"THE HISTORY OF
KABAA-MANGU HIGH SCHOOL
AND
THE CONTRIBUTION OF
THE HOLY GHOST FATHERS
UPON EDUCATION
IN KENYA"

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Master of Arts in the University of
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SYNOPSIS

This thesis is about the educational work of the Holy Ghost Fathers in Kenya, especially as carried out at their first school of higher learning for Africans at Kabaa and later at Mangu after the school was transferred to the latter site; hence the name Kabaa-Mangu High School. The thesis examines the educational programme of the school through a period of forty years from its humble and difficult beginnings in 1925 to the period shortly after Kenya's independence in 1965, and brings to light the many challenges that had to be faced and the obstacles that had to be overcome throughout that period. An attempt has been made to give a detailed history of the school as the only way of showing the immensity of the programme undertaken and the strengths and weaknesses of the Holy Ghost approach over the whole issue of culture contact in an African setting.

In the introduction and the final chapter of the thesis, an attempt has been made to register the earlier pioneer efforts of the Holy Ghost Fathers with particular reference to their educational activities right from their arrival in East Africa in the 1860's to 1911 when the Kenya Government began taking an interest in African education, and then to 1924 when an important Education Ordinance was passed by the Kenya Government leading to the foundation of Kabaa in 1925, and its Protestant counterpart, the Alliance High School Kikuyu in 1926; these two schools for a long time acted as the main institutions of higher learning for Africans in this country. An attempt is also made in Chapters VII and VIII to outline the part played by the helpers of the Holy Ghost Fathers, such as the Brothers and the nuns.
whose work both supplemented and complemented the efforts of the Holy Ghost Congregation; for, their collective contribution and impact is in effect part and parcel of the Congregation's work both in the field of education and in other areas.

Finally this thesis attempts an assessment of the collective Holy Ghost effort by relating it to the general development of Kenya throughout the colonial era.
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The ready and willing cooperation given me by the Headmaster of Kabaa, Fr. G. Ellis, and his successor Fr. P. O'Shea, and also by the Headmaster of Mangu, Brother John Schneider, were very much appreciated.

Indeed the help given me by various missionaries made me feel both humble and proud. For translating the first part of the Kabaa
journal from French to English, Sister Edmund of the Sisters of Our Lady of Africa at Thika, and Mother Francis Joseph O'Sullivan of Loreto Convent Msongari readily gave their very limited time, and have earned my very sincere gratitude. Mother Francis Joseph O'Sullivan also wrote for me a paper on the work of her Congregation in Kenya; similarly the "White Sisters" Convent nuns, and Mother Adelberta, Superior-General of the Precious Blood Sisters in East Africa; and likewise, Brother James Kilroy, on the Marianists of Mangu.

The great, veteran missionary Fr. C.T. MacNamara C.S.Sp., gave me a tremendous boost in my work by his enthusiasm for the project, and by the many original documents, photographs, letters, and the book "Let's Go", all of which he sent me from his residence in Ireland; and later in France. At his very advanced age, it was a great sacrifice on his part to react to all my letters so promptly, and I feel extremely grateful for all the help he gave me.

I am similarly also grateful to Fr. J.J. O'Meara of St. Francis Xavier's Church, Nairobi — former Principal of Holy Ghost College Mangu, and for a long time Education Secretary-General for Catholic Missions in Kenya — who gave me five long interviews packed with solid information, systematically given, which gave me important insights into Catholic educational work in Kenya. Other detailed interviews for which I am most obliged were with Fr. Paul White of Matuu Mission, Fr. Martin Reidy of Limuru Mission, Fr. John Reidy of Riruta Mission, Fr. Horber of Giriama Mission, Fr. Paddy Fullen of Mangu Mission, and the former teachers and students of Kabaa-Mangu High School who appear in the list at the end of this thesis.

I would like to say a word of thanks to Fr. R.F. Walker C.S.Sp., of Ireland, Fr. Grennan C.S.Sp., of Mombasa, Fr. O'Brien C.S.Sp., of Kilimambogo, from whom I received letters or documents on matters relevant to my research.
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ABBREVIATIONS

K.N.A. — Kenya National Archives.
H.G.F. (M) — Holy Ghost Fathers (Mission)
R.C.M. — Roman Catholic Mission
C.M.S. — Church Missionary Society
C.S.M. — Church of Scotland Mission
A.I.M. — Africa Inland Mission
F.A.M. — Friends Africa Mission
P.C. — Provincial Commissioner
D.C. — District Commissioner
A.D.C. — Assistant District Commissioner
P.E.O. — Provincial Education Officer
D.O. — District Officer
L.N.C. — Local Native Council
A.D.C. — African District Council
E.A.S. — East African Standard

GLOSSARY OF SWAHILI WORDS

Mzungu — European
posho — maize meal.
pure — a mixture of cooked beans and maize.
kongoni — hartebeest
serkali — government
nsama — Kamba word for elders' Council
kunde — peas
wazee — elders
shauri ya Mungu — it all depends on God
askari — a soldier or policeman
shujaa — hero, highly successful person
baraza — meeting of elders
duka — shop
fundi — craftsman or artisan
1. **The Coming of The Holy Ghost Fathers To East Africa**

The Holy Ghost Fathers, the founders of Kabaa and Mangu, started their first mission in East Africa on the island of Zanzibar in the early 1860's. The mission which they took over was pioneered by Bishop Maupoint of Reunion who had sent Fr. Fava to establish it in 1860. Bishop Maupoint's idea was to use the Zanzibar mission as a stepping-stone for the evangelisation of the East African interior.

Fr. Fava visited Zanzibar in June 1858, and after surveying the possibilities of founding a mission there, proceeded to France to secure the necessary funds. He returned to Zanzibar in September 1860 where he received an encouraging welcome from Sultan Majid, after he intimated that he intended to start a school which would lay emphasis on agricultural and industrial work, and produce trained artisans. After getting the necessary permission from the Sultan, Fr. Fava leased a building which he named "La Providence", and then went back to Reunion to collect the pioneers. The party of pioneers arrived in Zanzibar in December 1860. It included 6 nuns of the Filles de Marie order, two diocesan priests, six skilled craftsmen, and a surgeon. They had instructions to concentrate on Africans and to leave the Muslim Arabs alone. They opened a hospital, a dispensary, a smithy and several workshops, to begin with. By the end of 1862 "La Providence" had two dozen African boys and girls drawn from the slave population mainly through ransoms. These children formed the first Catholic School in East Africa.

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Meanwhile Rome had elevated the new mission field of East Africa to the Status of a prefecture Apostolic, giving it the name of Zanguebar. The Zanguebar Prefecture stretched from Cape Guadarfui in the north to the mouth of the Zambezi in the South, and had no limits in the interior. Rome assigned this new prefecture to the Congregation of the Holy Ghost Fathers in 1862, but the Holy Ghost Fathers did not take up the offer until July 1963. The Holy Ghost Fathers now sent Father Antoine Horner to take over from where Fr. Fava had left the work when recalled by Bishop Maupoint in late 1962, soon after surveying Bagamoyo for a possible mainland station.¹

After consolidating the work of the Zanzibar mission, Fr. Horner opened the first Holy Ghost mission on the mainland of East Africa at Bagamoyo in 1868, the site which had been surveyed by Fr. Fava six years earlier. Fifty boys were transferred from the Zanzibar mission to Bagamoyo, and a year later 46 girls were moved to join them.² This was the beginning of the spread of the Holy Ghost missions in Tanzania. It was not until 1892 that the first mainland station was opened in Kenya, at Bura in the Taita Hills. Here they established their first school for Africans in this country.

By the turn of the century - encouraged by the advance of the railway, which reached Nairobi in 1899 - they started a mission in Nairobi itself: the famous St. Austin's mission. Here, too, a school was started for Africans in 1900. Thenceforth, every mission opened had an elementary school attached to it which was fed by a number of "bush" or village schools. By 1924,

¹ Kieran, op.cit. page 16 sqq.
² Ibid. p. 194.
besides Bura and St. Austin's, the Holy Ghost Fathers had opened elementary schools of a sort at Kiambu, Mangu, Lioki, Kilungu, Riruta and St. Peter Claver's (Nairobi). ¹

They also had a school for Goans at Mombasa, one for Europeans in Nairobi and one for half-caste girls at the White Sisters Thika.² Kabaa mission, founded in 1913 had been abandoned in 1920 when the priests, pupils and equipment were all transferred to Kilungu.

It was the decision to start a Catholic Central School which brought the evacuated Kabaa site into prominence again. Fr. Michael J. Witte C.S.Sp. reoccupied the site in September, 1924 in preparation for the commencement of the school there in January, 1925.³

* * * * *

The founder of the Holy Ghost Fathers in modern times, Fr. Francis Libermann, placed a great deal of importance on Schools in the "civilizing and Christianizing of Africa".⁴ He insisted that everywhere in the mission field elementary out-schools must be established; from these schools the more promising pupils were to be sent to the central school in each mission. He laid down that at the mission school three categories of education were to be given: classical studies were to be given to pupils heading for the clergy; pedagogical instruction to those who were able to become teachers and catechists; while training in agriculture, crafts and trades was to be given to all other pupils. Needless to

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2. Verbal Interview with Mother Francis Joseph O'Sullivan of Loreto Convent Kusongari in March 1969, and another interview with the "White Sisters" at Mangu in June 1969.
   Also Kieran, *op.cit.* page 13.
add that all pupils were to receive religious and moral training. Fr. Libermann further advocated the formation of an elite who, through leadership, example and labour would gradually penetrate the masses.¹

The primary object of the Holy Ghost Fathers, as indeed of all the other missionaries, was to spread Christianity, but they realised fairly early on that this could best be accomplished through schools. Fr. Libermann had laid down detailed instructions as to how to go about spreading Christianity and knowledge through schools in Africa. If the implantation of the Church is to be effected, he wrote,

".... It will have to be rooted in the mentality, customs and culture of the people and not in the civilization proper to the missionary home country."¹

"Do not judge according to what you have seen or have been accustomed to in Europe. Divest yourselves of Europe, its customs and mentality. Become Negroes with the Negroes and you will judge as they ought to be judged.... and.... train them as they should be trained, not in European fashion but retaining what is proper to them."²

"Schools are a work to which we give top priority," he stressed.³

Pope Gregory XVI endorsed Fr. Libermann's ideas with great enthusiasm, stressing the importance of a native clergy. He visualised a system of education in which the better pupils would progress from village schools to boarding schools at the missions; at the apex of this system would be a seminary to teach candidates for the priesthood.⁴

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¹ Koren: op.cit. page 460.
² J. Koren: op.cit. page 175
³ Ibid. page 460.
⁴ Kieran, op.cit page 13
2. Early Holy Ghost Efforts at Education in East Africa

1) In the Nineteenth Century:

The Holy Ghost Fathers aimed all their higher education efforts at producing an African clergy. At the bottom of the educational ladder was the village school which in the majority of cases sat under a tree with a teacher who was usually a catechist; these schools were really catechumenates which when possible taught the rudiments of the three R's as well. Of those who reached the mission school the majority stopped learning after completing their religious instruction and receiving baptism; the better or keener ones stayed on at the mission boarding school for a further two or three years receiving further instruction in agriculture and industrial work where possible.

The large majority of the pupils were ex-slaves: some had been ransomed, others had ran away from their masters to seek refuge at the missions. Generally speaking, the only free children were the orphans who had got into missionary hands through various ways. All these were receptive to doctrines and ideas and could be relied on to bring the Christian faith and civilized ways to their former homelands.

As stated earlier all higher education beyond this point was reserved for those preparing for the clergy. The Holy Ghost Fathers made early attempts to train an African clergy, but discontinued them after discouraging failures which made them form the impression that the time was not yet ripe for Africans to take up church vocations. In 1869 a junior seminary was opened at Zanzibar with eight students. The medium of instruction

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was French, and the subjects taught included: French, Latin, Greek, Arithmetic, Geometry, Algebra, Plain Chant and vocal and instrumental music. The orphanage primary school at Zanzibar served as the preparatory school for the scholasticate. The decision to site the seminary within East Africa was dictated by the consideration that vocations might be lost and contact with African culture broken by residence in Europe.

After examining the curriculum of the Junior Seminary, the Mother House in Paris advised that the indigenous languages should not be neglected. As a result Greek was struck off the time-table and Swahili was substituted. In 1876 one of the seminarians was sent to Europe for further studies towards the priesthood. He found Europe too cold for his health and returned after only one year. After this, no further urgency was felt about producing indigenous priests for the rest of the nineteenth century.

A similar attempt to train African nuns was also soon abandoned. The Filles de Marie Sisters set up a noviciate at Bagamoyo in 1870 to train a congregation of African nuns. Six African girls enrolled at the Noviciate, which was transferred to Zanzibar in 1874. Unfortunately their new residence in Zanzibar, which was still under construction, collapsed in December 1875 killing three of the novices. Fr. Horner took the remaining three to Reunion in 1877 and the project came to an end. No serious attempt was again made to train African nuns for Holy Ghost missions until 1910.

1. J. A. Kieran, op. cit., page 134
2. Ibid. page 137
3. Ibid. page 142
The training of African lay Brothers also met with snags and had to be discontinued. The first African Brother was trained in Paris in 1875. On his return two others were sent, but both died in Europe in 1876 shortly after a further two had arrived to join a new class. As a result the new arrivals hurriedly returned to East Africa. One of them, Isidore, however, continued his studies locally until he became a professed Brother. But in 1881 the Brother who had received his training in Paris quarrelled with the missionaries and left the Congregation. It was not long before Isidore also left. This led to the attempt at producing African lay Brothers being given up; it was not resumed until 1907.¹

After the idea of training an African clergy was temporarily abandoned, each mission began to concentrate on turning out its own catechists,² who normally first underwent three or four years of regular schooling. Father Picarda's School at Mandera mission in Tanzania will serve to illustrate a typical school of the Holy Ghost Fathers at the time. The school was started in 1885 with a dozen pupils, and operated on a three to four-year curriculum (drawn up by Fr. Picarda himself). The curriculum included the following subjects: manual work, agricultural training, technical training, carpentry, smithing, trades (e.g. brick laying and masonry), reading, writing, arithmetic, Swahili and French.³

These nineteenth century efforts at educating Africans no doubt left their mark and guided the attempts which were made in the first quarter of the twentieth century.

1. Kieran, op. cit., page 139.
Although there were many difficulties in educating Africans at that state of East Africa's development it would appear nevertheless that the Holy Ghost Fathers did not exert themselves hard enough nor persevere long enough to get an African clergy, on which their founder and the Popes were so keen. A cursory examination of the reasons underlying their lack of perseverance in this direction suggests that they were not immune from the contemporary belief in European circles that Africans were inferior, did not have the right disposition, and were incapable of real intellectual work.

ii) **In Kenya from 1892 to 1910:**

Kenya was somewhat impervious to missionary penetration until the Uganda Railway began to make its way into the Highland interior in the late 1890's. This can be shown by the fact that the pioneer missionaries in Kenya, the C.S.Sp., whose agent Krapf had arrived as early as 1844, had made little headway even as late as 1894, having advanced barely fifty miles away from the coast.

The Holy Ghost Fathers first made their entry into Kenya at Mombasa, when the Superior General of the Prefecture of Zanzibar, Mgr. John de Courmont C.S.Sp. (1883-1896), opened an agency for the Mission there in 1890, and followed this by opening a mission station at Bura in 1892. His successor Bishop Allgeyer (1896-1913), encouraged by the Governor of Kenya (Hardinge), visited the rapidly growing railway town of Nairobi and established St. Austin's mission close by; the station which is reputed to have grown the first coffee in Kenya.

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1. Oliver, *op.cit.*, page 169
For their work in these missions the Holy Ghost Fathers drew a great deal on their experience in the Tanzania Mission. The elementary schools which were started at Bura, Mombasa and St. Austin's, though less successful, were in fact modelled on some of the attempts in Tanzania in which the stress was on agricultural and industrial rather than literary education. Progress was slow especially at Mombasa where Muslim influence was considerable and at Bura where the Taita were generally indifferent. At that time African parents failed to see any useful purpose served by sending their children to school; instead they had a persistent fear that this might be some form of disguised slavery, since manual work was generally required of the volunteers who went to school. Gradually, however, the resistance was broken and the mission schools at Mombasa and Bura began to fill up.

Bishop Courmont recommended that the curriculum include reading, writing, arithmetic, plain chant and catechism, as well as instruction in agriculture and the trades. The school at Mombasa devoted half an hour every morning to reading and writing, half an hour every afternoon to catechism, and twenty minutes to singing. The school at Bura, which was a boarding one, had one hour's class in the morning and two hours in the afternoon, the remainder of the time being taken up by manual work and rest. By the beginning of the twentieth century both the Holy Ghost missionaries in the field and the Mother House in Paris became convinced that schools were the best hope for the future of the missions. They also agreed that day schools were less costly and so they set out to discourage boarding institutions.

1. Kieran, *op. cit.*, page 192
2. *Ibid.* page 194
In 1906, partly due to political pressure from the British, the Holy Ghost missions in the British sphere (Kenya and Zanzibar) were separated from those in German-ruled Tanganyika and created into a new Vicariate which retained the name of Zanzibar Vicariate. However, its Vicar Apostolic, Bishop Allgeyer, himself a Frenchman, had a staff of priests that was, almost to a man, of French nationality, which did not solve the British problem much.

The Zanzibar Vicariate, especially the Kenya part of it, faced the problem of dealing with free children as opposed to ex-slaves. The free children of Taita and of Kikuyu as elsewhere in Kenya, were at first not keen on going to school, and, much like those whom Krapf had dealt with at Rabai more than half a century earlier, often asked to be paid in order to attend this new novelty of the White men. The lack of interest in education during the first decade of the twentieth century was partly because the parents felt that schooling was not only of little use but gave their children wrong ideas, prevented them from performing their traditional tasks in the family, and tended to estrange them from the tribal way of life.

Another reason was that the Government, too busy perhaps laying the foundation of what they wanted to be a sound administration, appeared to place little premium on the education of Africans. The missionaries got the impression that the Government not only showed little interest in this direction but deliberately refused to cooperate and often obstructed mission efforts to establish schools. By 1909, however some Africans in the Kikuyu area were beginning to appreciate the advantage of knowing how to read and write, since the few Africans who had got a smattering of these skills were much

3. Ibid., page 201.
sought after for employment on the new European farms where they were, by the standards of those days, comparatively well paid.¹

Interest in education was slowly being aroused in this area, though the British puppet, chief Kinyanjui, was still able to prevent the Holy Ghost Fathers and the Church of Scotland mission from establishing catechumenates close to his home.²

Up to this time there was no Department of Education in Kenya, and the only assistance the Government gave was in grants of land to missions. It was the pioneer work done by the missionaries of all denominations in their scattered mission schools on which later efforts by the Government grew.³ Most of the mission stations offered a little accommodation to their pupils and they normally paid them to do some work in addition to their learning. Great stress was laid on practical work and the problem of shortage of teachers was solved by the brighter pupils teaching those who were just beginning. All who wanted to attend were welcome, as there were so few anyway, and they all could keep coming for as many years as they wished without reference to planned progress or ultimate financial gain.⁴

The Government began to take an active interest in education in 1910, when it tentatively commenced to put pressure on people to send their children to school.

At first their idea was to establish schools for the sons of chiefs as had been done in Uganda from the beginning of the century. The Government in fact approached the Holy Ghost Fathers to found such schools, and the latter actually drew up a syllabus; but after the Government had selected several of their stations and recommended them for grants in connection with the project, the idea was suddenly

¹ Oliver, op.cit., page 199, and Kieran, op.cit., page 292.
² Kieran, op.cit., page 219.
³ See Appendix 2 (i).
dropped after opponents of the scheme brought forward the argument that the missions were already educating all the chiefs' sons that could be found, and, besides, such a plan could lead to religious conflicts.¹

A similar Government scheme to subsidise technical education brought forward in 1911, was more successful. As early as 1903 the Superior-General of the Holy Ghost Fathers, Alexander Le Roy C.S.Sp., had toyed with the idea of encouraging the starting of an agricultural and trade school in the Kikuyu area, but the idea was expensive and did not materialise. Then in 1911 the Government decided on a scheme whereby it would give grants to mission stations which provided facilities for technical education. Under this scheme African apprentices were to attend such a school for three years during which they would have three hours' classwork and three hours' practical work daily. The approved subjects for this scheme would be "Carpentry, masonry, smithy work, bricklaying, market gardening and medical and veterinary studies". St. Austin's mission had been teaching all but the last two of these subjects for the previous ten years, and so when it became evident that the scheme was to be available to English-speaking missionary societies only (which would exclude the French speaking Holy Ghost Fathers), Fr. Bernhard was able to make successful representations which not only altered the decision but secured a gift of £250 from the Government "for past services"² as well.

The first Education Ordinance was enacted in 1911 and in the same year the first Director of Education visited St. Austin's to discuss the Holy Ghost Fathers' plans for the school there. Hitherto, even some of the Africans living on St. Austin's property had shown a complete lack of interest in education, but after the Government began to apply pressure, school attendance figures rose considerably.³

2. Ibid.
After Government inspections, St. Austin's, Mombasa and Mangu were given the green light to start technical schools in 1911. The ordinance gave provision for grants of £2 per enrolled pupil per year and a further grant of £5 per pupil who passed a Government Examination, to purchase the necessary tools. This placed Catholic schools, which were almost entirely technical, in a fairly favourable position, until the arrangement was superseded by a new one in 1918.

3. The Choice of a Site:

Before surveying briefly the events that led to the foundation of a school at Kabaa in January 1925, it is useful to look at the struggle which the Holy Ghost Fathers made in their bid to acquire the site first at Kombe and then (after this was refused) at Kabaa. This will help put later developments at Kabaa, especially in regard to the acquisition of more land, into perspective.

(a) The Foundation of Kombe

The idea of founding a Holy Ghost Mission Station in Ukambani was first thought of in 1903. Up to that time the Holy Ghost Fathers operating in British East Africa (later Kenya) had seven mission stations: Mombasa, Bura, Giriama, St. Austin's Nairobi, Holy Family Nairobi, Kiambu and Mangu. These were under the Vicariate Apostolic of Zanzibar, which was controlled by Bishop Allgeyer. None of these missions was in the territory of the Akamba in whose area the Holy Ghost Fathers were anxious to extend their work and jurisdiction. Bishop Allgeyer and his Council decided in 1908 that the time was ripe to open a mission in Ukambani. They appointed Fr. Demainson, Superior of the mission at Zanzibar, and 35 year-old Fr. Paul Leconte the Superior of the one at Mombasa, to reconnoitre the territory near Donyo Sabuk and the hilly country north of Machakos, for a suitable site.

The two priests finally decided on a little hill called Kombe. Had it not been for official objections, Kombe and not Kabaa would have been the first Holy Ghost mission in Ukambani. As things turned out Kombe was occupied only for nine dramatic months, and had to be evacuated by order of the Government.

Three and a half years elapsed between the Bishop's choice of the Kombe site and its occupation by Fr. Leconte. It was in June 1912 when Fr. Bernhard the Administrator of the Vicariate, in the absence of the ailing Bishop Allgeyer, decided to proceed with the foundation of the mission in Ukambani. He took Fr. Leconte with him on a final look over the territory.¹

On his return the Administrator wrote to the Government Land Office for the plot on 25 June 1912. He enclosed a fairly accurate sketch map of the area around the site.²

The land officer seeing that the site was within ten miles of the African Inland Mission site at Kangundo, forwarded the letter and a sketch map to the P.C at Nairobi requesting for the latter's comments. This started a whole series of official correspondence on the matter. The problem revolved round a ruling of the Governor on 9 September 1910 that no mission would be given land within a radius of ten miles from another mission of a different denomination without among other conditions, the consent of that other mission.³

A great deal of correspondence followed, involving the D.C. of Machakos, the P.C. of Ukamba Province and the Land Officer. The Government officials contended that Kombe was only 6½ miles from the African Inland Mission (A.I.M.) station at Kangundo and so could not be allowed. The Catholics argued that the intervening Kanzalu range of hills made the journey between the two stations equivalent to ten miles in walking time.

Mr. Osborne, the D.C., was not satisfied with the Catholic view point. In his reply he pointed out that although it was true that a European if he followed the main track would take some three hours to go between Kangundo and Kombe, "a native need not necessarily do so," and the point of the ten mile limit appeared to him to be the prevention of a mission encroaching on another's sphere of action in so far as the native population only was concerned. By the main track Kombe would be outside the ten miles radius, but the natives affected by such a station would be within the radius.

The A.I.M. authorities were not helpful either. Their head, when approached, wrote back to the D.C. saying that on behalf of the A.I.M. Society he was asking that the ten mile limit be adhered to. As the crow flies, he alleged, it was definitely an encroachment; and as regards the time test he was of the opinion that it too could not be substantiated.

1. KNA: DC/MS/10A/4/1: Letter No. 662/4/2/12 of 26 July 1912, found in DC/MS/10A/4/1.
   Ibid. Letter No. 740/1/200 from the DC Machakos to the P.C. at Nairobi.
   Ibid. Letter No. 662/4/3/12 of the 19 August 1912 from P.C. to the D.C. Machakos.
   Ibid. Letter No. 661/4/4/12 of 19 August 1912 from P.C. to Nairobi to the D.C. Machakos.

2. KNA: DC/MS/10A/4/1: Letter No. 822/2/1/215 of 9 September 1912 from D.C. Machakos to the P.C.

3. Ibid. Letter No. 348/11 of 19 September from the D.C. Machakos to Mr. C.F. Johnson, Head of the A.I.M. at Machakos.
   Letter from Mr. C.F. Johnson of A.I.M. Machakos.
The Catholics did not wait until the wrangling over formalities was ended. Father Paul Leconte and Fr. Blais were appointed to found the mission at once. Fr. Cayzac, of Mangu having got verbal permission from Mr. C.W. Hobley, the P.C., instructed the priests to proceed to Kombe without delay. Accordingly Fr. Leconte set out from Mangu on 24 September 1912, and arrived at Kombe on the following day.

Within an hour of his arrival the local Akamba were on the scene and the questions came thick and fast: Where have you come from? What do you intend doing here? Who sent you? Will you be staying? The local chief, Nyaka, did not appear to be too well disposed towards the new arrivals either; he made it clear that he was boss in Kombe and that nobody could settle in the District without his permission. When Fr. Leconte confided to him, with what proved to be unwarranted optimism, that he had Government permission, Nyaka cooled down a bit. On hearing further that the Father would give him a generous measure of "the drop that cheers", he became quite agreeable and promised to return with his elders two days later to discuss the land shauri.

That same day, 26 September 1912, Fr. Leconte somewhat undiplomatically wrote a letter to the D.C. of Machakos which reads:

"I have the honour to inform you that according with the orders of my Superior, Rev. Fr. Cayzac, I have come to start a new Catholic Mission, just now; I intend to start tomorrow."

The D.C., Mr. Osborne, somewhat insulted by the wording of the letter, consulted the P.C. of Ukamba Province, who was resident at Nairobi, by telegram as well as by letter. In the letter he said

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3. KNA: DC/MK8/10A/4/1: Letter from Fr. Leconte to the D.C. of Machakos on 26 September 1912.
that Fr. Leconte's letter appeared to him to be peremptory and indicated a spirit of aggressiveness to which he (the D.C.) was not prepared to submit, and to which the attention of Fr. Leconte's superiors should be called at once in order to avoid a repetition of the same approach and a possible cause of friction between the Roman Catholic Mission and the Government officers in future. He got the P.C.'s permission to write to Fr. Leconte "strictly forbidding" him to take any steps in founding a station at Kombe until permitted to do so, "after the elders have given their consent."

Fr. Leconte in true Holy Ghost tradition sent a reply promising to abide by the D.C.'s orders until the matter had been settled between the Government and his "superiors". All he asked for the present was permission to erect "two little sheds with trees and grass for my boys and my goods, and in doing that I do not think I will trespass your forbidding."

Fr. Leconte, however, marred the diplomacy of his letter by harping on the subject of his superiors and by the last part of the letter which reads:

"I beg to remind you that I am here under orders and I will never leave the place if I am not ordered by my lawful superiors; I am ready even to go to prison, and my reasons are these: we have nothing to do with the American Mission. The rule of ten miles has been made without Catholics, and only between Protestants."


2. The Superior General and modern founder of the Holy Ghost Fathers, Fr. Libermann (Superior-General 1843-1852) wrote a guide to members of his Congregation in their dealings with the Government of whatever country they operated in. He wrote among other things: "Although government officials have no spiritual powers they can cause you trouble and frustrate you in many ways. On the other hand if they think well of you, they can be useful in advancing the work of the salvation of souls". (Quoted from Page 132 of "The Spiritans" by Henry J. Koren C.S.Sp., S.T.S.D., which is published by Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, 1958.

3. KNA: DC/7KS/10A/4/1: Letter from Fr. Leconte to the D.C. Machakos, dated 29 September 1912.
"The permission of the elders is nothing because the elders are supported by the Government and are the same thing as Government. More than that they are obliged to obey the Government Officers. In other countries: in Uganda and in German East Africa, the missionaries go anywhere they like, according to the Act of Berlin 1885; why, should it not be so in (British) East Africa?"

Meanwhile Fr. Leconte was busy winning good will and consolidating his position at Kombe. The local people even began to offer him presents of milk, eggs and fowl. Some had even given him the story that after his earlier visit with Fr. Bernhard to Kombe a land owner from a nearby village had slaughtered an animal and buried it on the spot where they had pitched their camp, in an attempt to prevent them ever returning.

Nyaka however, declined to discuss the plot shaursi until a reply had been received from Machakos.

Finally a negative reply was received from the Government, and Father Cayzac was prompted to lodge serious objections. In a strongly worded letter, to the P.C. he reiterated Fr. Leconte's words by saying that the D.C.'s refusal was a direct violation of the international treaties of Berlin and Brussels, by which European powers had bound themselves not only to permit but also to encourage and facilitate the establishment of missions of all denominations, in their respective spheres of influence.

Fr. Cayzac went on to point out that the elders and chiefs, whom the D.C. appeared to make much of, had in fact only the political power allowed them by the administration. "You did not," he went on "ask their permission to administer their country, nor to levy hut tax."

1. KIA: D3/KG/10A/L/1: Letter from Fr. Leconte at Kombe to the D.C. of Machakos on 29 September 1912.
nor to declare a certain district to be a Reserve and another not to be; and even if they had the right to prevent the establishment of a mission, international treaties allow you to dispossess them of it".¹

Mr. Hobley's reply dated 4 October 1912, gave the background of land policy in respect of missions: explained that as Provincial Commissioner it was his duty to carry out His Excellency's orders; asserted that the remarks concerning the political powers accorded to chiefs and elders were beside the point and expressed distress at Fr. Cayzac's suggestion that "Natives" should be forcibly deprived of their rights over their land "even for the formation of a mission."²

After being convinced that the Government was determined not to give in on Kombe, Fr. Cayzac in his capacity as Acting Superior of Holy Ghost missions in the Zanzibar Vicariate, appealed to the Governor through the Chief Secretary.³ In his letter he pointed out that Kombe was the only station left to the Catholics in Ukambani, and that at any rate did not recognise the right of one mission to prevent the establishment of another. "We cannot understand ..." he moaned, "why missionaries should be more inclined to pugnacity than any other body of men, settlers or merchants".

The Governor ordered that the time taken to cover the distance between the two missions be ascertained by actually walking it.⁴ Accordingly a District Officer (Mr. Reid) and Fr. Leconte walked from Kombe to Kangundo on the morning of 22 October 1912. In his report Mr. Reid said among other things that he had covered the distance in just over two hours. Mr. Reid went on: "I have no hesitation, however, in saying that in my opinion the Kangundo people on the south Kanzalu

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¹ KNA: DG/MS/10A/4/1 Letter from Fr. Cayzac to Mr. C.W. Hobley the P.C.
³ Ibid: Letter of Fr. Cayzac to the Chief Secretary
⁴ Ibid: Letter No. 661/4/16/12 of 15 October 1912; Also Letter No. 952/11/238 of October 13 1912.
hills are never likely to cross the Kanzalu range by reason of a preference for the teaching of the Roman Catholics nor do I think that the Mwala people are ever likely to face the walk entailed for the sake of enjoying the ministrations of the African Inland Mission. I do not therefore consider that the two missions would be likely to come into conflict.

In spite of this however the Governor's advisors apparently did not show him sufficient cause to waive the ruling he made in 1910. The Catholic authorities now referred the matter to the French Consul in East Africa, but he too failed to move the authorities from their stand.

While discussions of the Kombe site were continuing at high level, Fr. Bernhard, the Vicariate Administrator, stationed at St. Austin's Nairobi, instructed Fr. Leconte to see if a good site could be found in the Kilungu area. Fr. Leconte left Fr. Blais at Kombe and made a tour of Kilungu. He came back very impressed about the area; it had a larger and more willing population than the Mwala area where Kombe was situated, and besides it had plenty of water. The only snag was that here too the A.I.M. had earlier on established a station, though they had since abandoned it. So the application for this site was also refused.

(b) The Foundation of Kabaa

On the 2 April 1913 Fr. Leconte learnt that many of the inhabitants of Kombe were intending to migrate towards the Athi River, and began to toy with the idea of following them to open a mission there. Two days later Fr. Bernhard wrote to him saying that since the idea of Kombe had misfired would he rather stay on in spite of everything, or go farther away or move to Kabaa close to the Athi River. Fr. Leconte appeared to prefer Kabaa, so on 11 April 1913, on behalf of Bishop Allgayer, Fr. Cayzac wrote a letter to the P.C. stating that they had now selected a site at Kabaa. He enclosed a plan of the site and implored the P.C. to get through the necessary formalities with all possible speed so that the two fathers stranded at Kombe could begin to be usefully occupied. A report on this site was produced on 3 June 1913 by the assistant D.C., Mr. A. Chavier; he first wrote to Fr. Leconte on 29 May informing him that he had been detailed to inspect the plot at Kabaa and would Fr. Leconte call at his tent the following day at 6.30 a.m. for breakfast after which they would look round the plot at 7 a.m. Meanwhile Fr. Leconte was approached by his local friend Kioko with the news that the elders did not wish him to make a foundation at Kabaa because that is where they watered their animals; they wanted him to remain at Kombe.

Fr. Leconte entered the following in the journal after the conversation with Kioko:

"They wish us to remain in Kombe. Truly if we ever succeed in making a foundation here it will not be without hardships. The Government doesn't want us in Kombe; the elders don't want us in Kabaa. May St. Theresa of the Infant Jesus solve our dilemma in the spiritual interests of Okamba."

1. The other priest was Fr. Blais.
2. Kabaa Journal: entries for 2 April to 13 April 1913.
3. KNA: DC/KAS/10A/4/1: Letter 661/423/13 of 1 May 1913 from the P.C. to the D.C.
Early on 30 May Fr. Leconte joined Mr. Chamier for breakfast as requested. They then went to Kabaa together. The elders especially Keboze ("who alone grazes on the hill we want") insisted that the mission stay at Kombe because they water their cattle at Kabaa. The A.D.C. having walked around the hill however refused to accept their objections and insisted that the mission site was going to be Kabaa. He told them that he would make their objections known to Nairobi but added that he saw no justification for their refusal. Accordingly the D.O. reported to the D.G., listing the following reasons as the ones given by the elders of the well-attended baraza, he held: they contended that giving the Kabaa site to the Mission would mean a reduction in the area of the grazing then in daily use, since the site commanded their watering place; besides they were afraid that there might subsequently be trouble and complaints that their cattle trespassed on the mission land, while being driven down to water. They were also afraid of subsequent encroachments by the mission and would prefer that it be situated at Kombe.

The A.D.C. commented in his report that there was no cultivation on the site applied for and only one hut. If granted, he recommended that the eastern boundary should be drawn close to the bottom of the steep slope on that side. The space of some two hundred yards intervening between it and the river would give ample room for the cattle to be driven down. He attached a rough sketch to show matters more clearly and recommended that a maximum of ten acres be given and that the mission should be required to fence it. Fr. Leconte expressed a wish that if the site was to be fenced, one of the acres should be down on the river bank for use as a kitchen garden.

2. KNA: D0/MSS/10A/4/1: Report of Mr. Chamier to the D.G. of Machakos dated 30 May 1913.
When the report reached the F.C. he forwarded it to the Land Officer on 13 June, with the comment that there appeared to be local objections to the application and so the Roman Catholics might be asked to look for another site.

Meanwhile the Mother House of the Holy Ghost Fathers in Paris began to be sceptical about this site. On 6 June, Fr. Bernhard had written to Fr. Leconte saying that he had learnt that the Mother House had little confidence in the Kombe or Kabaa foundation.

Commented Fr. Leconte,
"They believe that we are holding on here simply to make a foundation at all costs. They do not wish to give orders but they insinuate very clearly that they would prefer us to involve neither personnel nor money in Ukamba. Pray that the Holy Spirit may guide us. Like you, I am prepared to abandon everything once I am convinced that such is God's will. They are mistaken in Paris in thinking that we are holding on here simply out of self love."

Fr. Bernhard wrote to Fr. Leconte on 14 June saying that the Government intended to uphold local objections. He went on:
"See if you can swing the elders in favour of Kabaa or refer the matter again to Osborne (the D.C.) who will in turn inform Mr. Hinde (the P.C.) and so on. There is no reason why the comedy they are playing with us, knowing fully well that we have no support, should not continue indefinitely."

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1. KNA: DG/ME/10A/4/1: Letter 458/11/99 of 6 June 1913, from the D.C. of Machakos to the P.C.
3. Ibid. entries for 6 June and 7 June 1913.
4. Ibid. entries for 15 June 1913.
Accordingly, on 21 June, Fr. Leconte went to Kabaa to see if he could find a favourable site other than that originally decided upon. He found one, and asked Njaka to summon the elders to discuss it. "There will be beer of course," he wrote. "No beer, no elders!"

The following day two elders came to Fr. Leconte and said they were prepared to reserve their decision and to agree to the foundation at Kabaa. Wrote Fr. Leconte: "This is probably the result of the promise of beer. O, powerful Liqueur!" But on 23 June he sadly learnt that the elders "from the other side" were quite differently inclined; they were unwilling even to consider the second site chosen by Fr. Leconte; the elders meeting called on the next day confirmed this unco-operative trend.

A further meeting on 27 June brought better results, however. Although the elders were still of the opinion that the mission was better at Kombe, they expressed a willingness to allow Fr. Leconte to have the second site he had decided on at Kabaa. Then after further discussion they suddenly decided that he could have whichever of the two Kabaa sites he chose. Fr. Leconte chose the first Kabaa site, the "bald headed" ("La Quarantine") hill. Wrote the indomitable Frenchman. "We must thank Our Lady because it is certainly she who won for us this victory for which we have prayed so much." He wrote to the D.C. informing him of the elders' decision. 1.

Thus it was that on 2 July 1913, Fr. Leconte left Kombe (where he had resided for 9 months 5 days), with twenty porters and pitched his tent on "La Quarantine", the site first chosen, but refused by the elders in the presence of Mr. Chamier. Fr. Blais remained at Kombe, to await developments. Only after settling at Kabaa did Fr. Leconte learn, on July 3, that the real reason

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why the elders had objected to their settling at Kabaa was because a "witch doctor" had told them that a European wished to live there and that they must prevent it. Fr. Leconte now persuaded the elders to send a delegation to the D.C. to inform him that they had changed their minds.

As a result the D.C. found it necessary to write to the P.C. explaining that the influential elders of the Nzama (local council) who had reached the verdict of May 30, in the presence of Mr. Chamier, had now approached him to withdraw their objections to the Roman Catholics building at Kabaa. They had changed their minds, they said, because the resident missionary had agreed to take an oath to dwell with them as neighbours and to refrain from unnecessary quarrels or complaints. The D.C. went on to say that he had assured them that the missionary would be asked to fence his side of the approach to the water to preserve their watering place and to avoid the risk of their cattle trespassing on the mission gardens; further the mission site would be beaconed thus rendering any subsequent encroachment on the part of the missionaries impossible. The D.C. concluded his letter by saying that the native objections over Kabaa could now safely be considered as non-existent.

In forwarding the information contained in the D.C.'s letter to the Land Officer the P.C. recommended that the Land Officer honour all the conditions laid down by the D.C. The Land Officer

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   Letter 1004/4/13 from the P.C. to the Lands Officer dated 12 June 1913.
   Letter 567/7/128 D.C. Machakos to P.C. dated 9 July 1913.

Ibid: Letter 1004/4/6/13 of 11 July 1913, from the P.C. to the Lands Officer.
agreed, but requested that the beaconing of the plot be carried out by the D.C. in conference with the mission and the "natives" after which he would issue a permit to occupy, pending the proper plans subsequent to it, when the usual lease would be issued. After further correspondence it began to appear as if the Kabaa issue was settled at last. But this impression did not last long. On 29 July 1913, the Land Officer wrote a letter to the P.C. virtually contradicting everything arranged during the previous fortnight. In the letter he said that after reconsidering the matter it now appeared to him that the grant of the site in question was open to objections especially as it was likely to give rise to friction with the natives, and concluded by stressing that in any case it would be impossible to survey the isolated plot for many years to come. The correspondence that followed between Government Officers showed one thing, that those concerned were not in favour of giving the Catholics a site anywhere in Ukambani area. It was a typical example of the "comedy" to which Fr. Bernhard had referred.

1. KNA: DC/10A/1: Letter L.4316/1/U of 16 July from the Lands Officer to the P.C. Nairobi.
2. Ibid: Letter L.4316/D/K of 29 July 1913 from the Lands Officer.
3. This contention is not supported by any information from the field. How the officer arrived at it is not clear.
4. KNA: DC/10A/1: Letter 1004/4/10/13 of 1 August 1913 from the P.C. to the D.C. Machakos
Letter 666/11/14 of 17 August 1913 from the D.C. to the P.C.
Letter 1004/4/12/13 of 11 August 1913 from the P.C. to the Lands Officer.
Letter L.4316/L/J of 23 August 1913 from the Lands Officer, to the P.C.
Letter 724/11/164 of 23 August 1913 from the D.C. to the P.C.
Letter 1004/4/16/113 of 1 September 1913 from the P.C. to the Lands Officer.
Letter L.4316/J/J of 5 September 1913 from the Lands Officer to the P.C.
Letter L.4316/ of 21 October 1913 from the Lands Officer to the P.C.
Letter 1004/4/20/13 of 23 October 1913 from the P.C. to the D.C. Machakos.
Letter 933/11/183 of 30 October 1913 from the D.C. Machakos to the P.C.
Meanwhile the French Bishop Allgeyer had resigned and the Holy Ghost Fathers had voted for a new Bishop. They had been given a hint to vote for a British Bishop as the Vicariate was in British territory: a letter from Fr. Bernhard confirmed that Fr. J.G. Neville, an Irishman, had won the election. The Vicariate was still predominantly French and so the actions and effectiveness of the new Bishop were bound to arouse some interest both from within and from without. But this was a matter for the future.

Going back to the official comedy, the D.C. of Machakos Mr. Osborne, visited the Kabaa site to carry out the beaconing request by Nairobi. He toured the site with Fr. Leconte and Fr. Blais in the presence of nine local representatives of the Nzama, and was at first disappointed that the Fathers had not previously made up their minds concerning what direction they wished the lines to run. Eventually, however, he was able to demarcate what he called nine acres—what in fact was according to his report 2 "300 yards frontage by 930 yards." The Fathers wished to have the tenth acre near the river but did not desire to locate it until they had seen to what point the river rises, during the rains. The report went on to say that the D.C. had instructed Fr. Leconte to surround certain trees with cairns to mark the accepted edges of the site. He suggested that if there was a surveyor working on the Yatta he could easily cross the river from the opposite side and survey the area indicated. He attached a sketch.

As a result the P.C. asked the Lands Officer to issue a permit for temporary occupation. 3

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3. Ibid: Letter 1004/4/24/13 of 2 December 1913 from the P.C. to the Lands Officer.
More delays followed, however, due to official bureaucracy; letters going back and forth between Government officers saying such things as: why did you not include the sketch; please issue the permit; yes but from what date does the rent accrue? It accrues on the date of the permit; had his Excellency already authorised the grant of ten acres according to the Secretariat Circular of 9 September 1910? And so on. It was indeed something of a comedy. To the chagrin of Fr. Leconte the Government finally made a decision of granting not ten but five acres to Kabaa.\textsuperscript{2}

Fr. Leconte was so infuriated at the reduction of the plot that he rushed an angry message to the Vicar Apostolic of Zanzibar, Bishop Neville, who was then at his Nairobi residence. Fr. Leconte had reason to be thus infuriated, for he had, since evacuating Kombe for Kabaa as a final measure on 30 September 1913, not only been certain that at last "the mission is now established at Kabaa finally"\textsuperscript{3} but he had

\begin{itemize}
  \item [1.] KNA: DC/IXS/104/4/1: Letter L.4316/S/B of 15 December 1913 from the Lands Officer to the P.C.
  \item Letter 1004/26/13 of 19 December 1913 from the P.C. to the D.C. Machakos.
  \item Letter 1004/4/28/13 of 22 December 1913 from the P.C. to the Lands Officer.
  \item Letter L.4316/F/B of 18 December 1913 from the Lands Officer to the P.C.
  \item Letter 1136/11/209/13 of 23 December from the D.C. to the P.C.
  \item Letter L.4316/S/J of 9 January 1914 from the Lands Officer to the P.C.
  \item Letter 1004/32/14 of 14 January 1914 from the P.C. to the Lands Officer.
  \item Letter 1004/4/33/14 of 29 January 1914 from the P.C. to the Lands Officer.
  \item Letter 4316/J/J of 3 February 1914 from the Lands Officer to the P.C.
  \item [2.] Ibid: D.C.'s report attached to letter 4315/D/0 of 6 February 1914, from the Lands Officer to the P.C.
  \item Letter 197/11/33/14 of 23 February 1914.
  \item Letter 274/11/54/14 of 27 March 1914. From the D.C. Machakos to the P.C.
  \item [3.] Kabaa Journal, entry for 1 October 1913.
\end{itemize}
actually carried out extensive schemes on the site including the planting of a vegetable garden on the tenth acre given him by Mr. Osborne close to the river. Now all this was upset, and, besides, the mission no longer had access to the river, being now restricted to the top of the hill.

This was no doubt one of the earliest cases to test Bishop Neville's diplomacy and the contention that a British Bishop would get more for the Catholics in a British territory. The Bishop wrote to the P.C. of Nairobi saying that he had just been informed that an error had been made in respect of the Kabaa site, unwittingly he was sure, by one of the Provincial Commissioner's "esteemed staff", which mistake would be a serious injustice to the young Catholic Mission at Kabaa. He pointed out that when the original grant had been made, the D.C., Mr. Osborne had fixed and marked the limits, in consequence of which Fr. Leconte and his assistant had set about the work of installation, planting trees etc., in the belief that the land within the limits marked by the D.C. and agreed by the chief men of the "natives", was the property of the mission. Mr. Pitt (the A.D.C.) had now changed those limits "reducing the concession to a paltry five acres" and cutting the mission off from the river. The Bishop concluded his letter by saying that he was confident, that the P.C. would look into the matter and rectify the mistake at his earliest convenience.

On 6 April, the P.C. forwarded Bishop Neville's letter to the Lands Officer and at the same time sent a reply to the former.

1. KNA: DC/NESS/10A/4/1: Letter dated 20 March 1914 from Bishop Neville to the P.C.
2. Ibid: Letter 1004/40/14 of 6 April 1914 from the P.C. to the Lands Officer.
He told the Bishop that either he had misunderstood Fr. Leconte or the latter had deliberately misrepresented the position. All the land in the Protectorate was granted through the Lands Office. The Bishop might not have been aware, he said, that five acres was the maximum amount of land granted to a mission station, except under exceptional circumstances when His Excellency the Governor could, if he thought fit, increase the amount up to a total of ten acres. In the application by Kabaa he went on, there were no exceptional circumstances mentioned nor did he (the P.C.) think they existed. Further, it was a mistake to say that a site had already been granted for the Kabaa station. Mr. Osborne had merely been instructed to report on the site; unfortunately the sketch map he had produced had made the area appear to be much more than five acres, and so the P.C. at the request of the Lands Officer had instructed Mr. Pitt to meet a representative of the mission and limit the proposed grant to five acres. He concluded by saying that he understood that Fr. Leconte had informed Mr. Pitt that if he could not get more than five acres the site as shown on the sketch would be the one selected by him.

Bishop Neville replying to the letter thanked the P.C. for the information contained therein, though he said, he could not conceal his disappointment at what seemed to him to be the lack of generosity on the part of the Lands Office towards the missions. He said that there were "exceptional circumstances" in respect of Kabaa which justified the full grant of ten acres. The administrator of his Vicariate, Fr. Bernhard, had applied for ten acres and the Lands Officer had granted this application; at least it was not refused. Mr. Osborne had subsequently demarcated the site and had even written "on 23 December 1913" to be told in whose name the occupation licence was to be made out. Further the native chiefs

1. KNA:DC/IKS/10A/4/1: Letter dated 13 April 1914 from Bishop Neville at his Zanzibar residence to the P.C. at Nairobi.
and elders had already consented to the grant. There had been no mention of five acres; it had been a question of ten acres all the way. The mission had therefore, in perfect good faith, considered the whole matter as being fully settled, and had accordingly set about getting the land allotted to them by Mr. Osborne in order. Then comes the Pitt episode; the only conclusion that could be drawn from all this, said Bishop Neville, was that although the original intention of the land office had been to grant Kabaa ten acres, some new rule regarding the grant of land to missions had been brought into existence before the legal formalities were finalised. The new rule had been given retroactive force and Kabaa's precious grant of ten acres had been halved.

For these reasons, the Bishop said, and for the general one that the missions are one of the greatest factors in the civilisation of the native and "a powerful auxilliary of the Government in the great work", he begged the P.C. to reverse his decision and confirm the first ruling of giving Kabaa ten acres. He added that if this was beyond the P.C.'s powers which he thought was not the case - he could refer the matter to the Governor. "If you say a word in its favour he is sure to grant it", the Bishop concluded.¹

All these appeals were to no avail; Kabaa was still having only five acres in late 1924 when Fr. Michael Witte re-occupied the evacuated mission to begin a school there. It is ironic that after all the fight and fuss over the Kabaa site, it should have been abandoned in May 1920, barely after six years of its foundation, due to lack of sufficient converts. The new station at Kilungu which gained by the transfer, proved far more fruitful, but Kabaa was destined for a different type of success.

¹. KNA: DC/NKS/10A/4/1: Letter dated 16 April 1914 from Bishop Neville at his Zanzibar residence to the P.C at Nairobi.
4. **Developments in Education Between 1911 and 1924:**

As pointed out earlier, the Kenya Government began to be involved in African education in 1911, when an Education Department was created by an ordinance passed that year. As far as the missions were concerned, the most important provision of the ordinance was the decision to subsidise mission schools which concentrated on industrial education. Such schools were to get £2 for every pupil enrolled and £5 for every pupil who passed an examination set by the Public Works Department. The Catholics, especially the Holy Ghost Fathers, stood to gain by this arrangement because their schools had always laid stress on technical and agricultural education and minimised literary education. This was especially so in the Zanzibar Vicariate which was staffed almost entirely by French priests, who avoided literary education as far as they could, after the Separation Act of 1905 enforced secular education in their home country and suppressed church schools there. They figured that this kind of move was bound to find its way to Kenya sooner or later, and they did not want to get involved, or further its cause. They therefore stuck to technical and agricultural education over which they were unlikely to clash with the Government or undermine their own work of laying a good Christian foundation. The Kenya Government's decision to stress industrial education, therefore, came almost like a godsend to them.

However, though profiting by the subsidy system of the 1911 ordinance, the Catholics had no illusions about the future. As if anticipating change, the Catholic Bishops of East Africa, decided at their conference in Dar-es-Salaam in 1912 to stress the religious function of their schools. One of their decisions was that the

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   *Also the Kenya Education Department Annual Report 1927.*
beginners in all their schools were first to spend one year in the "hearers class" followed by not less than two years in the formal catechumenate before they were baptised. This in effect meant that anyone who wanted to pursue further education in Catholic schools had first of all to undergo this religious course for three years - already a long enough time to discourage the majority of the Africans of those days to agree to stay a further three or so years even if for training in the industrial arts. Then also the appointment of Bishop John G. Neville, failed to alter the standing of the Catholics in Kenya to any appreciable extent. Besides, the first World War soon eclipsed most considerations, and when it ended a new grant-in-aid system was introduced which was very unfavourable to the Catholics.

In 1918, an Education Commission was appointed to look at the structure and workings of education since the ordinance of 1911, and make recommendations for future developments and procedures. Its report was published in 1919. Among its recommendations was the establishment of four separate systems of education, one for each of the main racial groups in Kenya: European, Indian, Arab and African. Another recommendation was that the grant-aiding system set up in 1911 should be dropped as being unsatisfactory, and a new system based on inspections should be introduced. The report pointed out that the experience of the first "Native" Government School - the Machakos Technical School - where the expenses amounted to £14 per pupil per year, showed that no missionary body could afford to run such a school without Government help. It turned out that no Catholic school was recommended under the new grant-in-aid system, a position which lasted for the next eight years.

1. Oliver, op.cit, page 210; and Kieran, op.cit, page 195.
2. Education Commission Report, Nairobi 1919, pages 1-9
3. Statistics from the Kenya Education Department Annual Reports, 1924-1926. Also a paper by Fr. G.T. Macnamara, written in August 1925 to Catholic Missions.
Two other recommendations of the 1919 commission are worth mentioning. It was decided that the curriculum of the Primary school would be literary and be spread over four years, that the Vernacular continue to be the medium of instruction and that at the end of this course, the better pupils would go on either to technical schools or teacher training (then called Normal) schools. The technical schools would teach surveying, telegraphy, medical work, administrative work, commercial work, and industrial and agricultural work. The commission noted that there were only two teacher training schools in the country: Buxton School and Frere-town School, both located at Mombasa.  

Several important developments took place in 1923 and 1924. They were set in motion by the establishment at the British Colonial Office of the "Advisory Committee on Native Education in the British Tropical African Dependencies" which aimed at pooling educational experience gained in the various British Colonies and giving impetus to the development of education in these dependencies. From this point on most Kenya Government policy statements included policy on education as well; for instance the Devonshire White Paper of 1923 which declared the paramountcy of African interests in Kenya. The Ormsby-Gore Commission of 1923 was another; it criticised missionary education as being too literary and paying little attention to the wider education of the African "for life in Africa". While agreeing that a knowledge of the three R's was essential the commission deprecated the tendency to import into Africa "nineteenth century English Board School education with its obsolete emphasis on the earning of marks and the passing of written examinations and parrot-like repetition of textbooks on foreign history and geography". The commission recommended that elementary and primary education should be carried out in the Vernacular, with English being introduced at a later stage.  

Then came the Phelps-Stokes Commission, which investigated in detail the state of education in Kenya as elsewhere in Eastern Africa, and made appropriate recommendations. Its report noted that missionaries had pioneered education in Kenya and had generally done commendable work. It recommended that co-operation involving the Government, the missions, and the settlers, was essential in formulating a sensible policy of African education. It stressed that the curriculum for African schools should aim at character, health, industry, agriculture, and wholesome recreation; and that it should be adapted to local realities, be imparted in the Vernacular up to the sixth year of school, and ensure that the children retain and enhance their consciousness of and interest in their community.

Pointing out that whereas whatever could be adapted from the European civilization should be adapted, the commission said it was bad educational procedure to make the African youth sing the British "Grenadiers" or the French "Marcelaise" and despise African music.\(^1\)

The commission asked, "Why should the history and geography of Europe and America receive more attention than that of Africa itself?"\(^2\) Such a line of thought was the theme of most of the recommendations of the Phelps-Stokes Commission; unfortunately they were accepted but not practised by the authorities, as later developments were to show in Kenya.

Of the Catholic schools the Phelps-Stokes Commission had this to say:

"The large and important Roman Catholic missions have maintained schools in most of the Provinces of Kenya for many years. Each of these Societies has the usual European staff,  

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2. Ibid.
including Fathers, lay brothers and sisters who supervise and conduct classroom instruction, industrial and agricultural training. Some of the schools are well planned and effective, with numerous out-schools that provide a limited amount of instruction in the ordinary school subjects. Others are said not to have attained the standards of education for which Roman Catholic missions are noted elsewhere. The co-operation of these societies through the Kenya Advisory Committee on Education promises to result in valuable re-organisation in their education work.¹

The most important development in the educational field in 1924 was the publication of that year's *Kenya Education Ordinance*. This ordinance codified the successful educational practices since 1911 and also the main recommendations of the 1919 *Education Commission Report*. It provided that all schools had to be registered and all teachers licenced before they could begin to operate; confirmed the grant-in-aid recommendations of the 1919 commission, and accepted the need for co-operation between the Government and the missions in which the Government's part would be to aid with grants and give guidance through inspections.²

The ordinance set up four Central Advisory Committees, one for each of the racial educational systems. Three Catholic representatives were allowed on the Central Advisory Committee on African Education³ and one on the Central Advisory Committee on European Education.⁴ The Government especially stressed the importance of teacher training since the quantity and quality of teachers were in very short supply, and the future of all education would depend on an adequate supply of well trained teachers.

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2. *The Kenya Education Ordinance 1924*.
3. One to represent each of three Catholic Bishops in Kenya. (Consolata Fathers, Hill Hill Fathers and Holy Ghost Fathers).
4. Fr. C.T. MacNamara.

Fr. C.T. MacNamara.
To this effect the Government started the Native Industrial Training Depot at Kabete, and also the Jeanes School, which was set up early in 1925 with the help of American foundations to train visiting village teachers. At the beginning of 1925 therefore, the educational institutions intended for Africans and maintained by the Government included these two new institutions at Kabete, and the earlier Government industrial schools situated mainly in the backward pastoral areas. The majority of the aided schools belonged to either the Church of Scotland Mission, or the Church Missionary Society. The Government's policy towards these schools was that, with certain definite limits, the greatest freedom was accorded to them; no hard and fast rules were imposed in respect of methods or routine, as the Government felt that a multiplicity of ideas stimulated progress.

The Protestant Schools which shared the 1924 Government grant to missions were: C.S.M. Kikuyu, C.S.M. Tumutumu, C.M.S. Maseno, C.M.S. Butere, C.M.S. Kahuhia, C.M.S. Kabete, and the Methodist school at Meru. The total Government vote for African education for that year (1924) was £23,100, of which £14,305 was set aside for mission schools. The latter was allocated as follows: Technical Education £6,779; Literary Education £3,126; Teacher training £2,230. All this money as pointed out above went to Protestant Schools, partly due to the fact that the Catholics had since 1916 not bothered to seek Government aid feeling that the Government was prejudiced in favour of the Protestants.

The table below gives the terminology used at the time for standards in the Primary School and forms in the Secondary School,

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2. See Appendix II (iv) (b).
as well as the grading of the schools themselves. It should be borne in mind that European and Indian education had by this time reached the Cambridge School Certificate level (Matriculation) but there was no recognised African secondary school until Alliance High School was started in 1926.

Table I. Nomenclature of Schools and Classes 1925.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELEMENTARY &amp; PRIMARY STANDARDS</th>
<th>SECONDARY FORMS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Substandards</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I, II</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III, IV</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V, VI, VII</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Junior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Senior</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The grading of the school, which is here shown in the bottom row, also served as the grading of the teachers trained at the specific level. Normally teachers taught in the level of school directly below their grading.

The end of 1924 therefore bowed out the experimental stage in Kenya education and ushered in the era of planned developments which were to have far-reaching consequences. The Catholic Central School, Kabaa, which started with the training of B and C teachers was on the scene just in the nick of time to catch up with these developments.
CHAPTER I

THE CATHOLIC CENTRAL SCHOOL: "MORPH OF PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE"

1. How the decision to found Kabaa School was made:

The birth of the Catholic Central School, Kabaa, was an unplanned and haphazard one, for the decision to establish a school at this deserted mission site was sudden and unexpected. On 23 August, 1924, the Annual Provincial Chapter of the Vicariate of Zanzibar, meeting at St. Austin's near Nairobi, heard Fr. Cornelius MacNamara give comparative statistics to show that the Catholics were behind the times in the field of education. He pointed out that a new Education Ordinance had just been published in the Official Gazette which provided all missionary bodies with an unprecedented opportunity to establish higher level schools and get involved wholeheartedly in educational matters. Were the Catholics going to establish a school at once or were they going to continue lagging behind, clinging only to catechumenates, even after the advantages offered by this important ordinance, he wondered.

Fr. MacNamara had every reason to be concerned. He was the first Holy Ghost Education Secretary, and unlike the French priests of the Vicariate whose training had been almost entirely a missionary one, he was both a missionary and a trained educationist. Moreover, besides having been appointed that year by Bishop Neville to sit on the Central Advisory Committee for Native Education (and also for European Education) he was the only Holy Ghost priest in a position to know how appallingly behind the times the Catholics had allowed themselves to be since 1918. His appeal was sincere, concerned and passionate.

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2. Circular letter written by Fr. MacNamara to all Parishes in August 1925.
The majority of the missionaries present at the Chapter, however, were neither impressed by his passionate appeal nor by what appeared to them to be an inordinate enthusiasm for this purely secularist idea. The only project they supported was the Catechists Central School which had been opened at Kilungu Catholic Mission in 1923 and was being run by Fr. Michael Witte. This was designed to supply the missions with the badly needed teachers of religion: what else was required? When pressed further they explained that the Vicariate was seriously short of personnel and could ill afford placing priests on projects of this kind at that time; they suggested that the Kilungu Catechists Central School be expanded to receive a total of five well selected candidates from each mission and that Fr. Witte be asked to try his best to give them the extra knowledge required. After extended discussions, this idea was endorsed by the Annual Chapter and approved by the Bishop's Council.

One of the chief opponents of the idea was Fr. Horber who as parish priest of Kilungu Mission was superior of Fr. Witte, and therefore Director of Kilungu Catechists Central School. The main supporters of the new project were the top men of the Vicariate: Bishop Neville, Fr. Bernhard and Fr. Cayzac; and of course the Education Secretary, Fr. MacNamara, and Fr. Witte himself. The majority of the remaining priests of the Vicariate were either opposed to the idea or indifferent.

Bishop Neville knew that Fr. Horber would not voluntarily agree to the proposed changes in the revised composition and aims of the Kilungu School. So on 2 September, 1924, he wrote a polite letter to him spelling out the recommendations of the Annual Chapter which had been approved by the Council and directing that he co-operate.

1. Kabaa Journal: entry for 16 and 17 September 1924; and also interviews with Fr. Horber.
In the letter, His Lordship said that the new combined school which would now be known as the Central Training School, would continue to be situated at Kilungu with Fr. Witte remaining Principal and he (Fr. Horber) the director and bursar of both the mission and the school. A total of thirty to forty candidates were to be enrolled for whom the Vicariate was allocating Sh. 9,080/- for the first year.¹

This money was to be budgeted as follows:—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 houses - each for five pupils</td>
<td>1,200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A classroom</td>
<td>1,200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture for the classroom and houses</td>
<td>600.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food @ 5/- per pupil per month</td>
<td>2,400.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uniforms and pupils' pocket money @ 5/- per pupil</td>
<td>2,400.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School books and material</td>
<td>480.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ox-wagon for transport</td>
<td>800.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>9,080.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Bishop suggested that the new centre should start the following December, but left it to the Principal in consultation with the mission Director to fix the actual date of opening and inform each mission accordingly. He hoped that each mission would endeavour to send five candidates to the school each of whom was to be a good practising Christian, able to read and write Swahili, and between twelve and twenty years of age. Each mission was to bear the expense of transport for all its candidates and provide each of them with a blanket and a box for carrying his things. The Bishop ended his letter² with:

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"Dear Father, this is a long letter on the new Training School of Kilungu. This establishment is the "Oeuvre Capitale" of the Vicariate. Yourself helped by Fr. Witte have the honour and the work of starting it.

"I pray God to bless this great enterprise and its founders. We propose St. John as the Patron Saint of the School........"2

On 3 September 1924, a day after writing the above letter to Fr. Horber, Bishop Neville formally appointed Fr. Witte to the principalship of the school. He also agreed to Fr. Witte's request that he be allowed to act as independently as possible in the interests of the school.3

Back in Kilungu Father Horber and Fr. Witte decided that Kilungu was unsuitable as a site for the new central school and they went together to Nairobi to say so. They mentioned the hard climate, the lack of building material, the scarcity of firewood and the difficulties of transport, as some of the reasons why they thought the school should be situated elsewhere. They suggested that Mangu, Riruta or Kabaa would be more suitable for the purpose,4 though ironically all the problems mentioned were even more acute at one of these - Kabaa. However although these reasons may have been valid in respect of Kilungu, the real reasons why either priest wanted the Central School to be situated away from that mission were quite different. Fr. Horber as the Parish priest of Kilungu wanted to have nothing to do with an institution that was likely to become increasingly secular in its curriculum and activities.5 The independent-minded Fr. Witte was anxious to move away from Kilungu because he considered that Fr. Horber was unsympathetic to the idea of the Central School and since he was to act as bursar he might not

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1. "Oeuvre Capitale" - work of Paramount Importance.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid, entries for September 1924.
5. Interview with Fr. Horber.
make the money available when required, which would impede the work of the school. Be that as it may the matter was discussed by the Bishop, Fr. Cayzac and Fr. Bernhard and the final choice fell on Kabaa. This choice was no doubt partly because Fr. Witte was so keen on this isolated and deserted mission site, which he knew suited his purpose better: for here he would be conveniently out of the reach of both the ecclesiastical and civil authorities, and could use his initiative to get things done.

After the decision was made, Bishop Neville wrote to Fr. Witte breaking the good news as follows:

"I thought over the question of the Central School. I consulted Fr. Bernhard. After considering yours and Fr. Horber's objections, we agreed that it would be wiser to open this school at Kabaa. You are authorised to set to work. Fr. Maciasara spoke to me this morning about what you had already told me that Fr. Blais offers his help in the foundation of this school.

"He hopes to spend a month with you at Kabaa where he is well known. I am sure Fr. Horber shall help you as much as he can.

"May God and the Blessed Virgin bless this work of extreme importance for our Holy Religion in Kenya Colony and especially in Ukamba. You will encounter difficulties but do not get discouraged - you are, young, enthusiastic and God is with you. Have courage.

"The money in question between you and Fr. Horber is destined for the new foundation. I shall write to Father about it. The money voted for the Central School of Kilungu is henceforward for Kabaa...."

1. Kabaa Journal, various entries in September, October, November and December 1924.
3. Letter dated 10 September 1924 from Bishop Neville to Fr. Witte found in the Kabaa Journal.
This clarification is exactly what Fr. Witte had been hoping he would get and now that it had been made he felt greatly encouraged, and set to work ordering all that was required at Kabaa. Among the big items he bought was a harmonium which the Bishop had given him permission to purchase. It cost 220/-, part of which was a personal gift to Fr. Witte from a friend.

On 15 September 1924, Fr. Witte and Fr. Blais set off for Kabaa. When the station had been evacuated for Kilungu in May 1920, all the equipment and the furniture had been transferred to the mission. Only a catechist, Yakobo, had been left at Kabaa to guard the Fathers' house built in temporary materials and the church which had been built in 1915 in permanent materials. Yakobo had ensured the renewal of the plaster work on the walls of the Fathers' house; otherwise everything else reflected neglect, carelessness and complete abandonment; "garlands of noisy and generous bats festooned the roof edges of the chapel"; the Fathers' house itself emerged above the long grass. There were no utensils, and the two fathers had to share the only plate available for their meals. Nevertheless Fr. Witte was happy, he had at last found the challenge and freedom he had always wanted to have in order to do something for the Africans.

2. The Unpopularity of the Project:

The challenge was to prove more exacting than he had hoped, for it was not only the natural impediments that he was going to face; human obstructions mainly from his colleagues, proved to be his most heart-rending concern. Looked at objectively, however, one gets the impression that Fr. Witte's early human problems were of his own making. His obsession with the out-of-the-way Kabaa site coupled with his known unwillingness to put up with unprogressive ecclesiastical-

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2. Ibid: entry for 16 September 1924.
superiors alienated the sympathies he might have received from many of his fellow priests. They formed the impression that his driving desire was to tackle an impossible undertaking to success; and the majority of them decided that he might as well go ahead; they would wait and see.

Fr. Horber whom the Bishop had asked to give him every possible assistance gave him only a few items necessary for Mass, and these on condition that he foregoes the monthly allowance to which he was entitled. He also objected to Fr. Witte's request that one of the better catechists at Kilungu, preferably Beda, whom Fr. Witte had trained, be sent to help with the work at Kabaa.

Fr. Horber, however, gave Fr. Witte seven porters to carry some of his own personal belongings, and promised to send seven labourers, who actually did not turn up until more than three months later. Only three other missions gave Fr. Witte help and active encouragement. These were St. Peter Claver's where the Irish priest Fr. Cornelius MacNamara was his sincere and constant supporter, Donyo Sabuk where the French priest, Fr. Blais was in charge and Lioki Mission where Fr. Mitrecy another Frenchman, out of sympathy for the plight of young Fr. Witte, supplied the vestments and other essential requirements for Mass, which Fr. Horber had not provided him with, as well as a few of the other things of which Fr. Witte was in most urgent need. Elsewhere, as far as fellow priests were concerned, there was a clear lack of concern; this in spite of the Bishop's instructions that every possible assistance be given to Fr. Witte and his undertaking. Fr. Witte himself, though he had known all along that he was pushing the thing too much for the liking of his fellow priests, had previously little figured that the lack of support would reach such proportions. Seeing little help forthcoming

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and everything go wrong he lamented: "All these pressing and urgent humble demands were left unanswered. The poor founder of the Paramount Work of the Vicariate was surprised and saddened." He formed "the impression that 'in general' the foundation of Kabaa Mission (and may be its director) was not worth helping."

He was, however, heartened by the assurance at every mission that the finding of pupils would be no problem. On his next visit to Nairobi he took the opportunity to write to each mission "to dissipate prejudice and to announce the opening of the school" on 15 December 1924.

3. Preparations for the Start:

A day after Fr. Witte and Fr. Blais had arrived at Kabaa they had set to work at once planning the site and the layout of the classrooms and pupils' houses. Apart from Yakobo the catechist, the local Wakamba at first kept aloof, but Fr. Witte was lucky in securing the willing services of a Muganda called Bartolomeo.

On the 18 September, the two priests returned to Mangu through Donyo Sabuk, where Fr. Witte made friends with Kavirondo labourers of the sisal estates, who were so impressed that they gave him some sisal poles for Kabaa. This contact was to lead to Donyo Sabuk becoming a useful recruiting ground for pupils mainly from the children and the ranks of the Kavirondo labourers there.

At Mangu the White Sisters gave him one hundred wattle poles for roofing. These poles together with the doors and windows he had ordered at Nairobi as well as the sisal poles at Donyo Sabuk, were to present Fr. Witte with his next major problem, that of transport to Kabaa. The track between Thika and Kabaa was nearly

2. Ibid: entry for 15 September 1924.
thirty-four miles long and went over the river Karara which had no bridge and was impassable by ox-wagon during the rainy period. Moreover he had not yet got the permission to purchase his own ox-wagon, and the ox-wagons owned by the local European farmers living between Thika and Kabaa were either out of order or unavailable. A Mr. Clay eventually made his wagon available for hire at the agreed rate of one shilling per ton per mile through a Mr. Tebbit, his Thika-based agent; but when he sent the bill it showed a charge of two shillings per ton per mile, much to Fr. Witte's surprise. However, in spite of this demonstration of lack of faith, Fr. Witte proceeded to make friends with all the settlers through whose area the track from Thika to Kabaa passed. He realised that they were bound to be of some use to him later in one way or another.

The most notable of the settlers he made contacts with were: Mr. Clay, Mr. Steele, Mr. Lindsay, Mr. Culton, Mr. Bunbury, Mr. Tebbit, and Mr. Delap. Of these his closest neighbours were Mr. Steele who was to prove of immense help to him in the immediate difficult years ahead, and the unpredictable Mr. Delap, a retired army major, through whose farm the road to Thika beyond the Karara lay. Mr. Delap was dreaded by most people, African and European alike, but on the whole got on very well with Fr. Witte. He was so impressed with Fr. Witte at their first meeting that he invited him to call in every time he passed that way.

Next Fr. Witte set out to make friends with the local chief, Kivuvu. He invited him and his elders to Kabaa and made them drink copious amounts of sugared tea. They promised him that if he was like Fr. Leconte (the original founder of the mission whom they still remembered with affection) they would accept his gifts and make

2. Ibid: entries for 4 November to 31 November 1924.
friends; but they would first observe him for two months before making up their minds. He lived up to their expectations and their general co-operation henceforth made things a lot easier for Kabaa, especially in matters of the acquisition of more land.

* * * *

On the 14 October three Kavirondo and one Kikuyu arrived to seek employment. Fr. Witte took them on as casual labourers. They brought the first load of poles to Kabaa on 24 October 1924; these poles had first been transported by Mr. Clay's wagon to Mr. Steele's from where the workmen and a few other porters carried them several miles to Kabaa. Three days later 750 sisal poles together with some doors and windows were carried in too. Many of the porters were volunteers who were paid little or nothing, and so were not likely to continue volunteering for long. Fr. Witte, still unable to purchase his own ox-wagon, now made desperate inquiries for an ox-wagon he could hire to transport poles and other goods from the Kabaa side of the Karara. On 28 October, he found one at Mr. Oulton's, but without drivers and with three wheels needing repair. He, however, sent six drivers and some children to Mr. Steele's, then proceeded to Thika in search of a wagon mender. The mender hadn't the necessary wood, so Fr. Witte rushed to Nairobi to purchase it from the Kenya Saw Mills.

He took the opportunity to purchase fifty beds and eight desks for the expected number of pupils. It is significant to note that, in spite of his serious lack of funds, Fr. Witte ordered beds for fifty pupils, instead of thirty to forty which the Bishop had budgeted for: he was later to be blamed for extravagance and imprudent spending.

On his way back to Kabaa he passed through Donyo Sabuk where his faithful Kavirondo friends volunteered to carry some more loads to Kabaa. On 4 November he went to see Mr. Steele to check on the
progress of the mending of Mr. Oulton's wagon, and was disappointed to learn from Mr. Steele that the repairs would take several more days. In the meantime he (Mr. Steele) wanted the six drivers (brought by Fr. Witte) to collect his coffee. Recorded Fr. Witte: "I had the impression that the promise of the Europeans who lived between Thika and Kabaa were lightly given."¹

Meanwhile the fetching of poles from Mr. Steele's continued whenever a few porters became available. The mended wagon brought in its first load on 26 November. On the same day the African fundi, who had come to work on the houses for the boys, left, having wasted most of the nails intended for two houses on one house, much to Fr. Witte's chagrin.

On 29 November 1924 the first batch of prospective pupils arrived, all of them from Bura Mission. They were to stay more than six weeks at Kabaa before the school actually started, but they came as a boon to Fr. Witte who lost no opportunity in making use of them to help transport poles, doors and windows from Mr. Steele's to Kabaa. Coming from the oldest established Catholic School in the country they were used to work and discipline, and worked willingly.

A week later, on 5 December, Brother Josaphat arrived to see to the building and generally to replace Fr. Blais who had stayed two months with Fr. Witte at Kabaa before leaving on the 15 November. At the same time the workmen, long promised by Fr. Horber, arrived from Kilungu at last, but they went on strike at the end of the first six weeks and Fr. Witte had to send them back.²

Brother Josaphat became a blessing at Kabaa not only as a builder and a companion of Fr. Witte, but more especially as a

¹. Kabaa Journal: entries for 22 October to 4 November 1924.
². Ibid: entries for 5 November to 15 November 1924.
provider of the badly needed meat. Being a seasoned hunter he killed several *kongoni* the day after he arrived and several more in the days that followed; the meat was shared by the inmates of Kabaa for whom it was a welcome addition to their generally poor diet, and also by the local Wakamba, who usually took the largest share. For instance, when Brother Josaphat killed his first hippo on 14 December, it "disappeared in the twinkling of an eye" shortly after being pulled out of the Athi River on the following day. So greedy were the local inhabitants for meat.

The school did not open on 15 December, after all, due to the delay in the completion of the buildings.

However, by the end of 1924 the pupils' dormitories and a classroom, all built of wattle and daub were almost ready, and Fr. Witte was very pleased with the progress so far made. He wrote in the journal, "Fast difficulties and anxieties made way for a new hope...... I thanked God and sang a vibrant *Te Deum*."¹

On 2 January 1925, Fr. Witte wrote a new circular to every parish informing them that Kabaa school would now open on 15 January 1925. The letter written in a lighthearted manner said among other things that the pupils were to meet him at Thika from where they were to walk with him thirty four miles to Kabaa and begin clearing the site to build their houses, for Kabaa was an unbuilt school.²

4. The School Opens:

At last the school opened on 19 January 1925, with 35 pupils.

¹. Kabaa Journal; entries for 15 November to 31 December 1924.
². Fr. Witte's circular of 2 January 1925 to all parishes.
Also Kabaa Journal; entry for 19 January 1925.
Also a two-page paper entitled "Catholic School Kabaa 1925-1950", written on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee of the School, author not shown.
drawn from Bura, Msongari, Mangu, Kiambu, Lioki and St. Peter Claver’s Nairobi. They were generally speaking, a poor assortment of pupils. Only a few had the envisaged standard of background education, that is, up to Standard IV of the then elementary school; some were near illiterates, having little more than the religious knowledge for which they had been selected by their parish priest. The undaunted Fr. Witte was disappointed but not discouraged. He quickly readjusted his thinking concerning the level the school was to aim at: he would concentrate on providing a solid foundation before embarking on the real target of teacher training and higher education.

The school opened with retreats intended to put the pupils in the right frame of mind and to prepare them for the difficult work ahead. The retreats lasted from 19 January to 24 January 1925, part of which time was utilised in singing and manual work. On the last day of the retreat the pupils were asked to sign a promise to see the three-year course through and subsequently, to give five years service to Catholic Missions. The matter was first clearly explained to them, and they were given the alternative to abstain from signing if they did not wish to proceed further and preferred to go back home instead. To Fr. Witte’s delight they all signed. A translation of the text of the “Promise”, which was in Swahili, reads as follows:

"For the glory of God and for the redemption of our brethren we promise before God and before our priest to follow this three-year course (without a salary, receiving only clothes and food) and after that to serve in the schools as our priests shall direct, for five years."

As far as Fr. Witte was concerned, although Kabaa School was opened on 19 January, its official date of birth was 24 January 1925,

1. A circular by Fr. C.O. MacNamara to all parishes, written in August 1925. Also an interview with Joseph Nguri.
3. Ibid.
after the first candidates had gone through the ceremony of making the above promise. The paramount work of the Vicariate had been launched. From then on there was no looking back.

5. The Many Challenges of the New Work:

While Brother Josaphat spent most of his time travelling between Kabaa and Thika bringing in the most urgent supplies on an ox-wagon, and also fetching firewood, Fr. Witte busied himself initiating his raw recruits through a rigid routine of manual work and classwork, which proved so onerous that some of the pupils ran away. The first pupil to defect was from Kiambu mission; he disappeared on 5 February. A Msongari pupil called Petro returned home on 19 February having found the pace too great and the work too difficult. Another four left on 27 February, because one of them refused to take "a well deserved" punishment; these four did not desert but asked permission to leave. Fr. Witte who, as later experience showed, was always most reluctant to part with any of his pupils, unless they were absolutely hopeless, allowed these four to leave no doubt in order to maintain obedience and discipline among the remainder. That he was unwilling to turn anybody away is indicated by the fact that in spite of the Bishop's instructions that all candidates be sponsored by the parishes and that the total was to be between 30 and 40 pupils, Fr. Witte actually admitted a few unsponsored pupils, and always had on the roll more pupils than the number for whom the school budget was intended or sufficient.

The first unofficial admission was made on 21 February 1925, when a Kikuyu pupil called Michael from Msongari was "provisionally" enrolled; he however, stayed only four short weeks before deserting.

But official candidates, though they came in gradually, were not in short supply. There was a steady supply coming in including

some Kavirondo boys from the farm community at Donyo Sabuk, brought in by Fr. Blais. By 18 March 1925 there were already forty three pupils on the roll, three more than the maximum allowed. Departures were constantly replenished by new arrivals, so that the average roll of attendance for 1925 was 45 pupils. In 1926 there were 80 on the roll, and 120 in 1927; In 1928 there were 145 official pupils.

If pupils, albeit of inferior quality, were plentiful, teachers were not. The first teacher to arrive was the Catechist, Beda, from Kilungu. Then on 27 January, Fr. Witte employed a Mukamba who had no previous training or teaching experience; he was a veteran soldier of the First World War, and Fr. Witte signed him on at three rupees a month under the impression that he would make a good drill teacher. In spite of all his army experience, however, the new teacher did not measure up to Fr. Witte's expectations. So poor was he that when Fr. O'Connor of Kiambu Mission (who came on 21 February to check on the reasons for the desertion of one of his candidates) took a drill lesson with the pupils, he proved so much better than their regular teacher that the pupils publicly clamoured for his taking over as drill teacher immediately. Be that as it may, throughout most of 1925 the only teachers Fr. Witte could employ were drill teachers. The first one mentioned above was replaced by Joseph Mwaka on 2 August 1925 who was given a condition that he lives with his first wife only. Mwaka, however, was no better than the previous one and Fr. Witte became so desperate that when he found a qualified drill teacher on 8 November 1925 he was willing to employ him at Sh. 40/- a month, a comparatively high salary for an African in those days.

1. "Kavirondo": A term once used to imply the inhabitants of the present Nyanza and Western Provinces.
3. KIA: Machakos District Annual Report for 1926 and 1927 marked DC/MIS/1/1/15.
4. Ibid: Report for 1928, marked DC/MIS/1/1/22; (Appendix 16).
The first European teacher to join Fr. Witte was Brother Egidius Schisphorst of Amsterdam, Holland, who was appointed by the Mother House specially for Kabaa, partly because being a mason he would meet the need for a technical teacher as well as erect some of the badly needed buildings himself, and partly because being Fr. Witte's countryman, he would make a fitting companion for him in the Kabaa wilderness. Brother Egidius arrived at Kabaa on 27 November 1925, having been fetched from Nairobi almost immediately after his arrival there, by the excited Fr. Witte. Brother Egidius more than met the expectations of both Fr. Witte and the pupils. He worked so hard and so well that Fr. Witte recorded: "the pupils find him an African rather than a Hzungu, and they consider that he merits to go with them to heaven."  

Fr. Witte, Brother Egidius and the drill teacher constituted the entire staff of Kabaa till April 1927, when another Dutch Brother, Brother Florian, arrived to take charge of the teaching of carpentry and related work. Another welcome addition to the staff arrived in December of that year; he was Mr. Comen, the first European lay teacher, who came especially to take charge of the school farm and the teaching of Agriculture. Then Fr. Michael Murren arrived on 28 October 1928; his academic qualifications were to make possible the opening of the High School. The only other teacher to arrive before 1930, was Brother Savinus, to take over building projects.  

Due to the serious lack of funds, the boarding (though not lodging) arrangements for pupils were no better than those that would obtain in an isolated camp. The staple diet of the pupils was posho which for the first six months was procured by transporting maize from Thika to Mr. Steele's farm and getting it milled there,  

2. Ibid: entries for April and December 1927, October 1928 and various entries 1930.
then transporting the bags of flour, again by ox-wagon, more than ten miles to Kabaa. Often the flour arrived after being drenched by rain, and it had to be dried and sieved before being usable.

As for relish the pupils themselves procured fish from the Athi River, usually on Sundays, the only day of the week when the timetable allowed them sufficient free time to do so. Meat was almost entirely procured by hunting. Before the arrival of Brother Egidius, Brother Josaphat used to do the hunting whenever he came for building purposes. The Yatta plateau, on the opposite bank of the Athi teemed with wild animals especially *kongoni* and Brother Josaphat and later Brother Egidius used to go hunting them with a large number of pupils to carry the carcasses to Kabaa. There the meat would be salted, dried and stored; this had to be done because Brother Josaphat was not always available on the site to start a fresh hunt; then after the arrival of Brother Egidius the expense of buying the bullets fell entirely on the Kabaa purse, and there wasn't in it enough money to spare even for this important item. When there was no meat or fish - and there were long spells when this occurred - the pupils ate their *posho* with green vegetables taken from the school garden and on the individual plots of pupils. Indeed the school garden became an important source of maize and vegetable foods after mid-1925, though naturally a good amount of the *posho* was acquired by buying from the local people who wanted the money to pay their poll tax. The maize obtained from the school farm and that bought from the local people was transported to Mr. Steele's mill to be ground into flour.2

There were no cooks or servants and all the cooking had to be done by the pupils themselves.3 For this purpose they were divided

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1. "Kongonii" - hartebeest.
2. Kabaa Journal: various entries for 1925. Also interviews with Mr. Joseph Nguri, and Mr. Atanas (Kanyuru) Gichanga, both students of Kabaa at the time.
3. Interviews with Mr. Joseph Nguri and Mr. Atanas Gichanga in February 1969.
into groups each consisting of thirteen pupils, and having its own
place in the dormitory, and its own plot for growing the food it
needed; each house also organised its own cooking including
fetching water, collecting firewood and procuring fish or vegetables.

To supplement the efforts of the houses Fr. Witte supplied
each with certain rations each week: a certain amount of *posho* and,
whenever meat was available, a supply of meat to last a week. On
feast days such as Easter, Christmas and St. Michael's day⁴ each
house was usually given three chickens, and maybe some rice, oil
and sugar. For the rest the boys managed their own feeding affairs
as best they could, and on the whole enjoyed the challenge.
Occasionally when *posho* ran out of supply, bananas or sweet potatoes
were bought for them, a rather expensive diet for Kabaa. As *posho*
usually ran out of supply on account of delay in milling at Mr.
Steele's place, and because the charges for milling there were, in
Fr. Witte's view, exhorbitant (fifty cents for every 25 lbs.),
Fr. Witte began seriously to consider building a small mill at the
river even if it was going to cost him Sh. 250/- . The main problem
was that the land adjoining the river was not yet officially
apportioned to Kabaa, so the project had to wait.

Individual pupils received fifty cents pocket money per month,
and on certain occasions an extra fifty cents for buying soap.
The pocket money was taken from the Sh. 5/- allowance per month which
included the cost of uniforms. Out of their pocket money the pupils
of each house often contributed to a general fund for buying the
food requirements of their group, often competing with the other
groups in a bid to make the facilities in their houses as attractive
as possible.²

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1. St. Michael was the patron saint of the original Kabaa Mission,
   and incidentally also of Fr. Michael J. Witte.
Sometimes Fr. Witte procured a central supply of fish by giving all the pupils a little time off to go to the Athi and return with a minimum amount of fish on pain of sanctions or promise of reward; the fish thus obtained was then dried and kept in a central store from where it was supplied to the houses when food became particularly scarce, as between September and December of 1925.

The financial problems of Kabaa were indeed immense, not only in respect of food provisions but in matters of equipment, transport and building as well; we shall therefore return to this subject after glancing at the curriculum which Fr. Witte put into operation at the school.

6. The Kabaa Curriculum:

From the very beginning the timetable was heavily loaded with activities both intramural and extramural. The school embarked on an ambitious curriculum consisting of academic, technical and vocational programmes, which when in full were:

**Academic Subjects:** Religion (Old Testament, Catechism and Prayers), Arithmetic, Swahili (grammar, reading and composition), English, Geography, Hygiene, Physical Education (drill), Singing, Music, (theory and instrumental), General Knowledge (including History), Games and Manners.

**Technical Subjects:** Agriculture (theoretical and practical), building, masonry, brickmaking, carpentry, ironwork, pottery, local crafts, engineering, shoe making, tailoring and drawing, typing and book-binding, as well as spinning and weaving.

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2. See Timetable in Appendix IV.
Vocational Programmes: Teacher Training; training of catechists; noviciate for training lay brothers; and a junior seminary for teaching prospective priests.

The programme fulfilled all the official requirements of the Education Department and included as can be seen from the list above much more besides. The medium of instruction was Swahili, which again was in accordance with official policy. History, which was treated under General Knowledge, mainly took the form of "lives of great men."

The technical subjects were introduced gradually as staff became available; Agriculture and local crafts (rope-making, mat-making, and basketry) were taught right from the inception of the school; building, masonry, brick-making and pottery were introduced when Brother Egidius arrived, while the rest of the technical subjects were placed on the syllabus on the arrival of Brother Florian, in April 1927. Shoe-making, tailoring, typing and spinning and weaving were introduced after former Kabaa students returned from apprenticeship at Thika, Nairobi or at the Native Industrial Training Depot at Kabete. The teachers for these subjects respectively were Mr. Bernard Ong'ang', Mr. Norbetus Odondo, Mr. Kimilu and Mr. Muchai.

As far as the religious vocational training was concerned, the catechists, whose Kilungu School had been absorbed, had naturally been present at Kabaa from the start of the school; the Junior Seminary and the Noviciate for lay brothers, however, were both

1. Report of Mr. Biss (Inspector of Schools) on Kabaa forwarded to Fr. Witte by the Director of Education on 24 June 1925. Also KNA: 1/1835 which included the inspection report of July 1928.
3. Interviews with Mr. F.J. Khamisi, on 22 February 1968 and Mr. Ignatius Mkok on 19 April 1963.
established in June 1927, the former with nine candidates and the latter with six aspirants. The lay Brothers were intended to form a new African Congregation to be known as the "Congregation of the Teaching Brothers of St. John the Evangelist." Although one candidate of the Seminary, Paul Njoroge, eventually became a priest before he died in Rome in the early 1940's, neither the Seminary nor the Noviciate at Kabaa, unlike the main school, produced any spectacular results. Among the first aspirants to the Brotherhood had been Mr. Cyrillus Ojoo, Mr. Alois Obunga, and for a time Mr. Francis J. Khamisi who, incidentally, had also attended the Junior Seminary.

The Kabaa programme quite obviously was an enormous one for a little, understaffed, ill-equipped and poorly provided school. But the school was fortunate in having a resourceful and devoted principal, a loyal and dedicated staff, and a student body that was thrilled rather than discouraged by the challenges of Kabaa. Apart from the more specialised religious training (the success of which would have needed extra and separate staff anyway), the rest of the programme was so successful that it won admiration from many quarters, judging by the number of visitors who frequented this isolated place. What was even more important, it won the enthusiastic approval and commendation of the Government Officers from the Education Inspectorate.

2. See Appendix XIII.
3. Mr. Cyrillus Ojoo became one of the first African teachers at Kabaa; he later taught at Mangu, before going back to his home area in Nyanza to teach under the Mill Hill Fathers. Mr. Alois Obunga (R.I.P.), taught for many years before becoming one of the first African District Officers appointed by the British Administration in Kenya. Mr. Francis J. Khamisi, taught at Kabaa before leaving the Seminary, and later became one of the first African journalists in Kenya as Editor of Rafiki Yetu, the Catholic newspaper, and then of Baraza.
4. See page 98-99 infra.
The First Official Report on the School:

The first official report on Kabaa was made by the Inspector of Schools, Mr. E.E. Biss, in May 1925. Mr. Biss set off to visit Kabaa on 27 May 1925, thinking that the school was not far from Chania Bridge (Thika). He had written to Fr. Witte earlier in May asking him to meet him at Thika on the appointed day. Fr. Witte met him as planned, prepared to cycle with him back to Kabaa; but on hearing that the school was thirty four miles away, Mr. Biss decided that he could not make it that day. Instead he interviewed Fr. Witte in detail about his school and wrote his report as a result of what he heard and from his impressions of the principal. His report, even though the result of second hand information, gives some insight both into the success of Kabaa and into its problems.

Fr. Witte was quite pleased with the report especially with Mr. Biss's recommendation that Kabaa be given £100 immediately for the buying of equipment. In referring to the application for a grant in 1926, the Director of Education's letter which accompanied the report, did not however give much encouragement. It said:

"With reference to your application for a Government grant, I have to inform you that an endeavour will be made to place your school on the grant list after an Inspection has been made, but no guarantee can be given as the Estimates for 1926 have already been submitted to the Government."

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2. The report is reproduced in full in the Kabaa Journal entry for 23 June 1925.
3. See Appendix V.
4. Apparently Fr. Witte had formally applied for a grant through Mr. Biss; there is however no record to this effect in the diary, but it is clearly implied in the above letter of the Director of Education.
5. Letter of the Director of Education to the Principal of Kabaa, written on 24 June 1926; found in the Kabaa Journal.
It did not mention the £100 and, despite many reminders, Fr. Witte actually never got this money. ¹

8. The Early Inspections:

The first full inspection of Kabaa, carried out by the Chief Inspector of schools, Mr. Biss, was on 18 September 1925; as a result Mr. Biss became even more enthusiastic about the Kabaa programme, to the extent that he recommended to the Government that Kabaa be given £400 to meet the salaries of its staff; this money however, was also eventually refused. ²

In February 1926, Bishop Neville in conjunction with Fr. MacNamara formally placed before the Kenya Education Department Kabaa's provisional syllabus for its teacher education and regular school programmes. The document entitled "Memorandum on the Training School Kabaa" defined the Catholic position with regard to education ³ and outlined practical suggestions on the subject of organization and curricula. It stressed the fact that the success of Kabaa's programme would "depend on large measure on the sympathetic and practical cooperation of the Educational Department". The document went on to say that the Catholics intended to cooperate fully with the Government, but they expected as much in return. ⁴

The Education Inspectorate's report on Kabaa which was made after the handing over of the new syllabus to the Education Department indicated that the syllabus had proved a success. The report, the result of an inspection carried out in October 1926, said among other things that Kabaa was:

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¹ The first reminder was sent on 1 July 1925; it is reproduced in the Kabaa Journal: entry for 28 June 1925.
² Kabaa Journal: entry for 17 September 1925.
³ See page 90-91 infra.
"One of the few places in Kenya where a serious effort is being made by a well-qualified and enthusiastic instructor to train teachers, the demand for which already enormously exceeds the supply."¹

The Inspection of 1927, carried out on 14 and 15 September by three Inspectors, also confirmed the effectiveness of Kabaa as a Teacher Training Institution,² whereas the Inspection report of July 1928 had some very telling comments, as for instance:

"The organizational genius of the Principal has managed to fit in endless occupations (i.e., industrial ones) without encroaching on the time usually given to the literary work." And also: "Everything seen proves that the school is maintaining a high standard of efficiency. The programme of work from early morning till late evening is admirably worked out and there is no confusion. Idleness is not tolerated and pupils move here and there at all times with a definite objective."³


The results obtained by Kabaa candidates in public examinations confirm the success of the programme even more dramatically. The first public examination to be attempted by the school was the Vernacular Examination of 1926; this was a Swahili examination and when the results came on 11 October 1926, 32 pupils had passed out of the 35 candidates entered. Fr. Witte had expected thirty passes.⁴ Although no figures are available for the results of the other schools which attempted the Examination, this result speaks for itself, especially considering that the school had started off with candidates of doubtful quality.

¹. R. Walker, op. cit., page 139 sqq.
². Also Kabaa Journal: entry for 1 October 1926.
³. Kabaa Journal; entry for 14 September 1927.
⁴. Found in KMA: 1/1835 A file on Kabaa.
A more important examination was attempted in December of that year. This was the Standard Seven Elementary C. Examination. Kabaa entered 33 candidates of whom 32 passed.¹

In the field of teachers' certificate examinations, the first attempt was made in December 1927 for the B- Teacher grade. Fifty candidates were entered, invigilated by the Deputy Director of Education, Mr. Bradshaw; ninety per cent of those entered passed.²

A year later (1928) the second entrants for the B-Teacher Examination and the first entrants for the important C-Teacher examination, sat these two examinations, invigilated by Mr. Benson and Mr. Watford of the Inspectorate. In the C-Teacher examination, in which there were twenty two successful candidates throughout the country, 16 of them were of Kabaa, and of the 140 successful candidates in the B-Teacher examination 34 were from Kabaa.³

<table>
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<th>Year</th>
<th>1928</th>
<th>1929</th>
<th>1930</th>
<th>1931</th>
<th>1932</th>
<th>1933</th>
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<tr>
<td>Kabaa Passes</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
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<td>Total Passes in all Kenya</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>65</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of Schools involved</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
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Only one candidate, Lukas Kumo, was entered for the 1929 C- Teacher examination, (see above table) and he passed.⁴ Of the 40 candidates for the 1929 Standard VII Elementary C examination, which was invigilated by a Mr. Beecher, 22 passed. The results of the first attempt at the Junior School Examination were also

2. Ibid: entries for 31 December 1927 and 3 January 1928.
3. Official Results Lists of the Kenya Education Department 1928.
4. Official Examination Results List 1929.
encouraging: three candidates were entered - Cyrillus Ojoo, Lukas Kumo and Simon Gohu - and all three passed. Unfortunately Lukas did not live to hear his results; he died in mid-January 1930; Simon Gohu did hear his results and actually joined the new High School in January 1930, but unfortunately he died in early April that year.¹

10. Financial Difficulties:

The most harraising problem of Kabaa during Fr. Witte's time was one of finance. The school started off with a mere nine thousand shillings as its budget for that year, a sum which would have been very inadequate even for a school without the transport and building problems of Kabaa. The school literally existed on credit from Nairobi shops, and entries in the Journal indicate that Fr. Witte was always in dread of his creditors. Even before the beginning of May 1925 he had already borrowed Sh. 200/- from Fr. Lammer to buy some urgently needed cement; so that when Bishop Neville wrote to him in May authorising the buying of the cement, Fr. Witte wondered what use the authorisation was for, when there was no money left in the school account.²

Fr. Witte's most embarrassing moments were often caused by his propensity to spend money on a mere promise of a grant whether from his Bishop or from the Government. For instance when in May 1925 the Bishop authorised an extra 2,400/- to be given to Kabaa, and the bursar delayed (rather long one might say) to release the money, Fr. Witte proceeded to order goods against this money to the extent that by 9 June 1925 he was so worried about the long overdue debts and the current shortage of food for the pupils, that "sleep came late that night and tiredness was felt in the morning".³ Again when Mr. Biss put in a plea to the Government to insert 2000/- in the Supplementary

². Ibid: entry for 31 May 1925.
³. Ibid: entry for 9 June and 25 August 1925.
Estimates of 1925 for Kabaa, Fr. Witte not only wrote several reminders for the sum to be made available, but actually ordered some goods against the money, which unfortunately never came.  

Similarly when Mr. Biss, the Chief Inspector of Schools, again out of sympathy and appreciation for what was being done at Kabaa, hinted that he would try his best to get £400 earmarked by the Government for teachers' salaries at Kabaa, Fr. Witte became so hopeful that he made plans for the utilization of the money which, in spite of a questionnaire which had been sent in in late September (and which Fr. Witte had filled in and sent back by pupil runner), never came.  

On 21 July 1925 Fr. Witte was so desperate over money matters that he got transported to Machakos town a large consignment of Kabaa products to be sold for money. It was to no avail; there were no buyers and the goods came back unsold. It was then that he "dared ask" for a loan of Sh. 2000/- from the Bishop in order to buy two ploughs and twelve oxen to pull them, as well as to pay for the labour of ploughing. He promised to pay this money back from the sales of the ensuing harvest. There is no record as to whether the Bishop advanced him this money or not; he probably didn't, for on 19 August Fr. Witte sent another letter to him through "one of the more advanced pupils", also desperately asking for money. Earlier he had written to Holland asking some friends to open a subscription list for Kabaa, and was pleased when he got a reply on 16 August stating that this would be done; but although there are records of small sums of money sent to him by friends in Holland, there is no record to indicate that large sums of money were received from this source, though it is possible that it was first channelled through the Bishop.  

2. Ibid: entries for 18 and 30 September 1925.  
4. Ibid: entries for 2 and 5 July 1925.  
5. Ibid: entry for 16 August 1925.
By the end of November 1925 Fr. Witte at last had realised that the Vicariate Procure was determined not to pay for more than the maximum of 40 pupils originally authorised by the Bishop. He already had 45 on the roll; in his usual resourceful manner he decided that five of the pupils "would be temporarily listed as workmen and would not receive uniforms"; he made this decision after putting the problem of redundancy to the pupils and asking for volunteers to go home for good, but none had volunteered.¹

At the end of 1925 he quite rightly recorded: "We struggled and struggling there will still be! We suffered and suffering will still be our lot! But God will be our eternal reward. Let us pray a sincere Deo gratias."

The year 1926 did not bring any relief; in fact it started badly. On 3 January 1926 Fr. Witte went on to Nairobi to try and collect a cheque promised him, apparently from a private source; he found no cheque and was "ashamed to ask for help from......confreres, who when hearing of my distress began to excuse themselves from afar. With shame and confusion I returned to Kabaa without delay."²

Then Brother Egidius joined in the campaign to raise funds by writing "begging articles" for publications overseas. Meanwhile, Fr. Witte pinned his hopes on the Legislative Council Budget debate which he hoped would result in the first grant for Kabaa; he was elated when he received advance news to the effect that Kabaa would receive a Government grant of Sh. 50,000/-.

He recorded: "We shall wait for official news and then sing the Te Deum."³

The official news of the grant came on 29 March 1927. It consisted of a capital grant of £1,678 for water and buildings and

2. Ibid: entry for 3 January 1926.
3. Ibid: entries for 7, 11 and 27 October 1926.
a Recurrent grant of £1,116, broken down as follows:

- Tools: £60
- Books: £70
- European Salaries: £500
- African Salaries: £36
- Boarding: £450

There was also a grant of £50 for equipment.

It was the largest amount of money that Kabaa had got since its inception, being more than the total actually given to the institution from all sources up to that date. This eased things for Fr. Witte somewhat. But with all the debts needing repaying, and the decision to put up a carpentry building immediately it was quickly expended; by the end of November that year the Kabaa bank balance was only Sh. 300/- and there were bills from the ndeno mill worth Sh. 3,000/- still awaiting payment. To make matters worse the Vicariate procurator, probably figuring that Kabaa should have spent the Government grant more thriftily, refused to give credit to the school. However Fr. Witte was encouraged by the promise of Mr. Bradshaw, the Deputy Director of Education, that Kabaa would get a grant of £1,600 for 1928, a generous grant even though less than the first one.

But Fr. Witte's planning was such that he was always ready to stretch a little money to meet greater demands and no amount of money could be entirely sufficient for the projects he had in mind. For no sooner had he got money or the promise of it than he proceeded to plan new projects to draw on it. As a result the grant of 1928 did not ease the financial problems of Kabaa; Fr. Witte's planning saw to that. On New Year's Day he wrote:

"Our hopes for 1928 are immense if God permits their realization; sufferings will not be lacking, but God be praised in advance."

2. Ibid: entry for 20 November 1927.
Then he proceeded to put down his needs and projects as follows:

"A technical branch, a turbine, auto, more land, more staff, more pupils: consolidations, embellishments, a lower quadrangle dining room, menial staff quarters, a training section for fundis in view of the great additions of 1929. These are some of the projects. Let us begin optimistically, cheerfully." 1

Thus the grant of 1928 which might have gone a long way in removing his financial difficulties was crippled from the start. By the beginning of May 1928 he was already experiencing the now familiar financial harassment. On 1 May he recorded:

"Father (that is Fr. Witte) goes to Nairobi to secure some of the grant-in-aid; he tries to calm some of his worst creditors. He is obliged to ask for money. If the reply shows as much practical sympathy as in the past the headache may not be so bad, but he already feels miserable enough." 2

He was afraid to go to Nairobi throughout May for fear of being stoned by his creditors, 3 but this saved him little trouble for two enterprising Indian creditors found their way to Kabaa to demand their money. 4 By August there were insistent reminders from the other creditors and Fr. Witte was forced to send Br. Egidius to the Procurator to plead for some money. 5 This S.O.S. appeal worked. The Procurator, Fr. Goetz, turned up on 16 August, with Fr. Lammer, bringing 3,000/- much to Fr. Witte's relief. 6 The situation was improved even further in late September when a gift of 1,000/- arrived from Holland, and the Bishop of Kisumu, Mgr. Brandsma, sent him another 1,000/- to pay the fees of the pupils from his Vicariate. 7

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2. Ibid: entry for 1 May 1928.
5. Ibid: entry for 11 August 1928.
Some Goans also contributed a little money to the Kabaa cause.¹ But the money was just not enough, and Fr. Witte was rather depressed by the fact that the Vicariate of the Holy Ghost Fathers, which owned the school had contributed only a total of 11,000/- for two years (1927 and 1928).² Yet he was able to write of 1928: "A year of great consolations........ With all the consolations from Rome through Mgr. Hinsley³ we finished with the Te Deum, preceded by the Miserere from the bottom of our hearts."⁴

However he could not refrain from asking: "What will 1929 be like with all the buildings to be done?"⁵

1929, the fifth year of the Central School, started with 185 pupils, and saw a little more by way of money both from the Government, and the Vicariate. The latter gave Kabaa 5,000/- in January 1929, 3,000/- in May, and a similar amount in July. The Government gave £800 as a capital grant⁶ besides the recurrent grant, comparable with that of the two previous years. The Local Native Council of Machakos not wishing to be outdone voted 400/- for Kabaa.⁷ It was a most fruitful year for Kabaa as far as finances were concerned. Wrote Fr. Witte: "We thank God with all our heart, and the Blessed Virgin, Mother of Sorrows, and St. John the Eucharistic Apostle." However he had not run out of ideas for new projects during the year which soon consumed the money liberally: a two-ton lorry for £180, improving the old dormitories for the highly blown up student population, installing piped water, and so on. He was still able to moan that such necessities as a proper road for the lorry, a laundry for the boys, and a larger school kitchen were still to be attended to.⁸

2. Ibid: entries for 29 September to 15 December 1928.
5. Most of this went to the building of the Fathers' house.
7. Ibid: entries for 25 May, 1 and 27 June, 3 July and 16 August 1925.
11. **Buildings 1925-1929:**

As already pointed out Kabaa was reoccupied in September 1924 with only two existing buildings; a church built in permanent materials, and the Fathers' house built of wattle and daub. By the beginning of 1925, when the school opened, eight wattle and daub dormitories and one classroom built of the same material, had been added. By May 1925 one house for the catechist (Beda) and two for the workmen were also ready. A new wattle and daub house was built by Br. Josaphat for Fr. Witte in June 1925. Meanwhile a little "Christian village" was started for occupation by families and individuals who requested to stay at Kabaa.¹

A new school was measured out in March 1926; at the same time a water tank donated by Mr. Delap was installed.² In April 1927, one teacher's house and another workman's house were added; also a fowl house and fowlrun, a barn and a shelter for carts.³ A carpentry shop built in permanent materials was started in early April, soon after Fr. Witte received news of the year's grant. By October 1927 the carpentry shop and a new classroom in permanent materials were ready and Fr. Witte was prompted to record a tribute to the builder, Brother Josaphat:

"Kabaa will always be grateful to Br. Josaphat, who, with untiring devotion and almost superhuman energy has put up so many buildings, probably the best of their kind in Kenya Colony. And all in so short a time....."⁴

Next on the building programme was a second wattle and daub classroom which was completed in October 1928, and a permanent

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2. Ibid: entry for 13 March 1926.
4. Ibid: entries for 18 September, and 23 October 1927.
Fathers' house for which bricks began to be made in mid-1928 and the stone laying was done on 1 August 1929; it was completed in January 1930, by Bro. Savinus who came to Kabaa from Bura in 1929 specially to see to the construction of this house. The house was built in part from the Government grant of 1929.

The making of bricks was hampered by the decision of the Machakos Local Native Council that Kabaa should not cut trees from the Yatta whether for firewood or for burning bricks, without a licence, a decision which was confirmed by the Government. As a result the school began to make cement blocks instead; they found this a rather expensive undertaking, so they bought a licence. Nevertheless the year 1929 saw the completion of a semi-permanent block intended to be used as a hospital and later as a convent, should nuns be appointed for Kabaa. Several small mud and wattle buildings were also erected partly due to the fact that some of the earlier ones were cracking. Although no building grant was given to Kabaa in 1930, the school was not put to particular hardship in this respect that year, especially as a large number of bricks had been left over after the completion of the Fathers' house and this was utilized by the boys in building a new permanent classroom.

The labour problems were closely tied up with the building projects, transportation of necessities, work on the school farm, and the making of roads. The skilled building jobs were at first wholly carried out by Bro. Josaphat, then for a time by Bro. Egidius and later by Bro. Savinus. The woodwork was the responsibility of

2. Ibid: entries for 4 May and 27 July 1929.
Bro. Florian after he arrived. They were often helped by the pupils, whose curriculum included building and carpentry anyway.1

A word about equipment will be in place here. Most of the equipment required was made at the school, first by Bro. Josaphat, and later by Bro. Florian with the help of the students especially after 28 June 1927 when a full kit of tools for classroom purposes was acquired. The initial doors, windows, beds, and desks and benches were bought from Nairobi, but after the end of 1925 additions or replacements were wholly made at Kabaa.2

Transport of loads was by ox-wagon, until the purchase of the two-ton lorry already mentioned, and the staff's mode of travel if not undertaken on foot, was on a bicycle or on a mule nicknamed "Kool," and later, not withstanding the bad roads, by a second-hand Ford car which was replaced, when it broke down, by a second-hand Chevrolet.3 With the bad roads, the numerous drifts and the obstructive Karara, the cars were actually an unnecessary expense.4

12. Land:

When Fr. Witte reoccupied Kabaa in 1924, he found only the 5 acres originally allotted to the mission during the time of Fr. Leconte. This was most inadequate for a school which needed a farm not only for its teaching programme, but for its very survival as well. As a result Fr. Witte systematically began to press for the allotment of more land.

1. Kabaa Journal: entries for 1 November 1925, 10 March 1927, 13 April 1927, 8 to 16 October 1929.
3. Ibid: entries for 6 to 7 June 1925, 15 to 30 September 1925, 12 October 1925, 8 to 31 May 1929.
4. Ibid: entries for 7 and 11 March and 1 April 1926.
He applied for land immediately he arrived, and an Assistant District Commissioner of Machakos, Mr. Sadler, called on 8 February 1925 to see if the request for more land was justified. After looking round he agreed that there was an urgent need and promised to help as much as he could to facilitate the formalities. Next, Fr. Witte who had already won over the cooperation of the local chief and elders, got them to finger-print a declaration in which they agreed to sell to the school one field approximately 30 acres near the river, and another portion totalling some twenty acres adjoining the original five acres on the hill. Mr. Fazan the D.C. of Machakos then turned up to hold a baraza with the elders. The party walked round the two fields, and the D.C. agreed that the 50 acres of land (which being in a native reserve could not be bought) be rented at the rate of 1 shilling per acre per year. Fr. Witte's request that he be allowed to fence off the two plots within six months was disallowed. Nevertheless the decision made at the time was a happy one for Fr. Witte: the two fields were to be at the disposal of the Mission, unconditionally, whether the school remained on the site or not, and permission for use was to take effect immediately pending the confirmation of formalities. This is when Fr. Witte set out feverishly to get oxen, a plough, money etc. in order to redouble cultivation to produce the much needed food. The D.C. wrote to the P.C. about the arrangement. Meanwhile Fr. Witte unofficially acquired a little more land adjoining the other fields from two non-Wakamba residents, Bartolomeo and Nganga, who agreed to sell it for ten shillings and eight shillings respectively in addition to a debe of posho each.

2. Ibid: entries for 14 and 15 July 1925.
Then for some reason Fr. Witte got second thoughts about the location of the 30 acres provisionally allocated to the school near the Athi River; he got the elders to agree that this portion could be replaced by one of equal size near the small waterfall. This move led to his losing the acres. He wrote to the D.C. about the change of plans, but unfortunately received a negative reply which said that this particular piece of land could not be allocated to Kabaa because the little waterfall was of great value and "the best point of all the district." Fr. Witte was not satisfied with the reply and actually applied again for the same site. He even proceeded to sow a little shamba close to the waterfall an action which for the first time, in Fr. Witte's experience, raised the objections of the local people; however, remembering that the Serkali wanted to keep them out of that area anyway, the locals finally agreed that the part "sowed by Fr. Witte would be the Serkali part." The Government had earlier made it known that a tree nursery would be established there.

Then dramatically Fr. Witte received news from the local chief's council that the Naama (Africa Council) of Machakos had refused the grant of 50 acres already provisionally given to Kabaa, thus bringing Kabaa back to where it had started with only five acres. The D.C. was on a visit in the area and now Fr. Witte made an appeal to him. The D.C. promised to send the appeal to higher authorities, but at the same time advised that it would be more advantageous to Kabaa if the school was transferred to a site on the Yatta on the opposite side of the Athi River, where it would be easier to get more land. Fr. Witte, however, thought it would be unwise to move the school just yet; but nevertheless said that if the Government consented to

2. Ibid: entry for 22 October 1925.
3. Serkali - Government
give him the bit of land near the waterfall on the opposite bank, at a reasonable price, he would agree to move the school.¹

Meanwhile he proceeded with ploughing the 20 acres, and optimistically sent a fresh application for the original 50 acres applied for earlier, "explaining their absolute necessity, and expenses already incurred".² Then as an anticlimax the Wakamba residents near the Karara River begged Fr. Witte to buy land near their place and move the school there; they wanted to settle on it for payment of a fee, and would be only too glad to send their children to the school. Fr. Witte thought it a good plan to consider, but eventually did nothing about it.³

On 8 January 1926, the Local Native Council at last "graciously ceded the 20 acres on the summit (which with the original amount makes a plot of 25 acres)," but refused the rest. The conditions were that the school would lease the plot for 33 years paying an annual rent of 4/- per acre; the land was to be fenced in with barbed wire within six months. At the same time a Mr. Neave (a European Settler from Kima, temporarily employed as a Tree Planter by the Local Native Council) arrived at the school apparently under orders to turn the unconfirmed 30 acres near the river, into a tree nursery. Fr. Witte immediately sent a protest letter to Machakos.⁴ Bishop Neville who visited Kabaa about this time was equally upset and promised to approach the authorities about the matter.⁵

¹ Kabaa Journal: entries for 9 and 10 December 1925.
³ Ibid: entry for 19 December 1925.
⁴ Kabaa Journal: entries for 8 January, 1 to 15 February, 11 June, 5 July, 4 August 1926.
⁵ Also: Minutes of the Machakos Local Native Council meeting held on 1 and 2 December 1925; and minutes of the L.N.C. Meeting held on 8 January 1926.
⁶ Also: Letter, Ref. No. 1570/17/2 of 4 August 1926, from D.C. Machakos.
It was on reaching Nairobi, that the Bishop immediately released the memorandum, already referred to, to the Governor of Kenya, with copies to the P.C. and the D.C. concerned. The memorandum dealt with many broad topics including the burning issue of extra land for Kabaa and the proposed syllabus for the school; it promised full cooperation with the Government if the Catholics were given a fair deal. The reply to the memorandum, however, while appreciating the suggested syllabus, categorically rejected the appeal over the 30 acres already refused.

However, Mr. Fazan, the D.C., on a visit to Kabaa, gave permission for "a small corner of the garden for vegetables" to continue to be used "while waiting for favourable circumstances to make an application for one acre elsewhere." Mr. Fazan stressed that the little corner of the garden was being temporarily allowed to be used by Kabaa on the clear understanding that it was "the Government's land"; though Fr. Witte recorded in parenthesis "in other words our stolen land." Later Fr. Witte reapplied for that part of the garden "which was not taken over by the Government nurseries." Later still, when the local elders advised him to transfer the school to the Yatta he asked them first to get him a plot by the river before he could consider the matter.

No new developments of importance over the land issue came to the fore until June 1923 when Fr. Witte attended a meeting of the Local Native Council at which he invited the P.C. (Mr. Stone) and the D.C. (Mr. Evans) together with the entire council to visit Kabaa. They agreed, and the council turned up as expected on 21 June,

3. Ibid: entry for 1 April 1926.
4. Ibid: entry for 7 October 1926.
5. Ibid: entry for 17 October 1926.
while the P.C. and the D.C. came on 23 June 1928. Each party was show around, given a drill display, a musical concert and a refreshing lunch. They all went away "very satisfied; promising every help over the land." However, a year passed before anything promising was done, and when at last the D.C.'s reply over the thirty acres came on 24 May 1929 it merely stated that there was little chance of getting any more land. Finally, in February 1930 Fr. Witte learnt of the bitter truth that the L.N.C. had decided that no more land could be granted to Kabaa. In his disappointment Fr. Witte blamed the refusal on the new D.C., Mr. Sylvester. Thus by the end of 1929 Kabaa had 25 acres of land, and did not get any more land for several years afterwards, in spite of the recommendations of the Education Inspectors.

13. The First Kabaa-Trained Teachers Go Out:

The first "graduates" of Kabaa Central School (seven of them) went out at the end of 1927. They were all B-Teachers, and were posted to four missions being the missions from which they had originally come. They left Kabaa on 3 January 1928, but before they went a moving farewell ceremony was arranged for them in the school. At this ceremony, held on 31 December 1927, the seven made a solemn promise before Fr. Witte and their schoolmates to abstain from drinking spirituous liquor, wearing shoes, contacting infectious disease and of course girls. Then they were blessed by the Principal who later recorded in the Journal: "May God be with you my children, as yet weak but well beloved."

2. Ibid: entry for 24 May 1929.
4. See Appendix 8 (i).
5. These missions were Licki, Kiambu, Mangu, and St. Peter Claver's, Nairobi.
6. See Appendix 8 (ii).
Other B-Teachers went out in 1923 and 1929, and also a small number of C-Teachers in both years. Most of the latter, however, remained to continue with further professional courses, and in the case of some of the group of 1929, to pursue secondary school studies in 1930.

The year 1929 marks not only the end of the first five years, but actually ended a phase of Kabaa Central School: for 1930 saw the beginning of the long awaited Kabaa High School. But before we advance on to this we shall first consider an important aspect of the life of the school and the unique members of staff who made this possible in the period we have already considered.
"Kabaa is run like a battleship." So wrote two competent critics from Europe, one of whom visited the school when it was barely three years old. The visitors, Fr. T. Gavan Duffy, a missionary working in India, who visited the school in December 1927, and Mr. F. J. Macken K.C.S.G., B.L., a veteran army officer, who visited Kabaa in 1929 went on to say that Fr. Witte was the "Captain" of this land-based "battleship," a comparison which strikingly portrays the organization and discipline of Kabaa. The school could also have been described with equal relevance as a permanent Boy Scout camp with Fr. Witte as the Camp Master. The rigid discipline, the regimentation, the autocratic rule and the unusual problems made Kabaa something of a battleship indeed; but the spirit of adventure, the make-shift arrangements, the hard tasks cheerfully carried out, the willing obedience, the esprit de corps, as well as the accent on moral living and family feeling, made the place more of a huge, well run scout camp.

Wrote Fr. Gavan Duffy:

"The pace of the whole place is tremendous; it strikes even a visitor at first sight, and, on reflection, gives him an envious respect for the high-power dynamo hidden in Fr. Witte's stocky frame."2

Even before Fr. Duffy and Mr. Macken arrived at Kabaa, an official Government report of Kabaa had said very much the same thing if in different words. This was the Annual Report of the District

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2. Gavan Duffy, ibid., page 60-61.
Commissioner of Machakos for the year 1926. It said:

"Nobody can visit the school without being struck by the energy and enthusiasm of Fr. Witte and the excellent discipline of the boys."  

This coming from an official confidential report is perhaps the most telling witness to the effectiveness of Kabaa in those early years.

It is therefore worthwhile to examine in some detail the points which made Kabaa so remarkable to observers; friends and strangers alike.

2. Daily Routine:

The Kabaa school day was packed with activities which began as early as 4:55 a.m. and ended at 9:30 p.m., with no more than fifteen minutes nominal break. During all this time nobody was allowed to stop being busy, so that the American born Fr. Gavan Duffy couldn't help comparing the pace of the school to the motto of Chicago's traffic police which, according to him, was "keep moving or stay at home." Even the fifteen-minute break had to be filled with some useful activity thought out by each pupil, since lying on the lawn or "star gazing" was forbidden; many pupils therefore utilized the short break for collecting firewood in preparation for the week when it would be their turn to cook; others tended their little plots, or watered their young trees; and yet others practised some athletic drill skill they had learnt. The rest of the time consisted of short snappy periods of class.

1. KIA: DG/BKS/1/1/15 (Machakos District Annual Reports, bound volume, for the year 1923-1937 - Appendix 16).
2. Kabaa Journal: various entries during the period of Fr. Witte. Also see Appendix IV. Also Mr. Macken's article, op.cit.
private study, drill, manual work, games and prayer — a succession of routine activities which Fr. Gavan Duffy called "small things well done for God". Of the success of this aspect of Kabaa life Fr. Walker wrote:

"To realise the important part played by the extraordinary spirit of work and the genial discipline prevailing at Kabaa one must remember that the African, like the European, has his traditional weaknesses. One of them is a tendency to physical indolence and intellectual apathy — a tendency which can only be conquered by the development of habits of intense physical and intellectual activity."2

"In effecting this transformation" Fr. Walker goes on "the directors of Kabaa School have been eminently successful."3 On this particular point — i.e., the almost proverbial physical laziness of the African — Fr. Walker was reiterating the contemporary belief in Europe. The success of Kabaa here is not that the school programme weeded out the traditional sloth of the African, but rather than it overcame the resistance by members of the male sex to perform tasks traditionally proper to females. For it must be remembered that indolence and laziness were frowned upon by Africans and their alleged sloth is an inaccurate observation by Europeans basing their yardstick on European culture and European-type activities. Due to the division of labour between the sexes in the traditional African societies one was only considered to be lazy if one failed to perform the relevant tasks needing doing, it being understood that the performance of tasks normally done by the other sex was not only shameful but objectionable. What Europeans have often considered to be idleness is in fact unwillingness to perform objectionable tasks, or in the earlier years what appeared to the Africans to be pointless tasks. It is in this that Kabaa was so very successful, considering that the boys willingly performed such tasks as carrying water, collecting firewood, and cooking.

1. Quoted by Fr. Walker op.cit., page 140.
2. Ibid: pages 140-141.
3. Ibid.
Going back to the daily routine at Kabaa, the pupils were roused from their sleep early every morning by three loud claps of the hand by Fr. Witte, who then recited the short prayer, "Tu autem Domine misere re nobis."

To this the pupils, still drowsy from sleep, answered: "Deo gratias", and briskly jumped out of their beds. The Kabaa day had begun.  

In the earlier years, the time for rise, from Monday to Saturday, was 6.00 a.m., but each succeeding year the time was moved farther and farther back so that by 1929 the senior pupils were rising as early as 4.55 a.m., and the juniors five minutes afterwards. All had barely five minutes to do their regular early morning breathing exercises, wash their faces and hurry, in orderly fashion, to the church for mass. Half an hour later the senior boys settled to early morning private study while the juniors were having their physical education lesson, the two groups alternating these activities from day to day. Then came the day's activities that followed each other in close succession till the final prayers of the evening when all, except the vigilant Fr. Witte, went to bed. On this the Inspector of Schools report of 1928 already quoted had this to say: "Notwithstanding the lengthy programme the boys are extremely clean and orderly."

Although Sunday had a modified programme, and appears on the timetable to be virtually free, it was nonetheless packed with events, the only difference being that the time for rise was a bit later, and the pupils had more choice of what they wanted to do, within the general framework of the timetable.

1. Interviews: Kapteni, Nguri, Gichanga, already mentioned.
2. Kabaa Journal: various entries. Also Mr. Macken's article op. cit. Also see Appendix IV Also KNA: 1/1035 Inspection report op. cit.
3. Ibid: Also interviews with Nguri, Kapteni, Gichanga, already mentioned, and Cyrillus Ojoo, Atanas Kuia, and others.
Bathing and swimming had a special place on the timetable and took place daily, including Sunday. The Junior boys usually went down to the river between twelve and one o'clock, that is just before lunch; while the senior boys got their chance for this important activity, immediately after lunch between two and three o'clock. If for any reason (such as the presence of an important visitor) these times could not be utilized, the event was postponed till games' time, between five and six o'clock. Pupils usually went down to the river on the double, and returned in similar fashion, since loitering at the river would mean lateness for class or the next activity, a serious misdemeanor for a Kabaa pupil.

3. The Boarding Arrangements:

For a school which operated on less money than the minimum required, careful arrangements were necessary for such matters as cooking and the time and labour necessary for it. As already mentioned, there were neither cooks nor servants; the pupils had to do the cooking themselves, and Fr. Witte - who himself cared little for food - allowed them only the absolute minimum of time required for cooking and eating, a bare three-quarters of an hour. During that forty-five minutes the two student cooks for each house fetched supplies from the school store, lit fires, cooked and placed the food before their "family" in time to enable them to be ready before the bell rang for afternoon class. An equally short period was provided in the evening for cooking and eating supper. So short was the time for these meals that some pupil cooks actually cooked the meat the day before and only warmed the food at the appropriate meal time the following day.

For boarding purposes the school was split into groups (generally known as families) each consisting of 13 boys; the thirteenth boy in each group being the prefect (Captain); he wore

1. Interview with Kapteni.
a special uniform to distinguish him from the rest. Each group
planned and executed its own cooking and eating arrangements, drew
up its own roster of cooks, two for each week, so that each pair
needed cook only for two weeks in a term and was enabled to plan in
advance for the collection of firewood and other necessities for
cooking. The Captain of the family did not perform cooking duties
but, as we shall see, he had other responsibilities to replace these.
The central supply of flour, meat, fish, salt, maize and beans was
kept in the school store, from which the cooks for the week fetched
the "family's" share for each day. The commonest staple food was
maize-meal eaten with dried fish, or dried meat or soup made from
green grams or beans; but a mixture of cooked maize and beans
(called pure in Swahili) was also a frequent diet; this was usually
eaten on Wednesdays and Saturdays but also at other times during
periods when meat was unavailable or scarce.¹

Fr. Witte was very particular about a balanced diet² consisting
of protein, carbohydrates and vitamins, but it was not always easy
to make this possible and often the boys¹ were seen with "cracked"
legs, possibly from lack of vitamins. Cracking feet and legs, and
dry skin generally were common problems at Kabaa, so that Fr. Witte
had to keep a supply of coconut oil not so much for cooking as for
the boys to apply on their skins to make them look more sightly,
especially when visitors were coming; this was often a messy job in
which some pupils applied the oil unevenly so that the visitors were
often able to guess what had happened, judging by the shiny legs of
the boys.³

The boys of each "family" had their own area in the dormitory
where they slept with their "Captain"; this did much to cement the
"family" feeling in each group whose remarkable cooperation and

¹ Interviews with Kapteni, Nguri, Gichanga and Fr. John Reidy.
² Kaba Journal: various entries. Also Mr. Macken's article, op.cit.
³ Interview with Fr. John Reidy.
esprit de corps in other spheres was an example per excellence of the general feeling of togetherness prevailing in the school. A good example of this is the fact that the captain of each "family", who was exempt from taking his turn in cooking duties, had to serve the rest of his "family" too; his duty was to fetch water from the tap (after a tap was installed) situated some distance from the dormitory, and fill the basins of each pupil in his "family", so that it could be handy for washing purposes when they woke up early in the morning. The captain performed this duty of humility after "lights out", when all the other pupils had gone to bed. 1

4. The Prefect System:

Apart from the Head Prefect, who for a long time was Cyrillus Ojoo, there were three types of prefects at Kabaa: the "family" captains, the class monitors, and the reporting prefects whom Mr. Felix Kapteni has described as "a kind of police special branch." The latter kept the Principal informed about any secret activities or tendencies by the boys, such as grumbling, discontent, and clandestine plans to go on strike; for in spite of Kabaa's excellent spirit there were times, especially during the early months of 1925, when the pupils, led by one malcontent or another, sometimes thought of going on strike. The well informed Fr. Witte usually nipped these attempted strikes in the bud, not through repressive measures or punishments but more commonly by calling the malcontents individually to his office and winning them over to his way of thinking. 2

1. Interviews with Gichanga, Nguri and Kapteni already mentioned. Partly stated also in Mr. Macken's article, op. cit.
2. Kabaa Journal: various entries e.g. for 9 March and 1 April 1925. Also mentioned by Nguri and Gichanga.
Although the prefects were generally not allowed to punish fellow pupils (this being the Principal’s prerogative), they were given a great deal of power and responsibility over matters of discipline and organization. Their orders had to be obeyed without question, disobedience to them being considered by Fr. Witte a more serious breach of discipline than disobedience to himself. But by the same token if a Prefect was himself found at fault he received double the punishment. ¹

5. Kabaa Discipline:

"The transcendent triumph of Kabaa "Fr. Walker rightly points out was the evident "joyous and alert obedience."² From the very start Fr. Witte established a discipline that was genial but very strict. A pupil who did not accept a few strokes of the cane, when found at fault, was considered to be the wrong sort,³ since no punishment was ever given arbitrarily or in anger at Kabaa; it was an accepted procedure that before punishment was meted out by or before the Principal, the fault of the offender was first carefully considered by a council of fellow students,⁴ after which the culprit was made to see that he had been in the wrong: only then was the punishment administered, usually before all the boys.⁵ Concerning this Fr. Cavan Duffy wrote:

"What I chiefly applaud is the fact that rewards and punishments are mostly discussed and distributed in public session; you are sentenced by common consent of your peers, and only after recognising your guilt."⁶

The punishments included caning, and watering or manuring the trees and flowers; this being the only form of manual labour which

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¹ Gavan Duffy, op. cit., page 61.
² Quoted by Fr. Walker, op. cit., page 140.
³ Gavan Duffy, op. cit., page 61.
⁴ Ibid, pages 61-62. Also Mr. Macken’s article, op. cit.
⁵ Interviews with Gichanga, Nguri and Kapteni already mentioned.
⁶ Gavan Duffy, op. cit., pages 61-62. Also Mr. Macken’s article, op. cit.
Fr. Witte allowed to be used as a punishment; under no circumstances did he allow work on the farm or regular forms of manual labour to be used as a punishment, since he wished the boys to like these activities as one of the most important aspects of their education.

Pupils found at fault at night were sent to the chapel to pray and ask God's pardon for their waywardness, while Fr. Witte, who never went to bed before one o'clock in the morning, kept watch.

The rules were comparatively few but those which existed were very strictly enforced: juniors were not allowed to mix with senior boys; breaking bounds was a very serious offence and, if habitually indulged in, resulted in dismissal; no one was allowed to go out alone; generally speaking: pupils had to be in twos (preferably threes) when going outside the compound; anyone found loitering or sitting idle was due for punishment.

Petty offences were also treated in another ingenious way. Fr. Witte began by giving to the first five boys he found committing a petty offence a small disc each. They were to pass these on to the next boy they found committing some minor irregularity such as speaking a vernacular other than Swahili. Each day the discs were called for during assembly time and those found with them had to do extra manual work. Good conduct discs were also available and they were exchanged for a little money in the school store.

The school's Swahili motto, "Jishinde Ushinde" was purposely chosen to stress the role and importance of discipline at Kabaa and in life generally. Its literal translation is "Conquer yourself so that you may conquer," but its real meaning is: one must discipline oneself even in small things if one is to succeed. That this motto

1. Interviews with Gichanga, Nguri and Kapteni.
had a great impression on the pupils may be shown by the fact that one of the earlier Kabaa students has established two photographic studios (one at Limuru and the other at Nairobi) each called rather inappropriately: "Jishinde Ushinde Studio."\(^1\)

Mr. Felix Kapteni remembers a European visitor who, having observed the somewhat regimented discipline of Kabaa in utter amazement, asked Fr. Witte what he was trying to do with the boys, and the Principal in his usual casual manner reportedly answered: "I am trying to make men of them."\(^2\) In many ways this is eminently true judging by the lives of the principled and hardy survivors among the old boys of Kabaa whom I interviewed. No one can fail to be impressed by the poise, steadfastness and graciousness of such men as Joseph Nguri, Felix Kapteni, Francis J. Khamisi, Cyrillus Ojoo, Hon. Roki Mchinga, M.P., Hon. J. Nthula, M.P., Atanas Gichanga, Ignatius Mkok, John Malinda, and many of the others, most of whom have retained a youthfulness that is reminiscent of Fr. Witte and Kabaa.

6. Manual Labour and Gardening:

Work with the hands was considered to be so important at Kabaa that it definitely took precedence over academic learning in the school curriculum, being next in importance only to religious observance.\(^3\) Formal manual labour and gardening were stressed by Fr. Witte not so much because they saved the school a possible heavy expense on salaries for labourers and precious money for purchasing more food, but because they were educationally desirable in themselves, and possibly also an account of the fact that the boys with

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1. The Nairobi Studio is in Reatta Road.
2. Interview with Felix Kapteni. Mr. Macken's article *op.cit.*, says something similar. Actually the speaker of the words was the E.A.S. Reporter.
3. Ibid: Also examine Appendix IV.
their traditional background believed that such work was undignified first because in African society it was the exclusive responsibility of womenfolk, and partly because no white men (the superior race at the time) were ever seen in this country wielding hoes or driving ploughs, which tended to give the false impression that such work was only proper for uneducated people. For this latter reason Fr. Witte regularly took part in the actual manual work himself, which placed upon this activity, as also agriculture, a high respectability at Kabaa. They may have had the side effect of discouraging the conscious emergence of an elite from among the ranks of Kabaa. Their training was designed first and foremost to make them live good Catholic lives, and secondly to enable them to fit into a Kenya that was then dominated by a European-created structure in which the Europeans alone were considered to be members of an elite, a fact which quite obviously the Catholics were powerless to alter even assuming they disagreed with the status quo. That the Catholics held as abhorrent any type of education that made people discontented with their lot was no secret, but there the common opinion which they shared with the settler-dominated Government ended. For whereas the Government aimed at keeping the Africans in a menial role, the Catholics did not necessarily share this view. Their main reason for preferring to educate Africans for a workers' role or community leadership at the village level, appears to have been because they considered that this was in the best interests of the Africans at that time, in view of Governmental policy which affected the social and political status of the

1. Interview with Felix Kapteni. Also R. Walker, op.cit., pages 139 sqq. And: Gavan Duffy, op.cit., pages 59-64.
2. Mr. Kipkorir is currently engaged on research for a doctorate thesis concerning the emergency of an elite among the ranks of Alliance High School Old Boys.
3. It should be noted that although Kabaa and its successor, Mangu, did not consciously aim at producing an elite, their products have not fared badly in the acquisition of high positions, especially after Kenya's independence.
Africans adversely, and which was unlikely to change for a long time, if at all. One might be inclined to argue here that the Catholics should have taken a more active part in opposing the unfair social and political policies of the Government directed towards the Africans, but this accusation can be levelled with even greater relevance to the more privileged Protestant sects and virtually to all the other denominations as well. At any rate it ought to be faced that such a line would have been impolitic at that time, unless the churches had chosen to enter headlong into active politics to oppose the Government.

Going back to the matter of creating an ambitious and privileged elite among Africans, it is discernible that this was one aspect in which the Catholics just do not seem to have thought it worth their while to compete with the Protestants. This may partly have been because the Catholic approach generally did not favour the creation of an ambitious elite in purely secular matters — though they encouraged an elite from the point of view of Catholic leadership and example — and partly on account of the fact that the Government was openly in favour of the Protestants and would most likely have found ways and means to frustrate Catholic ambitions in this direction anyway.

A memorandum on education produced jointly by the three Catholic hierarchies in Kenya in 1927, was very clear on this issue. Having defined the Catholic view concerning the aims of Education, the memorandum which was addressed to the Department of Education, went on to say:

"We consider it an axiom that for generations to come the vast majority of natives must be manual workers, their lives being spent in the workshops and on the fields.

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1. The attitude of the Department of Education towards the starting of a Catholic High School similar to the Alliance High School in the years 1929 to 1931, indicates this clearly.

2. Catholic Memorandum of 1927 to the Education Department.
"Bearing this in mind we have in the last twenty-five years taught trades to a large number of our people, while giving them the elements of book learning. We have trained our own carpenters, woodcarvers, stone cutters, brickmakers, smiths, masons and machinists. That our efforts have not been in vain may be seen by the churches, dwelling houses, schools, workshops, coffee factories, electric power stations etc., which are to be found in our different missions, and which have been erected by our own trained native workmen under European supervision. This however is an agricultural country; its riches are in the soil. Agricultural training is the chief need. We have taught our people the almost infinite details of work on a plantation, and the care of the machinery connected therewith....."

The memorandum went on to say:

"We must not hope to make in a few years a twentieth century English man of the African native; such hasty methods would produce an uninteresting mongrel, neither Englishman nor African. We have expressly avoided putting before the native book learning as an ideal, for experience has taught us that this would produce people who despise manual work especially in the field where it is most needed. Their ambition will be for a soft job. They will abandon the country and swarm to towns; and as there are but a few jobs to go round, a large discontented class is created living lives of idleness, theft, debauch, from whose ranks will be recruited dangerous agitators and their dupes....."

The above was part of the policy that guided Kabaa in its curriculum and practice, and is partly accountable for Fr. Witte's stress on manual work and agriculture. The subtle difference between the Protestant approach as exemplified at Alliance High School and the Catholic one prevailing at Kabaa, lay in the fact that the former, while appreciating the need for and dignity of manual work and agriculture generally, set out more particularly to produce future African leaders, in the more secular sense, while Kabaa tended to discourage this and to stress the role of a worker imbied with Christian ideals. 1

1. This is not saying that Alliance or the other protestant Schools neglected the idea of Christian ideals. The difference here is that the Catholics concentrated on this one aspect and consciously tried to avoid the other.
Not that the Principal of Kabaa, Fr. Witte, and the Catholic Education Secretary, Fr. MacNamara, entirely agreed that the Catholics should be kept out of leadership in the secular fields. Fr. Witte optimistically planned ahead for a Catholic University of East Africa, not without some element of secular leadership in mind. Fr. MacNamara actually mentioned the idea in several of his circulars to missions; in his circular of August 1925, mentioned earlier, he said: "I would ask you to make our schools as efficient as we can, not only in religious knowledge as we have done in the past, but also in secular education." It is true, however, that their idea of secular education approximated to what was suggested by the East African Commission of 1924 which referred to the training of capable, trustworthy public spirited native leaders.

Going back to the stress that Kabaa placed on manual work and agriculture, we note a great deal of originality in it and a little pomp as well - not unusual where Fr. Witte was concerned. Gardening was usually carried out according to the family groups of thirteen pupils each. The Captain of each family had an unusual role in this exercise. He held a whistle much like an athletics starter, while his family held their hoes high in readiness. Then suddenly he blew on the whistle and the family began hacking away at the ground with all possible energy and speed. Neither talking nor resting was allowed till the next blow on the whistle by the Captain, who incidentally stood guard all the time. When he had allowed them a minute or so to rest he blew his peremptory whistle setting them off once more; and so on till the gardening time was over.

3. All the old boys of the 1920's and 1930's who were interviewed testified to this.
There were three types of farms at Kabaa: the school farm; a farm divided into portions one for each class; and one on which every pupil had a plot of his own. The produce on the school farm included maize, simsim, groundnuts, sweet potatoes, "Irish" potatoes, vegetables of many kinds such as cabbages, carrots, peas (including kunde) and beans. Fruits were also planted in large quantities especially pawpaws, guavas, oranges, pineapples and bananas. The school farm was worked by the whole school, with classes taking turns. The farmwork was at first carried out under the general supervision of Fr. Witte himself, but after Mr. Oomen, the lay teacher, arrived, this responsibility was handed over to him.

In addition to the garden products the school farm also raised livestock, ranging from cattle, sheep and goats to pigs, rabbits, chickens and ducks.

The class gardens grew the same crops as the main school farm, and their crops were shared equally between the participating classes and the school. As far as the individual plots were concerned, each pupil grew what he liked provided his selection conformed to the rules of rotation which were assiduously stressed in the agricultural lessons.

This local family enterprise not only served as an effective means of imparting agricultural knowledge, but actually proved to be a useful source of food for the school, which was so sorely short of funds, especially during the earlier years. All the fruit and vegetables used at the school, for instance, were grown locally at the school; certainly during the first decade of its existence. Similarly with poultry. In addition, a good deal of the flour used was ground from maize grown on the school farm, though it never was sufficient to last a whole year, due to the capricious rains of

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1. All the old boys who were at Kabaa in the years 1925-34 testified to this when interviewed. Some of the later years too, e.g., John Abuoga.
the area. Indeed rain was a major scourge at Kabaa; either it
delayed unduly until the grass was withered along with the crops;
or it came in such torrents that it literally washed everything
away, soil and young plants alike. ¹

Occasionally it rained all afternoon and throughout the night
and then did not come again for many anxious weeks or months. The
Kabaa Journal is full of references to too much rain at the wrong
time or the lack of it when it was badly needed. There were times
when Fr. Witte fervently prayed or said Mass for rain: at least
on two occasions a novena was held specifically to implore God for
rain. In spite of all this, however, Kabaa had an ambivalent
attitude towards rain. On the approach of the regular rainy season
Fr. Witte would suspend all activities for half a day or so in order
to plant the fields: should the rains fail to come, after all, he
would be restless for days, but if it came in large quantities he
would suddenly remember that the drifts on the roads were swollen
with water and that the Karara river had made transportation of
essential supplies, and incidentally contact with the 'outside
world', almost impossible.

However, as long as the Kabaa fields were green again and
there was promise of a good harvest, he would get reconciled in
time, and gladly take everything in its stride. ²

7. Kabaa "Shuja'a"

Before turning to "the man who made Kabaa"³ let us look for
a while at something of the pride in Kabaa which ran so deep that

¹ Kabaa Journal: numerous entries throughout Fr. Witte's time.
² Ibid.
³ A phrase taken from a letter of Fr. Loogman writing from
Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, U.S.A., to John Abuoga; dated
5 May 1961, shortly after the untimely death of Fr. Witte.
many of the students (now oldmen) have not quite outlived it. The Kabaa spirit was sustained by many rousing bravado songs in praise of the school; the songs were composed by Fr. Witte with the help of Fr. Loogman, both of whom were expert musicians. All of the songs had a martial thrill about them and a great capacity to boost morale by both tune and words.

Two of the songs in particular were very effective all round. These were Kabaa Shujaa (i.e. Triumphant Kabaa), a secular song with a rousing tune, glorifying the school; and Sisi Wakristu Wakatoliki, a secular tune with pious words which, though it doesn't mention the name Kabaa, was actually understood by the pupils to be intended for the school. The effect on the boys of these and the other songs was tremendous: they whipped up an ecstatic loyalty and patriotism towards the school and all that it stood for, and one has got to hear them to believe. They so impressed Fr. Gavan Duffy when he visited the school in 1927 that he wrote:

"Now it is as much as your young life is worth to breathe a word against Kabaa; it is a war-cry - Kabaa; it is the banner of progress - Kabaa; it is almost a fetish - Kabaa. The boys have their own martial song to celebrate it; (and have another which glorifies in the Faith...) believe me, if you want to see them put their chests out and stand to attention and flash their eyes on Father Witte as if they would devour him alive, call for the School Song; it is the very spirit of Kabaa."

The Kabaa uniform was another remarkable feature of the school. Apart from the pupils' "good working clothes" made out of khaki material, they had a "really neat outfit" reserved for parades and festive occasions. This costume was set off to perfection with a red fez, which incidentally some priests didn't like on account of its Muslim connections, but which was fronted all the same by the famous "Kabaa-pin" - a medal "showing Africa outlined on the ball of

1. Interview with Joseph Nguri and Felix Kapteni. Also Fr. M. Reidy and Fr. J. Reidy.
2. For the Swahili text of some of the songs and the English translation of two of them, see Appendix VI.
the world, with the Cross planted upon it and the Holy Spirit brooding over it, and the words AFRICA CHRISTO around the edge.\(^1\)

Christian influence was another of the most effective aspects of Kabaa; the whole atmosphere of the school was charged with it. This ought not to be a remarkable thing about a Catholic school, but Kabaa boys (certainly of the earlier years) embraced Christianity with a conviction which, compared with the trend in later schools, was high above the average. Once they had got into the Kabaa tradition (for the school established a tradition almost from the very first year)\(^2\) the observance of religious duties and Christian principles tended to become second nature, part of their lives. The establishment of this tradition was certainly the result of Fr. Witte's casual, sincere and unassuming approach, which appealed to the African mentality and won for him a trust and loyalty, from his charges, not often met with in normal situations. This trust and dedication was transferred to God with great conviction.

It was said of Fr. Witte that he tried with remarkable success to inculcate in the boys:

"the art of living intelligently within their native environment, doing something to improve it and not looking across the seas for their inspiration."\(^3\)

For this reason religion was always taught in the Vernacular (Swahili) at Kabaa, which avoided:

"the taint of unreality which renders suspect any instruction... that comes as a covering from without and not as a growth from within."

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2. All Kabaa old boys I interviewed testified to this.
When Mr. Hacken, the ex-army man, visited Kabaa in 1929 and attended the night prayers with the boys he was forced to remark later that the experience reminded him of Mellery, the quiet Trappist Monastery in Ireland famous for its religious atmosphere; and he made it clear that this was not only on account of the "sighing of the winds from Kambane, nor of the singing of the Psalm 'In manus tuas!' which the boys sang sonorously that night as every night before retiring. He went on:

"A man without religion is a man unfinished and a menace, active or potential, to human society. None of these will come from Kabaa. They are not only training men there, but they are elevating Christian souls in a manner to edify those who pass that way."

There is one other activity that not only spread the name of Kabaa but brought many a visitor to the school; this was the drill performances. Judged by today's standards the smart drilling to quick commands or to the accompaniment of music would not pass as a good physical education lesson; but in those days this was a novel and perfectly acceptable idea. Even before Kabaa's famous band came into existence in 1930, the Kabaa drill team was getting the school invited to important occasions in district headquarters of Machakos, and even to Nairobi. When the School participated for the first time in a Government sponsored country-wide Drill Competition, held in late January 1928, it won first place and triumphantly brought back the coveted Denham Shield. Among the schools beaten by Kabaa were 4 of the best Government schools in the country, including that at Machakos and the Native Industrial Training Depot, Kabete. No wonder that Mr. Hacken wrote of the school's drilling skill:

"I have been a company officer myself.....and I have trained recruits and drilled trained men alike. The Kabaa boys are well worth seeing at drill..... I congratulate them."

1. R. Walker, op. cit. page 141. Also Hacken's article, op. cit.
2. Ibid: pages 140. Also Kabaa Journal: entries for 24 to 28 January 1928. Also Hacken's article, op. cit.
3. Ibid:
The interesting revelations in Mr. Macken's article in *The Catholic Times of East Africa* were so searching and so similar to the reports of the Chief Inspector of Schools, Mr. Biss, that someone at the Education head office got a cutting of them made and stuck in the official and confidential file on Kabaa, where they are still to be found.  

Visitors to Kabaa were always entertained with a drill spectacle, and the Kabaa Choir, and after 1930 the band as well. Considering the difficulties of travelling to Kabaa one wonders why so many visitors were so keen to visit the place; the main explanation for this appears to be that news of the novel and successful educational programme of the school got round and those really interested in education wanted to see it for themselves. Be that as it may one wonders whether the very successful drill team, school choir and later the famous Kabaa band didn't play their own little part in luring visitors to Kabaa.

One reason for visitors was of course Fr. Witte himself. Although he disliked the encumberances of ecclesiastical and state bureaucracy, it must not be imagined that he was anti-social or preferred a hermit's life. On the contrary Fr. Witte liked people and wanted them to be around. Above all he was so ambitious for Kabaa that he wanted its work known widely especially in those quarters where financial assistance was likely to come for his materially destitute institution.  

Among the earliest visitors to come to Kabaa was the 'father' of the school Fr. C.T. MacNamara, and the two closest settler families:

1. Found in KIA - 1/1856.
2. Interviews with Fr. J. Reidy, Mr. I. Mkok, Mr. C. Ojoo, Mr. Atanas Gichanga, Mr. Felix Kapteni, Mr. Joseph Nguri and most of the others interviewed.
3. Fr. Witte usually referred to Fr. C.T. MacNamara, the Catholic Education Secretary, as the 'father' of Kabaa for the part he played in supporting its cause. Similarly Fr. Blais was referred to as the 'grandfather', for having founded the Kabaa site with Fr. Leconte; the latter might have deserved the title better, but he died in late 1924.
the Steele's and the Delaps. Another early caller was the Headmaster of the Machakos Africa Government School, Mr. Bell, who was on his regular inspection of "bush schools" attached to his school. Not long afterwards Mr. Traill the Provincial Commissioner of Ukamba Province, accompanied by the D.C. of Machakos Mr. Fazan, visited Kabaa and had lunch with Fr. Witte; they were so "favourably impressed" that they advise Fr. Witte that if he expressed his requests to the Inspector of schools, Mr. Biss, who was to visit the school within a couple of days, they would sympathetically be considered. The two distinguished visitors perhaps sensing how poor Kabaa was, even secretly placed twenty shillings in the "offering box."

After a spate of other non-official visitors, the Assistant District Commissioner of Machakos called and Fr. Witte recorded, "It is becoming known that at Kabaa guests are welcomed." This was all too true, for soon the new P.C. of Machakos, Mr. Dobbs, thought it worthwhile to interrupt his journey towards Kitui to visit Kabaa with his family in January 1926. A month later Bishop Neville paid a visit to the school for the first time. The stream of visitors continued unabated throughout 1926 and 1927. The famous Fr. Tom Gavan Duffy visited the school for the first time on 12 December 1927, when he made the telling comments we have already referred to. In addition to the many visitors who came for the second or even the third time, the fresh visitors increased both in numbers and frequency, among them the Director of Education in Uganda, Mr. Hussey, the successive Provincial Commissioners of Machakos, Mgr. Brandsma of the Vicariate of Kisumu, the special Apostolic Visitor to East Africa, Mgr. Hinsley, the Director of Education, Kenya, Mr. Orr and later his successor Mr. Scott; teachers from the Alliance High School, and heads of various Catholic Schools in Uganda.

So widespread was the growing fame of Kabaa that the school choir was invited to sing for the Governor during his visit to Machakos on

3 July 1926. During the parade Fr. Witte was invited to sit between the Governor and his wife reportedly in order to explain something about the Kabaa School to His Excellency. It was then that Mr. Biss, the Inspector of Schools a great admirer of Fr. Witte's work at Kabaa, leant forward from his seat behind the Governor and whispered in the latter's ear: "Kabaa is a school for which I want a grant for next year; it deserves it; please support." No wonder that the first financial grant for Kabaa was made in 1927. It is also possible that the decision to increase Kabaa's 5 acres by 20 more acres which was made in August 1926 may well have had something to do with the Governor's impressions since at the end of the school's Machakos performance before the Governor's pavillion, Fr. Witte was congratulated on all sides.¹

8. The Captain of the Battleship:

The guiding genius behind Kabaa's epic story² was a remarkable missionary priest of the Holy Ghost Congregation, Fr. Michael Joseph Witte S.S.Sp., who founded the school while in his late twenties. Born on the little island of Texel in Den Burg, Holland, on 30 January 1896,³ he received his earliest education in Holy Ghost schools in Holland, but went to the Jesuit Louvain University in Belgium for his theology and philosophy.⁴ There he received a Diploma in Mental and Moral Science and also a Diploma in Modern and Classical languages.⁵ He became an accomplished linguist with many languages to his credit: French, German, Latin, English, Greek, some Italian, his native Dutch and, after arrival in Kenya, Swahili.

¹ Kabaa Journal: various entries for June 1926.
² Words used in both Mr. Macken's article in The Catholic Times 1929, op.cit, and in the Special Article in the East African Standard written by the paper's own Reporter and published on July 24 and 25, 1931.
³ Quoted from a handwritten old list of Holy Ghost missionaries dating back from 1863, and has the details of all Holy Ghost priests who worked first in the Zanguebar Prefecture and later in the Zanzibar Vicariate up to 1930.
⁴ Information supplied by Fr. C.T. MacNamara in a letter to John Osogo in May 1969.
⁵ KMA: 1/1856: A folio giving Annual Staff Returns of Kabaa High School 1931.
He was ordained a Holy Ghost priest in 1921 and arrived in Kenya on 21 September, 1922. His first posting was to St. Peter Claver's, Nairobi, where Fr. G.T. MacNamara and Fr. Blais were. It was here that the stately and discerning Fr. MacNamara noticed the striking qualities of the young priest which eluded so many other priests. Fr. MacNamara conceived an admiration for Fr. Witte that has never waned to this day. In September 1923 Fr. Witte was posted to Kilungu Catholic Mission to run the new Catechists' school there, under the direction of the Austrian-born Fr. Horber. A year later he was called upon to open Kabaa school as we have already seen.

We have already seen something of the organizational abilities of Fr. Witte as well as his devotion to duty and his love of Africans. But Fr. Witte was a man of many facets. Bearded, boyish looking and affable, he was so exceptional in his way of life and general approach to people and work that his former pupils use the most extravagant language in praise of him. A biography of Fr. Witte based on evidence from his former pupils would, if written, sound like a chapter out of a fairy book, or the life of a saint that never really lived. To them he was the holiest man, the best teacher, the kindest and most devoted person that ever lived; only his skin was European, they said, his heart was African. Of the European priests Fr. MacNamara would have endorsed almost every one of the adjectives that the ex-pupils of Fr. Witte used about him. Most of the other priests did not quite think so. They saw something shallow, comical, pompous and exhibitionist about Fr. Witte; qualities which irritated some of them.

1. An "Appreciation" of Fr. Witte written by Fr. MacNamara and made available to the author clearly indicates this.
2. Looked at from the standpoint of African culture Europeans were accorded the distinction of being not only "superior", but also and especially bad in most ways: wicked, overbearing, lazy, cruel, uncharitable, selfish, conceited, etc. Fr. Witte had none of these European vices, according to his pupils.
These other facets of Fr. Witte, however, were not entirely non-existent. The difference between the views of those who admired Fr. Witte and those who saw nothing too remarkable about him, lies in the fact that the former saw his nobler points too clearly to be bothered about his shortcomings, while the latter being rather orthodox in their beliefs saw not the man but his deliberate refusal to agree that, apart from the doctrine of the Church in all its many facets, there was no procedure so sacrosanct as not to deserve change, where change would lead to improvements; certainly not in matters of education. He believed in being original, and without the opportunity to do this he felt that his spirit was being stifled. His main shortcoming here appears to have been that whereas he believed in freedom of action for himself he rarely saw that those under him may have wanted similar consideration. He is said to have held the view that all missionaries who came to Africa did so in order to work for the Africans and therefore their personal comfort in things such as good food, good houses etc., must give way to African priorities. It is on account of this belief that he lived a poor, simple, strict life, eating poor (sometimes rotten) food, sleeping in poor houses and expecting the priests and the Brothers who lived with him to do the same.

For a man who cared so little about food or money as far as his own person was concerned, and who badly needed money for his school, one would have expected him to be something of a miser. But not Fr. Witte. He was not only something of a spendthrift, but he just did not know how to save money and often "wasted" it on unnecessary things. On one occasion, for instance, he bought one thousand flits for Kabaa, when the school needed only twelve. On another occasion he went to an auction and saw an assortment of midwifery kit being sold cheaply: he promptly bade for it and bought it — he argued

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1. Interview with Fr. Paul White.
4. Interviews with Fr. J.J. O'Meara.
later that they might come in useful one day, especially should nuns be appointed for Kabaa and a maternity for the local people become necessary. Similarly on another occasion he bought many more night chambers than were required. One day he went to a cattle auction at Thika and bought 22 cattle and 12 sheep for only Sh. 300; they were not much good either. On the same day he bought five old Indian 
dukas built of corrugated iron sheets for Sh. 400, because he thought that the iron sheets, though old, would be good enough for some buildings in Kabaa.

On other occasions going into an auction or a secondhand shop he might find a lot of old books on sale. He would voraciously kneel down next to the shelf containing the books and sweep them all into a heap and pay for them — and all because they were cheap. His argument here was that it was cheaper to buy one hundred books for say fifteen shillings than one new book for the same amount, which to him was a thorough waste of good money. He did not have much faith in books, and usually cyclostyled his own 'text books' anyway. Besides, he argued, even if some of the hundred books he swept off the shelf of a secondhand shop were trash, he could on reaching home select the better ones, throw away the rest, and still remain with a sufficient number to make the purchase worthwhile. Another of these injudicious purchases occurred when Fr. Witte went to an auction in Nairobi and bought all the medicines he found on a shelf there, without even knowing what they were apart from the fact that they were medicines. He had to get a friendly doctor from Machakos to come and identify and label them.

1. Interviews with Fr. J.J. O'Meara.
3. Interview with Fr. John Reidy.
Fr. Witte had the "constitution of a horse" says Fr. John Reidy. He could put up with any conditions, travel long distances on foot, eat any kind of food¹ or even go without it, and not be worried at all.²

These are some of the facets that irritated some of Fr. Witte's colleagues and incidentally the ones that made him so lovable and so very much at home among those who saw the man in him rather than the faults, which were minor, all things considered.

According to Fr. Martin Reidy who joined the Kabaa staff in 1931, Fr. Witte was a man of great enthusiasm, ambition, vision and foresight, who always aimed high: "his aiming high and his great love for Africans kept him alive." He enjoyed starting new places partly because he liked the challenge and partly because he disliked boredom; to this end he avoided routine, easy-sailing situations because he felt that they led to monotony. To avoid boredom he would drop into a class at Kabaa and start talking away, cracking jokes, and go on for hours. Nevertheless he was a man who was irrepressible and never easily depressed by failure. He was a thorough optimist, a great organizer who loved publicity for Kabaa.³

Fr. John Reidy who joined Kabaa in 1932, on the other hand, while admitting that Fr. Witte was a man of great zeal, says that he appeared to be a jack of all trades and master of none. Having come to Kabaa after a brilliant four-year teaching career in Trinidad, the academically polished Fr. John Reidy did not think much of Fr. Witte's novel approach at Kabaa. In later years Fr. John Reidy found Fr. Witte running a small school at Bura and the latter intimated to him that this made him feel like Napoleon on St. Helena;

¹ Interview with Fr. John Reidy.
³ Interview with Fr. Martin Reidy.
Fr. Reidy chidingly replied that he had himself felt precisely like that while under Fr. Witte at Kabaa.¹

Fr. Witte was a truly religious and saintly priest, dyed in the pioneer spirit, "full of optimistic zeal, fraternal charity and great devotion to our Divine Lord and His paramount interests, namely, the Catholic Missions and Catholic education therein. He could be favourably compared with the great missionaries of all time."²

Fr. J.J. O'Meara, C.S.Sp., who piloted Catholic education in Kenya in later years, says that Fr. Witte was a man of great foresight, who thought way ahead of his comrades and put the Catholic Church "on the map education-wise" in Kenya.³

What made Fr. Witte so successful with people was his thorough lack of ill will or spite. No matter what underhand action a person might have done, Fr. Witte would merely note it, then quickly dismiss and forget the incident. It was not so much his ability to forgive (which he quite obviously must have had in abundance) but his complete lack of hate and rancour, and his sympathetic understanding of people and their shortcomings.

Another facet that enabled him to get so much done in so short a time was his ability to win respect from those he dealt with whether they be pupils in his school or Government officials and the general public outside. People tended to like him instantly, and in this way, especially as far as officialdom was concerned he was able to accomplish a great deal through lobbying for more money or more land for Kabaa.⁴

Above all as already pointed out Fr. Witte was ambitious for

1. Interview with Fr. John Reidy.
2. Fr. MacNamara's "Appreciation" of Fr. Witte, op.cit.
3. Interview with Fr. J.J. O'Meara.
Kabaa. It was like a craze with him; the only thing that took precedence over his consideration for Kabaa was his religion; but since to him Kabaa's education was a means to salvation through the Catholic Church, the idea of Kabaa separated from the Church did not occur to him, and so there was no conflict in his mind. Kabaa was not just his brain child, it was indeed the paramount work of the Vicariate.

That his work was greatly appreciated outside Catholic circles is demonstrated by two very telling incidents. The first came about as a result of his rules concerning discipline and punishments. The reader will recall that in Kabaa, pupil offenders were tried and sentenced by a tribunal of their fellow students in public session and that the punishment was also administered in public after the culprit had agreed to it, on recognising his guilt. This arrangement was apparently illegal, and in July 1929 it led to an incident which nearly landed Fr. Witte in trouble, and which fortunately gives us the most sincere opinion of Fr. Witte in Governmental circles. It happened when a Mkamba pupil, by the name of Cyrili Muli wa Wambua, having been tried, convicted and sentenced to canes by the pupils' Tribunal on a charge of theft, went and lodged a complaint before the Provincial Commissioner of Ukamba, perhaps goaded on by someone else. The P.C. wrote to the Director of Education questioning the legality of "flogging .... a boy sentenced by his fellows," adding that the boy was determined to bring the matter before a court of law. The Director's reply said that flogging under certain conditions was allowable, but the severity in this particular case was objectionable. But then he added: "If the decision of the court is adverse to Fr. Witte, a very serious blow will be struck at the prestige of this most enthusiastic and efficient missionary. I would suggest that..... (the D.C.) see Fr. Witte privately and tell him that his position

is very insecure and advise him strongly to see the boy and settle
the matter out of court..." He added however, that the boy was
really to blame since he could apparently be sued for theft; and at
any rate he had himself chosen the kibokos instead of expulsion which
was the other alternative. He went on:

"You will, I am sure, agree that it is most undesirable
that the really excellent work being done by Fr. Witte at
Kabaa should not be injured through this unfortunate
incident. The school is certainly among the most successful
which I have seen and I should be much concerned if its
continued success were endangered."

These words coming confidentially from Mr. Scott, the
Director of Education, who was known to have little love for the
Catholics, provide a most telling testimony to the work and person
of Fr. Witte. That the D.C. persuaded the boy to withdraw his
complaint without making it known to Fr. Witte is also to the credit
of the Government officials with all their previous and later faults.
That Fr. Witte refused to change the practice after an interview with
and a letter from the Director of Education tells the other side of
the story, and incidentally something of Fr. Witte's stubbornness
when he was convinced he was in the right, despite regulations.

The second episode which illustrates how Fr. Witte's work
was appreciated by the Government concerns the fact, that although
not a British national he was in 1932 awarded the O.B.E. medal for
services rendered to African Education in Kenya.

3. KMA: 1/1092: Fr. Witte uses the title after his name in some
of his official letters. Also, reported in Catholic Times
Also the original copy of Fr. Witte's obituary written by
Fr. O.T. Mckinara in 1961, but only partly published in the
"Missionary Annals".
This then was the man behind the spectacular story and success of Kabaa. His assistants before 1930 included Brother Egidius Schisphorst, who was born in Haarlem, Holland, in 1902, and arrived in Kenya in 1926, being posted straight to Kabaa. Then came Brother Florianus Heimann, a German who was born in Cologne in 1880, and arrived in Kenya on 20 April 1927. He too was posted straight to Kabaa. Next came Fr. Michael Murren, an Irishman, born in Galway, Ireland in 1898, and educated at Blackrock; he arrived in Kenya in 1928 where his first posting was to Kabaa. Quiet, and scholarly, Fr. Murren became "the teacher" of the High School.

Apart from the European lay teacher, Mr. Oonen, and the African teachers who were at first usually drill instructors, the other helpers at that time were mainly part-time. Brother Josaphat and Brother Savinus; the "grandfather" of Kabaa, Fr. Blais, a Frenchman; and the "father" of Kabaa Fr. Cornelius T. Mackamara. The latter was born in Killaloe Ireland, in the year 1387, and first worked in the Holy Ghost Missions of Nigeria before coming to Kenya in 1921. These were the men who helped Fr. Witte turn a "bald-headed" hillock into a thriving institution that dominated the landscape of Ukambani.

In his article of 1929, Mr. Macken gives some insight into the kind of education that was being given at Kabaa. He was accompanied from Nairobi to Kabaa by two pupils of the school, one

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1. Hand-written list of missionaries, op.cit.
2. Interview with Felix Kapteni, Joseph Nguri, Atanas Huia etc.
3. Hand-written list of missionaries, op.cit.
of whom "could drive, and had a licence". They had come to Nairobi so that one of them could order goods for the Principal, and to Mr. Macken's surprise the boy was able to make the orders "viva voce". Mr. Macken went on:

"I noticed one other thing with him also which spoke volumes for the training he was receiving. I had some oranges in the car, and I offered the boys one each. They peeled them carefully and collected the rind to the last particles, depositing it in a waste paper basket outside the (Railway) Station with the greatest care.

"Such was the first contact with what can fairly be called the Kabaa Spirit."

After watching and examining the Kabaa programme, Mr. Macken was able to comment that Fr. Witte was a real educationalist who was fully aware of the power of the rod for good and evil, and also the importance of public opinion in the school. He said:

"Kabaa is not a place of multiple laws and interminable surveillance." "It is a place of simple laws based on public opinion and the object of the discipline is understood to be not repression, but an assistance to the moulding of character."

Fr. Witte made character like a hardy plant, said Mr. Macken, and he knew full well that authority had to be delegated in order that the subjects may be fit to use it when their own turn came. Above all Fr. Witte had realised very early on that the African was responsive to a high standard or a high ideal, than to a low standard or a low ideal.  

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1. Fr. Witte got some of the boys to learn driving as part of their general education.  
2. Mr. Macken's article in the Times of East Africa issue of 5 October 1929. op.cit.
Mr. Macken added that Fr. Witte made it no secret that the advocates of the African's inability to rise to high standards knew nothing about the African. He told Mr. Macken:

"The African likes to be trusted, and he likes to be treated as a man or in a manly way...... Some people will never see how similar the African is to the European child."

Concluded Mr. Macken:

"I saw the Kabaa boys at school. I saw their internal economy, from the boys who made their own and their fellows' beds on that particular day to the boy machinist who patched his fellows' garments. I saw them at football, and swimming, and drill. The last named is a real treat."

Finally we may quote the widely travelled and experienced Fr. T. Cavan Duffy again, who visited Kabaa three times; the first visit being in 1927 and the second and third in 1932. He said:

"After managing myself, a Teachers' Training School in India, and having visited a large number of such schools all over the mission field, I do not hesitate a moment in giving first place to Kabaa. And that after three visits, in the intervals of which I conscientiously went round looking for something better."

Such was the impact of Kabaa.

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1. Macken's article, op.cit.
2. H. Walker, op.cit. page 139 sqq.
CHAPTER III
THE CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL, KABAA

1. Prelude to the High School

If the Catholic High School Kabaa, was the first serious effort at teacher training in Kenya, the Protestant Alliance High School which started at Kikuyu in 1926, was the first deliberate attempt at secondary education for Africans in this country. But each institution clearly saw the need for the programme being carried on at the other place. The Alliance High School, for instance, seeing the dire need for teachers actually began to train a few teachers of F3 standard right from its foundation in 1926, and followed this up with the training of F2 teachers. Kabaa on the other hand, while concentrating on teacher education, because the Catholics felt that this was the most urgent need, explicitly intended to proceed on to secondary education as soon as practicable. There were other factors besides the urgent need of teachers which militated against the launching of a Catholic High School right from 1925. First on account of the general withdrawal of the Catholics from educational matters involving the Government after 1918, as a result of apparently being convinced that they had little chance of getting Government grants. ¹ Secondly arising from the first reason the Catholics apparently did not by the end of 1924 have sufficiently qualified candidates (whether by level or by numbers) to form a secondary class right away even assuming they had sufficient European teachers. But the third reason was the most relevant at that time: the view of the majority of Catholic priests that a purely literary education was detrimental to the well being of the African, and their preference for practical technical education for their adherents who advanced beyond the catechumenates. ²

¹ Appendix X shows clearly that the Catholics stopped receiving Government aid in 1915.
Thus, whereas the Protestant Alliance which already had buildings at Kikuyu, erected earlier (by a Government grant for another purpose)\(^1\) on 100 acres of land donated by the Church of Scotland Mission\(^2\), could afford to plan for a secondary school with the assurance of a recurrent grant from the Government, the Catholics did not have buildings ready for such a school, and even the most optimistic among them could not have counted on the Government giving them a recurrent grant immediately in spite of the provisions of the 1924 Education Ordinance, and the promises of 1925. Past experience had taught the Catholics that they could not take things for granted\(^3\) and future developments were to prove them right.\(^4\)

The Catholic authorities therefore decided to respond to the 1924 Education Ordinance realistically: they would make attempts to get a Government grant but would not count on receiving it, and they would concentrate on teacher education to begin with and aim at embarking on secondary education as soon as the first qualified products of Kabaa could form a class. They figured that they would be able to achieve this goal at earliest in 1927; but they revised this date to 1930 after failing to get the expected grant.

The recommendation for the expansion of African education was the responsibility of the Central Advisory Committee on Native Education, a government controlled organ on which missionary bodies were fairly well represented. It was this committee that recommended the starting of Alliance High School as a grant-aided secondary school under

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1. A medical school.
2. KIA: 1/57C: Letter No. 905/5 from Mr. Scott to the Colonial Secretary, dated 23 May 1929.
3. Appendix X.
4. The Catholic Central School, Kabaa did not get a Government grant until the third year after its foundation, and the High School not until the fifth year of its existence, except for a small grant at the rate of a Primary School.
the auspices of the Alliance of Protestant Missions in Kenya. The Catholic representatives on the Central Advisory Committee agreed to the recommendation to establish this purely Protestant School at Kikuyu on the explicit understanding that the Catholics should be allowed to start a similar school when they wished to do so at a later date. This condition was accepted by the then Director of Education, Mr. J.R. Orr, and the Protestant Alliance representative, Mr. W. Blaikie; a promise was then made by the Central Advisory Committee and is recorded under item 9 of the minutes of the sixth meeting of the Committee held on 9 and 10 June 1925, which was chaired by the Ag. Colonial Secretary, Mr. Northcote. Item 9 reads in part:

"That the Scheme suggested by the Protestant Alliance of Missions for the commencement of a High School being on the lines suggested by the Phelps-Stokes Commission, be favourably considered by the Government with a view to providing the necessary funds on the 1926 Estimates, and that the corollary of this is that when the Roman Catholic Missions are ready, their High School will meet with similar financial support from the Government." 4

When the matter reached the Governor's Executive Council the following minute was recorded:

"Council further advised that similar financial assistance, though not a similar grant of buildings, be given to the Roman Catholics when they are prepared to start a similar school provided Government is satisfied that such a school was necessary."

The Director of Education and Mr. (J.N.) Arthur were present. 5

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3. Minutes of Central Advisory Committee meeting of 9 and 10 June 1925.
4. KNA: 1/572: Letter No. 905/5 from the Director of Education to the Ag. Colonial Secretary Nairobi, dated 23 May 1929.
5. KNA: 1/572 Minutes of the Executive Council dated 4 August 1925. (cited in Mr. Orr's letter to the Colonial Secretary).
Although the above minute of the Executive Council approved in principle that the Roman Catholics were entitled to a High School, and committed the Government to giving financial aid to such a school when started, it did vary the recommendation of the Central Advisory Committee in two respects, first by ruling that the financial assistance given to the Roman Catholic School would not include a building grant similar to that given to the Alliance High School, and secondly by leaving it to the Government to decide on the timing of the start of the school at its own discretion. This latter provision was to lead to many frustrations on the part of the Catholics when they at last decided to start a High School.

It should be outlined here that the Alliance High School started in buildings which had been erected in 1922 from public funds supplied by the Government. The buildings had at that time been intended for a medical school ("open to all natives in East Africa") to be run by the Alliance of Protestant Missions, to train medical orderlies. The scheme did not work properly, and so after the Education Ordinance of 1924, the Protestant Alliance began to consider asking the Government for permission to divert the buildings for the purpose of a secondary school for Africans.

The Central Advisory Committee on African Education agreed to this request and recommended at its meeting of June 1925 that Government approve it; accordingly the Executive Council meeting of 4 August 1925 approved the recommendation.

As already stated the Catholics were quite happy about this arrangement, after the acceptance in principle both by the Director of Education on behalf of the Government and the Protestant representatives

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1. This money was from the East African War Relief Fund.
2. KNA: 1/572 - cited in Mr. Orr's letter to the Colonial Secretary: op. cit.
that they were free to start a similar school of their own as soon as they were ready to do so and that the Government would give them some financial assistance. They were not worried about the provision that a similar building grant to that given to the Alliance High School would not be made available to them.

Meanwhile they proceeded to consolidate their work at Kabaa before deciding on the advance to secondary work. Fr. C.T. MacKamara and Mgr. J. Brandsma and Fr. Michael Mitte were definitely of the opinion that the secondary school should be started when the first lot of Kabaa pupils reached and passed the standard VII Elementary C. level. They envisaged that the best of these pupils would advance on to the secondary level, while the large majority of the others would be trained for the professions especially teaching in order to make possible an increase in the number of primary schools and pupils, thus gradually laying a broad base for feeding the secondary school and for further expansion in other fields.

It all appeared to be so easy and straightforward. The Catholic Memorandum on education presented to the Government in 1927 had indicated that steps were in hand to advance on to the foundation of a Catholic High School as soon as the necessary grants were available. However, casual approaches on the subject made informally through the Central Advisory Committee, and also behind the scenes, soon indicated to them that some kind of obstacle was in the way, since no permission appeared to be forthcoming.

The Catholic authorities in Kenya perhaps sensing that they were unlikely to get the grant without top level diplomatic intervention, appear to have referred the matter to Rome: for in 1928 Rome appointed

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1. Mgr. Brandsma was the Secretary to the Catholic Ordinaries (i.e. Bishops) of Kenya.
2. The Catholics were apparently unaware of the Executive Council's intention to time the establishment of the school at the Government's discretion.
the eminent educationist, Mgr. Arthur Hinsley, Rector of the English College in Rome, as Apostolic Visitor to East Africa to negotiate the delicate issues involved. Mgr. Hinsley, (later to become Cardinal and Archbishop of Westminster), an Englishman, arrived in Kenya in the latter part of 1928 and immediately set to work. In the first week of November 1928, he chaired a conference of Catholic Bishops, at which it was decided that the long awaited Catholic High School would start at Kabaa in January 1930. This information was communicated to the Director of Education by Fr. Witte, and Mgr. Brandsma, in mid 1929. Their action set in motion a marathon series of correspondence between the Catholics and the Government, the Protestants and the Government, and within the Government machinery itself. The gist of the correspondence boils down to the fact that both the Government and the Protestants did not wish to have another secondary school in Kenya; though each party had different reasons for its stand.

The Catholics became disillusioned; they had always taken in good faith the 1925 promise to allow them to start a High School, when they were ready, as having been sincerely made. Now they realised that by their delay they had allowed themselves to run into snags. A new struggle reminiscent of that of founding the Kabaa site and that of getting a grant and more land for the Catholic Central School Kabaa, now ensued.

Fr. Witte's letter to the Director of Education concerning the High School, which started the ball rolling, reads as follows:

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2. KMA: 1/1856: Letter of Fr. Witte to the Director of Education dated 4 May 1929, in which he asked for grants for Kabaa High School in 1930.
"Following the decision of the Catholic Bishops' Conference, held in Nairobi (from) 5 to 7 November 1928, under the chairmanship of the Apostolic Visitor, Bishop Hinsley, it was decided to begin in 1930 the future Catholic High School at Kabaa. We presume that the Education Department will duly recognise Kabaa as a "C" school, while maintaining its special characteristics as a Training School for teachers.

"We should like to know, before incurring expenses in building and equipment, how far this High School would fall in with Government plans, and to what extent we may depend on Government for capital and recurrent expenditure." ¹

But the letter which sparked off the controversy was that of Mgr. Brandsma, Vicar Apostolic of the Hill Hill Mission in Kisumu, Secretary to the Catholic Ordinaries in Kenya, who had been the Catholic representative on the Board of Education since 1911, and who was one of the Catholic representatives on the Central Advisory Committee on Native Education. An extremely forceful character who often clashed with the new Director of Education (Mr. H.J. Scott), Mgr. Brandsma wrote a powerfully argued letter ² to the Director of Education requesting the Government to honour its pledge to the Catholics and allow them to establish a grant-aided Catholic High School, similar to the Alliance High School. In the letter he reminded the Director of Education of the events of 1925, and said that the Catholics were now ready to start their High School. He went on:

"Catholic educational activities of the last couple of years are rapidly leading to this; (we) are prepared to open this High School in January 1930, temporary (sic) at Kabaa Training College, for one or at the utmost two years.

The High School is however to find a permanent home at Limuru, where a hundred acres will be put at its disposition (sic)." ³

¹ KIA: 1/1356: Letter of Fr. Witte to the Director of Education, op. cit.
³ Ibid.
Mgr. Brandsma went on to say that the Catholics were prepared to start the building at Limuru once the Government assistance was assured, and asked that expenditure both capital and recurrent should be shared with Government "as happens with Alliance High School", adding that the Catholics fully consented to the idea of a Board of Management with Government representatives if the latter so desired.¹

He had thrown down the challenge.

The New Director of Education, Mr. Scott, was himself as forceful as Mgr. Brandsma if not more. The two were to clash often over fundamental issues and procedures, as for instance in 1931 when Mgr. Brandsma wrote a scathing article in the East African Standard attacking Mr. Scott's Annual Education Report of 1929 (after it was belatedly published) criticising among other things missionary education.

As a result of Mgr. Brandsma's letter of 11 May 1929, Mr. Scott studied the background to the issue carefully and wrote a minute to the Acting Colonial Secretary² outlining the main proposals and recommendations of the General Advisory Committee up to date and also the decisions of the Executive Council on the matter at various stages. He concluded by recommending that the idea be rejected:

"I am of the opinion that the time has not yet arrived for the establishment of such a school. If, however, I reply to that effect, then I shall appear to commit the Government irrevocably to the principle of a Roman Catholic High School ³ at Limuru and shall merely postpone the

² Ibid: Letter No. 905/5, Scott to the Ag. Colonial Secretary of 23 May 1929.
³ This is a peculiar statement considering that the Government had in 1925 already committed itself to the principle of a Catholic High School.
day on which the Government will be called upon to make heavy grants to what will in my opinion be for many years an unnecessary institution close to an expensive institution." 2

Mr. Scott then went on to explain that the standard of admission to a High School at the time was the Elementary "C" School Certificate Examination, and quoted the numbers of the entries and successful candidates in the examinations during the three previous years, as follows:

Table Number 3: Elementary C candidates entered and those who passed - 1926 - 1928.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of the Examination (Elementary &quot;C&quot;)</th>
<th>1926</th>
<th>1927</th>
<th>1928</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of candidates entered</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of candidates passed</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

He explained that the number and percentage of successful candidates at these examinations did not indicate that a second High School was desirable. Going on he commented:

"It is not possible to justify the establishment of two High Schools on the basis of an annual possible field of recruitment of some 50 or 60 pupils." 3

What the Director of Education did not say was how the numbers of successful candidates were distributed between the Catholics and the Protestants. Considering that a Catholic School had been approved in principle the crucial point was whether the Catholics were able to raise the necessary number of successful candidates. In fact judging by the Kaban results one gets the

1. KMA: 1/572: Letter No. 905/5 op. cit.
2. This expensive institution was the Alliance High School.
3. KMA: 1/572: Letter No. 905/5 op. cit.
impression that the school alone could have filled its secondary class every year from 1929 up to 1934 and a little beyond. Besides, after 1927 there were other Catholic Schools run by the Mill Hill Fathers and the Consolata Fathers respectively, which would act as feeders. Mr. Scott's arguments therefore were glaringly inconsistent. Whether his attitude was caused by his unfamiliarity with the job or by an unconscious dislike for the Catholics (or missionaries in general) is difficult to say. What is clear from the records is that he was not being goaded on by the Government;¹ on the contrary his minutes to Kenya's Colonial Secretary show that it was he who wished to push the issue through. However, whether it would have made much difference if the more genial Mr. Orr had not been replaced by Mr. Scott as Director of Education in 1929 is not easy to say either, though from the Catholic point of view the situation might have been better since they would have been talking to the same individuals who had promised them a High School.

It appears that Mr. Scott was motivated by his pet belief that inter-denominational (in effect non-denominational) schools were better than denominational schools. When the issue of the Catholic High School became very hot, he even tried to persuade the Government to reverse its decision on the Alliance High School by making it virtually non-denominational, without realising the legal implications of his suggestion.

2. The Suggestion to Offer Catholic Pupils Places at Alliance High School

In April 1929 the Kenya Missionary Council (Protestant) perhaps wishing to forestall the establishment of a rival secondary school, suggested to the Central Advisory Committee that:

¹ As is evident from KNA: 1/572, Letters No. 905/5 and 905/11.
"The Alliance High School, under its present constitution affords equal educational facilities for students of all faiths, and recommends to the Board of Governors that sympathetic consideration be given to the hostel accommodation for students other than Protestants." 

As part of his argument against the idea of a Catholic School, Mr. Scott now turned to the above suggestion of the Kenya Missionary Council as the best compromise. He formed the opinion that it was "evident" that the Kenya Missionary Council was prepared "to abandon the definitely Protestant colour of the school." He was actually wrong in this surmise. The Protestants were not offering the Catholics or other non-Protestants parity in the Alliance High School venture; they were offering places to pupils to be admitted on the terms of the Kenya Missionary Council. Mr. Scott ought to have sensed this, since he pointed out to the Colonial Secretary the fact that the 100 acres belonging to the Alliance High School had been donated by the Church of Scotland Mission strictly on the understanding that the school was to be carried on under the auspices of the Protestant Alliance. He went on:

"It seems to me that any offer of the Protestant Alliance to allow a Roman Catholic Hostel to be attached to the school is illusory. The Roman Catholics will probably regard it as insincere."  

The Roman Catholics, however, were never given the opportunity to reject the offer, and there is every reason to believe that they would, in any case, have rejected it. What happened was that the Protestants quickly clarified their position in regard to their proposal of a hostel for, say, Roman Catholics. Such a hostel they said, if erected on Alliance High School property, must be built

1. The constitution did not provide for Catholic or Muslim representation on the Board of Governors.  
2. KNA: 1/572: Letter No. 905/5, op. cit., in which Mr. Scott quoted from a Memorandum of the Kenya Missionary Council, dated 11 April 1929, to the Central Advisory Committee on Native Education.  
3. Ibid.  
4. Ibid.
from funds supplied by the Government, and if built by the Roman Catholics it was up to the latter to find some land nearby for the purpose. ¹

Mr. Scott next suggested that the constitution of the Alliance High School be changed to secure the following provisions: the representation of Roman Catholics on the Governing Body, on the teaching staff as vacancies arose, as well as on the Board of Trustees; he further suggested that the name of the school be altered to suit this arrangement and that assistance be made (presumably by the Government) towards the erection of a hostel for Roman Catholic pupils. Mr. Scott went on to say that if the Protestants refused to agree to these terms then the Government should go ahead and give the Catholics their own High School as agreed in 1925. If on the other hand the Protestants agreed to co-operate but the Catholics refused then the Government would be in a position to review the whole matter.²

The Protestants rejected the idea out of hand at their meeting of 27 May 1929.³ On receipt of a copy of the excerpt from the Protestant Alliance the Director of Education appears to have lost patience with this body, as is evident from another minute to the Secretary, in which he said among other things:

"I see no hope of getting any agreement while the missionaries are so intransigent. I would like to point out to these missionaries that there is another course open to the Government apart from that of subsidising separate high schools for Protestants and Roman Catholics, and that is the withdrawal of the grant to the Alliance High School and the reconstitution of the school as a Government School even if legislation is necessary to secure that end."⁴

¹ KNIA: 1/572: Excerpt from Minutes of the Representative Council of the Alliance of Protestant Missions held on 27 May 1929, quoted by Mr. Scott in his minute to the Colonial Secretary, already quoted.
² Ibid.
³ Ibid.
⁴ KNIA: 1/572: Letter No. 905/11, Scott to the Colonial Secretary, dated 5 June 1929.
The Colonial Secretary thought the Director of Education was now going a bit too far and advised that the course which the latter had suggested in his earlier minute was more appropriate since Mr. Scott's new suggestions introduced:

"...consideration of principles which would require to be weighed very carefully by Government, and which does (sic) not seem desirable to ventilate at this stage."1

Mr. Scott now sought an interview with the Secretary of the Protestant Alliance, Mr. W. Blaikie,2 and the latter wrote back saying that the Director of Education might wish to attend the final session of the Representative Council of the Protestant Alliance, on 31 July 1929.3

Meanwhile Mgr. Brandsma wrote to the Director of Education to find out why he had received no reply to his letter of 11 May 1929, and requested that the matter receive urgent attention "in view of the forthcoming Estimates."4 Mr. Scott, apparently anxious to know first the results of his projected interview with the Protestant Alliance on 31 July, wrote back to Mgr. Brandsma saying that the matter had not been over-looked, and that he would be in a position to write to him on the issue shortly. He, however, added that he did not propose to "make any provision in the Estimates for 1930 "as the numbers of pupils for secondary education do not at present justify the recognition of a second High School."5

Mr. Scott's meeting with the Representative Council of the Protestant Alliance failed to achieve the results that he had in mind.

1. KNA: 1/572: Letter No. ED/9/1/2/5 of 18 June 1929 from the Colonial Secretary to Mr. Scott.
3. Ibid: Letter of Mr. Blaikie to Scott dated 1 July 1929.
4. Also Letter 905/16 of 2 July 1929, Scott to Blaikie.
In his address to the meeting he made his position quite clear concerning the points "over which the Alliance was most adamant", and tried to make the meeting see "how ridiculous" some of them were. Pointing out that the Catholics had asked for a school at Limuru, he said:

"If we establish a Roman Catholic High School at Limuru we create two institutions doing similar work with numbers which for some time to come must be seriously below (those) required to secure efficiency."

He told them quite bluntly that their offer to the Catholics was so insincere that he was certain that if they were to be in the current shoes of the Roman Catholics and the latter were giving them such an offer they would certainly consider it offensive and insincere. He went on.

".....if that is your ideal of Christian cooperation with those who differ from you hardly at all in fundamental matters of creed, it is not mine.

"I would like you to look at the proposal more dispassionately and objectively. You propose still to conduct the school on definitely Protestant lines. You say you will admit children of another denomination living in a special hostel outside the school grounds. What are you offering the Roman Catholics?

"Suppose the Aga Khan were to secure land at Kikuyu and erect a hostel for Khoja Mohammedans, would you refuse admission to these boys? In effect I must tell you that your invitation to the Roman Catholics is illusory."

Mr. Scott went on to suggest that a fair offer would be to change the connotation of the word Alliance. It must not stand for the Alliance of Protestant Missions, he said, but the Alliance of all those interested in the education of the African.

1. KNA: 1/572: Remarks of Mr. Scott at the Protestant Alliance Meeting of 31 July 1929 op. cit.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
His plea, however, failed to move the members of the Protestant Alliance from their basic stand. Fortunately for them Mr. Scott made other remarks which helped them frame their objection more diplomatically. These remarks of Mr. Scott were to the effect that:

"...in my opinion we should not look forward to the development of an institution going beyond the stage of the Alliance High School in Kenya for any time that we could envisage, but we should rather give our support to Makerere."¹

Mr. Scott added that he did look forward to the time when other high schools would be opened and also to the possibility of denominational schools. He however, soon realised that by the latter statement he had let the cat out of the bag. He disclosed this impression in his minute to the Colonial Secretary.²

"The effect of these statements of mine was that the member (sic) of the Representative Council proceeded to regard my proposals as of a temporary nature, and I repeatedly emphasised that the use of the word 'temporary' could only be allowed if 'temporary' meant indefinite."³

After the departure of Mr. Scott,⁴ the members of the Representative Council then passed two resolutions on the matter in question. The first resolution said that as a result of the unanimous opinion of the Dar-es-Salaam Conference of the Directors of Education that Makerere was to become the University College of East Africa, which implied that the Alliance High School would be one of several similar High Schools from which students would proceed direct to Makerere College, the Council was not prepared to agree to the alteration of the constitution of the school⁵ since such

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¹ KNA: 1/572: Remarks of Mr. Scott at the Protestant Alliance Meeting of 31 July 1929, op. cit. Minute No. 905/26 of 16 August 1929, addressed to the Colonial Secretary by Mr. Scott. Also: Kenya Education Annual Report 1929 pages 16 sqq.
² KNA: 1/572: Letter No. 905/26, op. cit.
³ Ibid.
⁴ Mr. H.S. Scott was the Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Alliance High School (ex-officio).
⁵ KNA: 1/572: Extract from a letter dated 1 August 1929 from Mr. W. Blaikie to Mr. Scott.
an action was likely to prejudice the position of the Protestant Alliance in relation to the school.¹

The second resolution reads as follows:--

"As regards the admission of Roman Catholic students to the Alliance High School, the council reaffirms its readiness, in accordance with the provisions of the constitution, to admit such students to the full privileges of the school and further, if and when the numbers justify it, to consider the setting aside of special accommodation for them, provided that the cost of any necessary extra buildings be met by Government, and that, at the end of five years the whole position be reviewed."²

The result of Mr. Scott's interview with the Representative Council of the Protestant Missions, therefore, was to make them more adamant on their previous stand.

After the Director of Education's letter³ to the Colonial Secretary, the former has called in to brief the Governor personally on the matter. As a result of the briefing the Colonial Secretary sent a communication to the Director of Education which reads in part:

"(a)..............give the Governing Body of the Alliance High School to understand (sic) the Government must regard with strong disfavour the existence of so strong a sectarian bias in the control of an institution which was in the main established with funds intended for the benefit of all Africans without distinction as to creed; and

(b)..............ascertain whether Government is legally able on those grounds to insist upon measures to broaden the control of the school and give it a more catholic character."⁴

¹ KNA: 1/572: Extract from a letter dated 1 August 1929 from Mr. W. Blaikie to Mr. Scott.
² Ibid.
³ KNA: 1/572: Letter No. 905/26, op. cit.
⁴ "Catholic" here does not imply Roman Catholic.
⁵ KNA: 1/572: Letter No. A/5D/9/1/2/11 of 29 August 1929, from the Colonial Secretary to the Director of Education.
The issue was gradually turning into one of national importance. Surprisingly the forceful and somewhat unpredictable Mr. Scott wrote back to the Colonial Secretary disagreeing with the contents of the latter's letter, and insinuating that that was not really what the Governor had said at his interview with Mr. Scott. He said that the Governor had merely asked him (Mr. Scott) to summon Dr. J.W. Arthur and interview him on the matter, though it was felt that this was unlikely to alter the Protestant stand. Mr. Scott then went on to point out the core of the problem:

"There is evidently a real fear of the Roman Catholics in the ranks of the Protestants. How far this is a relic of mediaevalism and how far it is a product of fundamentalism in its modern aspect it is difficult to say. I am inclined to think it is a survival of mediaevalism."4

Then Mr. Scott introduced his pet subject of inter-denominationalism. He wrote:

"I have pointed out to His Excellency that my scheme for organisation of African Education involves the principle of interdenominational schools of Grade "C"... If the Government reject that scheme (at this level) it will be difficult to press the principle at the High School stage, though not impossible."5

The ensuing exchange of minutes between the Colonial Secretary and the Director of Education eventually dragged in the Attorney General. The latter advised that only legislation declaring the Alliance High School to be a Government school would work, but he pointed out that that would be a grave step since the British

1. Namely A/ED/9/1/2/11, op. cit.
2. KNA: 1/572: Letter No. 905/29 of 6 September 1929, Scott to the Colonial Secretary.
3. Dr. J.W. Arthur of the Church of Scotland Mission was the key figure in the foundation of the Alliance High School, and his church had donated the 100 acres of land on which the Alliance High School was built.
5. Ibid.
Secretary of State in London would have to give his consent.

The Attorney General then came out with the important revelation of the real problem standing in the way of the Government. He said:

"Secondly...would this Government be prepared to face the odium which it would undoubtedly incur amongst Protestant bodies in the Colony and at home if such legislation were passed?

"Questions would be asked in the House of Commons...."

4. The Suggestion of a Government High School

The Attorney General went on to suggest that in the circumstances the best course was to leave the Alliance High School alone and to assist the Roman Catholics in the way they asked, and to meet the demand of the natives for a Government School, in addition, in the hope that the passage of years will provide sufficient pupils to fill all these institutions. He went on:

"It is true that the acceptance of these proposals will involve Government in considerable expenditure, but by allowing the Alliance High School ever to be in Protestant hands Government has, it may be argued, committed itself to this course, unless Government considers that the interests of the public weal are so contrary to the adoption of this course as to render imperative the passing or overriding legislation."

It appears from the above quotations that the Attorney General was politely laying the blame on the Education Department for having recommended the idea in the first place. Mr. Scott, however, did not agree with him, as this meant "the acceptance of denominational schools." He still was of the opinion that the Protestant Alliance should be pressurised to change the deed without legislation. Then he proceeded to suggest other alternatives:

1. The Underlining is mine.
2. KNA: 1/572: Letter No. L.5004/19/2. op.cit.
3. Ibid:
"...one argument that would appeal to the Protestant Alliance, (is) the argument that Government is always at liberty to withdraw the grants-in-aid of the Alliance High School..."

This, however, Mr. Scott explained, amounted to a threat and could be done only if the threat was to be given effect, which in practical terms would mean the erection of a Government High School. He disclosed that in the "Kikuyu Province" alone, funds would be available from Local Native Councils to the amount of between £10,000 and £15,000, which could be utilized for this purpose. He suggested that the matter be referred to the Executive Council.1

This was done, and the Executive Council referred the matter back to the Central Advisory Council on Native Education.2 The Colonial Secretary went on to instruct the Director of Education as follows:

"His Excellency further directed that you should notify Monsignor Brandsma accordingly and intimate that no provision will be included in the estimates of 1930 for a Roman Catholic High School for Africans."3

Accordingly, Mr. Scott wrote to Mgr. Brandsma4 who on receiving the letter sought an urgent interview with the Director of Education; this he was accorded in early January 1930.5

3. The Catholics Start the High School Unofficially

Meanwhile Fr. Witte, ignoring the delaying tactics, went ahead and started the Catholic High School at Kabaa in January 1930,

2. Ibid: Letter No. A/ED/9/1/23 of 16 November 1929, from the Colonial Secretary to the Director of Education.
3. Ibid:
4. Ibid:
5. KHA: 1/572: Letter No. 905/66 of 25 November 1929, Scott to Brandsma
following on the decision of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of 1923, and apparently encouraged by the protective presence of the powerful Mgr. Hinsley. The latter, who had arrived in East Africa as Apostolic Visitor in 1928, had since been elevated by Rome to the status of Apostolic Delegate to East Africa, a title which gave him added influence.

Twenty seven boys formed the first class of the new High School, and Fr. Witte wrote:

"The start is rather unofficial and outside Kabaa nobody so far is aware of it. The High School is a child of Providence still more than was the case for the starting (sic) Training School."3

It appears from the first sentence of the above quotation that the unofficial start of Kabaa High School was a personal decision of Fr. Witte, and that the Catholic hierarchies, who were presumably waiting for official Government approval, had not yet given him the green light as late as March 1930. Fr. Witte, however, always an optimist and being very much aware of the delaying tactics in Government circles and undue opposition among the Protestant ranks, knew fully well that unless he took a bold step it would take some years before the school was officially started. He had nothing to lose by starting unofficially, and he could always stop the project if this action became necessary; besides, His Grace Dr. Hinsley was around and had already given his consent at the Catholic Bishops' Conference of November 1928, for the school to start in 1930. Fr. Witte, however, had another reason why he thought it a good idea to start unofficially. He wrote:

"Perhaps (sic) better that the High School first show success, before showing itself before the public. Will it succeed? Will it remain at Kabaa? Shauri ya kiumu. It seems it must succeed."4

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2. See Appendix IX (ii)
4. Ibid.
He had similarly started in 1929 experimentally with four pupils in preparation for the big start in 1930; the private pilot scheme had given him considerable confidence in Kabaa's ability to make a success of the secondary programme. The four who started in 1929 were: Cyrilus Ojoo, Paul Njoroje, Stefan Kimani, and Lukas Kibe.  

The 1930 class began with the now familiar spectacle of voicing and signing a declaration to follow the course to its finish and to serve the Catholic Missions for five years after that.  

Sometime after March 1930 Fr. Witte let the Catholic hierarchies know the plunge he had taken. As a result Mgr. Brandsma, in his capacity as Secretary to the Council of Catholic Ordinaries in Kenya, wrote to the Director of Education early in May reminding him of an unanswered earlier letter, and adding:

"You will have been informed no doubt by Fr. Witte from Kabaa that an actual start has been made and that some 27 students form the first class."  

As Fr. Witte had obviously figured, the tactic worked. Mr. Scott, the Director of Education, had no legal grounds to stop the venture, and he wrote to the Colonial Secretary saying that:

"I am afraid that the delay has given the Roman Catholics an opportunity of taking action to which no objection can be raised on educational grounds, but which makes it very difficult to resist their claim for assistance in regard to pupils taking Secondary work. I propose to pay grants in respect of the pupils at Kabaa on the same basis as they are now being paid in a Primary School and to tell the Secretary to the Council of Catholic Ordinaries that the development of the Kabaa institution into a Primary School with a Secondary department is noted and that consideration will be given to that development in the amount of grant to be allocated next

1. Lukas Kibe was the first Kabaa student to go to Makerere College; he later became an Assistant Agricultural Officer, and was killed by Mau Mau while on duty in the 1950's, a tribute to the Kabaa spirit and principles.
2. For the text of the Promise see Appendix IX(i) and for the full list of the 1930 secondary class see Appendix IX(ii).
3. KHA: 1/572: Letter No. ED/6/1930, of 5 May 1930, Brandsma to the Director of Education.
year, but that the general policy of the Government in regard
to the secondary institutions cannot be yet defined.\textsuperscript{1}

The Colonial Secretary quickly approved this suggestion,\textsuperscript{2} and
Mr. Scott wrote to Mgr. Brandsma accordingly.\textsuperscript{3}

But as late as April 1931 the approval of the High School and
its promised grant had not come, and Mgr. Brandsma was compelled to
write to Mr. Scott reminding him of the matter. In the letter he said
among other things:

"Owing to the financial condition of the Colony, we feel that
it would be unreasonable to press for a substantial grant at
the present time.

As however two classes of High Education are already being
followed by a large number of pupils, temporary in Kabaa, we
feel that we may with confidence ask that some considerable
consideration may be given in respect of Boarding and
Equipment.

Fr. Witte, the Principal of Kabaa School, has been asked to
supply you with the particulars in the 1932 Estimates."\textsuperscript{4}

The Director of Education's reply, signed for him by Mr. Biss,
said that his Department knew that at the end of 1930 there had been at
Kabaa two secondary classes; one of 22 and the other of 4 boys.\textsuperscript{5}

The letter went on to say that full consideration would be given
to Fr. Witte's estimates for 1932 but that no promise could be made at
that stage.\textsuperscript{6} Fr. Witte's High School estimates for 1931 had been
ignored due to the need to await "reorganization of African Education,"\textsuperscript{7}
his said.

\begin{itemize}
  \item[1.] KNA: 1/572: Letter No. 905/70 of 14 May 1930 Scott to the Colonial
  Secretary.
  \item[2.] Ibid: Letter No. ED/9/1/2/32 of 29 May 1930. The Colonial Secretary
to Scott.
  \item[3.] Ibid: Letter No. 905/72 of 2 June 1930, Scott to Brandsma.
  \item[4.] Ibid: Letter ED/17/1931 of 18 April 1931, Brandsma to Scott.
  \item[5.] Ibid: Letter No. 905/75 of 27 April 1931 (N.B. Actually there were
  23 pupils in Form I and 4 pupils in Form II).
  \item[6.] Ibid: Letter No. 905/75 op.cit.
  \item[7.] Ibid: Letter No. 905/68 of 14 May 1930, Scott to Brandsma.
\end{itemize}
Be that as it may, Kabaa High School was subsidised beginning from 1932 on the basis of a Primary School at the rate of Sh. 150 per pupil per year plus primary salaries for teachers, where Alliance High School was receiving a proper High School grant of Sh. 700 per pupil per year, which amount covered expenses other than "erection of buildings and permanent furnishings and equipment," that fell under a separate grant. It should be noted that the Alliance High School pupils paid fees at the rate of 125/- per pupil per year, whereas Kabaa charged no fees at all to its pupils, prior to 1935.

Throughout the period 1931-1933, Fr. Witte wrote many letters to the Director of Education asking for grants, but the Director of Education's replies were all negative, except a few.

4. Problems over the Grant for the High School

The combined grant to all Kabaa schools (at the Primary School rate) for 1932 was £2,207. Fr. Witte's passionate appeals that the number of secondary pupils receiving a grant be increased was not heeded and nothing was done until mid-1934. The Director of Education broke the good news of a proper secondary grant for 1934, in June 1933. In his letter to Fr. Witte he asked for an Annual Report from Kabaa to enable him to prepare the draft estimates for 1934. He enclosed a "copy of the rules governing grants for secondary schools for Africans."

1. KHA: 1/1026: Alliance High School (file)
   Letter No. 62/211 of 14 May 1930, and


3. For instance: KHA: 1/1856: Fr. Witte's letters of the following dates: 1931: 18 August; 30 September; 3 October; 6 November; and 5 December; 1932: 1 April; 30 June and 10 September.

4. KHA: 1/1856: Letter No. 170/163 of 23 December 1931
   Letter No. 170/173 of 19 September 1932
   Letter No. 73/117 of 11 January 1932
   Letter No. 1467/3 of 26 January 1933.

He stressed that the boys who were at that time in training for the Primary School Teachers' Certificate were not qualified for the grant. Going on, the Director of Education said that one of the effects of recognising Kabaa as a school earning a grant at secondary level would be that Fr. Witte would have to divide and keep quite distinct, the expenditure in respect of boys below the secondary stage, and boys in the secondary stage. The Director also stressed that the mission had to bear a certain percentage of the expenditure at secondary level, and disclosed that it was being discussed to reduce the secondary grant per pupil per year from £35 to £30.1

Fr. Witte sent in a meticulously prepared report and the estimates according to the "Rules". He detailed out all the teachers and their salaries, at Primary level, and included half salaries for those of the teachers who would be involved for half the time with secondary work. He had decided after consulting the Education Secretary, Fr. Mackenara, that two of the requirements mentioned in the Director of Education's letter could not be easily complied with at Kabaa due to the nature of the organization there. These provisions were: the need to keep the staff and budget of the Secondary section separate and distinct from that of the Primary section, and the provision that those pupils undergoing a teacher training course would not be eligible for a grant. The former requirement was difficult because there were only four European teachers each of whom was qualified in a different field so that they had to divide the work in each section; Brother Florian, for instance could only teach technical subjects and had to cater for these subjects both in the Primary and Secondary sections. The other requirement was difficult to meet because from 1932 teacher training as such was not treated as a separate subject at Kabaa; the current practice was that all pupils in the higher classes of the Primary School, and all students in the Secondary Section studied the theory and methods of teaching as a subject of the

1. KNA: 1/1856: Letter No. 170/194 of 9 June 1933, Mr. Scott to Fr. Witte.
2. Three priests, one European Brother (Florian), Four African teachers, and 2 African technical instructors.
ordinary school curriculum, and received some practical teaching in the
cut-schools whenever time could be found or during the holidays. It
was therefore not possible to separate pupils who were undergoing
teacher training and those who weren't; certainly not in the secondary
school.

The only provisions in the Director of Education's letter which
did not bother Fr. Witte were the need for the Catholics to foot a
definite part of the bill for secondary education, and the envisaged
reduction of the grant per pupil from £35 to £30 per annum, which
presumably was to affect the Protestants as well.

Fr. Witte's reply to the Director of Education pointed out these
matters. It also explained that there were in 1933 seven Kabaa students
preparing for the Senior Secondary Examination: these were the ones
destined to become the "Native" teachers of the High School. The rest
of the High School pupils included 25 preparing for the Junior
Secondary Examination in 1933, 21 boys who were that year in Form I, and
27 others who had passed the Primary Examination in 1932, but were
following a preparatory course before entering Form I in 1934. These
made a total of 30 pupils who he expected to be still on the roll in
1934. Thus taking into account those to be recruited after passing the
Primary School Examination in 1933, there was likely to be a total of
100 pupils or more in Kabaa Secondary School. He said that he had
enough buildings for 120 secondary school pupils in 1934, but
nevertheless intended to restrict the total intake to 100, to allow
for 200 Primary School pupils, who would bring the complete school
population to 300. His estimates took account of these figures.

1. This, according to Fr. John Reidy, was the only year when the Kabaa
pupils sat for the Senior Secondary Examination. The next class to
reach that level were two Form III pupils who were transferred
from Kabaa to Lang'ata in 1940, in which year they sat the Cambridge
School Certificate. One of them was Stephen Kioni, later to become
the first Secretary-General of the Kenya National Union of Teachers.
The table below\(^1\) gives a simple breakdown of his proposals set against the grant for 1933; the latter had been for a total of 135 boys both Primary and Secondary.

Table 4: Kabaa High School Estimates for 1934:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1934 Estimates</th>
<th>1933 Grant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Primary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Staff Salaries</td>
<td>£1,400</td>
<td>£750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Staff Salaries</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boarding</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>1,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumable Equipment</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upkeep</td>
<td>nil</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonial Staff Salaries</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Transport and Travel</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tools Handicrafts</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTALS</strong></td>
<td><strong>£2,732</strong></td>
<td><strong>£2,488</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After receiving Fr. Witte's estimates, which did not show separate teachers for Primary and for Secondary, Mr. Scott wrote back asking for the exact amount of time the "part-time" teachers would devote to secondary work.\(^2\) He intimated that his representatives would be visiting Kabaa to establish the facts on the spot, as he was not satisfied with the general idea that all staff give half their time to the Primary School and half to the secondary school.\(^3\)

At this stage, Fr. MacNamara, the Education Secretary for Holy Ghost Missions, entered into the picture. He said that although Fr.

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1. KNA: 1/1856: Fr. Witte's letter of 25 June 1933 to the Director of Education
2. KNA: Letter No. 170/198 of 29 June 1933 Scott to Fr. Witte.
3. This had been explained in Fr. Witte's letter to the Director of Education dated 5 July 1933.
Witte had asked in his estimates for £5220\(^1\) for 1934, it did not mean that the whole amount was to be covered by the grant, since the Catholics were going to raise part of the money.\(^2\) Be that as it may it was two months before the Director's decision on the grant came: it was unpleasant news for the Catholics - not because he decided to give Kabaa only half the amount asked for (£3610) since the Catholics would have accepted this, but because the Director had decided that the Catholics should in receiving a secondary grant of whatever amount, forgo their Primary grant. He wrote:

"It would be convenient to me if you showed this expenditure as expenditure on the High School and did not receive grants in respect of your other activities."\(^3\)

The Catholics had expected a minimum grant of £3,000 divided equally between the Primary and Secondary section,\(^4\) and now they protested. This prompted the Director of Education to write to Bishop Heffernan direct. In the letter\(^5\) he said that he felt it was better to concentrate the Kabaa grant to secondary work, as it was his hope that the Primary section would eventually go elsewhere. He said:

"My hope was that in concentrating the Kabaa grant to the secondary side the Authorities responsible for Catholic education in the colony would see their way to the gradual closing down of Kabaa as a Primary School and its transfer to another place which would gradually qualify for grants."\(^6\)

This was the first time that the decentralisation of Kabaa was officially mentioned. The Director of Education added that he would be prepared to recommend "the arrangement of £1,500 and £1,500" if he could receive an assurance from the Catholic authorities that this would not be interpreted as a definite commitment. He also disclosed that in future it was intended to treat the Kabaa grant as part of the block sum given to all Catholic Schools in Kenya.\(^7\)

1. That is the total for secondary and primary.
2. KNA: 1/1856: Fr. MacNamara's letter to the Director of Education dated 6 July 1933.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
Bishop Heffernan pointed out in his reply that the system of running the two schools side by side made for economy without impairing efficiency and so he could not understand the hurry to scrap it. Besides, he said, the High School was an inter-Vicariate school, whereas the Primary School was solely a Holy Ghost affair: to go ahead with the Director's suggestion therefore would lead to difficulties.  

The Director of Education's next letter did not mention the contents of the Bishop's letter; instead it merely suggested that the Bishop constitute a Governing Body for the school. But if he expected the Bishop to object to this he was disappointed, for the latter wrote back accepting all the proposals and saying that he was ready to submit a list of names for approval. The unpredictable Mr. Scott, however, instead of asking for the list (which is what one would have expected him to do in view of his earlier letter) now merely wrote advising the Bishop to approach Mr. Grieve, the Principal of Alliance High School, to get expert advice on how to form a Governing Body. The Bishop apparently ignored the advice.

Thus it was that by the end of April 1934, when Fr. Witte left for home leave, the much awaited grant for Kabba High School had not arrived.

3. The composition of the Alliance High School Board of Governors was as follows: 1. ex-officio chairman
   4. members appointed by the Representative Council
   2. members of the Kenya Missionary Council from those not represented at Alliance
   3. members appointed by the Government
   2. members of the Legislative Council appointed by the Legislative Council
   2. members to be appointed by the Board of Governors to represent donors of £50 and over, or not less than £5 annually.
In spite of the organizational and financial difficulties which the High School section created for Kabaa, the institution apparently got off to a very good start in 1930. Fr. Witte was to record buoyantly:

"The spirit of the boys is most satisfactory, notwithstanding death, sickness, extra digging work, unusual local food, leaking houses. The study has suffered a lot this year, but the moral and religious formation is the main item."

So attractive was the venture, at least on the surface, that by March 1930 the Principal was being constantly pestered by delegations of pupils from the Government African School Machakos and from Kangu who wished to be admitted to Kabaa School. Fr. Witte had to turn the Machakos ones away each time with the advice that they should finish their education at Machakos, "as they might land Kabaa in trouble." And interestingly enough, in 1931 it was the Local Native Council of Machakos which took up the matter by requesting Kabaa to take some of the pupils from the Machakos Government School; this time they could not be taken because there was no room at the school.

Nevertheless although the reputation of Kabaa remained high in public eyes, the original allure for the students within the school was beginning to wear somewhat, no doubt partly due to the fact that the pioneer phase was over anyway and the school was beginning to grapple with the problems of 'adulthood'; and partly because Fr. Witte's

1. Mainly pure (a mixture of maize and beans).
3. Strangely enough Kangu Catholic mission often barred its pupils from joining Kabaa from around 1923 onwards. The mission apparently thought little of Kabaa education, though the real reason was that Kangu wanted its best pupils for its own Primary School. Defectors from Kangu were always welcome at Kabaa apparently in reprisal.
5. Ibid: entries for 26 September 1931 and 1 November 1931.
ability to give individual attention to pupils and to minute details
was no longer possible with the expanded role and the new dimensions
of the school.

Throughout the period 1930 to 1934 the Kabaa Journal has many
entries of pupils’ complaints to Government officials about kiboko;
then there were other dissatisfactions, desertions as well as
expulsions, although the numbers affected were never very large in any
one case. The majority of the students, nevertheless, can be said to
have been relatively happy and the Kabaa Shujaa spirit still pervaded
the place as can be shown by successes in drill competitions and
football matches with other schools, and by the many visitors who
continued to visit Kabaa, in increasing numbers.

Visitors to Kabaa came in even greater numbers between 1930 and
1934, than they had done in previous years. Some came out of
curiosity, others for the purpose of learning Swahili, while others
came on official visits, e.g. education officials, various P.C.’s and
D.C.’s; the Governor of Kenya Sir Joseph Aloysius Byrne, who
incidentally was a Roman Catholic; the Bishop and other Vicariate
notables such as Fr. Bernard; large deputations of Local Native
Council members from Machakos, Embu, Nyeri, Fort Hall, Kitui and
Nasai Chiefs; the Principal of Alliance High School, Mr. Grieve and

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1. Kabaa played football against such schools as Jeanes School Kabete,
   Alliance High School, the Government African School Machakos, etc.,
   and of all the matches reported in the Kabaa Journal only two games
   were lost, the others being drawn or wins for Kabaa.
2. As for instance Fr. Kuhn of Rangala (Hill Hill Father) who came in
   November 1930; Fr. Grennan from Zanzibar and Fr. Farrelly;
   Fr. Kartelli of the Verona Fathers Uganda with 10 boys: from
   October 1933 to March 1934.
3. L.H.O. members and chiefs from outside Machakos district who
   visited Kabaa became so enthusiastic for the school that they
   insisted on getting more land for the school and abolishing the
   poll tax for adult students. The Nyeri, Kiambu and Fort Hall
   councillors in particular wrote letters to their D.C.’s to request
   this and offered to help pay for compensation to land owners.
4. The Machakos deputation visited the school on 22 September 1931;
   the Kiambu chiefs and L.H.O. members came on 12 July 1932; the
   Nasai chiefs came on 27 February 1933; Kiambu members came a
   second time, with Chief Koinange and Chief Josiah; the Fort Hall
   L.H.O. came on 22-24 June 1933; the Nyeri deputation came in 1933.
his staff; Bishop Re of the Consolata Vicariate of Nyeri; Loreto nuns and many others.

The most official and memorable visits were probably those of June 1932, when the first Apostolic Delegate to East Africa, Archbishop Arthur Hinsley visited the school for the first time since attaining his new status. During the feverish preparations for this important day Fr. Witte in his typical self, forgot to arrange for the Apostolic Delegate's food, of all things. As the band played and the choirs sang for the eminent visitor to Fr. Witte's satisfaction the other priests kept wondering what would happen at the lunch hour. During a brief respite in the performances one of the priests managed to get Fr. Witte's attention and to explain that there was no food for lunch. The quick thinking Fr. Witte was apparently unperturbed and merely gave instructions that the Brother and Norbertus Odondo should go out to the Yatta at once and bring back an animal for lunch. The Apostolic Delegate got his lunch late, but he probably did not know the reason why.¹

Two days after the departure of Archbishop Hinsley from Kabaa, the new Governor of Kenya, Sir Joseph Aloysius Byrne honoured the institution with his visit. The Apostolic Delegate's visit had probably been a preparation for the Governor's visit. In the Governor's entourage was, significantly Mr. Delap, the awesome settler of the vicinity who had recently been elected Member of the Legislative Council for the area.² Only five weeks prior to the Governor's visit Mr. Delap had, soon after his election, surprised his friend Fr. Witte with the unusual request that Kabaa assist him with money to the tune of Shs. 500/- "towards the cost of arranging roads", presumably in preparation for the Governor's visit.³ He had said that if the school did not contribute substantially towards his expenses he would close

¹ Kabaa Journal: entries for 1 to 4 June 1932.
² Interviews with Fr. J. Reidy and Fr. P. White.
⁴ Ibid: entries for April and May 1932, and in later entries.
the road (which passed through his farm) and refuse the school and its visitors the privilege of passage. This was no idle threat, for on many occasions the capricious Mr. Delap had locked the gate and refused to give the key to people proceeding to or from Kabaa. On one occasion he actually barred the Director of Education and his party from passing on their way from Kabaa, thus causing great hardship to the party. In his more sober moments, however, Mr. Delap would allow Fr. Witte to keep a duplicate key to the strategically situated gate that could not be bypassed. On the occasion of the Governor’s visit, nevertheless, Mr. Delap was a perfect gentleman, no doubt wishing His Excellency to have a good impression of the only show place in his constituency. How far his attitude had been improved by the action of Fr. Witte in sending the students to work on the road as the only way of getting out of the difficulty, will never be known. Such were some of Kabaa’s problems.

Then there was the first visit of Bishop Heffernan in December 1932. Kabaa received him liturgically, and the Bishop made history by requiring that:

"As an exceptional favour (he) allows the boys a fortnight’s holiday at home."

The boys had normally spent all their holidays at Kabaa since the start of the school in 1925.

6. **The Perennial Land Problem:**

At the end of 1929 Kabaa had only 25 acres of land, far too little for the expansion that took place in 1930. The Local Native Council in conjunction with the Government had at one time increased

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1. Kabaa Journal: entries for April and May 1932, and in later entries.
2. Ibid: entries for April and May 1932. Also interviews with Fr. Paul White, Fr. Martin Reidy and Fr. John Reidy.
3. Kabaa pupils normally spent all their holidays at the school, during which they followed a strict time table.
the land by 30 acres and then withdrawn the acres before they were officially ceded to Kabaa. The unsinkable Fr. Mitte decided not to give up pressing for more land, since the need for it was obvious, urgent and justified. He was greatly encouraged when the Akamba pupils of the school staged their own drive to get more land for Kabaa on 30 August 1932. The D.C. of Machakos Mr. Brumage, held a big baraza at Kabaa with the African elders who tentatively agreed to give the school an extra 150 acres of land. This increase of land was confirmed by a similar baraza in September of the same year. Fr. Mitte then went to the trouble of getting a trench dug round the whole area concerned and reinforcing the boundary with a heavy hedge of thorns. But six months later another baraza held by the P.C. Mr. LaFontaine who was accompanied by the D.C., Mr. Brumage, decided to reduce the area given earlier by about fifty acres, much to Fr. Mitte's chagrin. It was this that was eventually confirmed for Kabaa.

7. Kabaa Education in the Early 1930s:

The most revealing comments from an independent observer, on the Kabaa programme and Fr. Mitte's ideas about it were made by a reporter of the East African Standard who visited Kabaa in July 1931 and wrote a serialised feature article on the school. He referred to the school as having "something baronial and mediaeval, about the cluster of concrete and brick buildings grouped around the crest of a solitary hill" adding that it was "the last outpost of civilization in that direction." The reporter went on to comment that although it was never mentioned in official Government reports, Kabaa was "a fascinating story." The school, he said, was teaching Africans of all tribes self-respect, discipline, the value and importance of manual work, and the necessity for concentration on the essentials of good honest character.

5. Ibid: entry for 14 March 1933.
When he inquired to know what Fr. Witte was trying to do with the boys he got the answer:

"I am trying to make men of them, but I must admit that they are still children; one doesn't give up hope."  

The reporter commented that these were remarkable words coming from a person for whom Kabaa was a craze. The words clearly indicate that, in spite of the opinion sometimes expressed by his colleagues that Fr. Witte was something of a visionary, he was very much of a realist. As the reporter carefully noted, the secret of Fr. Witte's success with his African charges was that while setting standards for them and insisting that they be reached, he did not expect too much from the pupils. He believed in them and they in turn felt confident and rose to the challenges of the tasks and responsibilities demanded of them. The reporter narrates as others did before him that there was real willing and cooperative effort at the school; no outsider who visited the place could fail to see at a glance that pupils who had been in Fr. Witte's hands for some time "must be better than when they first entered", and that he solidly laid the foundations for a more responsible citizenship. Wrote the correspondent:

"I spent a weekend at the Kabaa schools and saw the results of almost herculean efforts to make a garden, both mental and physical, in the unfertile, and overstocked Makamba wilderness. What I saw could surprise many laymen, with general and rather pessimistic views about missions at large."  

Fr. Witte had started with very poor material at the end of 1924 but through "practical and sometimes novel means," he had succeeded in instilling into the pupils the ideas and standards of conduct which would develop their better characteristics and offer to him the material for his work. The reporter went on:

2. Ibid;  
3. Ibid;
"He sought to implant in their minds some of his own conceptions of the responsibility of service which education imposes on man. It was his task to destroy the illusion that education in itself was merely a source of personal pride and gratification, a means of enabling a man to place himself above his fellows."

That is why he began with the humbler tasks. Some of the pupils who came to Kabaa with the idea that school was a delightful life of ease soon found that they were required to work with their hands—building, clearing the compound and gardens and so on, and they left; twice the others rose in revolt against manual labour. But Fr. Witte had foreseen this and was not disturbed. He knew "the importance of self-restraint and a balanced appreciation of values in the African character", and realised that firm measures were necessary to avoid the dangers of "grafting a quickly absorbed education upon a too casual attitude on the responsibilities of life." So the hard work went on until the working discipline became accepted by the pupils as the standard of Kabaa education.

Fr. Witte told the reporter that the main barrier between the African traditional approach and "responsible citizenship" was the absence of imagination. This according to him was the greatest hindrance to an African reaching manhood as a European understands the term. Fr. Witte went on to explain what he meant by the African's lack of imagination:

"Death, once inevitable, does not appal him, simply because he cannot visualise it; and punishment does not irk him until it comes. Factitive things like arithmetic are very easy indeed to him, but geometry, which calls for much imagination, or rather groping ahead, is one of the hardest subjects that faces him... He is a man who thinks of today and does not know where tomorrow is until it is no longer in the future." 2

2. Ibid.
Fr. Witte then went on to criticise the educational system as he saw it operate in Kenya. He said that much of the education for Africans in Kenya finished by "leaving them as children":

"Because the system is wrong - too much instruction and too little education. What they want is a big tablespoonful of education and a small spoonful of instruction."

He was of the opinion that this would give balance to the boys; for attempts to "rush things" tended to leave an unbalanced man. This latter view is another remarkable statement by Fr. Witte, considering that most of his fellow priests were of the opinion that his own methods aimed at producing quick results; which in a way was true. However there is ample evidence both in Fr. Witte's Kabaa Journal and in the East African Standard article of 1931 to show that, far from believing in slipshod methods to produce quick results, Fr. Witte merely believed that the orthodox methods were, by and large, not always the ideal methods for tackling the problem he had before him, namely, that of producing a generation of educated Africans in the quickest possible time in order to provide the springboard from which to spread the ideal envisaged. He put the problem, in part, this way:

"I am a great optimist for the success of education once it is put on sound lines; plenty of occupation, healthy sports, and so on, all in a religious atmosphere."

He explained that up to 1931 his main task had been to create a sufficient supply of educated Africans who would act as teachers; but he was fully aware that the demand for teachers needed to keep pace with all the developmental needs of the country. For that reason he had plans in hand to improve and diversify the Kabaa programme so as to be able to produce educated Africans who would be capable of filling other posts. He realised too that the ability to read and write well and understand Arithmetic gave a boy additional

2. Ibid.
value and he had no doubt that with this additional perspective the Kabaa boy would

"...fill a more important place in the life of the community than the neoparas of the old tradition. From these things too, are leaders made. No school can produce leaders as a practice - but it can concentrate on the elements in character which make for leadership. That is what Kabaa believes."1

It is significant too that where orthodox educationists refer to the three R's, Fr. Witte always spoke of the Four R's,2 the fourth "R" being Religion, a fact which refutes the contention amongst more orthodox priests that Fr. Witte's programme at Kabaa was not sufficiently geared to the religious needs of the pupils.

Among the ingenious methods Fr. Witte used to put across educational values he cherished, is one that has already been mentioned, the passing around of discs for offences against such accomplishments as charity, politeness, and cleanliness, and also for faults such as walking on flower-beds, chattering after the bell has rung for church or class, or speaking a Vernacular other than Swahili. The latter point had originally been introduced in order to combat tribalistic tendencies and to weld the student community into one harmonious society; in this respect Kabaa met with astounding success, if the reports of such people as Fr. Gavan Duffy, Mr. Macken, and the various Education Inspectors who visited the school, are to be believed, not to mention the East African Standard special correspondence referred to above. The total sum of Fr. Witte's novel methods was that they:

"gradually made self-respect and attention to details of conduct a part of the character of the pupil."3

2. Ibid;
3. Ibid:
Finally, the East African Standard Special Correspondent pointed out that Kabaa was not "simply building houses and hoeing the "shamba" and that the original methods of Fr. Witte did not in any way detract from success in examinations, orthodox-style. He gave the following authentic results of Kabaa in the public examinations of 1930, the year before he visited the school:

Table No. 5. Kabaa Examination Results 1930:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examination</th>
<th>Number of pupils entered</th>
<th>Number of pupils passed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elementary B School Examination</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary C School Examination</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary B-Teacher Examination</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary C-Teacher Examination</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior Secondary School Examination</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note in the list above the first crop of Kabaa's secondary programme which had been started in 1929 without the name secondary or High School, and entirely on Fr. Witte's own initiative, mainly because he was anxious to experiment before committing himself to the secondary programme. That all four candidates passed the appropriate public examination must have given Fr. Witte added confidence in his bid to carry on with the secondary section of the school even though it still received no grant from the Government.

8. The 1934 Inspectorate Report:

Shortly before Fr. Witte's departure for home leave a team of Education Inspectors visited Kabaa to carry out an inspection, not because Fr. Witte was leaving, but as a result of the Director of Education's earlier promise that the school would be inspected to verify the requirements for grant-in-aid purposes. The team noted that Fr. Alfonsus Loogman had arrived to take over from Fr. Witte.

1. The East African Standard, article of 1931, op. cit. Also Examination Results List for 1930.
as Principal, and that Fr. John Reidy and Fr. Edward Lawless, both trained at Blackrock, had been assigned wholly to secondary work. They also noted that all the teaching in the Primary School was carried out by African teachers some of whom also took lessons in the secondary section; "their work was closely supervised by the Principal." The African teachers whom they found at Kabaa were:

- Mr. Francis Khamisi
- Mr. Paul Mjoroge
- Mr. Stefan Kangani
- Mr. Joseph Ngari
- Mr. Atanas Gechanga *
- Mr. Petri Mwau *
- Mr. Roki Kaberere *
- Mr. Alois Obunga

The Inspectorate team found 111 pupils on the Secondary School roll and 189 on the Primary roll, making a total of 300 pupils as estimated for by Fr. Mitte. Their tribal composition is of some interest: 124 Kikuyu, 87 Akamba, 21 Jaluo, 17 Bantu Kavirondo (Baluyia), 11 Giriama, 10 Taita, 4 Mandi, 2 Swahili, 2 Masai, and one each from Duruma, Suk, Meru, Ndia, Tanganyika and Uganda.

One of the Inspectors had a special word for Fr. John Reidy, he wrote:

"Fr. Reidy's work as I saw it in the secondary school was most thorough and enthusiastic."
The report gives us a glimpse into the curriculum of the secondary school. The subjects taught there it said were: Swahili, English, Mathematics, Agriculture and Latin. 1 History, Geography, Music and Typewriting are not mentioned but they were also on the secondary school curriculum then. The medium of instruction in the secondary school was English, but the primary school still had Swahili for this purpose. While agreeing that the curriculum was somewhat restricted, the Inspectors said that whatever was on it was taught with great thoroughness. 2

The Report listed the following Examination results for Kabaa in 1933:

Table 6. Kabaa Examination Results 1933 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examination</th>
<th>Entered</th>
<th>Passed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior Secondary Examination</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior Secondary Examination</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary School Examination</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary School Examination</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Teachers Examination (P.T.)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Primary Teachers Examination (L.P.T.)</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The poor performance (percentage-wise) in the senior secondary examination appears to have been the result of entering brighter pupils of a lower form merely to enable them to attempt the examination since the roll of the senior secondary class was only 7. The very poor performance in the L.P.T. examination, for which Kabaa had always been a great success, was caused by various factors. Fr. John Reidy who was in charge of the teacher training programme at this time, (which as explained earlier, was only taught as a subject on the school curriculum) did not agree with Fr. Mitte's ideas about teacher

1. One of the teachers of Latin was Joseph Nguri (Nguri) who had after leaving Kabaa attended a major seminary in Tanganyika.
2. The Inspectors Report 1934, op.cit.
training and thought the whole thing ("though the best in Kenya") not worth the trouble. Fr. Witte's earlier successful methods had taken into account the requirements of the Education Department, whatever his views of them; but the academically-minded Fr. Reidy believed in nothing short of teacher training on proper lines, as he knew them from his own training and earlier teaching experience in Ireland and Trinidad.

According to the Inspector's Report, Kabaa used the Drill syllabus of Machakos Government School, and had taken second place in the 1933 Denham Drill Competition. Other remarkable activities of the school were its Musical Drill (accompanied by the Band), its general Music programme including singing and organ playing; and also gardening and football. The discipline and cleanliness were very good, and there was a cheerful and willing atmosphere about the place. The Report went on:

"The school as a whole is a very live institution, and a confident and enthusiastic spirit pervaded all sections of the work."

Concerning the suggested split up of the school into two sections, the Inspectors, having examined the position, had this to say:

"It would not be possible to divide the school into two separate grant earning institutions without additional European staff, and eventually buildings since the Secondary dormitories are temporary structures."

1. Interview with Fr. John Reidy.
3. Also mentioned in the Kabaa Journal. Kabaa often took first place in this competition.
4. It is remarkable that Kabaa did little in the field of athletics throughout Fr. Witte's period. This cannot have been due to considerations of expense. Maybe Fr. Witte was just not keen on that sort of thing.
The Technical Inspector accompanying the team, though agreeing that the permanent buildings were in good condition, thought that all the buildings together were fit and sufficient only for one school; that is either a Secondary School or a Boarding Primary School. He expressed the view that if more than one school stayed on the site heavy expenditure would be necessary for the next few years.

The team also advised that they did not think that the incorporation of the Teacher Training programme into the ordinary school work was a successful practice. They suggested that if the teacher training course must stay then the Primary course should be shortened by a year\(^1\) in order to provide time for the Lower Primary Teachers Course. They considered that it was possible to train separately only a maximum of twenty such teachers at a time.

Finally the team recommended that the payment of fees by the pupils should be introduced.\(^2\)

9. The Staffing Problems Begin:

Looked at from the standpoint of today, the establishment of a High School at Kabaa in 1930 produced something of an anti-climax for the school. Right from the inception of the school to the end of 1929, Fr. Witte had been in full control of the destiny of the school; the many challenges had proved to be a catalyst for progress and a spur to success. Not so after 1930. Although Fr. Witte was still fully under control the institution had now expanded almost beyond recognition and become too large both in scope and in numbers to be dealt with by the resourcefulness of one person, even if that one person was the indefatigible Fr. Witte. As early as December 1927 Fr. T. Gavan Duffy had foreseen the trend and advised Fr. Witte to

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1. Kabaa had an additional year to the Primary School over and above the period required by the Department of Education.

2. Fr. Witte was against the payment of fees. The result was that every time he asked that his pupils (above 18) be excused from paying poll tax, he got the reply that if Kabaa were charging fees the school would not be so hard put on this issue.
consolidate what he had so far started and to avoid expanding the school into a mammoth institution with a Seminary, a Noviciate for Brothers and all that. He had pointed out that such a move was bound to sap his energies and water down the good work already being done.

But the optimistic Fr. Witte, though a great admirer of Fr. Gavan Duffy, did not take this one advice. He proceeded to expand the work of Kabaa in every direction and as early as 1929 he was already dreaming of a college at Kabaa, to the extent that he began to refer to the school in his letters as a college till the Department of Education cautioned against the use of the term which tended to create "false hopes."

The ill effects of Fr. Witte's ambitious programmes, however, did not show until early in 1932. In that year he was due for home leave but could not be released to go because the school was entirely dependent on him. His main helper, Fr. Michael Hurren, had never been too healthy at Kabaa. The new addition to the staff, Fr. Martin Reidy, who had been posted to Kabaa on 2 December 1931, needed more time before he could fully find his feet in the difficult circumstances of Kabaa. Bro. Egidius had been transferred to Limuru in September 1931.

The Kabaa European staff in most of 1932 therefore consisted of Fr. Witte, Fr. Hurren, Fr. Martin Reidy and Bro. F. Nieveler. The rest of the staff were Kabaa-trained African teachers, most of whom were still undergoing some form of higher training.

Purely from the staffing point of view therefore, Kabaa, with over 280 pupils, was bound to experience great hardships with a secondary programme. The staffing problem which had never been a

1. T. Gavan Duffy, *op. cit.* page 64.
2. KNA: 1/1830: A letter addressed to Fr. Witte by the Director of Education.
3. It is strange that the Director of Education, Mr. Scott, had been often using the lack of pupils as the reason for refusing a high school at Kabaa instead of the lack of staff.
great bother before, now became a major issue for the school. The situation was made worse by the fact that the Zanzibar Vicariate hitherto under the French Province of the Holy Ghost Fathers was handed over by Rome to the Irish Province of that order on Archbishop Hinsley's advice. Bishop Heffernan, who was elected first Bishop of the new Irish Vicariate of the Holy Ghost Fathers (covering Kenya and Zanzibar), assumed his post early in 1932. The departure of the great Fr. Bernhard of St. Austin's and Brother Solanus (both of the French Province) made the first notable sign of the new changes. The role of Fr. Witte within the Vicariate obviously became uncertain, but Bishop Heffernan made no moves in this respect for a couple of years. At any rate Fr. Witte was something of an institution at Kabaa and could not lightly be cast aside without seriously disrupting the Kabaa programme. This the Bishop did not want to do, as Kabaa was his key educational institution. So instead of transferring Fr. Witte to another Vicariate he decided to keep him, and incidentally Fr. Loogman — another Dutchman. The Bishop went farther: he declined to authorise Fr. Witte's home leave possibly because he had not yet decided on a suitable replacement at Kabaa.

It would appear that part of the reason why staff was not sent to Kabaa in sufficient numbers, especially after the Vicariate came under the Province of the Irish, was the reluctance of Fr. Witte to accept certain priests appointed to the school. The only recorded example (though a classic one) of what was probably happening behind the scenes, took place in February 1934. On the afternoon of 21 February, a Fr. Heelan from Mangu arrived at Kabaa and haughtily began to impress it upon Fr. Witte "with closed fists" that he had come and was going to stay by the order of the Bishop, and that nobody could get him out. He was "quietly told" writes Fr. Witte "that any conferee is always welcome" but Mangu priests had no right to prance on Kabaa compound, and from then on, their (car) drivers "would not be allowed to enter the boma". Fr. Heelan had to leave four days later, having lost the battle of wills.

* * * *
The first of the seemingly indiscriminate and certainly unfortunate transfers of Kabaa teachers started at the end of 1932, when Fr. Michael Murren and Fr. Martin Reidy were both transferred from Kabaa in November 1932 - the former to St. Austin's and the latter to Kilungu. Although they were replaced by Fr. R. Farelly and Fr. John Reidy, both fully qualified graduates of Blackrock College, and both hard working, these two were too new to the job, with all that that implies, as Fr. Mitte mournfully recorded in the Kabaa Journal\textsuperscript{1} at the end of 1933. But 1934 saw the biggest disruption of all. Fr. Farelly was the first to be transferred. He left on 26 January 1934 and was replaced by Fr. Paul White two days later. The latter stayed at Kabaa only for two months, however, being transferred in early March 1934 to St. Peter Claver, where he was to take over from the veteran missionary Fr. C.T. MacKamara, who was due for home leave in April. Fr. Edward Lawless replaced Fr. White at Kabaa but did not stay long either: Fr. F. McGuire arrived later in the year to replace him. Then, at last, Fr. Mitte was given permission to proceed on home leave at the end of April 1934, his countryman, Fr. A. Loogman being brought in to act in his place.

Thus in May 1934 the veteran European staff of Kabaa had all bowed out of the scene and an entirely new set of priests had replaced them. As might be expected the changes were catastrophic and from that point on the pace and "direction" of Kabaa school could not be the same again - and time was to prove this correct.

10. The Departure of the Captain:

Fr. Mitte was granted permission to depart for home leave at the end of April 1934. In preparation for his departure Fr. Loogman was posted to Kabaa on 17 April to enable Fr. Mitte to hand over the Principal's responsibilities during the remaining two weeks. Fr. Loogman arrived with Fr. MacKamara, who by a coincidence was also

\textsuperscript{1} Kabaa Journal: entries for December 1932 and December 1933.
leaving for home leave at the end of April, and came to say "Kwaheri". That whole afternoon was spent in musical performances and farewell speeches. ¹

Fr. Witte's last day at Kabaa was 29 April. On that day the boys of the "New Method Club" arranged a farewell tea party in his honour. Numerous speeches were given in praise of Fr. Witte which prompted Fr. Loogman to record in the Journal: "Let us hope (they were) sincere." The speeches and addresses were resumed after supper and went on till very late at night, with the two assistants of Fr. Witte — namely Fr. John Reidy and Fr. Edward Lawless joining in. ²

On the following day, as Fr. Witte prepared to depart for Nairobi, accompanied by Fr. Loogman and all the High School teachers and some selected pupils, the entire student body assembled and raised an enormous roar of cheers for the man they had learnt to respect and love. Fr. Loogman recorded that the roar was loud enough to "ring even the Big Ben."³ As Fr. Witte drove off with his entourage, many of the boys shed tears.⁴

The group spent the night at Nairobi and Fr. Witte left by train next day for Mombasa. As the train began to pull out, the "hard" man (Fr. Witte) "fought a temptation to shed tears."⁵

So ended nearly ten years of hard dedicated work at Kabaa. During those ten years Fr. Witte, through almost herculean efforts, had, to quote the East African Standard article of July 1931, indeed not only transformed a dry bald-headed hillcock into a thriving garden, but also established an institution which for the ten years dominated the entire Ukambani area physically, mentally and spiritually.

2. Ibid: entry for 29 April 1934.
3. Ibid: entry for 30 April 1934.
4. Several student eye-witnesses, interviewed, said this.
This had been done in spite of great odds: opposition from his colleagues, lack of funds, virtually non-existent communication and transport facilities, dry climate, frequent epidemics of malaria and menengitis, and also of locusts, and a whole range of unusual problems. Fr. Witte had achieved what appeared to be a miracle through his great missionary zeal, dogged determination, buoyant optimism, superb organizational ability, unparalleled foresight, and what was particularly important his belief that, given the opportunity, Africans were capable of rising to any occasion. His love for and belief in the boys under his care generated in them a trust and confidence and sense of responsibility without which Kabaa would never have overcome its many difficulties to achieve so much in so short a time.

* * * *

Fr. Witte expected to come back to Kabaa after his leave, but Bishop Heffernan decided to transfer him to Waa School - formerly an unsuccessful Government School at the coast, which had been handed over to the Catholics early in 1935 in the hope that this might bring some dividends. Bishop Heffernan probably figured that Fr. Witte was the one priest who could achieve any success at this institution, set in a strongly Muslim area. Other evidence, however, seems to suggest that the Bishop would have barred Fr. Witte from going back to Kabaa, whether or not Waa School had been available. Few of his fellow priests wanted him back there, and it is unlikely that the Bishop himself did.

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1. The Kabaa area gets only 20" of rain a year.
2. Something of the Kabaa spirit can be read in the letter of Alois Oungo (see Appendix III) to the Governor of Kenya, which I reproduce without comment.
3. KNA: 1/993 various documents and letters.
CHAPTER IV

THE BATTLESHIP WITHOUT THE CAPTAIN

1. Reforms and the Resulting Problems:

Fr. Alfonsus Loogman, the man who replaced Fr. Witte as Principal of Kabaa had a background very similar to that of the latter and on the face of it one might have thought that they had very much in common in their general approach to education and in their methods of organization. Like Fr. Witte, Fr. Loogman was a Dutchman, only a few months younger than the former, and the two had been classmates both in Holland and at Louvain University in Belgium. They were ordained Holy Ghost priests together in 1921, and arrived in Kenya on the same ship in September 1922. Over and above that they had since 1925 cooperated in compiling songs and printing or cyclostyle books for Kabaa school. As early as 1925 Fr. Loogman had, with the encouragement of Fr. Witte, started the first Catholic Swahili newspaper in East Africa, Rafiki Yetu, which he published at his mission in Mombasa, the intention being to counteract anti-Catholic propaganda disseminated by non-Catholic papers. In 1931 Fr. Witte had started a Kabaa Old Boys newspaper "Catasso" which was printed at Fr. Loogman's press in Mombasa and in which the Education Department took a great interest. Indeed the two priests had been very close friends, not so much because they were Dutchmen as that they had so many other things in common - they were both linguists, who had a command of the Swahili language that only one other priest of their day (the American born Fr. Marx of Sura) equalled. They were both musicians and music composers; and they were both zealous missionaries with a great ambition for the success of the Catholic Church and Catholic education in Kenya.

It is reasonable to suppose therefore that when Bishop Heffernan chose Fr. Loogman as the successor of Fr. Witte, he was of the opinion that Fr. Loogman was the one priest best placed to carry on where Fr. Witte had left off.

He was mistaken. In spite of the many common points between the two there were some significant differences which tipped the scales in the case of Kabaa. Fr. Loogman was an intellectual, very academically minded and scholarly, and hence was closer to the orthodox approach to things; besides he conspicuously had none of the organizational ability, the resourcefulness nor the foresight of Fr. Witte. In addition he lacked the personal relationship with staff and students which had made Fr. Witte so successful before, even though he had more and better staff than Fr. Witte ever had. Kabaa, with its many unresolved problems was bound to be a headache to such a man.

Fr. Loogman's first problems were with the pupils; they apparently watched his approach to Kabaa problems for a month and decided that he could not be as good as Fr. Witte. Fr. Loogman himself was to blame for this on account of his outspoken critical views of most things Fr. Witte had done before. For instance on 14 May he sent them "to the shambles to make them a better show. They were very badly done before." Fortunately the pupils had not firmly made up their minds about their new Principal as yet and this incident does not appear to have caused immediate resentment, since Fr. Loogman went on to record that:

"Their spirit is wonderful. The boys go singing to the field like it is done in poetry."4

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1. Interviews with Fr. Paul White, Fr. J.J. O'Meara and Fr. John Reidy.
2. Interview with Fr. J.J. O'Meara.
4. Ibid.
A week later, on Pentecost Day, he invited many visitors to Kabaa, in Fr. Witle's great tradition, "to join in the festivities." Some of the Old Boys travelled to Kabaa for the occasion including Cyril Us Ojoo who was then undergoing a course at Kabete before returning to Kabaa to continue as a teacher.

So far things appeared to be satisfactory in the School. By the end of May, however, the first signs of "general disorder" were showing. During the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament on Corpus Christi, "a good many boys" did not go to chapel, "unless urgently invited." Fr. Loogman was gradually losing touch with the student body, general demoralisation was setting in, and the willing discipline hitherto an outstanding feature of the school, was relaxing to alarming proportions.

And, as if that was not enough, Fr. Loogman began to run into difficulties with his fellow priests on the staff. After an outing to Nairobi in early June, he returned to Kabaa to find that:

"the youngest member of staff" had thought it fit "to change the hour of benediction and to omit the rosary." When the Superior comes home for Benediction at 5:50 p.m. he finds that all is over already.

Fr. Loogman was so infuriated by this action of Fr. Lawless that he publicly reprimanded him before the whole student body in the chapel. Whereupon Fr. Lawless, reacting in great anger, declared himself no longer a member of the Kabaa community and left for Nairobi with the intention of complaining to the members of the Bishop's Council.

2. Ibid: entry for 31 May 1934.
3. Expressed by several students of the time in different words.
5. That is the Principal, Fr. Loogman.
Fr. Lawless, however, returned on the following day due to motor bike trouble, "having reached only Mangu." He now sent a written complaint to His Lordship the Bishop, while Fr. Loogman sent the contrary complaint. The strained relations within the staff continued for most of Fr. Loogman's two and a half year stay at Kabaa as Principal.

The next of Fr. Loogman's concerned accounts. He was appalled by Fr. Witte's lack of money sense, after asking the Brother on the staff to find out details of what returns the various farming establishments were bringing. When the Brother produced the required details Fr. Loogman became furious, and with good reason as the following example, in respect of the costs of feeding pigs and their returns, shows:

Cost of feeding 5 pigs (originally worth Shs. 120 each)
4 debes of maize per day: Cost per year Shs. 1400.00
6 tins of unga per day: Cost per year Shs. 3285.00

Total expenses on pigs per year Shs. 4685.00
Loss per year about Shs. 4000.00

Fr. Loogman decided that something must be done about this state of affairs.  

By mid-June 1934, the pupils' discipline had so deteriorated that Fr. Loogman began to give a special series of "public reminders in the form of short lectures". These had little effect and on Saturday, 30 June, the boys went so far as refusing to turn up at "the usual inspection at 4 o'clock". His punishment for this was to kill no ox for them on that day. But this merely made matters worse.

Fr. Loogman wrote:

"The boys responded by sulkiness and impudence (showing the traditional Kabaa spirit?). The short sermon on Sunday will be on this to explain to them how things really stand."  

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2. Ibid: entry for 30 June 1934.
Part of the dissatisfaction and disillusionment of the boys stemmed from the fact that their welfare was not being given as much attention as was the case during Fr. Witte's time. One example will suffice here. When on 8 August 1934, the Kabaa Band was invited by Mangu Mission to perform at a show and sports function organized by Fr. McGill, they were left entirely to themselves without any member of staff to see to their interests. As a result:

"This caused some misunderstanding; also by the fact that in Mangu they are not properly looked after and no food was given to them."1

Interestingly enough, in spite of these internal problems, the external allure of Kabaa did not diminish. As in Fr. Witte's days pupils still deserted Mangu to join Kabaa. On one occasion Fr. McGill of Mangu followed two defectors to Kabaa, in vain. Fr. Loogman, who enjoyed Fr. McGill's dilemma wrote:

"The boys disappeared immediately after his arrival. This is interesting on account of the fact that Fr. McGill has refused for the past years to send boys to Kabaa, notwithstanding definite orders from the Bishop."2

Fr. McGill went back without the boys, much to his chagrin, and there followed some lively correspondence between Fr. McGill and the Bishop with Kabaa acting as an amused spectator.3 Meanwhile the defections from Mangu to Kabaa continued; by 20 September a total of nineteen boys had run away from Mangu to join the school. All this:

"...notwithstanding the rumours spread around in order to produce the contrary effect. The boys not having passed the B-School examination were not admitted as pupils in the school, but were kept to remind the Father in charge of Mangu that he should send the boys that have passed."4

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Ironically, Kabaa was already complaining about its own defectors to another quarter. Shortly before Fr. Witte’s departure, one pupil, Ignace Nduria, one of Kabaa’s best band players, ran away from the school, where he was pursuing a Junior Secondary course, and enlisted in the King’s African Rifles Band. Fr. Witte, perhaps too busy with tidying up for his departure did not follow the matter up in an attempt to return the deserter. Then two months after his departure another pupil, Thomas Kambei, followed Nduria’s example, and it was apparent that other band boys were going to follow. As a result Fr. Loogman wrote to the Director of Education demanding that the two pupils be dismissed from the army band and returned to Kabaa.¹ A lively and protracted correspondence followed involving the Officer Commanding the King’s African Rifles, the Director of Education, and Kabaa.² But although the army promised not to enlist any more Kabaa boys without the consent of the school authorities, and although this promise was enforced in a few cases, the deserting boys found many ingenious ways to join the army band without disclosing the fact that they were deserters from Kabaa, thus making it very difficult indeed for the army. As a result the army eventually decided that it was up to Kabaa to keep its pupils in place as it was becoming impossible to maintain the practice of asking each recruit whether he was a Kabaa pupil or not. The defections now became very frequent.

In mid 1935 Fr. Loogman in another of his letters on this issue wrote to the Director of Education as follows:—

"I am convinced that it is unnecessary to explain our point of view in the matter. It is evident that the facility with which good employments (sic) are distributed to our runaway pupils (and also to pupils withdrawn for reasons of behaviour) is unfair to the school, unfair to the good pupils, and unfair to the Government and society."³

Letter No. G/10/175 of 22 September 1934
Letter No. 170/11/142
Letter No. G/10/189 of July 1935, etc.

² KHA: 1/1360: various correspondence.

It was ironic that the Kabaa band which had been trained by an army band teacher in 1930, should five years later have become an unwilling supplier of seasoned teachers and recruits to the army band, much to the detriment of the morale of the school. The defections to the army continued in small numbers until Kabaa school was transferred to Mangu at the end of 1939, without the band.

Another of Fr. Loogman's problems came from the most unlikely quarter - the office of the Holy Ghost Education Secretary Fr. Michael Murren, who had taken over from Fr. C.T. MacNamara as Education Secretary in April 1934. Fr. Murren not only insisted on his right to transfer the African teachers to and from Kabaa, but also deviated at source the Kabaa school grant, so that instead of going directly to the Principal as had happened during Fr. Witte's time, it now went to the Central account of the Education Secretary, who then doled out to Kabaa the amounts he thought were appropriate.

The first order to transfer an African teacher concerned Mr. Atanas Gichanga whom Fr. Murren wanted to go and take charge of an Independent School at Kiambu. Fr. Loogman protested in vain, and the only compromise that the Education Secretary was willing to make was to release Joseph Gethinji of his own Mission (St. Austin's) whom Fr. Loogman demanded to replace Gichanga.

The first that Fr. Loogman knew of the fact that his grant had been transferred to the account of the Education Secretary was when he wrote to the Director of Education requesting for the last quarter of his grant for 1934. He received a reply saying:

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1. Presumably this had fallen in the hands of the Catholics through the action of the Government.
3. KIA: 1/1360, Letter from the Principal of Kabaa to the Director of Education dated 17 October 1934.
"I have the honour to inform you that the grant (Shs 15,000/-) was paid into the account of the Education Secretary, Holy Ghost Mission."

An attempt to get the grant for 1935 sent straight to the Kabaa account received the reply that the Principal had not even applied for it, which prompted Fr. Loogman to lay the whole blame on Fr. Marron, the Education Secretary, to whom he had forwarded all the details. Although the money did reach Kabaa eventually he was constantly irritated by the bureaucratic approach which made operations unnecessarily difficult, considering that there was no revenue from fees at all.

Fr. Loogman's major task at Kabaa appears in retrospect to have been a struggle to turn the school away from its unorthodox but practical, "camp" approach to a normal academic school atmosphere. This was a formidable task, considering that the entire fabric of the school was heavily overlaid by - and in one sense dependent on - the old approach. Besides, the changeover needed either a lot of money, which was not forthcoming, or a great deal of ingenuity similar to what had been required by the original makeshift arrangements: only a man of Fr. Witte's type could have effected this smoothly.

Take the question of fees. Fr. Loogman thought it ridiculous that the pupils should pay no fees, and in this he had the support of the Education Department. But for a school which had existed for ten years without the payment of any fees at all, there was need for careful planning in this respect and certainly for an accepted phasing-out period. Instead, however, Fr. Loogman introduced the payment of fees at Kabaa in 1935 at the rate of Shs. 100/- per annum for primary pupils and Shs. 120/- per annum for secondary pupils, without making it clear, as is apparent, that this was intended for bursary awards emanating from Local Native Councils, in the initial stages; and without stating a deadline after which all pupils would be required

1. KNA: 1/1360, Letter No. 170/11/49 of 23 October 1934, the Director of Education to Fr. Loogman.
to pay fees from one source or another. The result was that for the whole of 1935 the entire Kabaa Primary School with some 210 pupils paid only a total of Shs. 300/-; in comparison, the Secondary School with 95 pupils raised Shs. 375/- in fees.\(^1\) Much of this money was in fact raised from the meagre Local Native Council bursaries, which, Fr. Loogman complained, came in far too small amounts compared with bursaries in other schools.\(^2\)

Another unrealistic sudden change concerned uniforms and other school clothing. From the beginning of 1935 the school supplied only the "Sunday Uniform"; it was expected that all other clothing was to be brought by the pupils themselves. The outfit required of the pupils was as follows:

- 2 new khaki shirts
- 2 new pairs of khaki shorts
- 1 dark blue sweater
- 3 black blankets

Considering that the school was still in difficulties about money and that it was not too insistent on fees as yet, these requirements were not too much to ask; but one consideration was being overlooked: this was that the school had already got into the bad habit of not paying fees and the pupils and their parents were not likely to respond to these moderate demands too readily. Certainly not immediately, and Fr. Loogman soon realised the truth of this when he found it impossible to enforce the clothing regulations too rigidly. The inspectors who visited the school in 1936 found that, unlike in the earlier years, "there was considerable variation in clothing worn by the pupils."\(^3\)

In many other spheres, however, Fr. Loogman eminently succeeded in his endeavours. He managed for instance to get the school properly staffed with both European and African staff. His staff it might be pointed out here was much better qualified than any Fr. Witte had had.

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2. Ibid: various letters.
during his whole stay. Fr. Loogman himself had a Bachelor of Arts degree from Amsterdam, in addition to his other qualifications. All the others were certificated Teachers with additional diplomas.

The complete staff of Kabaa for the years 1935 and 1936 (excluding those for the attached Elementary Out-School) was as follows:

Table 7: Kabaa Teaching Staff 1935-1936:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>European Staff</th>
<th>Main Subjects Taught</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fr. A. Loogman (Principal)</td>
<td>Arithmetic, Biology, Drawing and Teachers' class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fr. John Reidy* (Deputy)</td>
<td>Teacher Training (till he left). (But also English, History, Geography, Scripture).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fr. Thomas McGuire</td>
<td>English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fr. G. Whelan</td>
<td>Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Book-keeping.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fr. Austin Lynch</td>
<td>Religion. (Also Arts and Crafts).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fr. Paul White**</td>
<td>Teacher Training, and Music.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fr. P. Kelly**</td>
<td>History, Geography and Holy Scriptures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brother F. Hieveler</td>
<td>Building and Carpentry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brother Furth Kunibert*</td>
<td>Instructor.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(*Note: Fr. John Reidy and Brother Kunibert left the staff at the beginning of 1936. Their replacements ** were Fr. Paul White who joined the staff early in 1936, and Fr. P. Kelly who arrived from Ireland later that year).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>African Staff</th>
<th>Main Subjects Taught</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Francis J. Khamisi</td>
<td>BB writing, and Teacher Training. (Also clerical work in the Principal's office).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Paul Njoroge</td>
<td>Swahili and Agriculture also some Teacher Training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Alois Obunga</td>
<td>Hygiene.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Joseph Gathenji</td>
<td>Swahili, History, Agriculture and Music.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Ibid: Also Kabaa Journal and Inspectorate report of 1936.
Other teachers though not mentioned in the report were:
Mr. Julius Thuo and Mr. Onesfas Karugo.

On the whole the Primary School was staffed by the African
teachers with the Europeans taking some lessons. The reverse was true
for the Secondary School.

As can be seen from the above list the Kabaa staff in 1935 and
1936 was ample. The Inspectors pointed out in 1936 that it erred "on
the side of generosity." They considered that at least two of the
African staff could usefully be employed elsewhere. Their
observation was particularly relevant considering (what they probably
did not find out) that one of the best qualified of the African
teachers, Mr. F.J. Khamisi, was in fact used as a reserve teacher,
spending most of his time helping the Principal with clerical work.

Another aspect in which Fr. Loogman was successful in his bid
to bring Kabaa back to conventional educational methods was in
curriculum. He discarded the practice of keeping the boys running all
day by leaving only the conventional subjects on the curriculum and
dividing the day into nine teaching periods. With so many teachers
around, Fr. Witte would have been tempted to increase the number of
activities, but Fr. Loogman mercilessly reduced them till it was
possible to restrict the morning session from 8:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.,
and the afternoon session between one o'clock and 3:40 p.m. In
addition he allowed only for 45 periods a week which made the
inspectors of 1936 wonder "how the time of so many members of staff"
was fully utilized.

A proper assessment of Fr. Loogman's reforms at Kabaa is
difficult to make since he needed more time to see them through.

2. Interview with Fr. Paul White.
That he would have succeeded, had he not been transferred elsewhere at the end of 1936, is shown by the examination results of that year. From the end of 1933 Kabaa had slumped in its performance at examinations, and hit bottom in 1935. But in 1936 there was success all round, with particular excellence in the Teacher Training results. The Education Department was so heartened by the success that, on hearing of the impending transfer of Fr. Loogman from Kabaa, the Director of Education, Mr. Morris, wrote to the Bishop in an attempt to convince him that such a transfer was not in the best interests of the school. The letter\(^1\) reads:

"I have heard a disquieting rumour that Father Loogman has been or is going to be moved from Kabaa. I forward for your information an extract from a report made by Mr. Dolton on his recent visit:

'\[I\] beg to report that I have examined teacher candidates at this school from November 19 to November 23. I should like to put on record my satisfaction at the great improvement in the work shown by the candidates over those of the previous year. I am satisfied that a real effort has been made to improve this branch of the work and credit is due to Frs. Loogman and White. The following are the results in Practical Teaching:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Examined</th>
<th>Passed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lower Primary</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1(^{11})</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Director of Education went on to tell the Bishop that although he (the Director) had no right to interfere with the posting arrangements of the former,

"...I am wondering whether it would not be possible for you to keep Father Loogman at Kabaa to carry on the good work..."\(^2\)

Good sentiments from the Director of Education, but Fr. Loogman had to go all the same, since his departure to a Dutch Vicariate was

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2. Ibid:
long overdue. Fortunately for the Director of Education, the man appointed to replace Fr. Loogman was the one who shared part of the credit for bringing Kabaa back into the limelight, Fr. Paul White.

2. Kabaa Becomes Fully "Irish"

Fr. Paul White was no stranger to Kabaa. He had taught in Kabaa for a month in 1934 just before the departure of Fr. Witte; he had kept in touch since leaving and had been re-appointed to Kabaa in 1936 to take over teacher training since Fr. John Reidy had been posted elsewhere.

A native of Tipperary in southern Ireland, Fr. White had received his secondary education at Rockwell College then moved on to Blackrock College (at the "Castle") where he stayed from 1924 to 1932 for his Philosophy and Theology studies. Part of this time was utilized in teaching at Blackrock for two years prior to being ordained a priest. He arrived in Kenya in October 1933 and was posted to Kilungu. It was in February 1934 that he moved to Kabaa in a switchover with Fr. Robert Farrelly. He stayed only a month at the school and could little guess that he was destined to become the first Irish Principal of Kabaa. Even when he was posted back to Kabaa in early 1936 there was no obvious likelihood of his replacing Fr. Loogman as the next Principal, since Fr. T. McGuire was already there as deputy, and other priests with similar qualifications were already on the staff.

Be that as it may, Fr. Paul White assumed the onerous duties of Principal of Kabaa on 1 January 1937, thus completing the long awaited "Irish takeover" of the school. The European staff now consisted of Fr. F. White, Fr. Robert Farrelly, Fr. G. Whelan, Fr. A. Lynch, Fr. Peter Kelly and Fr. Michael Higgins. A seventh priest,

1. Fr. Loogman was not immediately transferred to the Dutch Holy Ghost Vicariate in Tanzania. He was first transferred to Kilungu.
2. Fr. T. McGuire went on leave about the time Fr. Loogman left, he was replaced by Fr. Michael Higgins.
Fr. (later Mgr.) J. McEnnis was there to take charge of the seminary. Bro. Florian of course remained on the staff. The African staff consisted of those listed earlier with the addition of the veteran Cyril J. Ojoo, just returned from a course at Kabete, and another eminent old boy of Kabaa, Felix Kapteni, who after finishing his studies at Kabaa in 1935 had been posted to St. Austin's Nairobi, where he taught throughout 1936, being transferred to Kabaa at the beginning of 1937. Another addition was David Nganga.

Later in 1937 a welcome addition to the staff of Fr. White was a man who was destined to play a leading role in Catholic Education in Kenya, Fr. John Joseph O'Keara, who arrived from Ireland in October 1937 and was posted to Kabaa where he replaced Fr. M. Higgins.

When the School opened in January 1937, Fr. White immediately ran into the old problem of fees. He made a firm decision that no pupil would be admitted without fees. The result was that only a few boys returned in time. The rest stayed home till the decision was slightly relaxed to allow pupils to return while the parents made an effort to find the fees. Many of those who returned with promises to pay later, however, soon forgot all about it and Fr. White had to be firm again and send them home till they found fees. By the end of the year he was able to write: "We can now say that the idea of fees is now well established, but after a long struggle and much worry for the staff."  

Fr. White now embarked on his own little reforms. His first action was to establish the principle of one teacher per subject in the primary school and similarly in the secondary school. With the large and well qualified staff which he had there was no difficulty in effecting this at first. But the system had to be altered later. Another significant change was the re-introduction of "Mat and Rope-making" as a subject, one of the activities of dubious value.

that had been discontinued by Fr. Loogman. Fr. White got a special fundi "from the jail" to carry out the teaching of this.

3. The Seminary:

A retrograde step was the closing of the seminary at the end of 1937. It had been started by Fr. Witte ten years earlier but never through the period of its existence really did too well. From around 1933 its entire student body was drawn from the African teachers of Kabaa; indeed at various times after that year all the African teachers in the secondary and primary school were at the same time also seminarians, complete with kanzus and all. During Fr. Loogman's principalship the teaching of Philosophy and Theology was undertaken by Fr. Loogman himself and Fr. A. Lynch. The classroom for this purpose was a building started by Fr. Witte but completed by Fr. Loogman in 1936. Before this building was ready the priestly training was carried out in an old banda. Fr. J. McEnnis arrived to take over the seminary work, full time, early in 1937; the intention was that those who wished to continue with seminary work were to discontinue their career as teachers and to concentrate on seminary studies. The experiment never worked. The seminarians began to drop out one by one, mainly for health reasons, and the only survivor towards the end of 1937 was Paul Njoroge. He was sent to Rome to finish his training there under a new scheme whereby every diocese was asked to send a candidate to Rome. Paul Njoroge was ordained a priest in Rome in 1942 but died there of T.B. in 1944 shortly before his return to Kenya.

Thus ended Fr. Witte's dream of training priests at Kabaa. The Seminary was restarted in 1938 with three young recruits but moved elsewhere in the Vicariate a few years later.

1. Interview with Fr. Paul White. Also Kabaa Journal: undated entries for 1937.
2. Details on memorial portrait of Fr. Njoroge, issued after his death.
3. The Noviciate for Brothers had been given up much earlier on.
4. Another change of Principal:

A routine change of Principal took place in April 1938, when Fr. White left for home leave, during which he was to take a Diploma in Education at the Institute of Education London under a new scheme introduced by the Kenya Government to increase the supply of qualified teacher trainers. Fr. White's place as Principal was taken by Fr. Robert Farrelly. There was little change of policy or approach, the school continuing very much on the lines set by Fr. White. The only significant change was the discarding of the rigid arrangement of one teacher per subject throughout the school, due to the reduced staff. Fr. White's place as a teacher was not immediately filled; in fact the other priests had to share his subjects till the arrival of Fr. O'Sullivan and Fr. B. Culligan, both graduates with Bachelor's degrees, in late 1938. Fr. O'Sullivan, however, left for Zanzibar the following year being replaced by Fr. G. Foley, another holder of a B.A. degree. Fr. J.J. Lynch was added to the staff in 1939.

As far as the African staff was concerned the veteran teacher Francis J. Khamisi had left in 1937, but as he had been more of a Principal's helper than a teacher in his final months this led to little disruption in the staffing arrangements. To strengthen the technical staff Henry Mbugu (a carpenter) and Norbertus Odondo (a tailor) were added to the staff in 1938. Odondo, who had been on the staff before, soon left for good to become a teacher at St. Mary's Yala in Nyanza Province, in mid 1939; his place as a tailor was taken by Placidus Kitutu. At the same time Cyrilus Cjoo left for a short course and was replaced by Peter Mihoho. In mid 1939 Kabaa lost one of its African teachers, David Ngang'a to Githunguri Independent School, much to Fr. Farrelly's chagrin.

   Also interviews with Fr. P. White, and Fr. J.J. O'Meara.
3. KIA: 1/1360: various Kabaa returns.
   Also Kabaa Journal: various entries.
Throughout the years 1937 to 1939 the staff at Kabaa was of a comparatively high standard. Nearly all the European teachers were graduates with additional teaching diplomas or certificates. The African staff were all qualified for their subjects and compared favourably with the best qualified African teachers in the country. In spite of this, however, the Kabaa examination results, though good were not particularly brilliant. For instance although 31 out of the 37 candidates in the Primary Examination of 1938 passed, only five of them qualified to gain secondary school places. Also by 1939 the possible number of 100 pupils in the Secondary School had been reduced to 47: 23 of these were in Form I, 21 in Form II and 3 in Form III. One explanation for the reduction in numbers appears to have been the insistence on quality rather than quantity in the admission of pupils, a policy started by Fr. Loogman and maintained by both Fr. White and Fr. Farrelly. The insistence on quality if anything ought to have brought better results, but one important factor of 'quality' as applied at the time was age, and this did not always coincide with brains; the younger pupils who were preferred were not always the best passes in the entrance examinations. The Director of Education threatened to reduce the Kabaa grant for 1939 after discovering that of the 23 boys in Form I, 14 were not fully qualified for entry to Secondary School. Another factor which appears to have effected performance at Kabaa was the reluctance of the Mill Hill Fathers to send their pupils to the school, preferring to keep their best boys for St. Mary's Yala, first for teacher training and, from 1939, for secondary work. From the beginning Kabaa had placed great premium on boys from "Kavirondo," because they made good pupils; but it had always been easy to get them hitherto from Nairobi or the sisal estates or even Mombasa. For various reasons including the fact that after Yala was established Kavirondo Catholic parents in towns preferred to

1. KIA: 1/1360: various letters e.g. Letter of Principal Yala to Principal Kabaa, February 1937; Telegram & letter of Principal Yala to Director of Education, etc.
2. Ibid: various correspondence between Kabaa and the Mill Hill Education Secretary Fr. Rowlands, who had replaced Mgr. Brandsma (who died in 1936) as Education Secretary, and who appears to have introduced the new policy.
3. Luo and Beluyia.
send their sons in the higher classes to that school "to keep them in
touch with the tribal culture and away from the influence of the
towns." Kabaa began to get less and less of the Kavirondo boys.
From around 1935 more than half of all the pupils of Kabaa were Kikuyu,
the next quarter were Akamba, and the rest of the tribes accounted for
less than a quarter of the school. Kabaa became so desperate for
Kavirondo boys that, after failing in its approaches to Fr. Rowlands,
the Mill Hill Education Secretary, it made it known to the Education
Department that from 1936 onwards Kabaa would give complete remission
of fees to a maximum of 15 Yala boys who wished to study at Kabaa.
This however failed to bring the desired end, and the dearth of
Kavirondo boys continued. Fr. O'Meara was to complain later that the
policy of opening more Catholic schools such as Yala seriously
affected the success of Kabaa-Mangu. The earlier argument of
Mr. Scott, the Director of Education, had come back to the Catholics in
reverse, though under considerably changed circumstances from
those of 1929.

Meanwhile at Kabaa Fr. Farrelly had to re-introduce Fr. Witte's
idea of discs after he discovered that the speaking of Kikuyu was too
prevalent in the school. He also complained that some boys were
leaving the school either because they were "fed up" or for no
apparent reason.

5. The Senior Secondary Class Re-established:

Except for 1933 when a few Kabaa pupils attempted the Senior
Secondary Examination, the Kabaa High School for the most part
restricted its secondary programme to the Junior Secondary curriculum.

1. Interviews with Andrea Andago, Honori Kalingu, Norbertus Odondo etc.
2. KNA: 1/1360: Inspectorate reports on Kabaa from 1935 onwards.
3. Ibid: Letter of Fr. Logman to the Director of Education in 1936.
4. Interview with Fr. J.J. O'Meara.
There was no urgent need to tackle the Senior Secondary curriculum since a pass in the Junior Secondary Examination was sufficient to gain for a candidate admission to Makerere College. Not that Kabaa boys were all that keen on going to Makerere judging by the class of 1938. Of the 21 Kabaa candidates who sat for the Junior Secondary Examination in that year 17 passed, eight of them qualifying for Makerere, but to the surprise of the staff only one of the eight elected to go to Makerere.

Be that as it may the Catholic authorities partly encouraged by the fact that the Cambridge School Certificate Examination was going to replace the Kenya Senior Secondary Examination as from 1940, decided to re-establish a senior secondary section at Kabaa in 1939. Three pupils - Stephen Kioni, Philip Getao and Hilary Oduol were enrolled in Form III. These were the best of the junior secondary class of 1938. Hilary Oduol dropped out during the course of 1939; the other two were transferred to Mangu along with the whole school at the end of that year and became the first Cambridge School Certificate candidates of Kabaa-Mangu High School. They set the examination at the end of 1940 and both of them passed. Stephen Kioni gained admission to Makerere College; he was destined to become the first Secretary-General of the Kenya National Union of Teachers, a post which he was to hold with great distinction for many years.

Before explaining the steps which led to the transfer of the High School to Mangu, one or two events at Kabaa in 1939 are worth of mention. Two visits of note from outside the Catholic hierarchy took place in July of that year. First to come was the new Principal of Makerere College, Mr. Turner, who, accompanied by Mr. Dolton of the Kenya Education Department, visited the school on 17 July. He was

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2. KNA: 1/1360: Letter No. 170/11/299 of 31 January 1939; from the Director of Education to Kabaa; Letter of 12 February 1939, Fr. Farrelly to the Director of Education; Letter No. 170/11/306 of 17 February 1939, the Director of Education to Fr. Farrelly.
on his familiarisation tour of East African Schools that acted as feeders to his college. Mr. Turner made a very good impression on the staff at Kabaa and Fr. Farrelly recorded in the Journal:

"Mr. Turner is a charming man near his fifties. He is most sincere and his ideas on native education are very sound."

The other visit was made by the Governor of Kenya Sir Robert Brooke-Pompham. The Principal had gone to great trouble to get the Governor to visit Kabaa for its annual sports day, and after months of delicate "negotiations" through the Education Department His Excellency at last agreed to visit the school on 25 July. A large number of people turned up at the school to see His Excellency and his entourage, and the Kabaa band got a great opportunity to demonstrate its well known skill. It played "God Save the King" as the Governor stepped from his car, and paraded for him later. His Excellency had lunch at the Fathers' house after which he made a tour of the whole school. During the sports he started the tug-o-war and at the end gave away the prizes. The Governor expressed satisfaction at much of what he saw except for the fact that there was no "Boy Scout" troop at the school. He was later to take the Director of Education to task on this issue, and also on the need to convert Kabaa into a girls school after the High School moved to Mangu. The Director of Education in reply said that he would investigate if anybody at Kabaa was capable of conducting a scout troop. As regards a girls' school being started at Kabaa, he said, he was under the impression that the Catholic authorities would not be in favour of the idea as the area was too isolated from the main centres of the population. A girls' school needed suitable surroundings, he said.

3. KNA: 1/1360: Minute No. G.P. 19 of 26 July 1939, from the Governor to the Director of Education.
4. Ibid: Minute from the Director of Education to the Governor, dated 31 July 1939.
Another occurrence which brought repercussions to Kabaa - and incidentally to every other school in the country -- was the outbreak of the Second World War in Europe. All the German nationals were detained, among them the veteran carpentry and building instructor of Kabaa, Brother Floriano. All schools were ordered closed, but only for a while; they were allowed to reopen again in September. Kabaa reopened on 6 September.

6. Kabaa High School is Transferred to Mangu

As already indicated, the first request that Kabaa be decentralised came from the Department of Education in 1934. The inspectors who made the suggestion were convinced that such a move would be in the interests of the school. As a result the Director of Education had written to Bishop Heffernan as follows:

"You will note that both reports force us to the conclusion that the permanent recognition of two separate Institutions at Kabaa, one Primary and the other Secondary, cannot be approved.

It would appear therefore that the proper policy for those responsible for the development of Catholic education to adopt is the transfer of the secondary school to some other centre, and the maintenance of Kabaa as a Primary Boarding School."

It should be noted that the Catholics had in the first place really wanted to start their secondary school at Limuru and not at Kabaa. It was the delay in the approval of a Government grant for the school that led to the siting of the school at Kabaa, and to the fact that it remained there for so long.

When the Government suggestion to decentralise Kabaa came in 1934, Bishop Heffernan at first resisted it not so much because he was against the secondary section moving elsewhere as that the matter had been left undecided so long that it was going to be more of a problem.

1. KNA: 1/1360: Letter No. 170/11/27 of 16 May 1934, the Director of Education to Bishop Heffernan.
to separate the schools than to keep them together. Closely allied to these considerations was the problem of a grant: the Government really wanted to pay for only one institution, preferably the secondary school, which would have left the Catholics in a rather difficult position as regards the financing of the other institution. Thus the decentralisation of Kabaa was postponed year after year until the Catholics saw their way to going about it in 1938 and 1939.

As already pointed out the Seminary really bowed out at the end of 1937, though it restarted with three young candidates in 1938. The Brothers' Noviciate had disbanded years before, and so the institutions that were at Kabaa as from the beginning of 1938 were: the Secondary School, the Elementary Teacher Training Centre, the Lower Primary Teacher Training Centre, the Elementary Out-School, the Primary School and the Technical School.

Meanwhile the Catholics decided that it was high time the Secondary School moved to a more accessible place. On 2 September 1938, Fr. Finnegan, the Vicar General, accompanied by Fr. Murren, the Education Secretary, visited Kabaa for the specific purpose of discussing the transfer of the Secondary School. After exhaustive discussions, it was decided that the Principal, Fr. Farrelly, together with Fr. Murren and Fr. Martin Reidy should "look for a suitable site for building the school." Machakos was suggested as the place to be given first consideration. Land was not readily available there, however, and the Local Native Council appeared to be quite reluctant to consider the matter. Over and above that the African Inland Mission came out in opposition to the idea.

2. Fr. Martin Reidy soon took over from Fr. Murren as Education Secretary.
4. Interview with Felix Kapteni.
On 9 October the three priests met at Mangu to think of other alternatives to Machakos as sites for the proposed school. There they decided on 11 October, that "Mangu should be the site for the new High School."

When the news was broken to the Kabaa staff on 13 October, however, some of the priests expressed the opinion that Mangu was "not an ideal spot." They pointed to one big disadvantage: the difficulty in maintaining discipline among the boys in such a heavily populated area like Mangu. On Sundays, they said, there would be many outsiders at the church and mixing would be inevitable, with consequent problems. It was suggested that a neutral plot in the vicinity of the White Sisters Convent, three miles away from Mangu, would be best. But the White Sisters, when approached are said to have objected to the suggestion. Eventually Mangu was confirmed and plans were laid for the new school there. The architect for the project, Mr. Ward, visited Kabaa on 5 February 1939, and drew the plans free of charge. A week later the N.I.T.D. apprentices who had been hired to undertake the construction arrived at Mangu; they were to work in close consultation with Brother Savinus, in matters of accounts and selection of material. The N.I.T.D. team and their European supervisor soon began to cause concern for Brother Savinus: in early April he complained that they were working too slowly, mainly because the European supervisor liked the Mangu surroundings and so "was in no hurry to get finished."

Meanwhile the Government allocated £100 towards the building of the new school, after Fr. Farrelly had written a letter requesting for a grant. The money was a mere token and might as well not have been

1. Limuru was now out of the question since a girls' school had been started there in late 1936.
3. Ibid: entry for 5 February 1939.
4. Ibid: entry for 3 April 1939.
given especially as it affected consideration for other grants. The school was therefore built almost entirely from funds supplied from the Bishop's own sources. Then dramatically, while the building was progressing at Mangu, the Vicar General, Fr. Finnegan, turned up at Kabaa and held a meeting with the priests there in which he hinted that Kabaa had not abided by some of the decisions of the Vicariate council and as a result "no new building" was going to be undertaken at Kabaa either. \(^1\) This was quite a blow to the staff who were looking forward to their move to Mangu; so far only classrooms and dormitories had been built at the site. The Vicar General's order meant that no staff houses were going to be built, and actually none were built. As he had pointed out to them, the High School staff, when it moved to Mangu, had to put up with the little accommodation that there was. The Principal had to use his little office as a bedroom and the other two priests had similarly to squeeze in other little rooms. That the European staff at Mangu lived in poor conditions during the early years can be shown by the fact when Carey Francis, the renowned Principal of Alliance High School, who himself lived a life of austerity, first visited Mangu and saw the sleeping accommodation of the Mangu Principal, he was visibly astounded and said so. \(^2\)

As the transfer of equipment to Mangu was going to take some time to complete, due to bad transport facilities, and as this had to be carried out before the rains started, Fr. Farrelly got permission from the Education Department to close the school in the third week of November. \(^3\) Only pupils sitting public examinations remained at the school. All High School boys were directed to report back at Mangu and not to Kabaa after the holidays. The other sections of Kabaa were to come back to the old place, pending their transfer to other places later.

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2. Interview with Fr. J.J. O'Meara.
When the High School moved out of Kabaa at the end of 1939, Fr. P. White, who had since returned from his course at the Institute of Education London, remained at Kabaa to head the remaining sections there. Fr. R. Farrelly moved to Mangu as Principal, his staff being Fr. P. Kelly and Fr. G. Foley. All the other teachers remained at Kabaa. The Mangu staff was reinforced by the appointment of Mr. Ignatius Mkok (an old boy of Kabaa) who had just completed his teachers' course at Makerere College.¹

Our attention must now turn to Mangu where the High School, which had come to be considered as the main Kabaa institution, was literally and physically transferred.

¹ Mangu Journal: entry for 11 January 1940.
Founder and First Principal of Kabaa.
Plate 2: Fr. C.T. MacNamara, C.S.Sp., with six of the 1925 class.

Plate 3: The famous Kabaa Pin.
Plate 4: A View of Kabaa in 1927.

Plate 5: Kabaa Admirers: (l to r) Fr. N. Stam, Bishop Brandsma, Fr. Tom Gavan Duffy, and Fr. Burgman of Yala, c. 1927.
LET'S GO

SWEDISH DRILL, KABAA.

Plate 6: Kabaa drill in the earlier years.

Plate 7: The battleship and its Captain: Fr. Witte taking a drill lesson.
Plate 8 (Above: l to r)

Plate 9: Fr. Paul White.
Plate 10: Kabaa Students and Staff, in front of the Fathers' house, in the early 1930's.

Plate 11: Inside a Kabaa dormitory during Fr. Witte's time.
Plates 12 and 13: The Kabaa Band in later years.
Plate 14: Brother Josaphat the great builder (as he looked in 1962) outside the Mangu High School Church which he built in 1912.
Plate 15: Brother Frank Russel, S.M., and his staff in 1961.
CHAPTER V

HOLY GHOST COLLEGE MANGU REPLACES KABAA — THE FIRST DECADE: 1940—1950

1. The Start and its Challenges

The end of 1939 bowed out the era of the "battleship" and 1940 ushered in the era of the conventional school. Holy Ghost College Mangu started with a completely different tempo and on a different note from that of old Kabaa. Even a completely new motto, "Fides et Scientia" was coined. On the surface the objectives themselves appear to have been different, except of course in the basic Catholic principles over which there could be no disagreement. In a way it was like starting all over again, even though officially Kabaa High School had merely been transferred to a new site and the change of name was necessary only to avoid confusion.

To the three Irish priests who made the Mangu staff, however, the change was real and the break with Kabaa complete. They wanted none of the unorthodox ideas of Fr. Witte to seep into Mangu; they wanted none of that mad rush to get quick results; hurry and tight schedules were not going to be part of the Mangu life. This was going to be a typical Irish school where the approach was to be on the lines of gradual, but sure, development, laying the correct foundations for conventional academic excellence, and above all a truly Catholic atmosphere. Not that Kabaa lacked these things, but Kabaa's approach, especially during Fr. Witte's time (the ghost of which still haunted Kabaa many, many years after the High School had moved to Mangu) had been most unorthodox. Looking at the two approaches in retrospect, however, it is evident that the difference between the approach of Fr. Witte at Kabaa and that of the

1. Interview with Hon. T.J. Mboya in 1968.
2. Interview with Mr. Stephen Kioni in 1969.
3. Interview with Mr. Hilary Ng'wenyo in May 1968.
5. Interview with Fr. Martin Reidy.
Irish priests at Mangu was that whereas the latter believed in a school of the "European" type right here in Africa (with minor modifications), the former employed inventiveness and originality to try and get an approach that would suit and appeal to Africans, even if such an approach were going to be unorthodox by European concepts and standards. It is debatable as to which of the two approaches produced the better results. Stephen Kloni who was first at Kabaa and then at Mangu has no doubt in his mind at all that, from the African point of view, the Witte approach was the better of the two, though he agrees that the Irish approach had its strong points.\footnote{Interview with Mr. Stephen Kioni.}

Going back to the start of Holy Ghost College, Mangu, forty nine pupils turned up for the opening when the first term started on 11 January 1940. These were one less than the minimum of fifty allowed by the Education Department for grant-in-aid purposes.\footnote{In 1939 the Education Department officials stressed to Kabaa that a minimum of 50 qualified pupils would be necessary if Mangu High School was to get a grant. Grants were given at the rate of £30 per pupil, and the minimum to be given to a Secondary School was £1,500.} Kabaa had closed at the end of 1939 with only 47 pupils on the secondary school roll, three less than were allowed. As a result the school had to refund £90 to the Education Department, with half-hearted warnings that if 1940 did not get the full total of fifty qualified pupils for all the school's four forms, the Department might consider withdrawing the grant, according to the rules.\footnote{KIA: 1/1360: Letter No. 170/11/345 of 26 October 1939 from the Director of Education to Kabaa. And Fr. Farrelly's reply dated 22 November 1939.} Fortunately the Department relented and the threat was not carried out: Mangu did receive a grant for the qualified pupils it had in 1940, and the European staff received their flat-rate salaries which, though small, were adequate to keep the simple-living priests well supplied with their basic needs of food and other provisions.\footnote{Interview with Fr. J.J. O'Meara.}
The Director of Education seeing the financial problems of Mangu, insisted, when he visited the school in early February 1940, that the school must make all pupils pay the statutory fees in full, which indicates that revenue from fees (the old problem of Kabaa) continued to come in slowly even at Mangu.

The breakdown by class of the Mangu intake of 1940 was as follows:

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It can be seen from this that more than two-thirds of the potential Form III candidates who had been in Form II at Kabaa in 1939, had dropped out. The two surviving candidates of the school certificate class were Philip Gitau and Stephen Kioni; the third pupil H.P. Oduol had dropped out in 1939. Gitau became the first school captain of Mangu.

Among the pupils were some who were destined to hold high public offices. For instance, Maurice Otunga who was to become Bishop of Kisii in later years, and Lawrence Oguda who in the opinion of Fr. J.J. O'Meara was perhaps the most brilliant pupil that passed through Kabaa-Mangu in the earlier years. Oguda was to become one of the Kanu-appointed members of the East African Central Legislative Assembly. Another prominent pupil of that year was John Malinda, later to hold posts in the Kenya Civil Service as Permanent Secretary, as Director of Personnel, and finally as the first chairman of the Teachers Service Commission.

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1. Mangu Journal: entry for 8 February 1940.
2. Ibid: entry for 12 January 1940.
3. H.P. Oduol joined the Railways and today he is a senior officer in the East African Railways Corporation.
4. Lawrence Oguda passed the Junior Secondary Examination brilliantly in Mangu in 1941 and Fr. J.J. O'Meara was most disappointed when Oguda's Parish Priest (the Mill Hill Fr. Bartles) insisted on his joining teacher training at Yale, when according to Fr. O'Meara, Oguda might have continued up to University with great advantage to himself and to the Catholics.
Mangu in the early years was no picnic to students and staff. However, the first Mangu pupils were well pleased with their "new luxurious school," comparatively speaking; and although the staff accommodation was inadequate and poor, "add to that a lack of the ordinary conveniences", cheerfully borne by the Fathers, "and one realizes that this beginning has been difficult for the staff." All things considered, Mangu had little to offer as a site for a secondary school. Added to the problem of accommodation was the land problem: the school occupied part of the mission compound which was already overcrowded. As a result valuable coffee trees had to be cleared to make room for a playing-pitch, the restricted lawns and the necessary paths. There just was not much room to manoeuvre, let alone expand. When the Catholic authorities had made the decision to transfer the High School to Mangu they must have known that no more land could possibly be made available to it for expansion: Mangu was set in the middle of a dense population that was very short of land. How far the decision in favour of Mangu had been influenced by the parish priest, Fr. McGill, the erstwhile "enemy" of Kabaa, cannot be known because it is not recorded in any documents I had access to.

The shortage of land space made the Principal resort to some makeshift arrangements for the temporary acquisition of more land, such as when he persuaded Kamau, the school gardener, to rent part of his plot to Mangu for a private rental fee of Sh. 20 a year, on the understanding that he or his heirs could have it back on demand at short notice.

So desperate was the need for more land. Once more Brother Josaphat, who had been so useful at Kabaa in the earlier years, and who had built Mangu Mission between 1906 and 1912, was soon on the scene to carry out and supervise the clearing of trees and the laying out of lawns and paths.

2. Ibid: entry for 8 February 1940.
3. The Mangu Journal has many references to the willing cooperation of Fr. McGill in matters concerning Holy Ghost College, Mangu
5. Ibid: entry for 8 February and 17 March 1940.
But first there was need to carry out extensive levelling; a tractor had to be used for this to make the front of the school and the playing pitches flatter. Then there were problems of water and electricity. The water was procured from the river by a pump, but often during the rainy season the water was so muddy that it served no good purpose. So the Principal got tanks installed at the school to catch water to be used during the "muddy" days. The electricity was provided by an engine that often gave trouble and needed frequent repairs.

It is little wonder that Fr. R. Farrelly soon asked to be relieved of the privilege and burden of being Principal of Mangu. He had been principal there for only a month. He went back to Kabaa to teach under Fr. P. White, switching places with Fr. J.J. O'Meara, who left Kabaa to join the staff of Mangu, as a teacher. Fr. P. Kelly was appointed the new Principal of Mangu, as from 11 February 1940. The changeover was made without the knowledge of the Education Department, and soon pertinent letters were arriving from the Director of Education seeking an explanation for Fr. Farrelly's transfer and the appointment of Fr. Kelly as Principal.

Be that as it may Fr. Kelly remained Principal for the next two years, assisted by Fr. J.J. O'Meara and Fr. G. Foley.

For four classes, albeit with small enrolment, the school badly needed an extra teacher over and above the three priests and the African, Makerere-trained, ex-Kabaa pupil, Ignatius Mkok. The shortage of staff was made worse by the frequent absences of Father Foley on medical grounds.

1. Mangu Journal: various entries, January to April 1940.
2. This is not suggesting definitely that Fr. Farrelly was frightened of the problems of Mangu; it is suggested only because no explanation was given for his sudden decision to quit the post. It is true that the initial staff at Mangu was still waiting the Bishop's confirmation, but he was not the one who asked Fr. Farrelly to step down. It is recorded in the journal that Fr. Farrelly made the decision himself. Fr. J.J. O'Meara also told me so.
and the fact that the priests on the staff were expected to perform regular Sunday religious duties at out-stations and occasionally at missions needing reliefs.

Chances of getting an extra priest on the staff – if indeed the Bishop and his council were going to agree to this – were dashed in mid-June 1940, when news arrived of the entry of Mussolini's Italy in the War on the side of Germany. This meant that the Vicariate of Nyeri which was entirely staffed by Italian priests and nuns, was going to need priests to take over, since the Italian Consolata priests (and nuns) were of necessity going to be detained. This soon happened and several Holy Ghost priests were posted to the Consolata Vicariate to keep the mission stations of Nyeri and Meru open. Incidentally, Fr. Michael Witte, founder of Kabaa, who was then running the Teacher Training College of Morogoro in Tanzania, was one of those called in to help in the "orphan" Vicariate; he became Apostolic Administrator of the Vicariate till the return of the Consolata Fathers at the end of the War. 

The Mangu High School priests were given the additional responsibility of looking after the nearest deserted missions to Mangu: Cathanga, Rocho, and for a short time the White Sisters Convent; Fr. Lammer who had been sent to Fort Hall to help out, was soon returned to resume his work at the White Sisters.

Over and above these responsibilities, one of the staff, Fr. J.J. O'Meara was appointed the Education Secretary for Holy Ghost Missions, and had to do this in addition to his full teaching schedule. What with

2. Fr. Witte's obituary written by Fr. C.T. MacNamara.
   Also interviews with Fr. J.J. O'Meara, Mr. Ignatius Mkok, and Mr. Felix Kapteni.
4. Interview with Fr. J.J. O'Meara.
the need to travel on these duties and the religious ones, and with the inadequate and poor facilities for travelling, things were far from easy.

The result was that the daily routine at the school, though kept fully under control, was a very lax one indeed. There were many occasions when normal class periods were not utilized because one or other of the priests was down with fever, or away on some necessary trip. Equally frequent were the "free" days sometimes with picnics - on Holydays of obligation, and significantly, St. Patrick's Day, which took on the importance of St. Michael's Day at Kabaa during Fr. Michael Witte's time - and others. Sunday afternoons were always free for walks - the whole school going out together on foot to places as far away as Chania Bridge, and Ndarugu. In the beginning, evenings were not utilized exhaustively for studies as had been the practice at Kabaa: the Mangu boys usually went to bed at 8.30 p.m. The need for blackouts during the war made matters worse, of course, though despite this it was still possible to have frequent film shows in the evenings.2

The frequent "free" days often had unexpected results on the pupils. On some days, following such a holiday, they looked lethargic and there was "an atmosphere resembling that after-the-holidays atmosphere, pervading the whole school."3

2. The Stress on Religious Education:

Judging by the journal alone, there was great stress on religious observance at Mangu. Retreats were at frequent intervals: all mass feasts were observed liturgically according to the Church Callendar complete with the appropriate hymns, church music and recitals sang by the boys. Interestingly enough, Protestant boys who wished to join the church choir were free to do so, and Karuga Koinange for instance, who was one

1. First one old car then a second old one, and a motorcycle that was near useless. (Kabaa Journal).
3. Ibid: entry for 26 March 1940.
of them, knows even today all hymns including the chants for the Requiem mass. Most of the items recorded in the journal are of a religious character or of visitors. There are few details about the academic activities, unlike the Kabaa one, which is so detailed that it includes everything that took place. That there was great stress on things religious may be shown by the fact that some pupils decided to go to the Seminary even after finishing the Cambridge class, a remarkable thing in those days. Bishop Otunga\(^1\) is the most notable example. After sitting the Cambridge School Certificate in 1943, he gave up all worldly ambitions and joined the Seminary to train for the priesthood instead.\(^2\) Another pupil who went straight from Mangu to a Seminary at a later date was John Njenga (now Mgr. John Njenga). The religious tradition of Mangu went with many of its pupils into Makerere College. Here some of the ex-Mangu pupils showed a religious fervour (at least for a time) that approximated to fanaticism.\(^3\) The Protestants who attended Mangu (and they were quite a few), were expected to go to church, but they were not coerced into becoming Catholics, though many of them voluntarily chose to become Catholics and if they did they became very staunch Catholics indeed. Those pupils who remained Protestants, throughout, like Karuga Koinange, James Maura, and Samuel Waruhiu, had a very high opinion of the religious fervour of the Catholics at Mangu.\(^4\)

According to Fr. O'Meara, Mangu's objective was to produce solid Catholics, men of good character who would be good and responsible citizens of the contemporary world; men of high principles who saw the need to practice self denial to urges even in small things, and who would be able to stand up for what they believed to be right.\(^5\) These had

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\(^1\) Bishop Otunga, has recently been named by the Pope as the first African Archbishop of Nairobi.

\(^2\) Article in a Dutch newspaper (1948) translated into English by Fr. Neeven of Tororo College, Uganda. Also interview with Mgr. John Njenga, and personal knowledge.

\(^3\) Examples can be cited from among those who entered Makerere between 1948 and 1952. Some of the 1951 and 1952 entrants were particularly notable for their extreme fervour.

\(^4\) Interview with Karuga Koinange in 1968, and Samuel Waruhiu in 1968.

\(^5\) Interview with Fr. J.J. O'Meara.
been the aims of Fr. Witte at Kabaa, and they are the aims of every Catholic School worth the name. But some schools succeed in some of the aims better than others, and neither Mangu nor Kabaa were exceptions. Basically the Catholics use schools as a means to an end. Their foremost purpose is to spread the church. But "in order to prime the machine they pursue a long term policy to educate the people - so that eventually they might take over after being brought up to the standards required." But all this has to be accomplished gradually and systematically. In this lay the essence of the Mangu approach.

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3. More Challenges:

At the end of the first term, on 11 April 1940, after the pupils had left for home, the overtaxed staff of Mangu breathed a sigh of relief and were happy about "the deserted appearance" of the school. They were able to "recuperate" in preparation for the resumption of normal duties on 13 May.2

The second term brought its own problems, notably that created by 'flu in June. The epidemic paralysed the whole school so that classes were suspended for days.3

Another disappointment was the final hint by the Education Department that no capital grants could be expected by Mangu. Fr. Kelly had began by writing a reminder to the Director of Education in which he stated that Mr. Wisdom, when he was Acting Director of Education, had promised him that when funds became available consideration would be given to a building grant for Mangu. Fr. Kelly pointed out that the existing

1. Interview with Fr. J.J. O'Meara.
3. Ibid: entries for June 1940.
classrooms, and dormitories at Mangu had been built by borrowed money to the
tune of £800 on which interest was 3% p.a. In addition materials to the
value of Sh. 14,000/= had been supplied on the basis of easy payments over
a period of two years, but the war had upset the latter agreement and the
school had been obliged to make every effort to pay off the debt. He
enclosed a full statement of the cost of buildings and asked that the
issue of a building grant be seriously considered. 1

The reply to Fr. Kelly's request was most discouraging. It reads:

"I beg to inform you that a careful search of our files has
disclosed no reference to any promise given by this Department
that a building grant would be paid.

It is noted that a special grant of £100 was paid, partly in
view of the Department's inability to waive the usual ration
charges in respect of the Native Industrial Training Depot
apprentices working on the buildings.

In the present financial stringency, I do not think it would
be possible to make a case to the Government." 2

That ended any hopes, for the time being, that Government might
change its policy on the question of giving building grants to Mangu.

The third term saw the ungainly departure of the only African member
of staff, Mr. Ignatius Mkok. A man whose Catholic training had been
mainly in the hands of Fr. Witte and Fr. Loogman, Mkok never got on too
well with the Irish priests at Mangu. This was accentuated by the fact
that he had two grievances which they could not solve. First he wanted
better accommodation and there was none; the priests themselves lived in
appalling conditions. Secondly he wanted more pay, being of the opinion
that with his seven teaching periods a day, and since he lived far away
from his home, he deserved a salary of at least Sh. 4 a day, or Sh. 120
a month. 3 The Government scale for Makerere teachers, however, at that

1. Ministry of Education File on Mangu, T.C.191: Letter of Fr. Kelly to
the Director of Education dated 4 June 1940.
2. File No. T.C.191, op.cit., letter No. B.189/106 of 10 June 1940, the
Director of Education to Mangu, with a copy to Bishop Afferman.
3. File No. T.C.191, op.cit. Letter of Mr. Ignatius Mkok to the Director
of Education, dated 4 March 1940.
time allowed only a salary of Sh. 70 a month which is what Mkok was earning.
Fr. Kelly saw no reason why this should be increased since Mkok was performing a normal job, and the Education Department had no intention to offer him a higher salary. These and other problems got on the nerves of Mr. Mkok, and by the third term he was too disgruntled to put up with the situation much longer;¹ the Principal on his part thought Mkok "insolent, disobedient and generally unsatisfactory". On 17 October 1940, he dismissed him from Mangu.² Poor Mkok found his way back to Nyanza heartbroken, but still full of pride and confidence in himself.³

The departure of Mr. Mkok from Mangu and the coincidental illness of Fr. O'Meara, left the school badly short of staff at a time when there was the greatest need of staff due to the impending examinations. It was Kabaa that came to Mangu's rescue. Fr. Farrelly and Mr. Cyrillus Ojoo, arrived to act as relief teachers. Cyrillus Ojoo then agreed to come back to Mangu at the beginning of 1941 to replace Mkok.⁴

4. The First Inspection of Mangu:

Shortly after the departure of Mr. Mkok, the first official inspection of Mangu school took place. Two officers of the Education Department, Mr. Dolton and Mr. Donovan arrived on 5 November to undertake "the long-threatened inspection," The inspectors put the whole school on their toes:

"Staff and boys were put through their paces. Our impression was that they expected many more weak candidates than they actually hit upon. Fr. Kelly put his cards on the table for Mr. Donovan and is quite optimistic about our grant for 1941."⁵

¹. File No. T.C.191, op. cit Letter of Mr. Ignatius Mkok to the Director of Education, dated 4 March 1940. Also interview with Ignatius Mkok.
². Mangu Journal: entry for 17 October 1940.
³. Mkok was taken on by Yala in 1941, but was dismissed from there too in 1942. Fortunately for him, his old teacher and friend Fr. Witte was then in Kyeni Mission Embu, performing his duties of Apostolic Administrator. Fr. Witte badly wanted a teacher to help him start a school at Kevote. Hearing of Mkok's availability he immediately sent form him. And so Mkok got himself a job again. He lived with Fr. Witte in the same house for nearly seven years.
⁵. Ibid: entry for 5 November 1940. Incidentally the Inspection was partly to check whether there were enough qualified candidates to enable the school to qualify for the following year's grant.
The inspectors found 45 pupils at the school only forty-two of whom qualified for the grant; the other three were Form I pupils who had not passed the Primary School Examination and so did not qualify for a grant.¹

When the Inspector's Report eventually came it was not as unsympathetic as had been feared. Indeed it made some very useful recommendations. One was to the effect that to get more space for the Secondary School, it would be in the interests of Mangu if the Elementary School there (Fr. McGill's famous school) was moved onto a plot out of the compound. The other noted the paucity of numbers in the two senior secondary classes and added that the Inspectors were of the opinion that the solution to this was:

"Wholehearted cooperation between the three Catholic Missions, if a full secondary school, of reasonable size, is to be built up at Mangu."²

This was exactly the private view of Fr. J.J. O'Meara the Education Secretary, who thought that Yala should never have been developed into a secondary school so soon. It reduced both the quantity and quality of the Mangu intake, and made it impossible, for instance, for the school to compete successfully with Alliance High School, which had the advantage of taking the cream from all the Protestant Schools all over the country.³

The Inspectors noted the departure of Mkok, and the subjects taught by the three priests on the staff.⁴

² Ibid.
³ Interview with Fr. J.J. O'Meara.
⁴ See also Appendix XVIII.
Table No. 8: Mangu Staff in 1940 and Their Subjects:

- Fr. Kelly took English, History, and Geography in Forms II, III and IV.
- Fr. O'Meara took Mathematics in Forms II, III and IV, and Science in Forms III and IV.
- Fr. Foley took English, History, Geography and Agriculture in Form I; Agriculture and Biology in Form II, and was also responsible for music.
- Fr. Mkok, before he left, had taken Swahili in all classes and Mathematics in Form I.

The Inspectors noticed several anomalies which they thought should be looked into. The idea of Fr. O'Meara being a teacher as well as Education Secretary was not a good one, they said, adding that the mission would be "greatly assisted if he could be released for full-time work as Education Secretary", though they conceded that it was difficult to find his replacement on the Mangu staff.

A more serious matter from their point of view concerned the defects in the timetable. They reported:

"Too much time is given to study and to Swahili. Moreover, Forms II and IV are taken together in Biology, History, Geography and Science. This is quite impracticable. The real reason is the smallness of the staff; the school needs either four Europeans and one Makerere teacher, or at least three Europeans and two Makerere Teachers."

The Report suggested that General Knowledge should be added on the timetable, and thought that English was generally well handled apart from the fact that the set book for Form III, "The Nigger of Narcissus" was an unhappy choice. Mathematics too was generally well handled, but the lessons which the Inspectors witnessed being taken in Geography, Science and Biology left much to be desired, though for different reasons. The Geography lessons did not link what was taught with realities in Kenya; Science suffered from lack of equipment, and the Biology lessons brought out terms that the pupils did not fully understand.

2. Ibid.
Nevertheless Mangu got away with it and received its appropriate grant the following year.

5. The Earlier Examination Results:

Two classes sat public examinations at the end of 1940. The Junior Secondary class did not give the staff much hope. The journal records:

"Knowing the class to have a big tail we are not too optimistic about this year's result. It should not be as those of the past three years."  

The Cambridge class, with its two candidates, however, gave them some heart. But their examination was spread over many days partly so that they could copy out their answers to provide a spare copy so that in case the original copies were sank on their way to England the extra copy could be used instead. It was a real ordeal to the two boys but they withstood the strain well enough.

Both pupils passed, thus making the first Cambridge results of Kabaa - Mangu High School, 100% successful. Stephen Kioni proceeded to Makerere, but the unfortunate Philip Gitau could not make it: he died not long afterwards.

Of the 1940 Junior Secondary class, ten students out of the twenty who sat the Examination passed. Five of those who passed qualified to proceed on to senior secondary, but only one of them was anxious to join Form III. As no candidate of St. Mary's Yala had qualified for a senior secondary place, Mangu was again to find it difficult to get a reasonable number for its senior section.

1. Mangu Journal: entry for 6 December 1940.
2. Ibid: entry for 9 December 1940.
3. Interview with Stephen Kioni, and Fr. J.J. O'Meara.
The following year's Cambridge results of Mangu were no better percentage-wise: apparently only one candidate passed out of five. The Junior Examination brought slightly better results, with twelve out of seventeen candidates being successful. The results of the 1942 Examinations were also similar: two out of four passed the Cambridge Examination, and six out of twelve the Junior Secondary Examination. Only one of the Cambridge class passed the tough Makerere Entrance Examination that year. None is recorded to have passed this examination the following year, but the percentage of the Cambridge passes went higher with two successful candidates out of the three entered; in the Junior Examination six passed out of eleven, also a slightly higher percentage over the results of 1943.¹

Looked at in retrospect one gets the feeling that with such a well qualified staff at Mangu the examination results of each year ought to have been better. The probable explanation as to why this didn't happen in the early years seems to centre on the fact that too much time was "wasted" through the many free days and periods. But of course Mangu did not place examinations foremost in its priorities, which in itself was not a bad educational approach.

Two successes from a different quarter came to two Mangu students in 1943, when Titus Wambogo, secured second place in the Inter-Territorial Essay Competition in April, and later in the year Maurice Otunga won first prize in the Swahili Essay Competition.² But Maurice had made up his mind to give up worldly things of this kind. Shortly after sitting for the Cambridge Examination he walked out of Mangu straight into the Major Seminary at Kakamega, without waiting for his results,³ thereby greatly frustrating

¹ Mangu Journal: entries for the respective years.
² Ibid: entries for April 1943, and January 1944.
³ Ibid:
his father's ambition of making him his successor as chief of South Bukusu. Maurice was destined to be a different type of chief – Bishop of Kisii Diocese, and subsequently Archbishop of Nairobi.

6. Mangu Carries on Despite the War:

The reopening for 1941 took place on 17 January. The boys trickled in slowly but by the end of the day thirty one had arrived. The Principal formed the opinion that it would have been much better if the opening was to be much later to allow the candidates more time to settle problems of bursaries, fees, and qualifications, as a lot of time was wasted waiting for classes to fill up. So, the first few days of the first term in 1941 were occupied in giving out books, preparing rooms and general clean-up.

By the beginning of February the roll had risen to forty pupils: five in Form IV, three in Form III, eighteen in Form II, and fourteen in Form I. Of the fourteen in Form I six had come from Kabaa Primary School. Only 42 of the pupils received a Government grant.

The European staff remained the same as for 1940, with: Fr. P.J. Kelly, Fr. J.J. O'Meara, and Fr. G.J. Foley. Cyrillus Ojee left Kabaa to join the Mangu staff as he had promised, and made the fourth teacher, taking Mkok's subjects. A fourth priest, Fr. T. O'Sullivan, was at long last appointed for the school in March, 1941, which eased the staffing situation, and the teaching load per teacher considerably. The School was now able to have General Knowledge as a subject; this was placed on the time-table during the second term of 1941; also a course in Religion, as opposed to Scripture which was already an examinable subject at Cambridge level.

2. Ibid: entry for 17 January 1941.
An important event of 1941 was the arrival of Franciscan nuns to open a convent close to Mangu High School. Although they had no direct connection with the School, they were going to come in useful for such matters as dispensary facilities and the beautifying of the Mission chapel. The sisters came from Uganda and were brought by the famous Mother Kevin herself. They soon opened a primary school for girls and later a secondary school.

In 1941 there was the first recruiting campaign from a Government Department — the Police — aimed at interesting Mangu Boys in joining the police force.

1942, Mangu's third year of existence, opened on 17 January, with thirty boys reporting back on the first day. Of the new 28-strong Form I class, 13 came from Kabaa alone, and seven from Kagumo. Three were in Form IV, seven in Form III, thirteen in Form II. But the school still had less than the fifty qualified candidates required for the grant. However, Mangu already had a tradition of getting away with it as far as grants were concerned and 1942 was going to be no exception.

1943 was a much more difficult year in many respects but especially in matters of food, a widespread problem throughout the country due to the war and the failure of the crops.

The prospect of a famine made it appear as if it might be necessary for the school to close for most of the second term. By April the boys were grumbling over food, the main ring leaders being in Form II. The boys just did not understand that famine conditions prevailed over most of Kenya, and Fr. O'Meara in disgust sent the whole Form II class home.

2. Ibid: entry for 3 October 1941.
save for two of them. However on the following day the other priests prevailed upon him to accept the qualified boys back, on condition that they all receive a punishment on return, and that none of the ring leaders "who had bullied the class and wanted to run the school" be admitted. A total of seven were accepted back at the beginning of the second term, though most of the others had come or written asking to be readmitted. The food shortage situation improved in the third term when the Maize Control Board placed the school on its list with a ration entitlement of 1 lb per day per pupil.

A major catastrophe at the school during the year was the sacrilegious act of a local maniac who entered the Mangu church at night, ransacked the sacristy, opened the tabernacle with the key and carried away the Blessed Sacrament, in addition to a chalice, some altar linen and other sacred articles. Some of the articles were later found intact in the coffee plantation. They included the lunette, the Blessed Sacrament, the chalice and the paten. Police were called in and they eventually found the culprit and the two children he had used to keep watch while he went about his sordid business. Mangu made reparation for this sacrilegious act with full solemnities on 30–31 January 1944; the ceremonies included a night-long adoration with priests, nuns and High School pupils taking part.

Incidentally this kind of incident occurred several times in the following fifteen or so years.

7. The Games Spirit of Mangu

Games, especially football, were taken very seriously and became an important feature of Mangu life. At first matches were usually played against Kabaa, now only a Primary School with young boys, and therefore a poor equal. Naturally Mangu won most of the matches that were not draws.

2. Ibid: entry for 5 April 1943.
3. Ibid: entry for 2 June 1943.
4. Identified later as John Gitau
On one occasion, however, the Kabaa junior team of fourteen-year-olds triumphed over the Mangu Junior team. Incidentally some of the Mangu senior team were considered good enough to be invited to play for the Kiambu District team which played at provincial and national level.¹

The year 1942 saw the first match between Mangu High School and the army G. Coy at Ndarugu Camp. The Mangu team had a crushing victory over the tough and seasoned servicemen. This was to be the first of many friendly matches with servicemen teams, many of which took place in the following year.²

The most exciting matches of 1943 were against the Royal Air Force team at Thika, and the Navy (R.N.A.S.) team from Nairobi. Mangu won two of the R.A.F. matches and lost the third, and one of the R.N.A.S. matches and drew the other.³

Mangu also played matches against the only other African senior secondary school in Kenya, Alliance High School. The first recorded match between the two rival schools was on 22 July 1944, when thirty six Alliance High School boys visited Mangu accompanied by their Principal, Mr. E. Carey Francis, and other members of staff. On that occasion the Alliance First Eleven beat Mangu 3-2, but the Mangu Second Eleven was luckier and won its match against the Alliance Second Eleven. A return match of the senior team was played at Alliance High School, and Mangu lost 2-4. There must have been other matches during the following two years, but the next one recorded took place at Alliance High School on 14 July 1947, and it was a draw. Considering that Alliance High School selected its students from all over the country, and that Mangu was handicapped not only in this regard but also from the fact that its roll

was so small, the football competence of Mangu was not bad. Indeed the football spirit became quite a tradition in the school.

8. Staff Changes 1942-1946

Although the staff remained the same as for the previous year, "rumours were rife of pending drastic changes" at Mangu, and the priests braced themselves for transfer at short notice to any place in the extensive Vicariate of Zanzibar. "The spirit is really admirable," wrote Fr. O'Meara.\(^1\) The Bishop's Council was to meet sometime between 2 and 8 February to make the expected far-reaching decisions.\(^2\)

The first decision to come from the Council was to the effect that Mangu Mission itself was to pass under the control of the High School, with Fr. Foley becoming the pastor, and Fr. McGill earmarked to go elsewhere as soon as the necessary arrangements were ready. Orders arrived requiring Fr. McGill and Fr. Kelly to get together and agree on financial adjustments for submission to the Bishop right away. In the reshuffle Fr. O'Sullivan replaced Fr. Foley as chaplain to the new Franciscan Convent just across the road.\(^3\)

The next major change was mooted in May and effected in June.\(^4\) It involved the change of Principal and other administrative arrangements. Fr. Kelly, hitherto the Principal, was transferred to Bura, and Fr. O'Meara was appointed Principal in his place. Fr. Murren was transferred to Mangu to become the local Superior of the whole place and also to act as bursar. Fr. Kelly left for Bura on 9 June, but Fr. Murren did not turn up at Mangu until 2 July.\(^5\)

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2. Ibid: entries for 2 and 8 February 1942.
Once more the Education Department got wind of the change of Principal at Mangu which had been effected without its knowledge, let alone sanction, and the Director of Education wrote direct to Bishop Heffernan seeking for an explanation. At last the Bishop replied. In his letter he said:

"I wish to inform (sic) that Rev. Father P. Kelly has been transferred to Bura Mission and his place as Principal at Mangu has been taken by Rev. Father O'Meara. The latter will be able to devote all his time to the Mangu School as it is my intention to relieve him of the Education Secretaryship when some other changes, now pending, have taken place."3

The Director of Education, obviously feeling that the Bishop intended to reserve the right of transferring Kabaa Principals, now wrote to impress it upon His Lordship that he (the Director) wanted to have a part in this exercise too. His reply reads as follows:--

"I do not know whether your letter is in reply to this office letter No. B.189/169 of 18th June 1942.

In view of the fact that a large grant is being paid to Mangu I suggest that the department should have been consulted before this change was made. You do not state whether the Rev. Father Kelly's place at Mangu has been taken by another father or whether the staff there is reduced by one."4

As before the Bishop tidied over the confrontation and Fr. O'Meara was confirmed Principal of Mangu. But the gesture of relieving him of the extra responsibilities of Education Secretary did not last: Fr. (later Bishop) E. Butler, who had been appointed to this post in July 1942, apparently held it for some seven months only, for by February 1943 Fr. O'Meara was again both Principal of Mangu and Education Secretary for Holy Ghost Missions.5

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2. Fr. O'Meara was replaced as Education Secretary by Fr. E. Butler.
5. Ibid: Letter of returns signed by Fr. O'Meara dated 11 February 1943. Also interview with Fr. O'Meara.
He was not released of the Education Secretary post until 1945 when Fr. M. Higgins was appointed to assume the responsibilities, which were increasingly becoming heavy.  

The staffing situation had remained at three priests and Cyrillus Ojoo since the departure of Fr. Kelly. One change took place in mid 1943 when Fr. T. O'Sullivan was transferred from the Mangu staff to St. Mary's School Nairobi, and his namesake Fr. F. O'Sullivan, also a B.A. holder, arrived from Waa to take his place.  

In 1944 Fr. Foley's lung problems led to his being replaced on the staff by Fr. James B. Lynch. Thus the staff for 1944 and 1945 was:

Fr. J.J. O'Meara – Principal.
Fr. F. O'Sullivan.
Fr. James B. Lynch.
Mr. Cyrillus Ojoo.

Changes in the staff did not occur again till 1946, when Fr. Meade replaced Fr. J.B. Lynch, and later in the same year Fr. M.F. Soughley arrived to take the place of Fr. O'Sullivan. Mr. Herman Moraya an old student of the school, returned in 1946 to join the staff as the second African teacher, after finishing his course at Makerere College.

9. Fr. O'Meara's Discipline: with

Fr. O'Meara was a great disciplinarian and ruled Mangu with an iron hand. Light of build, dapper and aristocratic in bearing, Fr. O'Meara who held a B.A. degree and a Diploma in Education from London, knew his job thoroughly;

1. Interview with Fr. J.J. O'Meara.
3. Although there were rumours in February 1945 to the effect that Fr. O'Meara was going to be transferred and Fr. Munren (who was most reluctant) was going to take his place as Principal of Mangu, nothing materialised, except for the fact that a Fr. Cremins was temporarily sent to Mangu that month to wait to replace someone, which again did not materialise and he was withdrawn on 22 June 1945.
but his somewhat harsh discipline made him dreaded by the student body as no other headmaster could ever be.\(^1\) He used the rod frequently and effectively and, although by no means ubiquitous all over the compound, he was so discerning that the erring pupils got the obviously exaggerated impression that he could see through walls and thick fences.\(^2\) Quite remarkably, however, all the students interviewed invariably think that the strictness of Fr. O'Meara, looked at in retrospect, was a good thing, as it instilled into the pupils certain principles which came in useful in adult life.\(^3\)

Fr. O'Meara started with strict discipline right from the time of his appointment. Already on 16 June, when four discontented Wakamba boys were requesting to leave, and a palaver failed to discover the real reason why they wanted to leave, Fr. O'Meara solved the problem by taking the ring leader, A. Kikube, at his word and dismissing him.\(^4\)

Then when two students failed to turn up in time at the beginning of the third term of 1942, and one of them, M. Munyao,\(^5\) returned three weeks late, he too was promptly dismissed.\(^6\) Less than a fortnight later there was "a minor strike" over food; the students were becoming increasingly restless and they probably picked on the food issue to bring home the point. They complained that the substitution of mbazi for beans in their diet and the use of simsim oil instead of ghee, detracted from the previous standard of food they were receiving. Fr. O'Meara, however, was not to be coerced; he insisted that before listening to any complaints

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1. Interview with most students of Mangu including Hon. T.J. Mboya, who was a pupil at Mangu from 1946 to 1947.
2. Most of the students interviewed said this; among them Andrew Lukalo, John Abuoga etc.
3. Ibid: For example Karuga Koinange, a Protestant, says he thinks he profited from Fr. O'Meara's discipline, though it was "far too strict."
5. The other pupil was the quiet and well-behaved football player, Maurice Otunga. Fr. O'Meara later discovered that the usually reliable Otunga was seriously ill at home. He came back nearly/month late and was readmitted.
"the food already cooked must be eaten, simsim oil or no oil at all, the
substituted mbeazi" and all. And he dismissed one boy to stress the point. ¹
The dismissed pupil, Simon Waweru, who was due to sit the Junior Secondary
Examination, thought that by writing a letter of complaint to the Director
of Education he would be reinstated. His letter² dated 3 November 1942,
received some attention at the Head Office, when the Director wrote to
Mangu to inquire about the incident,³ but Fr. O'Meara's explanation⁴ was
considered satisfactory and the Director wrote to Waweru saying that after
making appropriate inquiries he saw no reason to accede to his request.⁵

But that was not the end of the troubles of 1942. On the feast of
All Saints the students had another of their many 'walks' and six of
them came back apparently drunk.⁶ A heavy punishment was prescribed by
Fr. O'Meara the following day, but only one of the six agreed to take it.
The rest could not get away with it, however. They were summarily dismissed;
only to be returned by their parents or parish priests with humble apologies
and declarations of a willingness to take the punishment now. Fr. O'Meara
relented, but doubled the punishment.⁷ He wrote:

"My prayer is - may the Lord strengthen my long arm for the task
a head."⁸

The Sunday walks at Mangu during Fr. O'Meara's time were a formal
affair with the whole school going out in a body led by prefects at the
front and other prefects bringing up the rear. No shoes were to be worn:
luxuries like sugar were not supplied and no one was allowed to bring them
to school even if he could afford them. No visitors were allowed, not even

¹. Mangu Journal: entry for 18 October 1942.
². Found in File T.C.191, op.cit.
⁴. Ibid: Letter of Fr. O'Meara to the Director of Education dated 15
November 1942.
⁵. Ibid: Letter No. B.189/187 of 20 November 1942, the Director to
Simon Waweru.
The only pupil of the group mentioned is Titus
He received "Fifteen of the best," i.e. canes.
⁸. Ibid: entry for 13 November 1942.
relatives except on certain formal occasions. That this latter rule was strictly observed can be shown by the fact that Senior Chief Koinange was once barred from seeing his son, Karuga, on a visit to Mangu.¹

Such was the discipline of Fr. O'Meara.

10. The Perennial Problem of Grants:

Brother Josaphat arrived early in 1941 to build one teacher's house,² a welcome addition to the buildings from the point of view of the staff, though much still remained to be done to ease the accommodation problem. This was partly made possible by the fact that Mangu got a slightly bigger grant in 1941 than in the previous year, because of the inclusion of £300 for a building grant, at last. But the grant was given with a warning from the Director of Education. It reads:

"I beg to inform you that I am prepared to pay you the full grant this year. This in effect, means an ex-gratia building grant of £300.

I am bound, however, to give you notice that from 1942 onwards grants will be allocated strictly in accordance with the Rules."³

This building grant no doubt enabled Mangu to build the teacher's house already referred to.

Another indirect help came in the form of a wireless set, a gift from the Department of Information to enable the school to listen to broadcasts about the war and presumably other Government propaganda.⁴

¹ Interview with Karuga Koinange, and B.B. Bangua in 1969.
² Mangu Journal: entries for 17 February 1941.
⁵ Ibid: Fr. O'Meara's Letter of 29 November 1942 to the Director.
The old problem of the grant came up again towards the end of 1942. The Principal, Fr. O'Meara, wrote to the Director of Education giving him his estimates for the grant of 1943, basing them on an expected roll of 45 students, and asking for a slight increase in the flat salaries of the priests and that of the African teacher, Cyrillus Ojoo.¹

The Director of Education in reply insisted on being given exact figures of pupils in each Form, without which he was unwilling to give a full grant to Mangu,² and when he did not receive a satisfactory answer he wrote to Fr. O'Meara in his capacity as Education Secretary³ the following letter:—

"I have the honour to inform you that in view of the difficulty experienced in obtaining the requisite details it is not proposed to continue to pay a quarter's grant in advance. Instead an interim payment of 80% of the quarter's grant will be paid and unless full particulars are received with the application for the balance of the quarter's grant no further payment will be made for the quarter."⁴

So Fr. O'Meara now wrote giving the details, which were at last available; a roll of fifty five pupils was expected, forty of whom would be qualified for the grant. This number did not include the Form III enrolment.⁵ By the beginning of the second term of 1943 the number of "approved pupils" was reported to be only thirty three,⁶ and Form III had apparently been dropped.

Nevertheless 1943 had began promisingly, with a comparatively strong Form I having 30 pupils of whom 21 were qualified for grants.⁷

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1. File No. T.C. 191, op. cit., Fr. O'Meara's letter of 29 November 1942 to the Director
2. Ibid: Letter No. B.189/192 dated 4 December 1942
3. Fr. O'Meara had again been asked by the Bishop to take on the additional duties of Education Secretary, after being relieved of it in July the previous year.
6. Ibid: Letter from Fr. O'Meara as Education Secretary dated 5 July 1943.
Nevertheless 1943 had began promisingly, with a comparatively strong Form I having 30 pupils of whom 21 were qualified for grants.\(^1\)

Although Mangu was eligible for grants and received one right from its inception in 1940, there was always some kind of struggle for it every year with the Education Department. The Department was of the opinion that the number of Mangu's students qualifying for grants fluctuated so much from year to year that it could not take any returns or estimates by the Principal for granted. Mangu on the other hand felt that some allowance had to be made for these fluctuations since they were inevitable, and the Department ought to have had some confidence in the honesty and good sense of the Principal.\(^2\) This bureaucracy and red tape caused much frustration for Mangu, in spite of the fact that the tough-dealing Fr. O'Meara, took a very hard line in his correspondence with the Education Department on grant issues.\(^3\)

The 1944 grant was much less than it should have been due to this apparent lack of good faith. Fr. O'Meara sent in his estimates for 50 students but received only a grant at the usual rate of £30 per student, for 40 students. Fr. O'Meara's plea that the grant be adjusted to cater for the 49 qualified students actually on roll,\(^4\) received the reply that the request was too late as the grants had already been fully allocated.

The letter went on to say that the figure of 40 had been arrived at on the basis of the roll of the previous year and on the Primary School results of the relevant Catholic Schools.\(^5\) The reply incensed Fr. O'Meara, who wrote back as follows:


\(^2\) Much of the correspondence between Fr. O'Meara and the Director of Education, found on file T.C. 191, *op.cit.*, boils down to this.

\(^3\) Ibid.


"I .... note that you are unable to increase the allocation to the High School.

The manner of reaching the figure 40 causes us much dismay. A letter of mine dated 7th February 1944 gave the number of approval pupils as 50. This seems to have been set aside. Taking our Catholic Schools into consideration, the figure reached by your office is accurate but we have never restricted entry into the school only to students qualifying from Catholic Primary Schools.¹ Are we to take it that other students are not to come to the Catholic High School? Of the twelve or so extra candidates accepted this year nine are from the Government schools. All are recommended by their respective Principals, most of them by the Inspector of Schools of the Province concerned.

You will readily understand, Sir, that these additional boys increase our running costs considerably. Books, food, clothes, are all more expensive than last year. May I ask what I am to do with those boys? It hardly seems fair to them to take the drastic step of informing them that they must leave as the Government is unable or unwilling to pay for their Secondary Schooling. I am loath to take the step and yet, in fairness to the school and the Mission, I am not justified in running into debt on their account."²

The Director’s reply avoided the issues raised. It reads in part:

"I am afraid this difficulty will continue to exist so long as you have to depend to some extent for your recruitment on schools other than the Catholic (sic) feeder schools."³

The Director finished the letter by saying that the Department might look into the matter if the financial situation improved later in the year - which didn’t happen. What is of interest in the Director’s letter is the indirect implication that only Catholic pupils should be sought for; the Department apparently had moved a long way from Mr. Scott’s policy of ten year’s earlier about inter-denominationalism. Fr. O’Meara attacked the implication in his reply by saying: "I regret I do not understand the difficulty mentioned in your first paragraph", adding that the Director of Education knew only too well that Secondary Schools recruited their pupils

¹ There were several Protestant students at Mangu at the time.
³ Ibid: Education Department Letter No. 189/231 of 20 March 1944 to the Principal of Mangu.
from the official list issued by the Department of Education. Mangu High School had conformed to all routine procedures and taken all the pupils from the official list. Why then reduce the number. He went on:

"The logical conclusion is that the Department is not prepared to finance boys from non-Catholic Schools at Mangu. On the facts no other conclusion is possible." 1

The Director of Education merely replied that he had nothing to add to his earlier remarks. 2 And so the 1944 grant was not increased. Mangu was also denied bonus benefits for its European staff in spite of another major struggle by Fr. O'Meara. 3

Next Fr. O'Meara set out to get a building grant for a much needed extra dormitory. The number of students expected in January 1945 was 65 which was too large for the dormitory space available. The classroom and laboratory accommodation would still be adequate, but a dormitory had to be got ready at once. 4 Another urgent necessity was a sick bay for the boys. 5 The Principal produced an architect's estimates of the cost which amounted to Sh. 8,916.00. The Education Department graciously gave Sh. 5,500/- to go towards the cost of this dormitory. 6

Before approaching the Department of Education for this assistance, Fr. O'Meara had in October 1944 tried to get the Vicariate to build the dormitory and had actually managed to get the vicar General, Fr. Finnegan interested, but Fr. Muren the Superior and bursar for Mangu had shown no interest in the project and his word was accepted. Fr. O'Meara was given a "milk and water permission of the kind of: 'expense not justified unless

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1. File No. T.0.191, op. cit., Fr. O'Meara's letter dated 23.3.44.
2. Ibid: Letter No. B189/234 of 27.3.44, from the Director of Education.
3. Ibid: various correspondence in 1944.
6. Ibid: Letter No. B189/300 (undated), from the Director of Education.
(a) or (b) or better (a) and (b) were fulfilled. Hence the approach to the Education Department. Obviously, however, the Vicariate paid the difference of the cost of the dormitory; it was completed with a temporary roof early in the second term of 1945, when the senior boys moved into it. Prior to that the considerably increased number of students in 1945 (they had reached a record of 66) had spilled into a classroom to get more sleeping accommodation. The building programme of Mangu continued to present problems to the extent that the Catholic authorities began to toy with idea of moving the school to a hundred acre plot near the White Sisters, in the event of which the Mangu buildings would be converted for the use of a Teacher Training College. This also failed to materialise.

The introduction of budgetary grants as opposed to per capita grants which had been the practice since Kabaa—Mangu began earning any grant, eased the burden for Mangu considerably, even though the "fight" for the correct amount continued every year. The budgetary grant-in-aid system started to operate in 1945. The first budgetary estimates were sent in by Mangu on 2 December 1944 in respect of the following year, the main items on the estimates being salaries, food, equipment, machinery, buildings and miscellaneous (e.g. medicine, transport and games). The total estimates amounted to Sh. 62,530, of which Sh. 12,000 was expected from fees.

The Director of Education rejected the Estimates because they included salaries for the priests at the rate of £450 per annum each.

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2. Ibid: various entries January to May 1945.
4. Interview with Fr. J. J. O'Neillara.
He commented:

"I assume that the staff will consist of Fathers of the Mission, who do not receive salaries, but certain allowances. This item could not therefore be allowed." 1

Other reasons why the estimates were rejected included the fact that the cost of a new dormitory had been inserted when it ought to have been dealt with as a separate item. A more important objection was the absence of a Board of Governors at Mangu, since the new rules insisted on the existence of one. 2 So Fr. O'Meara had to send in new estimates, and promise that a Board of Governors was going to be formed as soon as the Bishop had given his approval. 3 The Director of Education, however, again insisted on lowering the flat rate salaries of the priests from £450 to something less, 4 and Fr. O'Meara had to reduce the figure to £350, 5 to the delight of the Education Department, who refused to alter it for some years.

11. Foundation of the Board of Governors

Although a Board of Governors had been suggested for Kabaa in the early thirties during Fr. Witte's time, it never got off the ground for various reasons, the most relevant being the unnecessary fuss over grants by the Department of Education which left the Bishop with the feeling that a conventional Board of Governors was not going to be worth the trouble, since it was unlikely to reduce the apparent prejudice against the Catholics within the Education Department. Kabaa, and later Mangu had therefore contrived to get away with it over this issue till 1944. The new rules compiled that year for the grants of 1945 appeared more insistent on Boards of Governors for grant-aided schools, and the Principal seriously began to consider establishing a Board of Governors for Mangu. 6

2. Ibid.
3. Ibid. Fr. O'Meara's letter to the Director of Education dated 6 February 1945.
5. Ibid. Letter of 4 June 1945.
In April 1945, after consultation with Bishop Heffernan, he sent a tentative list of suggested names for the members of the proposed Board of Governors.¹

The Board of Governors however was not formed that soon; it was in fact not formed until three years after the arrival of the new Bishop of the Zanzibar Vicariate, the Right Rev. (later Archbishop) J.J. MacArthy, who arrived in Kenya in 1946.² Meanwhile the Education Department had once more to relax its rules and give Mangu grants to operate on pending the formation of a Board of Governors. For the grant of 1945 the Director wrote the following letter to the Holy Ghost Education Secretary:

"I would confirm the arrangements made at the interview, namely, that the Department will pay the school a grant of £1,800 this year without prejudice to any necessary revision in an upward or downward direction when it has been possible to form a Board of Governors and for the Board to examine the estimates and make recommendations. It is realized that in the absence of his Lordship the Bishop it is not possible at present for the Mission to reach decisions on the constitution of the Board of Governors."³


"The Vicar Apostolic for the time being of Zanzibar.
The Vicar Apostolic for the time being of Kisumu.
The Vicar Apostolic for the time being of Nyeri.
The Prefect Apostolic for the time being of Meru.
The Principal for the time being of the School.
The Educational Secretary for the Vicariate of Zanzibar.
The Hon. The Director of Education (or his nominee)
The Hon. the Chief Native Commissioner (or his nominee)."

2. The Right Rev. J.J. MacArthy had been Education Secretary of the Holy Ghost Missions in Tanzania in the thirties, and during the Second World War had been appointed by Rome to be Acting Apostolic Delagate for East Africa based at Mombasa. It was from this post that he was appointed Bishop of the Vicariate of Zanzibar in 1946, taking over from Bishop Heffernan.

Earlier Fr. O'Meara had got the Director to procure for him extracts of the relevant sections of the Alliance High School Board of Governors Constitution to use as a guide in drawing up the Mangu one.

Meanwhile the original suggestions for the composition of the Board were scrapped by the Catholics themselves. In late 1947 the Holy Ghost Education Secretary Fr. Higgins, wrote to the Director giving him a recomposed list of suggested names for the Board of Governors, which had been approved by Bishop MacArthy.

After studying the suggested composition of the Board the Director wrote back giving some counter suggestions. He was of the opinion that as Fr. Doody and Fr. Byrne were both Holy Ghost Fathers "there should be one additional European representation of the Consolata Mission which also operates in the Central Province." Further, he suggested that there should be African representation on the Board and that the Provincial Commissioner should also be a member, who could be in place of one of the suggested nominees of the Director of Education.

   The names were as follows:
   Very Rev. Fr. Wallis (Chairman) The Educational Secretary
   Rev. Fr. Doody
   Rev. Fr. Byrne
   Mr. Rudolph Anderson
   Two members nominated by the Director of Education.
   (The Principal of the School was to act as Secretary to the Board, but he would not be a voting member).
Earlier Fr. O'Meara had got the Director to procure for him extracts of the relevant sections of the Alliance High School Board of Governors Constitution to use as a guide in drawing up the Mangu one. ¹

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The Holy Ghost Education Secretary wrote back objecting to two of the suggestions in the Director's letter, namely the inclusion of a Consolata Father and an African. His reasons against the Consolata suggestion were that

"It is not in accordance with Ecclesiastical discipline for distinct Ecclesiastical jurisdictions to be thus involved in their separate affairs." 1

The objection to the inclusion of an African on the Board were on the grounds that

"As far as can be ascertained from the experience of other Boards with such African representation, it is considered that no useful purpose can be served thereby." 2

The result was that the Director summoned the Holy Ghost Education Secretary for an interview over the matter.

The next time the Board of Governors matters came up in a serious way again was in January 1949, after Bishop MacArthy had returned from leave and made the final decision. The Education Secretary, Fr. H. Farrell, opened the issue with the Education Department by discussing it personally with the Director of Education in mid-January 1949. Then he wrote a letter to the Director detailing out the Catholic proposals for a Board of Governors. The letter (quoted here verbatim) reads. 4

"In the course of the interview which you accorded me on the 17th inst. you told me how necessary it was that some definite decision be come to as regards the Governing Body of Mangu School. I

2. Ibid.
understood from you that we should make up our minds without further delay as to whether this School was to remain 'sui generis', or come under the Government Regulations (Govt. Notice 556, 1945) respecting other schools of its kind. You kindly left to us the choice between the alternatives.

The Committee I called to examine this matter, whilst rather reluctant to accept a Board of Governors, have nevertheless decided that the Board system should be adopted, and Constitutions should be drawn similar in most respects to those governing the Alliance High School. The Committee insist that in the personnel of the Board and the Constitutions which shall govern its functions, provision shall be made to ensure that the school shall remain under the ownership and control of Catholic Ecclesiastical Authority. With this object in view, I submit that the Board be constituted as follows:

His Lordship the Bishop (or his personal representative).
The Pro-Vicar of the Vicariate.
The Educational Secretary, Holy Ghost Mission.
The Headmaster of Mangu.
One other European member of the staff.
The Headmaster of some other Catholic Secondary School in the Colony.
Two Representatives of the Government Education Department.

I note that in different letters on my files reference is made to nominating African members to the Board. No mention is made of this in Govt. Notice 556, The Education (Grant in aid of African Education) Rules 1945, so I presume some amendments have since been made to these rules. That raises for us a point of very great importance. As you, Sir, have left us free to accept the Board or to remain outside it, we take it that our handing over the School to the new management is a bilateral agreement, and we submit that the terms of it cannot be altered later on by unilateral action. So that if these Rules be further amended at some future time, we shall not be bound by any alterations which are contrary to the Constitution to be now drawn for the governing of the school.

I am preparing a draft of these Constitutions, and hope to submit them to you in the near future. I hope too that we shall be able to terminate the protracted negotiations on this matter, in a way acceptable to you and to ourselves."
The Department of Education decided that the proposals contained in Fr. Farrell's letter would be acceptable if the Provincial Commissioner of the Province was included in the membership as he would adequately represent African interests, and if the provision concerning change of rules was deleted. Fr. Farrell was in agreement and now sent a draft constitution of the proposed Board of Governors to the Director. Again the Director of Education had only two "slight" alterations to make in the constitution; they were that the Provincial Commissioner or his nominee be included in the membership and Rule 13 be omitted as being unnecessary (see Appendix XVII). Finally Fr. Farrell and the Director reached agreement over all issues and the former was able to thank the latter for his patience and consideration during the protracted and delicate negotiations over the years.

After this the matters concerning the establishment of the Board were handled very fast. A meeting was convened by Fr. Farrell on 30 May 1949. The Director of Education, Mr. Patrick, was invited to chair the meeting at the start to conduct the election of a proper Chairman and Secretary. The other main items of the agenda for this inaugural meeting of the Board were the presentation of the Headmaster's report and audited accounts for the year 1948, and the consideration of the budget for 1950. The members

3. See Appendix XVII.
6. Mr. Patrick preferred just to be a member.
7. As in footnote 5.
present at the meeting were:

Table No. 2 First Members of the Mangu Board of Governors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Hon. the Director of Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Fr. J. Kavanagh, representing His Lordship Bishop MacArthy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Fr. Doody, representing the Very Rev. Pro-Vicar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Fr. H. Farrell, Education Secretary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Fr. M.F. Soughley, Holy Ghost College.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The meeting was informed that the official scale of salaries for European staff receiving a flat rate was £500, plus a furlough grant which could be accumulated over four years to a total of £285. The meeting also agreed that a capital grant of £700 should be inserted in the estimates for 1950 to provide for "new sanitary accommodation." Another recommendation of the meeting was that "Handwork should be added to the curriculum of the school."2

Now that the much awaited Board had been formed and had met, the Principal of Mangu and the Holy Ghost Education Secretary set to work to try and get the promises of the Education Department fulfilled. The two most crucial promises concerned proper salaries for the European staff and capital grants in respect of buildings. The Education Secretary inserted these in the estimates for 1950, which he sent in in June, 1949, to be early.3 The proposed salary for each priest was given as £450, which together with the Cost of Living Allowance (C.O.L.A.) amounted to £500.

1. This gave the priests some hope: they had been receiving only £350 p.a. each since 1943, after Fr. O'Neara's plea for £450 (which was still less than the official figure) was refused.

2. File No. T.C. 1337: Minutes of the first Mangu Board of Governor's meeting.

The Chief Inspector of Schools, Mr. V.A. Ottaway, in a minute to the Director of Education expressed serious objections to this.\textsuperscript{1} In the minute he said he was dissatisfied with the way the Holy Ghost Mission submitted its estimates generally, and insisted that since the priests at Mangu had lived on £350 in 1948, the figure should not be changed, unless they gave a detailed breakdown of their actual expenses per priest to substantiate the claim for £500.\textsuperscript{2}

The Director of Education, Mr. Patrick, cautioned him with the following words:

"If the audited accounts show that they have spent £500 per European Master in 1950, would you consider this figure excessive? I should like to discuss this with you."\textsuperscript{3}

Nevertheless a letter signed by Mr. Ottaway for the Director of Education went to the Holy Ghost Education Secretary raising the objections.\textsuperscript{4} By a coincidence, Fr. J.J. O'Meara had returned from home leave and been appointed Education Secretary, which enabled him to take a very firm line on this issue.\textsuperscript{5}

In one of his letters Fr. O'Meara was particularly pungent. It reads in part:\textsuperscript{6}

"This question of salaries for High School Fathers has been a bone of contention for years, tossed back and forward each time from your Department, to the School authorities and vice versa according as estimates come under revision. No decision has been reached.

\textsuperscript{1} File No. T.C. 1337, op. cit., Minute of the Chief Inspector of Schools to the Director of Education, dated 18 June 1949.

\textsuperscript{2} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{3} Ibid: A note written on the same minute by Mr. Patrick.


\textsuperscript{6} Ibid: Fr. O'Meara's letter of 16 August, op. cit.
In Mr. Donovan's time, under duress, we accepted a salary of £350 per head as a compromise solution until such time as a Board of Governors and your Department, Sir, should resolve the problem. That was £100 lower than we considered we could justly claim. Letters and conversations made our position clear. Now, the Board has claimed £500 per Father and, apparently, the claim does not meet with your approval. I would think it a reasonable claim in 1949 with the cost of living ever so much higher than in 1943 when we accepted £350 as a working compromise. The Report of the East African Salaries Commission would support this view e.g. £350 converts to £550 on the revised scale.

Our position must be clear and we would very much like to have this long outstanding problem solved. Would you please let us know what salary you would be prepared to admit as reasonable in the circumstances? I think that this way we may more easily and quickly come to an agreement."

As a result Mangu got a grant of £3,250 for 1950; this included salaries for the European members of staff at the rate of £475 each, a furlough grant having been calculated into this amount.¹ Then Fr. O'Meara as Education Secretary having worked out and presented a breakdown of expenses per priest at Mangu, amounting to £480, the Education Department agreed to grant this sum as from 1951, thus bringing the protracted struggle at long last to an end.²


An event of great importance in 1941 was the holding of the first big meeting of the Kabaa - Mangu Old Boys Association, which took place on 12 October.³ The idea of the Association had been started by Mr. Peter Mwau - then teaching at Government African School Pumwani and taken up by Fr. Kelly at Kabaa in mid-June 1939.⁴ Fr. Farrelly and

Fr. O'Meara, continued the preparations for the foundation of the Association at Mangu. Invitations were sent to all old boys of Kabaa and Mangu who could be reached, in mid-1941. The result was the meeting of October. The Association was formally established at this meeting: In the elections that took place the following were elected office bearers:

Chairman: Mr. F.J. Khamisi.
Secretary: Mr. W.J.K. Kioko.
Treasurer: Mr. Alfons Oloo.
Joint Secretary: Mr. Bartholomew Adambo.

Patrons for the Association were elected during the course of the following year: for their names, and the list of founder members, as well as the address of Bishop Heffernan to the Annual Reunion of 1942, see Appendices XIV, XV and XVI respectively.

It was resolved thenceforward to hold Annual Reunions with sports and concerts taking place, and the 1942 Annual Reunion carried out this resolution admirably. The concert and sports, held at Nairobi, were well publicised in advance and meticulously planned. As a result they drew large attendances.

The event took place during the August school holidays, but twenty-four Mangu boys stayed behind to participate in the sports, at which they gave a well appreciated drill performance and played a successful match against the Old Boys. In the evening of 1 August there was a concert in the Pumwani Memorial Hall, performed by the Old Boys of Kabaa; among the prominent people in the audience was Bishop Heffernan.

1. The First Annual Report 1941-1942. op.cit.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
and the Nairobi District Commissioner, as well as many other Europeans, and of course a large number of Africans. Three plays "Duka Langu", "Nani aliyeiba Kondoo" and "Rahisi Sana" were well acted and drew great applause from the audience. Other items of the concert were traditional dances accompanied by instrumental music: they included an Akamba dance, a Maasai dance, and a Kikuyu dance. Additional performances included a flute solo, a coronet solo, guitar music, caricature sketches depicting Indian behaviour, and special shows by Fr. Doody and Brother Savinus. In-between performances the Kabaa band delighted the audience with its expert performances. The three-hour performance was very well appreciated by all present. The football matches and the drill performances and the Kabaa band and musical drill display took place the following day in the Nairobi Stadium, with a large gathering of spectators present. The football team of the current Mangu boys beat the one of the Kabaa-Mangu Old Boys Association three to one. The events of the two days made quite good publicity for the two schools, and of course for the combined Old Boys Association. The Proceeds of the Concert and Sports Day amounted to Shs. 1,307.00, and brought a nett profit of Sh. 752/24, after accounting for the expenses. Bishop Heffernan made a contribution of Shs. 100 to the Association, and Fr. Kelly gave Sh. 20, on the occasion. The Bishop also addressed the Annual meeting.

The 1943 Reunion was held at Mangu. Apparently only a small number turned up, but they earned a free day for the Mangu boys, and stayed over-night.

1. Baraza, a report found in the issue of 8 August 1942.
2. Ibid.
3. First Annual Report of the Association, op.cit
4. See Appendix XVI.
The next big do for the Association was in 1944. Once more the Reunion was held at Nairobi and consisted of sports and concerts in which the two schools and the Old Boys took part. This time the only Catholic Girls Secondary School in the country — Loreto Convent Girls School, Limuru — was invited to supply some items of the concert, and gravously obliged. They produced a Swahili play about the Uganda Martyrs. As in 1942, in-between the scenes of this play as the other plays, the Kabaa Band provided orchestral music. The girls, like all the other participants stayed in Nairobi for the two days and nights of the Reunion, and the Old Boys were allowed to act as their "chaperons" in taking them back to St. Teresa’s Girls Secondary School where they were housed. The celebrations gave as much publicity to Loreto Convent Limuru School as they did to Kabaa and Mangu and their Old Boys Association. Mother Francis Joseph O’Sullivan who was Principal of Loreto Convent Limuru, says that the experience gave the girls confidence and helped to establish a tradition of theatricals and music at the school.1

The Association was very strong in the 1940’s, but appears to have slackened somewhat in the 1950’s, partly because the thorough planning of the earlier Reunions did not characterise these years. Hilary Ngweno, the Mangu student, who broke the Kenya record in the School Certificate Results of 1956, is of the opinion that few people would wish to go to a Reunion where they merely drink something, make speeches and play a game. He thinks that an Old Boys Association must profit its old institution. It should plan generous contributions to improve the school in various ways. It could build a swimming pool, offer bursaries to a few current students, build a dormitory, and so on.2

2. Interview with Hilary Ngweno, May 1968.
The Association has survived several spells of inaction, but still flourishes today with Joseph Karanja, Peter Otieno Nyakiamo and John Abuoga as some of the main inspirers.\(^1\) The Marianists appear to have given the Association a new filip since their taking over. There have been regular well-attended reunions from 1962 onwards.

13. The Final Years of Fr. O'Meara's Principalship

The effects of Fr. O'Meara's planning at Mangu began to show during the last two years of his stay at Mangu. Not that his earlier years had not brought their own results. Looked at from the point of view of today, the first four years of Mangu (part of which are to Fr. Kelly's credit) have left their own mark on the Kenya scene: the impact of men like Archbishop Otunga, Stephen Kioni, Samuel Waruhiu, Karuga Koinange and others, all products of those first four years, needs no explaining. The final four years of Fr. O'Meara (1944 to early 1948) produced among others the late Thomas Joseph Mboya, Lawrence Sagini, Mwai Kibaki (all Government Ministers of independent Kenya.), Bishop R. Ndingi and Mgr. J. Njenga, a number of other priests, politicians, Permanent Secretaries and a host of civil servants. It has been asserted\(^2\) that up to independence and possibly a little beyond, Mangu had produced more doctors, both medical and academic, than Alliance High School.

Figures are difficult to compile on this but a rough count seems to confirm the view, and Hilary Ngweno thinks that the reason for this excellence by Mangu students in the academic and medical world was caused by their lack of opportunity in the colonial administrative hierarchy due to

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1. Joseph Karanja is the current President and Peter Otieno Nyakiamo the current Secretary. John Abuoga has held posts in earlier years and is their publicity man, and the Vice-President in 1969.

2. By Hilary Ngweno, and Stephen Kioni.
subtle prejudices against the Catholics.¹ How far this was also influenced by Fr. O'Meara's planning is difficult to establish. Be that as it may, Fr. O'Meara left a tangible imprint on Mangu School, perhaps of a different kind from the one Fr. Witte left on Kabaa, but a far-reaching imprint all the same.

On the physical side of the school Fr. O'Meara built two more dormitories, extended the Father's house (the double storey of which was completed in 1946), brought the science laboratory up to date so that with a few additions after his departure² Mangu was to pride itself on having the best laboratory in all Africa.³ Improvements on the lawns and pitches were also his work.

Further, Fr. O'Meara was also responsible for the games spirit especially in football which reached a very high standard indeed, in spite of the fact that Mangu was handicapped by the field of selection. With the highly increased roll of 1946, 1947, 1948 and 1949, the Mangu team became so strong that in the last of the years mentioned above it beat Alliance High School in both ⁴ matches played.⁵

Fr. O'Meara's tough fight to get grants has already been noted and he was to continue it later as Catholic Education Secretary-General. Like Fr. Witte before him, one of his problems, though on a much less scale, was with his superiors. For instance the Bishop was sometimes slow in making important decisions as in the case of the establishment of the Board of

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1. Interview with Hilary Ngweno.
2. Actually some of the science equipment that came to the school in 1949 from America were sent in the name of Fr. O'Meara.
3. File T.C. No. 1337, op.cit., First Annual Report discloses the additions which brought the lab to this perfection: three projectors one each for sound, strip and microfilm. The Mangu journal then makes the remark in the text.
4. From around 1944, Mangu played at least two friendly matches a year against Alliance High School.
Governors. Another reason was the existence at Mangu of an overall Superior from the time the Mission was handed over to the school. One of the superiors, Fr. Michael Murren, was most uncooperative with the Principal of the school which made matters very difficult for the latter, considering that Fr. Murren held the purse. Fr. O'Meara apparently breathed a sigh of relief when Fr. Murren left for home leave in November 1945. After Fr. Murren divulged the news of his departure Fr. O'Meara recorded in the journal:

"This will throw a little more on the school staff, but they are pleased that the exit of Fr. Murren means an end of a very difficult three-year period. A Father-in-charge of the mission, with no interest in the school and staff, can make life very difficult for the school Fathers."  

Fr. Murren was replaced as Father-in-charge by Fr. Mitrecy, who arrived to take over in early February 1946.  

Another unexpected development was when the Consolata Fathers, anxious to start a Senior Secondary school of their own at Nyeri, went ahead and unofficially established a Form III class in early 1948, just before Fr. O'Meara's departure on home leave. There were 40 good Catholic candidates at the end of 1947, but these could not be sufficient for two classes. The matter was fortunately settled by the Apostolic Delegate, Archbishop Matthews, and Mangu made its preferential selection of 32 from the group.  

The last inspection report during Fr. O'Meara's time took place in 1947. It gives us some insight into the routine and curriculum of the school, both of which are little mentioned in the school journal. Perhaps the best

2. Ibid: entry for 2 February 1946.
thing is to show both as tables: these are indicated below:

**Table No. 10: The Daily Routine of Mangu in 1947**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.45 a.m.</td>
<td>Rise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.00 - 6.30</td>
<td>Chapel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.30 - 7.00</td>
<td>Breakfast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.30 - 8.00</td>
<td>Physical Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.00 - 11.50</td>
<td>Morning School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.50 - 1.45</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.45 - 4.30</td>
<td>Afternoon School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.30 - 5.00</td>
<td>Cleaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.00 - 6.00</td>
<td>Games</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.00 - 6.30</td>
<td>Evening Prayers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.30 - 7.30</td>
<td>Supper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.30 - 9.30</td>
<td>Evening Prep.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.45</td>
<td>Lights out.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table No. 10: Allocation of Time per Subject - 1947.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Form III</th>
<th>Form IV</th>
<th>Form V</th>
<th>Form VI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Religious Knowledge</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swahili</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geometry &amp; Algebra</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arithmetic</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science: Biology</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
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38 38 31 29
The Inspectors noted that there was no Art and no Handwork on the timetable, but remarked that English was taught to a very high standard.  

The year 1946 produced the best Cambridge results during Fr. O'Meara's time; and also in the Makerere Entrance Examination in which six candidates were successful, a very high percentage. So spectacular were the results that the Education Department sent the Principal a letter of congratulation. Alliance High School got less passes in the Makerere Entrance that year, yet somehow managed to send more candidates to the College, much to the surprise of Mangu. The Mangu journal was to lament the "underhand tricking over Makerere results."

The results of 1947 were also good in all the examinations, and so when Fr. O'Meara left Mangu in February 1948 he had already been able to observe the results of his careful planning for gradual progress but sure success. The years following his departure, 1948 and 1949, were very successful ones all round for Mangu. He had brought the school to take-off point, and henceforth success could be ensured, and often was.

14. Mangu after Fr. O'Meara

At the beginning of February 1948 Fr. O'Meara left for Europe on home leave and Fr. J.J. Meade was appointed Principal. Fr. Meade's European staff consisted of Fr. M.F. Soughley who had been on the staff since 1946, and Fr. J.C. O'Connor who had joined the staff of Mangu early in

1. File No. T.C. 191 op.cit.
3. Alliance High School apparently negotiated for some of its better students who had failed the Entrance Examination to be admitted into Makerere on a Preliminary Course.
6. Ibid.
1948 just before Fr. O'Meara's departure. The two African members of staff Mr. Cyrillus Ojoo and Mr. Herman Muraya, still remained on the staff.¹

The roll for 1948 reached a record of 97 students, four more than for the previous year, and once more the dormitories overflowed; so the second dormitory started by Fr. O'Meara had to be completed quickly to ease the situation.² Government allowed £500 for the erection of this dormitory and Africans built it on contract.

The many problems for Mangu proved to be too onerous for the inexperienced Fr. Meade and barely two months after his appointment he was replaced by Fr. J.B. Lynch, who had been on the staff before. He arrived from Pugu Tanzania to take over the Principalship on 9 April 1948, and Fr. Meade left six weeks later for Kiambu.³ About the same time Fr. M. Higgins was replaced as Education secretary by Fr. J. Kavanagh.

There were not many developments of note in 1948, though it ought to be mentioned that Mangu and Alliance High School played their usual friendly matches, and the Cambridge results brought eleven very good passes out of the thirteen candidates entered. Six of them joined Makerere College. The main sensation of the year was the decision of the Education Department to reduce the staff salaries of Mangu by a total of £450 in the estimates of 1949. When Mangu and the new Education Secretary, Fr. J. Kavanagh, protested and insisted

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on claiming £450 for each priest, the Director of Education threatened to pass on the information to the Commissioner of Income Tax. ¹ As a result Fr. Kavanagh wrote a strongly worded and somewhat derisive reply in protest. ²

1949, which started with a new record of 106 boys, was much more eventful. It saw the establishment of the Board of Governors as we have seen, and also the triumph of Mangu over Alliance in the football match of the year. ³

The First Board of Governors meeting was told in the Principal's report that during the nine years since Mangu's start a total of 244 students had passed through the school; of these 23 had entered Makerere. During that period 140 had passed the Junior Secondary Examination, and 40 had passed the Cambridge School Certificate Examination, ⁴ which was not a bad record on the average.

One disappointment of the school was the transfer of the genial and energetic Fr. Soughley whose enthusiasm and interest in the boys since his arrival at the school in 1946, had whipped up a great deal of sentiment for Mangu among the students, ⁵ which probably accounted in part for the successes in football matches in 1948 and 1949. Fr. Soughley was transferred to the Teacher Training College at Licki, switching places with Fr. B. McCourt. ⁶ Another priest who joined the staff at the time was Fr. J.J. Nugent. ⁷

². Ibid, Fr. Kavanagh's letter of 1 October 1948.
⁴. See Appendix XIX.
⁵. Various students interviewed said this.
A welcome addition to the staff, though an unofficial one, was that of the highly qualified Fr. Murphy, the Superior General of the Holy Ghost Fathers in the Vicariate, who was announced local superior of Mangu mission as well, which made the priests at Mangu somewhat uneasy. However the presence of Fr. Murphy at Mangu soon became a boon, for he decided to do some teaching in the school, in a bid to lighten the heavy load on the staff. Fr. Murphy, a holder of two doctorates besides a master's degree and other qualifications, had not been in the classroom for the previous fifteen years, but now took English in Form III with great competence.

Earlier in the year the school had had one of those experiences with the awesome Mr. Delap, the retired army major who held the key to the road leading to and from Kabaa. Two Mangu teams left for Kabaa accompanied by three priests, on the morning of 17 March, but Major Delap was in one of his frequent bad moods, and he locked the gate, and at first refused to let them through.

"The old gentleman was even abusive to the Fathers who called for the key. Furthermore he made it quite clear that they would not be given the key on the return journey later than 9.00 p.m. This meant that all the visiting Fathers and the lorry with our boys had to come back by Tala going very near Kanzalu."

As a result the boys virtually spent the return journey on the way, arriving back at Mangu at 5 a.m.

From the Catholic point of view the most notable event of the year was the arrival of the statue of Our Lady of Fatima at Nairobi, on its tour round the world. Mangu took its own small part in the honouring of this world-venerated statue of Our Lady.

3. Ibid, entry for 17-3-49.
In the examination results of 1949, twenty-eight out of thirty-one candidates passed the Junior Secondary Examination, sixteen of them qualifying for the senior secondary. Fifteen out of sixteen passed the Cambridge School Certificate with very good grades, like in the previous year, and another good number of them was admitted into Makerere College.¹

It remains to be said that throughout the 1940's the incidence of visitors at Mangu was very high indeed. Naturally the large majority of visitors were priests for whom Mangu became an important rendezvous of Irish hospitality. They streamed in almost daily, and on important occasions such as Church Feasts or sports days there was an influx of them, so that the journal spoke of their coming as an invasion.²

There was a considerable difference between the reasons why people visited Kabaa in the 1920's and 1930's, and why they visited Mangu in the next two decades. Whereas visitors to Kabaa had gone there on account of the exciting programmes that were known to take place there, the Mangu visitors, if priests, went there apparently as a form of Irish reunion on a smaller or larger scale; if non-clerics they generally went there on official business of a sort. The interest was more in the staff, and their exploits, whereas at Kabaa it had been in the students and their programme.

The year 1949 saw the completion of the first decade of the existence of Holy Ghost College Mangu. During that period the school had progressed from strength to strength largely as a result of Fr. O'Meara's planning. In its own way Mangu put

¹. Mangu Journal, entry for 24.1.50.
². Mangu Journal, numerous entries throughout the 1950's.
up with various problems over that period notably the difficulties caused by the second world war and its aftermath, and not least by the shortage of accommodation. The school had originally been planned for sixty boys only and each classroom for no more than twenty pupils; these classrooms were later made to hold as many as thirty-two pupils, a rather unsatisfactory state of affairs. The need for more classroom space and dormitory accommodation was met by the conversion of old mission houses, some of them built as early as 1912, and by the piecemeal addition of the odd new building as funds became available either from mission sources or from Government grants. All things considered, the school came out of that difficult decade very much strengthened, which helped the work and the planning in the second and equally difficult decade, due to the emergency.

1. Mentioned in a fund-raising pamphlet which was made available on the visit of President Kenyatta to Mangu High School in November 1968.
CHAPTER VI

HOLY GHOST COLLEGE MANGU

The decade of the Emergency - 1950-1960

1. The First Half of the Decade

Mangu started the year 1950 with 113 boys and a new Principal, Fr. B. McCourt, the previous Principal, Fr. J. B. Lynch, having been transferred to Pugu in Tanzania.\(^1\) For the first time in its ten years of existence, the school opened with its full quota of pupils in nearly every class. Hitherto the two senior classes had never had more than sixteen pupils each; this year Form V had 25 and Form VI had 23. Pupils' enrolment could no longer be a problem at Mangu, but the accommodation remained an acute problem both from the point of view of classrooms and of dormitories. The staff too, though impressive in qualifications, was still two less than the accepted staffing quota. In addition to the two African teachers Cyrillus Ojoo and Herman Muraya it consisted of:\(^2\)

- Fr. B. McCourt, B.A., S.T.L.
- Fr. McGoldrick, B.A.

Fr. O'Leary was still on the staff but the returns do not show, possibly because he was more particularly concerned with the Mission. Fr. Nugent had left at the end of 1949.

In view of the inadequacy of the staff as far as numbers were concerned the Board of Governors which met in March 1950 agreed upon the principle of six European teachers besides the two Africans on the staff.\(^3\)

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2. Ibid: Fr. O'Meara's letter of 20th April, 1950 to the Director of Education.
However this arrangement was not to be implemented until the following year and was subsequently disturbed by transfers. The departure of Fr. Murphy for Europe in the middle of 1950 led to the arrival of Fr. Paddy Fullen who was to concern himself with mission matters only, and Fr. Rea to take Fr. Murphy's place in the school. In spite of the shortage of staff, however, the examination results for the year were remarkably good, no doubt indicative of the abilities of the staff: out of the 33 candidates entered for the Junior Secondary Examination, 31 passed, eleven of them qualifying for the senior secondary course; the Cambridge class of 23 secured 22 passes, sixteen of them being in the first grade. This class was to send the largest contingent (twelve) of Mangu boys to Makerere College up to that date; the group included Emilio Mwai Kibaki, later to become a Minister in Kenya's independent cabinet.

Apart from these very gratifying results, 1950 was a relatively uneventful year, the chief event of note being the celebration of the Silver Jubilee of the founding of Kabaa school; this was organized by Fr. Connaughton and was held at Kabaa on 23 and 24 September, 1950. Two other happenings of note were the acquisition of new band instruments for Mangu which led to the establishment of its own flute and drum band. There was also the decision to start rearing pigs and a few cattle at the school.

In December of 1950 Fr. O'Leary and Fr. McGoldrick were transferred to other missions and Cyrillus Ojoo, who had taught at Mangu since 1940, went over to teach in his own home Province of Nyanza. Their replacements on the Mangu staff for 1951 were Fr. T. O'Sullivan who was returning on the staff after many years at St. Mary's School Nairobi, Fr. M. Mackey, who arrived from Sierra Leone; Fr. Rea was also posted to Mangu specifically to replace Fr. O'Leary but in

addition he took on the Swahili lessons formerly taken by Mr. Cyrillus Ojoo; finally there was Fr. Sheridan who on arrival to Kenya was assigned to Mangu, and Mr. Ambrose Lukalo, an old boy of Mangu who arrived from Makerere College. The four priests together with the two still remaining on the staff, namely, Fr. McCourt and Fr. J. C. O'Connor, brought the total number of European staff to six as recommended by the Board of Governors meeting of March 1950. Fr. Sheridan, however, stayed at Mangu only for two short months before being transferred elsewhere, which brought the European staff back to five; these together with the two Africans on the staff reduced the number to the old inadequate total of seven. But then Fr. Rea left the staff in early September and his replacement Fr. Tom Roche stayed at Mangu only two months before proceeding to Europe on leave; which did not solve the staffing problem a great deal.

Mr. Lukalo, in co-operation with Fr. McCourt, became a boon to Mangu when he started the first Boy Scouts troop which earned him well deserved commendation from the Education Department.

On the debit side the new sanitary accommodation which had been built in 1950 with a Government grant proved a failure and had to be urgently attended to in 1951, as was also the inadequate lighting plant.

Mangu High School made history in East African education in 1951 by presenting its candidates for the full science subjects of Physics, Chemistry and Biology—this being the first time that an African school in East Africa had presented the full science course.

2. Ibid: entry for 3 March 1951
3. Ibid: entry for 3 and 20 September 1951, and 9 October and entries for mid-December 1951.
5. File No. T.C. 1337, Minutes of the Board of Governors meeting held on 30 March 1951.
   Also various correspondence on the file.
This was reported later to have been the result of the efforts of Fr. J.C. O'Connor, a fully qualified and very competent teacher of science. The results in that year's examinations were one hundred per cent passes in both the Cambridge School Certificate Examination and in the Junior Secondary Examination; however the percentage of those getting high qualifications in each examination was lower than for 1950 and only five got to Makerere as compared to the twelve of the previous year.¹

An event that brought Mangu into the news at the end of 1951 was the attendance of the Outward Bound Course at Loitokitok by Fr. McCourt, Mr. Ambrose Lukalo and three of the High School boys. They "won golden opinions from all, for their keenness and skill."²

The year 1952 saw the largest capital grant of all from the Government, and it is rightly considered "the building year" of the school. The grant of £31,000 led to the erection of two new classrooms, two new dormitories, a new dining hall, a new kitchen and stores; and extensions to the Fathers' house also a new library a new laboratory as well as four teachers' houses, a water bore-hole, and a better lighting system.³ Brother Josaphat and for a time Brother Simon carried out the actual construction of the buildings. Although this extensive building programme caused a great deal of inconvenience for the student body and staff alike they all bore it cheerfully consoled by the fact that they were going to have a much easier time than before after the completion of the project.⁴ The school had from January 1952 taken on a double stream Form III (i.e., the first class of the school, known today as Form I)

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1. File No. T.C. 1337, Minutes of the Board of Governors meeting of 17 April 1952.
2. Ibid. Also Mangu Journal: entries for December 1951.
and this had to use a classroom on the Primary school block "next to the youngsters", till the new classrooms were ready.¹

As far as the staff was concerned the recommendations made earlier by the Board of Governors that staff be not changed so frequently was apparently not taken into account by the Bishop. At the beginning of 1952 he transferred Fr. McCourt from being Principal of Mangu to being Education Secretary, Holy Ghost Mission, with headquarters at Nairobi; he also transferred Fr. Mackey to Kabaa to become Principal there. For their replacements he sent Fr. Comerford to take the place of Fr. Mackey, Fr. Wallis to take that of Fr. McCourt, and Fr. Soughley to assist Fr. Wallis (superior of Mangu) with the duties of Acting Principal.²

These sweeping changes might have affected the school seriously were it not for the fact that the new team of priests included some extremely energetic and enthusiastic educators. Another welcome addition on the staff was Mr. Simon Katua, an old boy of the school, who had just completed his studies at Makerere College. Already on the staff were Fr. J. C., O'Connor, Fr. T. O'Sullivan and Mr. Ambrose Lukalo.³ The latter left later in the year to study chemistry in the United Kingdom.⁴ About the same time as Mr. Lukalo was to leave further transfers were carried out among the priests again, in spite of the very firm recommendation of the Board of Governors held earlier in the year stressing the need to keep the staff at the school for longer periods to ensure stability.⁵ In the reshuffle of 16 August 1952, Fr. Wallis and Fr. O'Sullivan moved to St. Mary's Nairobi, and Fr. O'Leary and Fr. O'Shea arrived to replace them at Mangu, respectively. There was no replacement for Mr. Lukalo, which

2. Ibid.: entries for January and February 1952.
4. Ibid.: Minutes of the Board of Governors meeting 1952.
was to add a great load to the staff till the end of the year. Fr. Soughley now became a full principal of Mangu instead of acting on behalf of Fr. Wallis as before. Other arrivals to join the staff of 1953 were Fr. James Griffin and Mr. Joseph Karanja, another old boy of the school, who had just finished his training at Kagumo College where he had qualified as a KTI teacher.

As the number of classes had increased to seven due to double streams in Forms III, IV, and V the increase in the number of teachers by one did not alleviate the staffing difficulties, and the teachers continued to carry a very heavy teaching load indeed.

Fr. Soughley could not have wished for a better staff. Both the Africans and Europeans were co-operative, innovative, hardworking, and above all most enthusiastic and ambitious for Mangu; so the record number of 179 students on the roll and the increase in classes did not present much of a problem, contrary to the Principal's earlier fears that this might be so. Other factors which accounted for the comparatively good discipline among the boys throughout the year were the worry of the boys about their families due to the worsening situation of the emergency, and Fr. Soughley's system of "correction tempered with kindness". A further factor in this respect is considered to have been the vigorous games' spirit introduced by Fr. O'Shea with the help of Mr. Katua. The resulting pupils' enthusiasm for games played an important part, though "in a negative way" by preventing trouble through distraction. A new tennis court was made ready in July of that year largely through the efforts of Fr. Griffin, and the Inter-School Sports competition was held at Mangu for the first time and, although Alliance High School carried the day,

3. Ibid.
the intensive training given to the Mangu boys during a brief six months stood them in good stead.

Two plays were also presented by the boys that year. 
"Anne of the Ashes", a Catholic version of Cinderella, and "Your name is Satan", both of which were presented by Fr. O'Leary.¹

The only mishap of 1953 was the discovery that the school had overspent its grant allocation for the year to the value of shs. 7,344/13, which led to some pertinent queries from the Education Department,² but the matter was eventually explained and tidied over.

Once more an unfortunate change of Principal occurred at the beginning of 1954; unfortunate not because the person who was taking over was not suitable but because Mangu needed some stability which could only become possible by keeping one man on the job long enough to set tradition. Fr. Soughley was replaced by Fr. J. C. O'Connor,³ 

Fr. J. C. O'Connor, M.Sc., H.Dip Ed., took up his task with a great deal of imagination and originality. He for instance started the system of devolving responsibilities to the members of staff, under which Fr. Griffin became Dean of Studies and Fr. O'Shea Dean of Discipline.⁴

Fr. O'Connor also introduced to a certain extent, the approach of Fr. Witte at Kabaq of keeping the students on their toes,⁵ and maintained Fr. Soughley's strict discipline of the genial type.⁶ Like his predecessors, however, the reportedly likeable Fr. O'Connor, gave very little real responsibility to his African members of staff, who for the first time were a sizeable percentage of the whole staff. They included Mr. Simon Katua, Mr. J. Karanja, Mr. Albert Maleche, and Mr. Paul Erulu. Although the open dissatisfaction among the African staff which erupted in 1956 occurred outside Fr. O'Connor's period, some have suggested that its roots go back to 1954.⁷

¹ Mangu Journal, various entries in July 1953.
² File No. T.C. 1337, op. cit., latter No. C/221/II/65, dated 27-7-54
³ Ibid: Letter of Fr. Barrett Education Secretary to the Director of Education.
⁴ Mangu Journal, entries for 5 February 1954.
⁵ Ibid: entry for 5 February 1954.
⁶ Interview with Hilary Ng'weno, a student who entered Mangu that year.
⁷ Interview with James Ombere.
Nevertheless, Mangu under Fr. O'Connor in 1954 saw a great upsurge in both classroom and extra-curricular activities and at least as much enthusiasm for the success of Mangu both among the staff and the students as had been the case during Fr. Soughley's time. The Mangu football team in particular, under the dynamic guidance of Fr. O'Shea, became remarkably formidable, defeating such teams as Thika Police and the Royal Insiskilling Fusiliers.\(^1\) Alliance High School was also defeated in both matches of the year;\(^2\) and many other teams.

1954 saw further extensions to the Fathers' house, partly made possible by a grant of £3,500,\(^3\) it also witnessed the arrival of a huge bell weighing over one ton, ordered from Burns Oates and Washbourne, the cost of which was £300.\(^4\) There were few other developments in the year, though mention should be made of Mangu's fear that the school was not likely to get any more students from schools in other provinces, since Kabaa had started its own unofficial Form III that year, and schools like Yala and Nyeri were likely to keep their own candidates of Form IV, and this happened in 1955.

As far as further staff changes in 1954 were concerned, Fr. O'Leary, described by the journal as "a man of great goodness and charity", nicknamed "Father Danielis" by the locals, left Mangu in mid August and was replaced by Fr. W. Roche, who arrived from Limuru to take up his place on the Mangu staff. At the same time another priest, Fr. N. Killian, was also appointed to the Mangu staff and arrived from Kilimambogo to take up the appointment.\(^5\) The 1955 European Staff at Mangu therefore consisted of the teachers in the following table:\(^6\)

2. Ibid: entry for 10 April and 23 October 1954.
Table 11. Mangu Staff 1955:

Father James Griffin - Principal
Fr. O'Shea
Fr. W. Roche (who left in July 1955)
Fr. Clements (who left for home leave in October 1955)
Fr. N. Killian (who left in December 1955)
Fr. Mel Bannon arrived in June 1955 to deal mainly with mission matters
Fr. Paul Cunningham arrived in June 1955

Mr. David Irungu
Mr. Joseph Karanja
Mr. Paul Eruulu
Mr. Daniel Owino
Mr. John Namwamba.

In view of several changes in the European staff, and in preparation for the beginning of 1956, the following priests were added to the staff towards the close of 1955:

Fr. C. O'Nuallain (arrived in November)
Fr. J.G. O'Connor (arrived in early December)
Fr. D. O'Leary (arrived in late December)

With such frequent changes in the staff, problems could be expected and they did begin to ferment in mid 1955. The first signs of trouble arose within the African staff; most of whom were dissatisfied because they were being treated like "senior students of the High School."\(^1\) Eruulu, Owino and Namwamba, all non-Kikuyu, wrote letters of resignation from Mangu and requested the Director of Education to transfer them to schools in their home area of the then Nyanza Province.\(^2\) The theme of their letters was the same: they were dissatisfied at Mangu; they had been posted there in the first place against their wishes; and they did not wish to stay beyond 1955.

Their problems are said to have centred on the "dictatorial" rule of Fr. Griffin at Mangu. The elderly and seasoned Fr. Griffin, on the

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1. File No. T.C. 1337, op. cit., letters of Eruulu, Owino and Namwamba to the Director of Education written in May and June 1955, seeking transfers to other schools.
2. Ibid:
other hand, appears to have considered them a bad lot, and is said to have told one or two of them that he sometimes wondered why some of the African teachers had been appointed to Mangu in the first place,\(^1\) an attitude which the teachers considered provoking. However, despite the grumbling and the dissatisfaction of the African teachers, only one of them, Daniel Owino, was able to get away from Mangu at the end of 1955, and only because the Principal of Kisii School, Mr. Sharrad, having heard that Mr. Owino, a science teacher, was anxious to get out of Mangu, approached the Education Department to effect his transfer.\(^2\) Thus the gathering storm at Mangu continued, though under cover, and when it erupted in late 1956 it swept in its wake the majority of the students as well and it was a different Principal, Fr. J. Barrett, who had to cope with the explosive situation, about which we shall see later in this chapter.

One incident of 1955 that seems to have diverted the attention of the African teachers, at least temporarily, as well as that of the students, was a lorry accident in June in which one student - James Munene - died and many others were seriously injured, while travelling back from a Family Rosary Crusade at Kiamwangi.\(^3\) The incident might have added flames to the simmering trouble, but the Principal and European staff were so affected by the tragedy that for a time the whole school felt alike in their bereavement, and there was no room for confrontation over past grievances. Then opportune much of the energies of the students were soon diverted into games and dramatics. Two plays were produced in the second half of 1955: "Julius Caesar", and "The Opposites"; they were acted by the newly formed Dramatic Society, apparently mainly composed of Form III boys.\(^4\) However, the

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1. File No. T.C. 1337, op.cit., Owino's letter to the Director of Education, dated 12 May 1955; Erulu's letter to the Director (date not shown.)
2. Ibid: Mr. Owino's letter.
Mr. Sharrad's letter to the Provincial Education Officer, Kisumu, dated 27 May 1955; and the Director of Education's letter to the P.E.O., Kisumu, dated 29 June 1955.
impending trouble was only postponed, not averted; it resulted in the strike of 1956, which, being the biggest strike in the annals of the school, we shall give more space to, shortly.

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On 8 December 1955 Archbishop MacArthy sent a directive to Mangu making changes in the staff. Fr. Cunningham was appointed Principal and Superior of Mangu, replacing Fr. Griffin who still remained on the staff! Fr. N. Killian was transferred to Eastleigh in Nairobi, and Fr. J.C. O'Connor, the scientist and a former Principal of Mangu, was posted back to the Mangu staff. This meant that the new Principal, Fr. Cunningham, had on his staff two former Principals of the school, a hardly satisfactory arrangement, even considering the vow of obedience to which all priests subscribe, and the fact that this was not only normal practice within the Congregation, but that none of these priests would have thought of taking advantage of the situation to make things difficult for the new Principal. The problem here was a psychological one: the students could not help comparing the effectiveness or otherwise of the new Principal and that of the others still on the staff who had been Principals earlier. Fr. Cunningham, however, did not stay as Principal of Mangu for long: he was transferred at the beginning of May 1956, to become Principal of St. Mary's School in Nairobi, and Fr. J. Barrett, who had been Education Secretary for Holy Ghost Missions before going on leave, was posted to Mangu as Principal, shortly after his return from Europe.

An extremely tough disciplinarian and awesome individual, Fr. Barrett, no longer young, would have done extremely well had he come immediately after Fr. O'Meara. But he took over Mangu not long after two extremely affable Principals, Fr. Soughley and Fr. J.C. O'Connor, and although Fr. Griffin's principalship in 1955 had been unpopular with both the African teachers and the students,

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1. Interview with Joseph Barage Wanjui in October 1969.
Fr. Cunningham’s brief headship had nearly brought things to "normal" when Fr. Barrett took over.

Within a week of his arrival Fr. Barrett was already taking advantage of Empire Day to put lessons across on discipline and loyalty. After the tree planting ceremony he assembled the entire school in front of the church where he read the "Queen's Message to the Youth of the Empire", and then proceeded to give his own "short inspiring address" in which he explained "what was required of the boys in the Catholic High School Mangu". The occasion was ended appropriately by the singing of "God Save the Queen".¹

So far so good. Fr. Barrett appears to have become particularly hard on both the students and the staff after the Education Inspectors visited Mangu from 29 May to 1 June 1956 and made a highly critical report on the school. From that point on he embarked on an intensive programme to try and put the school back to an acceptable standard. The result of his well intentioned measures, however, was that an extremely tense atmosphere developed in the school, and the eventuality of a strike became a matter of time.² But before we pursue this matter further, we need first to look at the general problem of that decade – the Mau Mau uprising, and some of the problems that it brought in its wake.

2. Problems Caused By Mau Mau

The 1950's were the years of the Emergency caused by the outbreak of the nationalist struggle in Kenya, more commonly known as Mau Mau. The impact of the struggle and the legislation that was enacted to contain it affected schools considerably; and, in a way, Mangu had more than its share of the trouble. The school became a target of Mau Mau attacks and threats between 1952 and 1956, apparently because it was

¹ Mangu Journal, entry for 24 May 1956.
² Interviews with various students including Hilary Ng’weno, James Omberé, and Joseph Barage Wanjuu.
associated with Fr. McGill, against whom a section of the local Mau Mau adherents appear to have had a long standing grudge. There were of course other more general reasons why missions and mission schools were unpopular with the Mau Mau but there are pointers that Mangu had the additional disadvantage of having once been the citadel of Fr. McGill.1

The first inklings of the impending Mau Mau trouble were referred to in the Mangu Journal as early as 1950 when it was recorded that Kikuyus were organising strikes in Nairobi for higher wages and that the Vicariate's own coffee farm at Limuru was affected. Interestingly enough the Mangu Journal agreed that

"Some wages to Africans do appear low. For weeding coffee and such work the wages for women are 4/- per week; the day begins at 8 a.m. and ends at 3 p.m."2

But while agreeing with this aspect of the legitimate demands of the Africans the journal went on to express apprehension over other disturbances which included "forcible capturing of Kikuyu Christians and forcing them to take a pagan oath to oppose Europeans especially the mission Fathers".3

By July 1950 the Kikuyu students in Mangu were already showing signs of belligerency and general unruly behaviour, and demanding that they were entitled to hold all administrative offices within the student body, such as those of prefects and monitors.4 By December of the same year it had become necessary to identify Christians attending night Mass on Christmas Eve by the issue of cards, and as a further precaution the Government posted a few police askaris to watch out for trouble just in case.5

1. Interview with students including Hilary Ng'weny
2. Ibid:
3. MJ : entry for 16 July 1950
4. Ibid: entry for 24 December 1950
5. Ibid: entry for 25 March 1952
1951 however saw relatively little Mau Mau activity in the Mangu area. This lull lasted until March 1952 when the following significant entry was made in the journal:

"For some time past there has been a lot of rumour about the illegal society, Mau Mau. Some of our Christians claim to have been beaten up at night time for refusing to take a horrid pagan oath, which seems to be directed against all Europeans. It has even been whispered that there have been a few murders in the Mangu district by the Mau Mau. Another rumour widely believed by the people is that our neighbouring chief, Danieli, spoke at a public gathering and said he would lead an attack on Mangu mission, which is the enemy No. 1, kill the Fathers, live in their house and use the church as a dance hall! The Fathers feel that if he has said these things it must be ascribed to a drunken boast." 1

Three months later a specific instance came to light when a local Christian woman reported to the priests that she and her mother had been subjected to moral pressure by twenty five local Mau Mau to take the oath and that she was ready to name them. 2

The school had not been touched so far but a fortnight later, one of the cows of Mangu School was found wounded with cuts from a panga, and about the same time a Christian closely connected with the mission was set upon in the vicinity of Bobs Harries' farm and beaten and forced to take the oath. 3

Soon after these incidents, lawlessness in the neighbourhood reached alarming proportions and on 28 July a senior police officer called at Mangu and disclosed the news that plans were underway either to establish a police post next to Mangu school or to temporarily evacuate the entire Mangu community - priests, nuns, students and all - to somewhere near Taika where their safety could be ensured. He stated that the police had information that September 1952 would be the month for the real trouble, and advised the priests that if they

wished to procure firearms he would gladly issue them.¹ The
arrangements for possible evacuation to Thika Club were taken a step
further when the Assistant Commissioner of Police arrived to find out
about the situation for himself, after it was rumoured that 10,000
people were planning to march on Mangu. Apparently he found the
situation serious enough to warrant emergency measures; for he gave
instructions that the entire community should be ready for evacuation
to Thika at short notice should the situation become worse than it
was then. He further decided that while the situation was being
watched he was going to consider the possibility of supplying the
mission with a radio broadcaster to enable the inmates to pass on
urgent information quickly.² Then dramatically rumours were received
setting the date for the projected attack on Mangu for 31 August 1952,
so a police patrol was sent to Mangu to guard the mission and convent
compounds; but no attackers turned up,³ making the alarm one of the
prevalent and frightening rumours of those days.

The police withdrew after convincing themselves that the rumours
were something of a hoax, but a week later a man, by the name of
Ndungu Stefan, cycled impudently into the Mangu compound in the
evening and

"...... insulted the Church, Jesus Christ, the Fathers and the
convent girls who were (on the Mangu compound) picking flowers
for the altar. It was a typical Mau Mau tirade: 'Did you
bring the stones of this church from Europe? Who is Jesus
Christ? He is a foreigner. He is a fool; and so are you.
Follow me and I massacre you ...." ⁴

When Fr. O'Connor tried to send him away the transgressor threw
stones at him, one of which hit its target. Fortunately the High
School boys now thought he was going too far and they got hold of him
and gave him a beating till he was forced to flee from the compound,

³. Ibid: entry for 31 August 1952.
⁴. Ibid: entry for 8 September 1952.
though still shouting insults. What surprised the priests was that after Fr. Comerford and Brother Josaphat had gone to call the local headman, Mapera, to come and arrest the man, the headman refused with the explanation that the intruder belonged to a different location. Although the Gattuldu police arrived later and took up the search for the man, the Mangu population could not quite understand why the headman had taken the attitude he did.

Two days later, police called at Mangu and reported that a gang of fourteen Mau Mau adherents had attacked Fr. McGill's mission of Kiriku during the night with the intention of killing the father, but fortunately Fr. McGill was away and the priest who was present, Fr. O'Donoghue, had managed to escape and hide himself. Apparently Fr. O'Donoghue remained in his hiding place for so long that his colleagues feared for his life and next day a Mass was said and the school children said rosaries for his safety. Fortunately, however, he appeared later, shaken but unhurt. As a result of this experience a 30-strong contingent of Special Service soldiers and a detachment of police under three European officers moved into Mangu a few days later to enforce the curfew in the area covered by Kiriku, Mangu and the White Sisters Convent. The forces people camped in the grounds of Mangu School and a journal entry recorded: "This is a great relieve to us, but the situation is still serious." Nevertheless several weeks of quiet followed, in contrast with reports from elsewhere, especially Fort Hall and Nyheri, of people burnt to death and headmen murdered. Threats to Christians in the Mangu area, however, continued so that some prepared for the worst should the police move away from the area. Reassuringly the journal recorded:

5. Ibid: entry for 4 October 1952.
6. Ibid:
"It now seems that they (i.e., the police) will not move out at all but will establish a permanent Police Station here."1

The Mau Mau now organised a campaign to prevent the people going to church on Sundays, as even pagans had began coming to Mass; but these designs were quickly thwarted by the police as soon as they became evident.2 Shortly after this, Senior Chief Waruhiu was murdered and a new wave of violence and unrest followed. Rumours of strikes and further attacks on Europeans became prevalent, but the Mangu priests were "not particularly worried."3 The situation, however, became very tense after the arrest of the leaders of the Kenya African Union (K.A.U.) on 20 October 1952. A large military contingent camped on the football field of Mangu overnight;4 and the Member for Law and Order, Mr. Wyatt, accompanied by the Assistant Commissioner of Police visited Mangu for a brief period on their rounds to gauge the reaction of the people to the arrests of 20 October: at Mangu they found that the reaction was one of "sullen resentment," among the locals.5

The Member for Law and Order again visited Mangu on 9 November to assess the situation further,6 and the following day the Chief Native Commissioner also paid a visit to the school, which showed how seriously the Government was taking the Mau Mau threats to Mangu.7

A fortnight later, Fr. McGill was shot at in his mission at night though he was not hit.8 Soon afterwards the Catholic hierarchies began to make Christians take an oath on the Bible as a way of renouncing Mau Mau; this step was taken after the Government insisted that all Kikuyu people be de-oathed, and the Catholics were left with no

2. Ibid:
alternative but to give their adherents an oath on the Bible, since they disapproved of the pagan oath recommended by the Government.

At Mangu 700 Christians received this Catholic oath on 14 December 1952 alone; most of them took it cheerfully, but two appeared reluctant and bitter, while a third refused to repeat the words of the oath. All who went through the ceremony received Government certificates for doing so.¹

On Christmas day Mangu was one of the few missions in Kikuyu territory which were allowed to have a midnight Mass, no doubt because the police and army were conveniently at hand. Massive precautions, however, were put into operation: over and above the usual mission card which the police accepted as sufficient identification, there was tight security around the church and compound, so that as might be expected, there was no incident throughout the ceremony, though a Bren gun was accidentally discharged during the offertory. Incidentally that night two babies were born in the environs of the church.²

So effective were the security precautions in the whole Mangu area, that by the end of 1952 the police were intimating that it was the quietest district in all Kikuyuland, at that time.³

But New Year’s Day 1953 started with new developments: a band of young Kikuyu girls were reported to have entered Mangu compound with the intention of luring the askaris away; fortunately as this method of luring askaris to their death was by this time well known, the Sergeant in charge of the post suspected a trap and locked up five of the girls, thus probably saving the troop from possible 

¹ Mangu Journal, entry for 14 December 1952.
² Ibid; entry for 24 and 25 December 1952.
³ Ibid; entry for 31 December 1952.
On the following day Fr. O'Leary decided to follow the example of other areas by establishing a Home Guard unit for Mangu. He convened a large meeting of elders which selected 49 men for the purpose; the selected men were later approved by the District Officer for the area. Their job was to patrol the Mangu area in groups of twelve, watch out for strangers and arrest any suspects, who were then subjected to de-cathing ceremonies. The Mangu people were of the opinion that Mau Maus who came to their area to stir up trouble were from Fort Hall; however, although this was partly true, the Mangu area did have its own local Mau Mau adherents who were not always passive, though the tight security precautions did make things very difficult for them.

Within a week of its foundation the Mangu Home Guard unit had arrested a total of 29 suspects, six of whom were from Fort Hall. They were encouraged by the reward of ten shillings which the Government gave them, as it did elsewhere, for every single suspect captured. However, for some reason the Home Guards of Mangu refrained from capturing well known local Mau Mau leaders, one of whom made himself conspicuous by wearing a bishop's gear, crozier, pectoral cross and all. This may have been on account of the fact that such men though vocal, during the day, contrived to keep indoors after dark and so could not legitimately be arrested.

An interesting mix-up involving Mangu students and teachers took place on January 11, when Fr. O'Leary and Brother Josaphat went with some boys by lorry for an excursion along the Ndarugu river some twenty miles from the school. It turned out that some Mau Mau prisoners had escaped from custody and were suspected to have taken refuge in the forest in that area. So when the Mangu lorry was seen entering this forest, wireless messages were relayed to the authorities to the effect that a gang of Kikuyu sympathisers had

taken food to the Mau Mau hiding in the forest. Within a matter of minutes the place was cordoned off by the security forces who began to move in from all sides. They finally came upon the would-be culprits to their great relief and considerable amusement.¹

By early February 1953 the Mangu timetable had been moved back by half an hour to ensure that no people rose too early to get to church as this was risky.² On 7 February an extra police detachment arrived to reinforce the existing army and police platoons in Mangu. By this time the whole Kikuyu area had been declared a Special Area, which meant that police and army officers had the powers to challenge anyone and use firearms if their commands were not obeyed.³

On 9 March Archbishop Matthews, the Apostolic Delegate in East Africa, arrived in Mangu to discuss the Mau Mau situation,⁴ which gives some indication of how serious the problem was. A month later the biggest scare of all came when Fr. McGill's car roared into Mangu and its occupant (Fr. McGill) gulped out the alarming news that a gang of about 100 armed men had gathered on the far bank of the Chania river just before dusk and were obviously contemplating an attack. The news threw the entire Mangu community into a turmoil. Intensive preparations involving security men, homeguards, the locals, the teachers and students were put into operation. While Fr. O'Leary and Fr. Comerford raced to Thika to call for more help, the remaining priests set about barricading their doors and supplying the students with pances. In the hurried distribution of guns and ammunition in the Principal's room, a shot gun accidentally went off, though it fortunately caused no more harm than damaging some books lying on a bookshelf.⁵

¹. Mangu Journal, entry for 13 January 1953.
². Ibid: entry for 1 February, 1953.
³. Ibid: entry for 7 February 1953.
⁵. Ibid: entry for 6 April 1953.
Among the precautions taken was the coining of the password "Danieii", in order to help everybody to identify the local Home Guards.

It was a great disappointment therefore when the Gatundu police arrived later in the evening and expressed the view that the whole thing was a false alarm. The priests, however, quite wisely refused to accept that view, since they knew that Fr. McGill could not have made the report without reasonable grounds. It was not long before their scepticism about the assessment of the situation by the Gatundu police was given more weight: at 11.15 p.m. the Thika police (K.P.R.) arrived with the information that the attackers were on the march, and that at the rate they were travelling towards Mangu they would probably reach the place around mid-night. As a result further precautions were taken: lights were covered or turned low, and some of the priests, armed with guns, began to patrol quietly along the verandah of their house. However, apart from four people who had been arrested much earlier in the evening, no attackers reached the school that night, though next day it was learnt that six of the gang had been killed some distance away from the vicinity.1

However, rumours reached Mangu later that the six people shot by the security forces were really not Mau Mau. This intimation made the Mangu priests so unhappy that from that point on they began to lose faith in the fairness of the security forces.2

The tense situation led to the school being closed prematurely before the first term examinations were held, because the boys "were so unsettled and worried about their families."3 As soon as the students moved out of the dormitories the women and children of the Home Guards and the local Christians moved into them for greater

2. Ibid: entries for 7 and 10 April 1953.
safety, as the Home Guards were greatly worried about suspected impending attacks by the nearby Mau Mau. This atmosphere of suspense and uncertainty continued throughout April 1953.

A new development in the psychological strategy of the Mau Mau was the fact that a section of the people who had taken no oath but who were not actively opposed to Mau Mau began to live in fear of both the the Mau Mau and the Home Guards-cum-Police. The contrary type of problem also existed: it concerned a private feud between the local chief and the homeguards, which led to the rumour that he was a Mau Mau sympathiser. Be that as it may, incidents of Mau Mau activity in the area began to decrease gradually from that point on, though matters were still hot in some other areas of the Central Province.

On 19 July, His Grace Archbishop MacArthy, while on a visit to Mangu, spoke to a large gathering of the local wazee pointing out to them that it was necessary for them to distinguish between the ordinary Europeans and the missionaries. This appears to have been a reference, though indirectly, to the reports of killings of innocent people by Government forces under cover of the general accusation "Mau Mau", a practice which was becoming increasingly common and which the priests wanted to dissociate themselves from. The Mangu journal records that Archbishop MacArthy was very much impressed about the spirit of friendliness among the Mangu people, a feature which had been absent for some time. This change of heart was attributed to the efforts of Fr. O'Leary, who had throughout "associated himself with the people so closely."

A sidelight to the Mau Mau issue was created by the arrival of the famous author, Graham Green, at Mangu accompanied by his host Fr. McGill. The celebrated author had reportedly come to gather material for writing a book on Mau Mau.

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2. Ibid: entries for 22 and 30 April 1953.
5. Ibid: entry for 18 September 1953.
December 1953 saw some renewal of Mau Mau activity in the area when it was learnt that oaths were being even given to the school children. For this reason Fr. O'Leary "tried to separate Catholic children from the pagans on one circumcision night so as to avoid subversive instructions". The boys slept together in the Primary School classrooms and the girls in a nearby building, after the latter had shown reluctance to go and sleep in the Convent, apparently because they did not wish to miss "the dances, food and drink"; which made the priests wonder if it wasn't time that these customs were Christianised.1

On Christmas eve 1953, there was another scare and the women and children once more moved to sleep in the school dormitories. All the men were put on guard outside the mission compound, and a platoon of soldiers also arrived to stand guard, but no incidents took place,2 although it was learnt later that a gang was contacted that night moving from the Thika side towards Mangu and that one European had been killed and the European head of the Thika K.P.R. had been seriously wounded; Government forces had managed to kill four of the gang and to capture four others, two of whom were known to be residents of Mangu.3 The scare continued into the first week of the new year, so that the police succeeded in ordering the inmates of the White Sisters Convent (though they failed with the Mangu priests) to be evacuated to Thika. This action was later to be deplored by Archbishop MacArthy who

"...objected strongly to the civil power ordering Fathers and Sisters to leave their mission without consulting him, and he has told us that we must not let the Sisters go again."4

Actually, although Archbishop MacArthy had a genuine complaint here since his authority was being flouted, he was in addition

3. Ibid:
somewhat disenchanted with the Government over their allowing or conniving at the irresponsible actions of the security forces in harassing innocent people under guise of pursuing Mau Mau terrorists. On 7 March 1954, for instance, 40 people were killed in the Mangu area alone, and although in contrast two Europeans were murdered a few days later, and several homeguards some time afterwards, the Catholic authorities were beginning to feel more and more that the security forces had got out of control and needed a great deal of disciplining.

It was not long before some Mangu High School boys and some of their teachers were involved in one of the high handed actions of the security forces. It happened when the school lorry in which they were travelling was stopped by a European K.A.R. Sergeant from Gatundu. The boys and teachers were ordered out of the lorry and made to work at a Home Guard post digging trenches. Other lorries were also stopped and their inmates ordered to work as well. Mangu had hitherto been hearing only of rumours about such high handed treatment of civilians, but now the priests had confirmed their suspicions. The next entry in the journal reads:

"Such high handed and unwarranted action by these young European officers is not infrequent."

"One of the Fathers on hearing the news visited the Sergeant responsible, and secured the immediate release of the lorry and its occupants."3

This incident alienated the priests beyond recall; from then on they became very critical of the whole handling of the emergency. On 12 June 1954 it was recorded in the journal:

4. Ibid:
"The Home Guards are becoming as lawless as the Mau Mau and have indulged in an orgy of robbery and thuggery recently. The D.O. has intervened and it looks as if the Headman will be deposed and some of the Home Guard charged in court for their misbehavior."

But it took a whole nine months before the Headman was dismissed.

The changed attitude of the Catholics over the affair of the emergency appears to have become evident to the Governmental authorities, with unfavourable consequences to the former. By the end of March 1955 the journal was recording complaints against the lack of Government cooperation with the community at Mangu. The following is the most significant of the entries:

"The departure of High School boys next week is causing much difficulty. All Kikuyus should have pass books by now, but the local administration at Gatundu has been far from helpful of late. Being out in the blue, as we are, may have been an advantage in the past but at present it is a severe handicap. Sometimes, from the difficulties encountered from the administration one would be tempted to think that the Irish Fathers were in some strange way the cause of the Emergency! There does not seem to be any consistency in the policy of the different Departments. For example bursaries are paid for the education of the Kikuyus but when the Kikuyus leave Mangu they find they are outcasts. 'No Kikuyu need apply' is the slogan of many employment agencies - Railway, Banks, Survey etc. Kikuyus are now to leave Uganda, Makerere included! Decisions taken at one level calculated to undo policy at another level! One requires great faith to see even a little sanity in official procedures."

In June, word reached Mangu that the area was to be villagised, much to the chagrin of the locals and the disgust of the Fathers working in the Mangu area. The journal had the following comments to make on the issue:

"The Government seems determined to 'rehabilitate' the Kikuyu by brutalising and debasing them. This single step is probably the greatest tragedy since the Emergency began."

It can be seen that the Catholics had travelled a long way from the Government stand on the Emergency issue. One couldn’t blame them. They operated from the grass roots of the African society and they were best placed to judge the feelings of the people. Little wonder therefore, that in spite of everything, Holy Ghost College Mangu came out from the emergency unscathed.

3. The 1956 Strike:

As if Mau Mau troubles were not enough a students’ strike descended on Mangu right in the middle of the Emergency. This was the biggest students’ strike in the history of Kabaa-Mangu and it took place in October 1956, a few months after Fr. J. Barrett had taken over as Principal. It would be incorrect, however, to lay the causes of the strike at the feet of Fr. Barrett exclusively. He only happened to be the Principal of Mangu at the time. For one thing, Fr. Barrett had taken over his duties as Principal with a great deal of enthusiasm, and although he was somewhat awesome and too strong-willed for the liking of both the students and the staff, he did take the welfare of the school very much at heart; he even carried out further levelling of the compound and fields and went as far as tarmacking the paths in the school to make the place more comfortable for the students, all this entirely at his own expense, with money received from relatives in Europe.¹ A man who could do this would do everything to avoid wrecking the boat he was steering. The point being made here is that Fr. Barrett did not come to Mangu to try and make things difficult.

There were remote as well as immediate causes of the strike. The boys had always been complaining about what they considered to be the harsh discipline of Mangu.² They particularly resented being

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1. Interviews with various former students including Hilary Ng’weno, Joseph Barage Wanjui, James Omere, Dennis Afande etc.
2. Most of the students interviewed said that looking back they think that the Mangu discipline did nobody any harm, and was beneficial to most students.
treated in the same way "as the Kabaa boys had been treated many years before at Primary school level"; they felt that they needed and deserved more mature treatment. More recent resentment had been growing since 1955 over more exaggerated issues of this kind.

Then there was the general dissatisfaction by the African teachers on the staff, who suffered much frustration from the priest-layman relationship that was the vogue at Mangu. The teachers in the heat of the moment interpreted this in terms of European–African relationship which made matters worse than they ought to have been. Then at the beginning of 1956 the first African graduate joined the Mangu staff. He was Mr. Claudius Mwashumbe, from Taita, who held a B.A. and an LL.B. degree from an Indian University and who came to Mangu after a bit of service at the Indian High School in Mombasa and also at a correspondence College in Nairobi. Mwashumbe brought a new dimension to the thinking of the students at Mangu and, one is inclined to think, to the teachers as well. In his own way he was very much interested in the welfare of the students, but as he saw it the African students were not being brought up with a sufficient sense of freedom and responsibility, which was not in the best interests of the country and its future. The students on their part liked Mr. Mwashumbe's ideas generally on account of the nationalistic ring which they carried, which appeared to corroborate the students' own feelings. Mr. Mwashumbe opened their eyes to the outside world.

It was on account this, and the fact that Mr. Mwashumbe always spoke out openly against what he considered to be the shortcomings of the educational system in Kenya in general and the administration of Mangu in particular that he was later accused of having incited the strike; which again is an over-simplification. Neither Fr. Barrett nor Mr. Mwashumbe caused the strike. They may have contributed unwittingly

1. Interviews with various former students including Hilary Ng'weno, Joseph Barage Wanjui, James Ombere, Dennis Agande etc.
2. Interview with Hilary Ng'weno, James Ombere and Joseph B. Wanjui.
3. Ibid.
to the conditions that precipitated it, but they did not cause it independently of other, earlier factors. The students would in any case have gone on strike whether Mr. Mwashumbe had come or not; and they would have eventually done the same whether Fr. Barrett had taken on the headship or not: in the latter case, only the timing would have been different.

Several pointers indicate this view. For instance when one of the boys beat up the youngest priest on the staff who had replaced Fr. O'Shea as Dean of Discipline it was because this priest, obviously through inexperience, had tried to be too harsh and was much less understanding than his predecessor in the post. The student who beat him up alleged later that that Dean had provoked him beyond bearing; that the priest was thought to be wrong can be gauged from the fact that instead of the students intervening to help the priest as might have been expected, they merely made a ring around the two and acted as delighted spectators. Mwashumbe had nothing to do with all this; and whereas Fr. Barrett can be blamed for having appointed such a young and largely inexperienced member of staff to be Dean of Discipline, it cannot be assumed that he knew in advance that the priest could not cope with the students adequately. The actions of the Dean of Discipline had a great deal to do with the immediate causes of the strike.

That neither Mwashumbe nor the other African members of staff had little to do with the immediate causes of the strike can again be shown by the contents of the Principal's first letter to the Director of Education on the subject of the strike. According to that letter the trouble had started when the boys of Form II (formerly Form IV) had begun by being generally difficult under the incitement of four

1. Interview with James Ombera and Joseph B. Wanjui. (The names of the priest and the student are withheld purposely by the author)
2. Interview with James Ombera.
student ring leaders. The four boys, the letter said, had written letters to their homes stating that Mangu was a "little Cyprus", "a concentration camp", and other things "reminiscent of Mau Mau."

On getting wind of this development, Fr. Barrett had decided "to wait for a suitable opportunity", which presented itself one night in October, when he found two of the Form II boys misbehaving at the back of a classroom (not their own) during study time. He caned them, as he believed a bit of the cane "is an antidote to this sort of crime".

Next morning he went further and dismissed them from the school. At the same time two other boys of the same class decided that they would obey only such rules as they considered were reasonable. So Fr. Barrett suspended them, as they refused to accept any form of punishment and their disturbance sorely tried his patience.¹

After Fr. Barrett had expelled the first pair of boys and suspended the other two, the students of Forms I, II and III decided to go on strike in sympathy. But first they handed a memorandum to the Principal and asked him to meet them "and listen and accede to their demands at once", otherwise they would all leave the school the following morning.² Their demands included: the immediate recall of the expelled boys; freedom to go where they pleased at weekends; freedom to receive visitors without asking for permission; freedom to write letters and to receive them without examination by the school authorities; immediate abolition of all fines, penances and punishments; no further compulsory learning of the catechism; and withdrawal of all supervision so that they (the students) may develop their will power and personality.³ It can be seen from this list that the issue of the four students was only a small matter, among the grievances even though it is listed first.

² Ibid: Circular dated 7 November 1956, sent out to all Secondary Schools by Fr. Barrett, apparently to forestall the possible acceptance in other schools of the boys he had expelled both before and after the strike. All their names and faults are mentioned.
³ Ibid:
According to Fr. Barrett's circular to all secondary schools, he did meet the students to discuss their demands, but his answers had not satisfied them. So the ring leaders continued with their task of inciting the other boys to strike action: some made fiery speeches, others moved amongst the group issuing threats, and yet others drove out the unwilling with sticks and pangas. All this took place on 21 October.

The following day, 22 October, had been declared a public holiday by Princess Margaret who was currently visiting Kenya and to whose honour the students of Nangu had travelled to Nairobi on 20 October, during her public appearance there. Fr. Barrett had allowed the boys to be free on the extraordinary public holiday but only the Form IV boys and a few of the others stayed behind to celebrate the holiday, the majority of the Forms I, II and III students having left the compound at about 4 a.m. for their homes in a walk-out strike. The Form IV boys had decided to stay behind because their Cambridge School Certificate Examination was only four weeks away, but they had been in full sympathy with the strikers and some of them had actually helped mastermind it.

The students who had gone away soon realised that it was no fun to stage a strike during the Emergency: the Government was at that time very suspicious about such behaviour, if only because it let loose in the country a considerable number of young Kikuyu boys. And most parents were not with their children on this either; partly because it was unsafe for them to roam about in the country at that time, and partly because most parents had begun to dread the idea of their children being sent away from school since they were already

1. File No. T.C. 1337, op. cit., Circular dated 7 November 1956, sent out to all Secondary Schools by Fr. Barrett, apparently to forestall the possible acceptance in other schools of the boys he had expelled both before and after the strike. All their names and faults are mentioned.
4. Interviews with Barage, Ng'weno, and Obere.
considering a school education as an investment. So those who managed to reach home were quickly returned by their parents, and others went to plead with the Education authorities either at Head Office in Nairobi, or at provincial level, for their sons to be taken back to Mangu. Some of the others, especially the Kikuyu, did not reach home: they were picked up by police and detained in screening camps for violating the pass laws. The District Officer of Thika, for instance, looked up a large number of Kikuyu boys who assembled at his office to ask for passes to enable them to go home. It was during the interrogation of these boys that hints of some African teachers having contributed to the strike were mentioned. All mentioned Mr. Mwashumbe as having told them that there were precedents in other schools where boys who had been expelled for organising or taking part in a legitimate strike had received letters from the school authorities inviting them to come back.

Fr. Barrett however was determined to make this a real lesson for the students, especially after he got the Education Department to see his point of view over the whole matter. On 27 October he got ready letters of dismissal for the known ring leaders and dispatched them. However, some of the boys who received these dismissal letters eventually argued or implored their way back to school. All who returned were punished as a condition of being accepted back, which was something of an anti-climax for the boys, though in a way they had made their point.

When the school resumed normal classes on 29 October 1956, three of the African teachers - Mwashumbe, Erulu, and Namwamba - were barred at first from taking their classes as Fr. Barrett suspected

1. Interviews with Mr. Ombebe, Mr. Wanjui, and Mr. Denis Afande.
2. For instance Chief Charles Karuga Koinange (later a Provincial Commissioner) brought back his own son, Wilfred, personally, on 25 October.
3. File No. T.C. 1337, op.cit., various letters on the subject.
6. Ibid: various correspondence. Also Mangu Journal entries for October.
them of having instigated the strike. The other two teachers, Mr. J. Karanja and Mr. D. Irungu, both Kikuyus, were not affected as they had kept aloof from the strikes. Mwashumbe was a short time afterwards given one and half month's salary in lieu of notice and asked to quit, with the approval of the Education Department. Namwamba, fearing victimization, tendered his resignation on 15 December 1956; Eruln had done this much earlier on. Incidentally, shortly before the students' strike the African teachers had presented their own memorandum to Fr. Barrett listing the needs and grievances which required looking into. It makes interesting reading and in its own way gives some insight into one aspect of the organization of Mangu at the time.

All things considered the students gained little if anything from the strike. Those who were expelled missed an opportunity, and those who stayed still lived with the same problems they had set out to correct. If any of them had hoped that the Archbishop might remove Fr. Barrett they were highly disappointed: for Fr. Barrett was to stay on until the beginning of 1961, well after the last of the 1956 strikers had left the school.

But if the students had gained nothing, the school authorities hadn't gained anything either, in spite of their handling the strike in a non-compromising manner. In fact quite a few problems arose, not least being that of finding teachers to replace the three African teachers who left at the end of 1956. One prospective replacement who had led to Fr. Barrett and Fr. Griffin travelling all the way to Molo to persuade him to join the Mangu staff ended up in snubbing

3. See Appendix XVI
the Principal by refusing to come after all. The staffing situation had become acute indeed. Another teacher, John H. Gitau, agreed to teach only for part of a term in 1957, in spite of a plea that he stay on longer; he was anxious to go back to Makerere to complete his post-graduate diploma in Education. In the end of the school had to take on a European lay teacher, Mr. D.C. Miller, on African terms of pay, and an unqualified African teacher, to ease the staffing situation. Fr. Barrett even agreed to employ a teacher who had been dismissed from a Protestant school on moral grounds, a most unusual thing for a Catholic school to do, but it shows how desperate Mangu was for teachers.

A less tangible liability of the strike to Fr. Barrett and his administration was the loss of confidence, generally speaking, from the student body. This was a great blow to him since he had really aimed at doing good by the boys, which is why he was sinking so much of his own money in the school. He felt hurt that despite his good intentions the students should fail to be appreciative and instead dash his dreams of making Mangu a booming success able to measure up with the best schools in the country, on all points. As a result of his disappointment he became somewhat uncomfortable with the students and they in turn with him, which made things rather difficult for all in the school, till the majority of the students of 1956 had left the school in the normal way.

And various other correspondence.
5. Ibid: letter No. C/221/3/7 of 10.10.57, from the Provincial Education Officer Nairobi, to the Director of Education.
letter No. 5/57/Vol.II/247 dated 15.10.57 from the Director of Education to the P.E.O. Nairobi.
6. Ibid: folios 265, 266 and 267, being letters from and to the Director of Education on the subject.
7. Interview with Mr. Dennis Afande in September 1969.
4. **The Second Half of the Decade:**

Although in the second half of the 1950's Fr. Barrett's administration was affected considerably with the after-effects of both the Emergency and the 1956 strike, the general progress within the school compared quite favourably with that of the first half of the decade. For one thing although the Cambridge results of 1956 brought a lower percentage of passes in comparison with that of the previous year, they included the most brilliant result in the history of the school: Hilary Ng'weno received first class distinctions in six subjects (each with 1 point), his weakest subject being English in which he secured a distinction of 3 points. Ng'weno came top on the Kenya Cambridge pass list for the year so that he had no difficulty in gaining admission to the highly selective Harvard University the following year on the strength of his Cambridge results alone.

Further, the Cambridge results of 1957 were 100% pass at Mangu; and the remaining years of the principalship of Fr. Barrett consistently secured results of above 90% pass. So, considered from the point of view of Examination successes, Fr. Barrett and his staff did not fare badly, though in other aspects the students formed the opinion that Fr. Barrett's administration left much to be desired. But this is open to question judging by the other facts available.

Be that as it may, Fr. Barrett appears to have sensed the students feelings, thus adding to his general disillusionment. An extremely energetic and hard working man, and very ambitious for Mangu, Fr. Barrett, soon began to show signs of poor health. The first signs

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1. Interview with Brother James Kilroy in September 1969; corroborated later by documentary records.
2. Interview with Hilary Ng'weno. (Ng'weno got to Harvard by writing an application letter direct after procuring the address from the United States Information Office in Nairobi).
3. Mangu Journal, various entries. See also Appendix XX.
of this were fainting spells; these were followed by more serious health problems culminating in an operation in December 1957. By 1960 he was again complaining of "pains and fatigue" and so had another spell with the medical people.

As had happened during the time of his predecessors, Fr. Barrett's efforts were watered down by frequent changes in the staff which not only militated against stability but actually reduced the effectiveness of the programme generally speaking. Towards the end of 1956 Fr. O'Shea left for home leave, and in early January 1957 Fr. Bannon was transferred to St. Peter Clavers in Nairobi. Their replacements were Fr. N. Killian, who was returning to Mangu staff after a spell of service elsewhere, and F.G. Heffernan who arrived from Gatitu mission at the beginning of February. Thus in 1957 the European staff consisted of Fathers Barrett, Griffin, O'Nuallain, Killian, and Heffernan. The two Africans on the staff were Mr. J. Karanja and Mr. D. Irungu, till Mr. J.H. Gitau joined the staff for a short time in the second term, and subsequently Mr. Joseph Mathenge, followed by Mr. E.K. Mbogu, were taken on.

Since the school had double stream, making a total of eight classes, the general average of five priests and two African teachers on the staff at one time meant that the school was seriously understaffed. The situation improved a little bit when Fr. O'Shea arrived back from leave and was reappointed to Mangu, and as stated earlier, Mr. Miller was recruited to the staff.

1. Fr. Barrett first fainted a few times in succession between 18 and 20 August 1957, so that he had to be ordered to go to the coast for a holiday. (Mangu Journal)
5. Ibid:
6. Ibid: entry for 1 and 5 February 1957.
8. Ibid: entry for 1 October 1957. Also File No. T.G. 1337, op.cit., various correspondence between the Education Department and Mangu.
At the end of 1957 Fr. Killian and Fr. Heffernan were removed from the staff of Mangu to Eastleigh Mission and St. Mary’s School, Nairobi, respectively.¹ Their replacements were Fr. P. Rea from Eastleigh and Fr. Clements from Kiriku mission, both of whom had been at Mangu before.²

But the two priests stayed at Mangu for only the first term of 1958, after which Fr. Clements was transferred to Holy Family in Nairobi and Fr. Rea to Ngaririga Mission.³ No replacements arrived till Brother Columba was posted from Limuru mission to join the staff.⁴ Earlier Fr. John Reidy had arrived to take up the duties of the now separated mission.⁵

1959 witnessed more changes in the staff when Brother Columba was posted to Nairobi to run the Catholic Bookshop there, and Fr. Bannon, who had apparently returned on the staff at some unrecorded time, left for Kiriku.⁶ No immediate replacements were appointed, but after the departure of a third priest, Fr. Griffin, who was proceeding on leave to Europe,⁷ Fr. Tom O’Brien arrived to replace him.⁸ Soon afterwards Mr. Duncam Mwangi, too, arrived after completing his B.A. course at Makerere College. Another African teacher who arrived at this time was Mr. Henry Agoya.⁹

A second European lay member of staff, a Mr. Barney, was taken on, and was later temporarily replaced by a Mr. Antony Pereira.¹⁰ Further changes took place towards the end of 1959: Fr. Clements arrived to

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2. Ibid.
replace Fr. John Reidy at the Mangu mission,\textsuperscript{1} Mr. Barney flew back to England on retirement,\textsuperscript{2} and Fr. Griffin, Fr. Jimmy O'Brien and Fr. Comerford joined the staff although Fr. Griffin stayed only a month before being transferred elsewhere.\textsuperscript{3}

But transfers went on right up to the last year of the Holy Ghost Fathers\textsuperscript{1} stay at Mangu. In early January 1960, Fr. Tom O'Brien left for Miguta, and Fr. J.C. O'Connor "for Shauri Moyo" to run a new mission at Nakonde, where he soon started a new Catholic Secondary School there - Aquinas High School.\textsuperscript{4}

A new lay European teacher also arrived to join the Mangu staff, a Mr. K.C. Doherty, a Welshman.\textsuperscript{5} Later in the year Fr. O'Nuallain left for home leave,\textsuperscript{6} Mr. J. Karanja for a year's study at Hull University,\textsuperscript{7} and Fr. Comerford broke his arm then left for home leave in Ireland.\textsuperscript{8} By this time it was already evident that the Marianist Brothers from America would take over Mangu at the beginning of 1961, and so the two replacements, Fr. Michael Duggan and Fr. Tom Farrelly, who arrived in late October 1960, were only on temporary transfers,\textsuperscript{9} as was Fr. G. O'Nuallain's re-appointment in early November after returning from his leave.\textsuperscript{10}

As far as the physical improvements of Mangu were concerned, Fr. Barrett did a commendable job, comparatively speaking. He moved the Intermediate school to a new plot outside the school to provide

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{1}Mangu Journal, entry for 11 August 1959.
\item \textsuperscript{2}Ibid: entry for 20 November 1959.
\item \textsuperscript{3}Ibid: entries for 14 November and 10 and 16 December 1959.
\item \textsuperscript{4}Ibid: entries for 1 and 2 January 1960.
\item \textsuperscript{5}Ibid: entry for 8 January 1960.
\item \quad Also File No. T.C. 1337, op. cit., various letters.
\item \textsuperscript{6}Ibid: entry for 27 June 1960.
\item \textsuperscript{7}Ibid: entry for 4 August 1960.
\item \textsuperscript{8}Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{9}Ibid: entry for 24 October 1960.
\item \textsuperscript{10}Ibid: entry for 1 November 1960.
\end{itemize}
more room for the congested High School. In cooperation with the Education Secretary, Fr. J.J. O'Meara, he managed to get the Government to install a new lister electric engine in the school at a cost of £1,200, after the old one suddenly broke down; and he effected the final separation of the mission from the High School in August 1957, after a separate church had been completed on a nearby plot to serve the mission.

But that was not the end of Fr. Barrett's drive to transform the look of Mangu. In early 1959, work started on a new European-type house for one of the European lay staff, at a cost of £2,500 received earlier from a Government grant in 1958. He also purchased a new Volkswagen bus, after the old one had been bashed by its drunken driver. A novel addition to the improving conveniences of Mangu was a telephone which was installed initially in the Principal's office in late September 1958. Then in preparation for the intake of 1959, Fr. Barrett purchased ninety double-decker beds, which helped reduce the congestion in the dormitories considerably. It is little wonder therefore that the Cambridge school leavers of 1958 (the class that had given him so much trouble in 1956) surprised him with a party in his honour at which they gave him several expensive presents, a clear indication that his image had improved considerably since the strike. The modernisations he had embarked on, no doubt played a part in this.

Next Fr. Barrett proceeded to improve the teachers' houses. He bought 100-gallon tanks and got them installed in each African teachers house, "to avoid incessant complaints." A teacher could use

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2. Ibid: entries for 13 August and 15 August 1957.
8. Interview with James Omboire.
the entire contents of his tank each day, though they now began to complain that this amount was not enough. To stop any more complaints Fr. Barrett now approached the Education Department to provide him with money to install bigger tanks; he got a promise of £600 for the purpose, and the tanks arrived in June of that year. Finally, using the foundation of the old pigsty he quickly built an extra teacher's house to ease the housing problem. Few Principals could have beaten that record.

In football and sports, Mangu maintained her old standards during this period, in spite of everything. In the Alliance-Mangu matches of 1958 one was a draw and the other a win for Mangu; and although the school got only third place in the Music Festival, it compensated for this by taking the sports shield at the Annual Sports Meeting held at Machakos; at this meeting Alliance High School came second.

The 1959 football matches brought one win for Mangu against Alliance, and three vice versa. In sports, however, Mangu had no rival that year, apparently on account of one dashing Masai student called J. K. Keayla. Fr. O'Neill took the credit for training the team. Somehow that year the Mangu football team lost to Kabaa, which school, incidentally, had since the mid 1950's resumed secondary work.

In 1960 the Mangu football teams beat Alliance teams at three different matches; it beat Kabaa twice, and Machakos also twice.

3. Ibid:
The only teams that defeated Mangu that year were the Railway Training School, and the Abaluyia team. After Fr. O’Nuallain’s departure for home leave, Mr. Doherty took over the coaching of the team.

So Fr. Barrett had little to be ashamed of in the field of sport.

Fr. Barrett’s main disappointments, and indeed the disappointments of many Holy Ghost Fathers, was the decision by Archbishop MacArthy that Holy Ghost College Mangu was not going to embark on Higher School Certificate work in 1959 as had been expected, and that the school itself was going to be handed over to a teaching order of Catholic Brothers within a couple of years. We shall pursue the results of the latter decision in the next chapter, but the one concerning Higher School Certificate courses can be disposed of right away. It all started when the Archbishop suddenly wrote to the Mangu Principal in 1959 saying that "Higher School Certificate cannot be accepted for Mangu." A week later the Principal was summoned by His Grace to attend a meeting convened by him on the same subject. It was at this meeting that the reasons behind the sudden decision came to light: the Apostolic Delegate, had apparently given instructions to the Catholic Education Secretary General, Fr. J.J. O’Meara, to the effect that Higher School Certificate work had to be on a multi-racial basis, and was to be started in a separate institution "by the personnel of Opus Dei."

Considering that multi-racial institutions were still unpopular with the Government as late as 1959, it is not clear whether the Apostolic Delegate in making this decision was defying the current practice, or whether he had carefully negotiated the issues with the Government. It has been explained that the latter was the case.

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5. Interview with Mr. David Sperl in principal of the Opus Dei Strathmore College in 1969.
though it is difficult to understand this considering that in that same year the Government barred the Catholics from building a multi-racial Major Seminary on St. Austin's land near where Strathmore College is today, on the grounds that this was in the White Highlands, and schools attended by Africans could not be sited in the White Highlands. Hence the Seminary had to be built beyond Langata, which presumably was not part of the White Highlands.

The next thing to happen was that an Opus Dei priest Fr. Cummins called at Mangu to discuss the Higher School Certificate issue with Fr. Barrett and Fr. O'Connor. The issue was that

"The Opus Dei intend to start a Higher School Certificate school in Nairobi but they are as yet unready (sic) to do so. Mangu want the Higher School Certificate class here." 2

Finally in early November, the Director of Education, Mr. Miller, and the Catholic Education Secretary General, Fr. J.J. O'Keara, paid a visit to Mangu

"... and dashed hopes of a Higher School Certificate class, by the suggestion of starting a third stream at Mangu (preferably day)." 3

As a result, Strathmore College came into being, and Mangu lost its opportunity of embarking on Higher School Certificate work, which was a great disappointment to the priests at Mangu, since it meant that Mangu would henceforth be considered junior to its old and friendly rival, Alliance High School. However the authorities had made the decision, and it was final.

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It remains to be said that the first and last Governor of Kenya to visit Mangu School as such was Sir Evelyn Baring, who had paid his

1. Interview with Archbishop MacArthy, Fr. J.J. O'Keara, and Fr. John Reidy.
visit on 14 November 1958 accompanied by a large retinue of Government Officers. Though he stayed for only one hour, it was considered a great honour at the school.¹

Another event of note during Father Barrett's time was the presentation in 1959 of some candidates in the Agricultural Science paper in the Cambridge School Certificate Examination, an achievement of no mean value considering the serious shortage of land at Mangu.

This brings us to the end of Holy Ghost College Mangu under the auspices of its founders, the Holy Ghost Fathers, and to the birth of Mangu High School under the Marianist Brothers, who were invited by Archbishop McArthy and took over possession of the school in 1961.

¹ Mangu Journal, entry for 14 November 1959.
CHAPTER VII
MANGU HIGH SCHOOL UNDER THE MARIANISTS

In 1961, after twenty-one years of managing Mangu, the Holy Ghost Fathers handed the school over to the Marianist Brothers of the United States. The decision to hand over the school was an agonising one for the Archdiocese of Nairobi in general and Archbishop MacArthy in particular. Mangu was not only their oldest and best school, it was the show place and treasure of the Holy Ghost world in the then Diocese of Zanzibar. There were however overriding reasons for taking this important step: the Archbishop's main concern was the spreading of the Catholic Church, and whereas the schools were an important auxiliary in this work, the opening of more missions was a much more urgent necessity.\(^1\) Besides, the schools no longer acted as the main recruiting ground of candidates for baptism, since most pupils came to the secondary schools when they were already baptised. The Archbishop therefore having weighed the pros and cons of the whole issue, decided that he wanted the priests in the work of the missions, and could no longer allow schools to tie down so many priests as was the case with Mangu, which needed as many as six priests or more at a time.\(^2\)

Accordingly despite many objections from the Holy Ghost Fathers, Archbishop MacArthy made up his mind to invite an order of Brothers to take over Mangu, as the first step towards removing priests from schools, for more direct mission work.

The idea of handing Mangu over to lay Catholic Brothers was first given serious thought in 1953, when the Archbishop opened a dialogue with the Marianist Brothers of England. An agreement was apparently reached, and arrangements were made for the first batch of Brothers to come out to Kenya to start work at Mangu.

1. Interview with Archbishop MacArthy in 1968.
2. Ibid.
in January 1954. More Brothers were to have joined them in January 1955, at which point it was hoped the Holy Ghost Fathers would have withdrawn completely from the school leaving it to the management of the Marianists.1

The Mangu Journal recorded this information and then went on to give the following details:—

"The present Fathers' house will be loaned to the Brothers and a new bungalow is to be built at once to house two Fathers on the mission ....

"The need of releasing more Fathers for mission work has long been felt .... The step is doubtless necessary but we in Mangu feel rather sad that it should be so."2

Somehow, however, the project never came off, and six years were to elapse before more news of a similar project was hinted at. On 6 August 1960 the Principal of Mangu, Fr. Barrett received the news that he was to be transferred to become Principal of Umbwe High School in Tanzania3 at the beginning of 1961. On 30 December Mangu received definite news that the Marianist Brothers from America were due to arrive at Mangu in a week's time.4 Apparently Archbishop MacArthy had been negotiating behind the scenes with the Principal Superior of the Marianists of Dayton, Ohio, Rev. James M. Darby, S.M., to get the Marianists of that Province to take the offer which had earlier been made to the Marianists of England.5 Archbishop MacArthy had not given the attempts up because he was concerned about having so many priests tied up in educational institutions when he badly needed them in the task of opening more missions.6

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5. Paper by Brother James Kilroy, op. cit.
Also Interview with Archbishop MacArthy in 1968.
Fr. O'Keara in his capacity as Education Secretary-General, broke the news of the coming of the Marianist Brothers to Mangu as follows:—

"I have the honour to inform you that His Grace the Archbishop of Nairobi, has invited a teaching order of Brothers to replace the Holy Ghost Fathers at this school. The society is called the Society of Mary (Marianists). The headquarters of this society is Mount Saint John, 4100 Patterson Road, Dayton 30, Ohio, U.S.A. In the U.S.A. this teaching order is responsible for a number of High Schools and two universities—one at Dayton, Ohio, and one at San Antonio, Texas.

"The handover will be gradual. One Brother is due to arrive in October, two more in January, 1961 and, by January 1962, there will be six Brothers on the staff. Some Holy Ghost Fathers will remain to fill out the staff during the transfer period."

The first two Marianist Brothers arrived at Embakasi Airport where they were met by Fr. Barrett, who symbolically turned the keys over to the Principal-designate, Brother Frank Russell. The other Brother was Rev. Francis Muller. The two were brought over to Mangu the same evening, and they set to work at once since the term had already opened. Four days later a third Brother arrived, Rev. Charles Barnett, who flew in from an earlier post in Nigeria, and was met at Embakasi Airport by the Archbishop's Secretary, Fr. Meagher. Brother Charles was already in the classroom teaching Biology within two days of his arrival.

It was agreed that Fr. Barrett would stay on temporarily as Acting Principal while the Brothers familiarised themselves with their new job and the surroundings.

The Archbishop wrote the following letter to the Provincial Education Officer for Nairobi in whose area Mangu High School lay at that time, announcing the changeover of Principal:

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"I wish to inform you that Reverend Brother F. Russell is to take over as Principal of Holy Ghost College, Mangu from Reverend Father J. Barrett."

"I am sorry that I was not able to give you this information earlier, but due to unforeseen circumstances it was not possible. I did, however, inform the Education Department through Fr. O'Neillara that the Marianist Brothers were to take over the college as from January 1961."

The Principal-designate, Brother Frank, had had considerable experience in the U.S.A. where he had been particularly noteworthy as Sports Master and basketball coach in several schools. Apart from his other duties at Mangu he quickly built a new basketball court at Mangu, and "soon the boys were playing the game as well as any of his former students in the States." In addition Brother Frank did much to improve the physical side of the school: he built a new library and a recreational hall, installed fluorescent lights in all classrooms and re-decorated the dining hall in an attempt to improve the atmosphere of Mangu. Brother Frank was able to do this largely with money made available by the Marianists. Indeed from the start it was necessary for the Principal to keep two accounts books, one dealing with the normal grant and the other with funds sank into the school from Marianist sources including the salaries or allowances of the Marianist staff.

Throughout 1961 Father Killian O'Nuallain remained at the school to serve as chaplain, till the arrival of a Marianist priest, Fr. Eldon Reichert, who took over this responsibility; previous to his posting to Mangu in 1961, Fr. Reichert had been stationed for a time at St. Patrick's, Asaba, in Nigeria. There were five Africans on the Mangu staff at the time: Mr. Duncan Mwangi, Mr. Francis Oluta, Mr. Henry Agoya, Mr. David Irungu, and Mr. Nicholas Muruguri.

2. Paper by Brother James Kilroy, op. cit.
3. Interview with Brother John Schneider in 1969.
The school was to lose them all shortly after Kenya's independence, when they left one by one to join various Government establishments such as the Ministry of Education Head Office, Government Chemist, Provincial Education Office, and other administration posts. Although this affected the stability of the staff for a time, it was only a temporary phase, and it was not long before suitable replacements were found.

The Marianists came with plenty of ideas, but they soon realised that the British type of education current in Kenya had important differences from that operating in their home country of the United States, and that the work of the Holy Ghost Fathers at Mangu had been of a very high standard within the British context. They therefore decided to take over where the Holy Ghost Fathers had left off and to build on the firm foundations they had laid over the twenty-one years they had been managing Mangu. While pursuing this policy, the Brothers introduced such innovations as they thought would enrich the system and added a new dimension to the school. They laid great stress on the practical teaching of science (following in the steps of Fr. J. C. O'Connor) which quickly established a scientific tradition at the school. They established separate laboratory instruction in Chemistry, Physics and Biology, their aim being to help meet the current demand for qualified African technicians and agriculturalists in Kenya.

The Marianists are keenly aware of the fact that the Holy Ghost Fathers turned over to them their best school, and are determined to live up to the trust thus placed in them. Brother James Kilroy, who was the second Marianist Principal of Mangu and is now Headmaster of Aquinas High School in Nairobi has in a statement put it this way:

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1. Paper by Brother James Kilroy, op. cit.
2. Interview with Brother James Kilroy and Brother John Schneider in 1969.
3. Ibid.
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"The Marianists realized that the school they had taken over from the Holy Ghost Fathers was their best establishment ....... Since the Holy Ghost Fathers had established this school at Kabaa, nurtured it through the years, suffered through its growing stages, and directed it along paths of glory and fame, many a Holy Ghost Father had dedicated part of his life to this school. This is a fact that the Marianists are well aware of .... and very appreciative of. Mangu is a part of all these Holy Ghost Fathers, and the Marianists are determined to keep up the fine name of the school, and to maintain its finest traditions .... they intend that Mangu will mean as much to each Marianist who serves there."

More Marianists arrived to join the Mangu staff. The three that followed the first batch were Brother Pat Muller, Brother Michael Stimac and Brother John O'Connor. They were each to make a notable contribution to the Mangu programme.

Brother Michael became noted for his introduction of new science activities at the school. He started an amateur Radio Club and set up a radio transmitting station at the school both of which aroused great interest and enthusiasm among the boys, and received considerable attention from the public, as can be shown by the following newspaper article.

"In today's leader page is a schoolboy who has just become perhaps the youngest radio "ham" on the whole continent. He is Natole Martin a 15-year-old pupil at Mangu High School, near Thika."

"He is asignal success, but it is more of a feather in the cap for the school itself, a remarkably progressive institution which very seldom comes into the news."

"Last year the East African Standard told of how Brother Michael Stimac, the school's science master, had started the first air school for Africans at Mangu.

"More should be heard of Mangu a scholastic light which should not be hidden under a bushel ....... Mangu will undoubtedly produce more Tom Mboya's."

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1. Paper prepared by Brother James Kilroy (who was Principal of Mangu High School from 1954 to 1965) entitled: "Some Notes about the Marianists at Mangu High School".
2. Ibid.
It cannot fail to do so when teachers like Brother Michael, who holds a commercial licence as well as a master's degree in both Mathematics and nuclear physics, pass on their knowledge there.

But why I wonder do not more local firms and industries - and Government too - lend a hand with finances so necessary to further the work of Mangu? 1

Several of the students who took the electronics work seriously were later to carry on until they received their Amateur Radio licences; and one of the students actually broadcast the moment of Independence at midnight on 12 December, 1963. Since then the Voice of Kenya has attracted many of the Mangu boys who went through Brother Michael's programme.

In addition to the electronics programme, Brother Michael also started at Mangu an Air Programme to interest the boys in things connected with aviation. His intention was not to teach the boys to fly, since he expected this to follow naturally for those who wished to take up a life of flying in the adult world; he aimed at building interest in things connected with aviation such as weather, mechanics, radio, the physics of aviation, designing, plotting air speed and ground speed, and allied operations. In this he was immensely successful, and the results of his work have been evident in recent years by the number of ex-Mangu students who have joined the Kenya Air Force 2 or are working with the East African Airways. 3 The following quotation gives some importance to this venture:

"Helped by private companies, Mangu National High School, Thika, is to become an unofficial training school for African pilots and air plane mechanics."

1. Ibid:
2. East African Standard issue of 8 November 1963, in an article entitled "Feather in Cap."
3. The best qualifying student at the Kenya Air Force graduation ceremony performed by President Kenyatta in 1969 was an ex-Mangu student - Peter Atambo.
Yesterday the Minister for Education Mr. Otiende, inaugurated the first training programme on the school's airstrip which was constructed by the boys on the land of Mr. Peter Harries, who lent all the machines.

The boys gathered on the runway to greet Mr. Otiende, who arrived in a cessna aircraft belonging to Blackwell Campling which will be used for the training flights.

Accompanying the Minister was Mr. John Gordon, Vice-President of Blackwell Campling which is giving 150 hours free flying time to the school. This will be sufficient to take 60 boys up to a reasonable level of flight and mechanical training.

Eventually it is hoped to acquire an aircraft so that a thousand boys can be trained.

After Mr. Otiende had warmly commended the project, stressing the need for African pilots, six boys were taken on the first two training flights by Capt. Z. Boskovic. Other training flights will be given by the school's science master, Brother Michael Stimac.

Brother Stimac said that the air training programme would be spread over four years most of it in the classroom. When a machine was acquired, training opportunities would be offered to other schools.

Watching the first flight were Mr. Hilary Ng'weno of the Esso Company which is giving 500 gallons of petrol towards the scheme and the aviation attaché to the America Consul General Mr. Bruce Miller.¹

The Marianists at first wanted to make many more such innovations in the educational system, but they found it necessary to go slow with the new ideas, realizing that the examination - geared system in Kenya made it imperative to prepare the students for the Cambridge syllabus.² As a result of this the Brothers have introduced new or fancy programmes only if they act as a stimulus for the Cambridge subjects.² The switching of their attention to the Cambridge Examination in more recent years has made the Kenyan results in that

¹. East African Standard issue of 26 July 1963, article entitled "Future Pilots spread their Wings at Thika."
². Paper by Brother James Kilrcy, op.cit
Examination compare favourably with the best standards in the country, though it has at the same time slowed down the electronics and aeronautics programmes.

Shortly after taking over Mangu, the Marianists were asked to staff the new school started by Fr. J.C. O'Connor near Makadara in Nairobi, called Aquinas High School. Father Reichert, Brother John O'Connor, and Brother Michael Stimac were taken from the staff of Mangu to undertake this extra task. They were replaced at Mangu by Father Robert Cuellette, a French Canadian, who arrived from Abidjan in West Africa; Brother John Schneider and Brother Charles Barnett, who apparently had gone back after arriving with Brother Frank in 1961. Each of these three additions to the Mangu staff became an asset in a different way. Fr. Cuellette soon established a French Department at Mangu thus making the school one of the first to take up the study of this language in East Africa. Brother Barnett had had considerable experience in the teaching of science both in America and in Marianist Schools of West Africa, and so became a factor in the maintenance of the high level of teaching science in the school. Brother John Schneider who had had many years of experience in the teaching of English and in journalism introduced the new techniques of Speed Reading; he also brought the products of Science Research Association designed to improve the level of speed, comprehension, interest and ability of each individual student. In a matter of two years the Cambridge results in English brought twenty distinctions, a clear proof of the efficacy of his methods.¹

In January 1964, Brother Frank was transferred to Malawi and Brother James Kilroy arrived to replace him as Principal of Mangu; he was accompanied by Brother Paul Koller and Brother James Vorniran, both science teachers. Brother Paul took over

¹ Paper by Brother James Kilroy, op.cit.
the air programme and the Radio Club from Brother Michael Stimac who moved to Aquinas High School in Nairobi, and Brother James Vorndran took over the Biology department from Brother Charles Barnett who, like Brother Frank Russell, was posted to Malawi for a new assignment. 1

Throughout the period of the Brothers the Government has given regular recurrent grants to meet the tuition and boarding costs as well as to cover the teachers' salaries. In addition to this the Government has also offered £7000 annually to cover the necessary additions and repairs to buildings and to bring the equipment up-to-date. The school has had to decline this offer however, due to the plans of shifting it to another site.

After the Government's decision to allow 35 instead of 30 pupils per class, Mangu's double stream classes faced a possible maximum of 220 pupils 2 - too many for the present site and available accommodation. Then there is the need to start Higher School Certificate classes. 3 Accordingly the Maristans have begun a drive to raise funds from local and international sources to make it possible to move the school to a completely new site bought from Bobs Harries, 4 thirteen miles away from Mangu.

This will lead to the second transfer of the High School, but unlike the first transfer, careful planning and unhurried selection of a site coupled with the availability of more funds will ensure that Mangu High School at last gets a suitable, spacious and permanent home.

1. Information taken from a document entitled: "Mangu High School Development Programme", which was launched by President Kenyatta at Mangu on 30 November, 1968.
2. Ibid: Also interview with Brother John Schneider.
4. Ibid: Also Interview with Brother John Schneider.
CHAPTER VIII

THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE HOLY GHOST FATHERS IN EDUCATION IN KENYA - OVERALL VIEW:

1. General:

Although Kabaa-Mangu High School was the first and main school of the Holy Ghost Fathers in the field of higher education, the congregation did establish other schools in later years, especially since the 1940's, and although they fall outside my thesis, their impact forms part of the Holy Ghost contribution to education in Kenya. It is therefore useful to analyse the expansion of these later schools, and we shall do this later in this chapter. Meanwhile we shall recall some of the main features of Holy Ghost involvement in education, within East Africa in general and Kenya in particular since the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

In the introduction to this thesis we traced the early efforts of the Holy Ghost Fathers in East Africa which contributed in laying the foundations upon which later developments rested. We saw something of their efforts to train ransomed and runaway slaves, tribal misfits and unfortunate orphans, in their mission stations in Zanzibar, and on the mainland of Tanzania. We also saw how they gradually extended their work to free children in these areas, till they reached the Taita hills where they opened their first mission and school for Africans in Kenya.

Furthermore, we traced their attempts to provide higher education to Africans at the beginning of the last quarter of the nineteenth century; though these efforts to train priests, brothers and nuns during the 1870's may have produced no tangible results they did provide some insight into such problems as curricula and adaptability of educational methods to peoples who were not only of a different culture but had for centuries been held in very low opinion by the peoples of Europe, the home country of the missionaries.
Such pioneer work was essential before a proper start could be made, and the Holy Ghost Fathers along with a couple of other missionary bodies which operated in this country at the time must share the credit for the part they played in the venture.

Nor were the achievements and pioneer work of the Holy Ghost Fathers restricted to opening schools and finding out if Africans could learn to acquire a modern education. Equally important was the part they played in studying local languages and reducing them to paper. Their efforts in the documentation of Swahili are especially commendable, and the work of Fr. Sacleaux C.S.Sp., who studied Swahili in the 1880's and wrote and translated many books in it, must be considered at least on a par with that of Bishop Steere of the U.M.C.A., and that of the first pioneer of them all, J.L. Krapf, who had reduced Swahili to paper as long ago as the late 1840's.

In our own century the work of Fr. A. Loogman C.S.Sp., in the advancement of Swahili made its own impact both in Swahili newspaper Rafiki Yetu which he started in 1925, and in his books entitled Somani Kwa Fureche, which are still textbooks in the independent countries of East Africa today. The same is true of the work of Fr. Marx C.S.Sp., whose Swahili books are also popular. These are but a few of the outstanding educationists who guided Holy Ghost education in Kenya. The work of Fr. M.J. Witte and Fr. J.J. O'Meara has already been noted - two men who have left an indelible mark on the educational scene in Kenya, through the innovations they started or policies they popularised, and more significantly through the men they trained and let loose in the country to spread the influence.

Mgr. Brandsma, in his article of 1931 in the East African Standard, pointed out rightly that the Catholics including the Holy Ghost Fathers had, through concentration on technical, agricultural and industrial subjects, during the first two decades of this century made it possible for many a government department and many a firm
to find the necessary workers to make these enterprises function. The same is true of the three decades preceding independence: Kabasa-Mangu and the other Holy Ghost schools that were opened later did make an outstanding contribution in the supply of civil servants, teachers and clerks, and it would be difficult to think of an establishment whether in government or in the private sector in which one or other product of the Holy Ghost schools did not find his or her way.

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2. Girls' Education:

This brings us to the important question of girls' education. The contribution made by Holy Ghost helpers in this field needs no stressing since teaching orders of nuns have been working with the Holy Ghost Fathers right from the beginning. The Filles de Marie nuns came out with the very first batch of missionaries in 1860 as we saw earlier on. And when the Holy Ghost Fathers moved to Kenya they arrived with the Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny who opened the first schools for girls at Mombasa, Bura, and St. Austins in Nairobi. The replacements of the Cluny Sisters are still in Kenya today; these are: the Sisters of the Precious Blood, the Sisters of Our Lady of Africa (i.e., the "White Sisters"), and the Loreto Sisters. As each of these congregations has made a notable contribution to girls' education in this country, it will be in order to say briefly something about them and their work over the years.

a) The Missionary Sisters of the Precious Blood

The Congregation of the Missionary Sisters of the Precious Blood was founded in 1885, in Natal, South Africa, by a Trappist monk, Abbot Francis Pfanner. The Sisters of this congregation (sometimes referred to by their nickname of the "Red Sisters") arrived in

1. In His Footsteps, a printed pamphlet published in Durban "with the permission of the Management Board of CATHOLIC YOUTH and FAMILY."
East Africa in 1898 where they first operated in the Tanzania area. They were invited to Kenya by Bishop Allgeyer in 1909. Bishop Allgeyer wanted them to replace the Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny who had been working with the Holy Ghost Fathers since their arrival in Kenya (at Mombasa and Bura) in 1892, and were now pulling out for service elsewhere.

The Sisters of the Precious Blood who specialised in education and nursing arrived to take over Bura on 6 February 1909. The head of this party of three Sisters (Sr. Virginia) came from Mlingano Mission (Tanga) in Tanzania, while the other two Sisters — Sr. Lamberta Schwatz, a teacher and nurse, and Sr. Hemmenegildis Himmel — came direct from the Mother House of the Congregation in Natal.

Towards the end of July 1909, Sr. Virginia, having established Bura on Precious Blood lines, went back to Mlingano and was replaced by Sr. Genesia Groebel, who had been in Africa for the previous ten years. Another of the earlier arrivals was Sr. Eustacia Stoebich who arrived in January 1911, to replace Sr. Lamberta who died suddenly on Christmas day in 1910 after two years of distinguished service as teacher and nurse at Bura, which had endeared her to the local people. In 1911 the Cluny Sisters pulled out of the Mombasa Mission and the Precious Blood Sisters took over the convent there.

The surviving Precious Blood Sisters at Bura and Mombasa carried out an enthusiastic programme in education and nursing till the outbreak of the First World War in August 1914. Being Germans operating in a British territory they had to be removed a few months after the start of the war. Those at Bura (in the vicinity of which

1. Written information supplied to the author by Mother Adalberta of Riruta Catholic Mission, in 1969. (She is the current Superior-General of the Precious Blood Sisters in East Africa).
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
the fighting between the British and Germans was raging) were marched to the coast at the end of 1914 under such hasty and difficult conditions that all three fell victim to typhoid due to drinking dirty water on the way. The first of them died shortly after arrival at Mombasa in January 1915. The other two died in February and March of the same year respectively. 1

Thus the war temporarily brought Precious Blood efforts in Kenya to a stop. However, ten years later, on 9 February 1925, the Congregation resumed its work at Bura. A new batch of sisters, among whom was an outstanding educationist, Sr. Rosalina, arrived and opened a girls' Primary School that year at Bura in accordance with the provisions of the Education Ordinance of 1924. After the arrival of Sr. Juditha to reinforce the school staff at Bura very rapid progress was made at this school, and its first girl candidates sat the Kenya Primary School Examination in 1932. Their performance so encouraged the Education Department that Mr. Wisdom, the Provincial Education Officer, approached the Catholics with the request that they start the first High School for African girls in Kenya at Bura in 1933. However, on account of the fact that the Congregation of the Precious Blood Sisters felt that they had little prospect of maintaining a supply of sufficient teachers for secondary work, the Sisters reluctantly declined the offer, preferring to concentrate on Primary education and teacher training for a start. 2

Sr. Juditha had unofficially started training her own teachers in 1930, not so much with the aim of procuring certificates for her four African girls, but in an attempt to make them proficient enough to help her out with the teaching in the lower Primary School. But in 1931, Mr. Wisdom, while on a visit to the school examined the four girls and, to the delight of Sr. Juditha, passed them all at P4 level. From then on Sr. Juditha trained a few P4's every year. In 1933,

1. Written information by Mother Adelberta, op.cit.
2. Ibid.
she started training a few F3 teachers in addition. This unaided teacher training continued until 1945, when a Teacher Training Centre maintained by the Government was established.\(^1\) The Precious Blood Sisters continued to run the Bura Teacher Training College for another twenty years till its amalgamation, by the Government's decision, with the Shanzu Teachers College in 1965. The vacated buildings at Bura were converted into a Secondary School for girls run by the Sisters.\(^2\)


One of the Precious Blood Sisters' lasting contributions to Kenya's education was the training of a local Congregation of African sisters, who are gradually taking over the running of schools as and when their numbers and experience make this possible. The Congregation, the Sisters of St. Joseph, which was founded by Bishop Heffernan C.S.Sp., D.D., has its Mother House at Bura, where their training was originally undertaken first by Sr. Rosalina and later by Sister Amadea. In 1961 the Congregation became independent and one of the African Sisters, Sr. Theresa Njeri, became its first African Mother General. The Sisters of St. Joseph are today teaching in several of the Primary schools in the Diocese of Mombasa. They are also employed in the Girls' Secondary School at Bura, and took over the Primary School at Giriama Catholic Mission from the Precious Blood Sisters in 1953. As their personnel get more training the contribution of the Sisters of St. Joseph in the field of education will be greater.

\(^1\) Written information by Mother Adelberta, op.cit.
\(^3\) Mother Adelberta's paper, op.cit.

The Precious Blood Sisters are now training another lot of African girls for the sisterhood at Riruta, some of whom they hope to become Precious Blood Sisters and to make a contribution in the field of education as also in the field of nursing in which the Sisters of this Congregation have already made a notable contribution wherever they are found in Kenya.

b) The Sisters of Our Lady of Africa:

The Sisters of Our Lady of Africa, more commonly known by their nickname of the "White Sisters", and founded in the 1860's by Cardinal Lavagerie, first arrived in East Africa in 1894 and began their work in the missions of the "White Fathers" in Tanzania and Uganda. They extended their work to Kenya in 1907 when they established a convent at Mombasa in the buildings which had been used by the White Fathers as a procure since 1891. The White Sisters moved into these buildings after the White Fathers had decided to transfer their procure to Dar-es-salaam, having found Mombasa an inconvenient centre for a procure, since they had no missions at all in Kenya.

Next the Sisters of Our Lady of Africa bought land at Thika three miles away from Mangu and built what they intended to be the headquarters of all the convents of their congregation throughout East Africa. The headquarters, however, was eventually shifted elsewhere outside Kenya, though the Thika convent remained a little island in non-"White Sisters" territory.

At their Mombasa Convent the Sisters of Our Lady of Africa opened a school, initially for Goan and Seychellois children; this is what became the Star-of-The-Sea School. It has since "mothered" another

2. Kieran, op.cit.
3. Interview with Fr. J.J. O'Meara.
school in Mombasa - the Mary Cliffe School - but otherwise the White Sisters have largely restricted their activities to their only two Convents in Kenya, the one at Mombasa and the one at Thika.¹

The role of the Convent at Thika in educational matters needs special mention because it was for a long time unique in East Africa.

The White Sisters School at Thika, which is today called Maryhill was originally established as an orphanage for children of mixed blood in 1932. The orphanage opened with eighteen half-caste orphans, mostly of European-African parentage. Within a year the number of "mixed" children at the orphanage had reached thirty and so it was decided to open a special school for them.²

In those colonial days children of mixed blood were placed at great disadvantage in matters of education. The educational system was fixed on strictly racial lines and made provision for Europeans, Asians, Arabs and Africans. The schools were intended exclusively for the children of the appropriate races, and no crossing of the lines was permitted. No provision whatever was made for half-caste children. It was on account of this situation that the "White Sisters" decided to do something for these unfortunate and underprivileged children.

Accordingly at the beginning of 1933, the orphanage was converted into a school for orphans of mixed parentage. For accommodation the Sisters of Our Lady of Africa set aside a building which had previously been a coffee store; the ground floor housed a classroom, kitchen, and dining-room, while the "attic" was converted into a dormitory. The school, which was entirely financed by the Sisters and from Catholic sources, became the first school for children of mixed blood in the whole of East Africa, and its roll was drawn from all three territories.

1. Interview with Fr. J. J. O'Neill.
Most of the children virtually became permanent residents at the White Sisters Convent, remaining there even during the holidays. A large number of them were wholly or partly dependent on the Sisters for their needs. ¹ Although the Convent coffee farm brought in a good amount of revenue, the Sisters were very much short of funds for running the school, and so kept prodding the Government, however, was unwilling to waive important regulations concerning the issue of grants to schools. For one thing there was no vote for mixed schools, and for another, the Inspectors of Education complained that the buildings used for this particular school did not meet the requirements stipulated by the regulations. ²

Meanwhile, the population at the School was increased by the addition of Goan and Seychellois children from outside townships who needed boarding facilities to get an education. By 1951, the number of pupils in the School had risen to eighty. In that year, partly because "normal" children were now on the roll, the Education Department relented and gave a moderate capital grant, ³ which, though inadequate, came in useful in supplementing the Catholic funds to erect a block of six classrooms and a dormitory for 200 pupils. This eased the accommodation situation considerably. ⁴

Earlier, when the number of pupils finishing the Primary course became considerable, and as the half-castes had no boarding secondary school to go to, it was considered necessary to advance on to secondary work, and so a secondary section was established. In 1951 this secondary school was recognised as a "Grade A" School for Cambridge School Certificate purposes, and in the same year the first and only candidate successfully sat for that examination. ⁵

¹ Paper written by the "White Sisters" at Thika entitled: "Maryhill Girls Secondary School."
² KMA: File No. 1/8, and File No. 1/161 on "White Sisters' Special School": various correspondence.
³ Ibid:
⁴ Ibid:
⁵ Paper by "White Sisters", op. cit
Also the official Examinations list of 1951.
By 1954 there were 150 pupils, both primary and secondary and including some very young orphans of pre-school age. This was the time of the emergency and as already noted in an earlier chapter the children were in considerable danger and the Government had to station on the convent compound a unit of the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers to protect the inmates.¹

By 1960 the school roll had risen to 190 boarders and there were, in addition, a good number of day pupils. In 1962 the secondary section was separated from the primary section as far as boarding arrangements were concerned; the former had assumed the name of Maryhill School since 1960, and the Primary School was now given the name of Maria Goretti School.²

Another significant development was that from around 1960 the policy of the school began to change. The colonial arrangement of racial systems of education had largely become out of date and "multi-racialism" was rapidly becoming the accepted practice. Besides, the pupils were becoming increasingly conscious of the fact that they were in a charity school and they did not like the idea. Thus, gradually, more "pure race" children began to be admitted, and at Kenya's independence Maryhill ceased to be a school reserved for special children. The first African pupil was admitted to the School in 1962. Five years later the number of African children had reached 51.5% in the secondary school and 48% in the primary school. By 1968 there were more African children than the children of any other race in both sections, and the half-caste children accounted for less than five per cent.³

An important contribution of the Sisters of Our Lady of Africa

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2. Also interview with the White Sisters at their Thika Convent in June 1969.
to the education of this country was the training of an order of African nuns called the Assumption Sisters. The order was founded by His Grace Archbishop MacArth in 1956 and he handed the training of the novices to the Sisters of Our Lady of Africa. That the training of the Assumption Sisters was effective is shown by the fact that they now wholly run Maria Goretti School, as well as several other Primary Schools in the Archdiocese of Nairobi.  

Among the earlier educators of the White Sisters were Sr. Mary Loreto who was Headmistress at the Thika Convent from 1935, and Sr. Margret Magrath who also became a Headmistress of the same school. But the Sisters quite rightly point out that in their congregation they all work as a team and it is not customary to mention individuals.

C) THE LORETO SISTERS

The third most important group of Holy Ghost helpers are the Loreto Sisters, who arrived in Kenya in 1921, at the invitation of Bishop Neville.

The Loreto nuns are the Irish branch of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary, a society which was founded in the early sixteenth century by an English lady called Mary Ward (1585-1635). Mary Ward's action in founding this order was caused by the fact that in England at that time the effects of the Reformation seriously hampered Catholic apostolic activity, and she intended the Society to be a kind of lay apostolate performing educational work; in effect, a teaching religious order. The Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary extended its work to Dublin, Ireland, in 1822. This foundation named its convent "Our Lady of Loreto", and so eventually the Irish nuns of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary became known as the Loreto Sisters. By 1841 the Loreto Sisters had extended their work to India, and in the years following to Canada, Spain,

1. Interview with Archbishop MacArth in 1968.
2. Interview with the White Sisters at their Thika Convent.
England, Mauritius, South Africa and Australia. Their headquarters remained in Dublin.\(^1\)

Next the Loreto Sisters were invited by Bishop Neville to open convent schools in Kenya. The first six Irish Sisters of this order arrived at Msongari, Nairobi, in 1921, all of them hailing from Loreto convents in India. The Convent at Msongari had originally been started by the Cluny Sisters, but they had since withdrawn, and the Loreto Sisters were virtually making a new start there.\(^2\)

The Loreto Sisters established their first school at Msongari, for European girls of all faiths. They started with a boarding Primary school, but they soon established a boarding secondary school, as well, since there were already enough candidates for this.

In 1925 the Holy Ghost Fathers asked the Loreto Sisters to take over the Catholic Parochial School, which is today in the grounds of the Holy Family Cathedral, Nairobi. The School was at the time mainly attended by Goan children, but Seychellois and other Asian children were also admitted. Later the Loreto Sisters were invited to open more schools for European children; such schools were established at Mombasa, Valley Road Nairobi, both in Holy Ghost territory, and one at Eldoret in Mill Hill territory. The latter catered for the children of the European community in the Uasin Gishu and Trans-Nzoia farming areas and also from Uganda. The Loreto Sisters also opened a large day school for Goans at Eastleigh in Nairobi.\(^3\)

In the field of African education the Loreto Sisters' earliest and biggest contribution was at Loreto Convent Limuru, where they established a school at the end of 1936. The background to this mission site was that the Holy Ghost Fathers had acquired the land there at the turn of the century, and when the Consolata Fathers had

\(^1\) Paper written by Mother Francis Joseph O'Sullivan, entitled "The Loreto Sisters".
\(^2\) Ibid.
\(^3\) Ibid.
arrived in 1902 to gain experience in the Holy Ghost Vicariate before going to start work in their own Vicariate in Ethiopia, Limuru was one of the missions in which they received their tutelage. The Consolata Fathers, however, came to like Kenya so much that they decided to stay, and Rome apportioned out to them the Vicariate of Nyeri. They also retained the mission at Limuru where they had established a large coffee plantation. Later, on the recommendation of Archbishop Hinsley, the Apostolic Delegate to East Africa, Limuru Mission was handed back to the Holy Ghost Fathers at the outset of the 1930’s.1

It should, further, be recalled that when the Catholics decided to start their own secondary school for boys they first intended to site it at Limuru where 100 acres were to have been placed at its disposal. Due to the wrangling over whether the Catholics should be allowed to start a secondary school of their own and also over the grants, the secondary school for boys which was started in 1930 was of necessity situated at Kabaa. Thus it was that in 1936, Bishop Heffernan, decided to start an African girls school at Limuru. The Loreto Sisters were appointed to start the school, and Mother Dolores, who had been in the country since 1921, moved from Msongari to establish it. Her staff consisted of Sister Francis Joseph O’Sullivan, who had arrived straight from Ireland, and Sister Miriam, who was lent to the venture by Valley Road Convent, Nairobi. For their accommodation a new bungalow was erected to house the convent, and for the two classrooms and a dormitory for pupils the nuns used the buildings which had belonged to the Consolata Sisters before they moved to the Consolata Vicariate.2

The school started at primary level, with seven boarders and 21 day pupils, most of them being Kikuyu. When the parents of the day girls who wanted them to help with some of the work at home learnt that the girls would be required to attend afternoon classes as well, they raised serious objections and some even withdrew.

1. Koren, op. cit., pages 277-279
their daughters. Other girls dropped out on their own, and the roll often fell very low; but the Sisters persisted and — although the teaching was through the medium of Swahili — succeeded in bringing their first class to the Primary School Examination in 1944, with very encouraging results.¹

At the same time, beginning from 1939, the Limuru Convent had started the training of P4 teachers. This had been followed by that of P3 teachers from 1946, P2 from 1951, and P1 from 1954. The Sisters had also started a Teacher Training College at Loreto Convent Kiambu in 1949, to which place Limuru's P2 and P1 classes were transferred in phases, the final class moving there in 1958.²

The Loreto Convent Girls' School, Limuru, officially embarked on secondary work in 1949. The first girls of the school sat the KASSE (Kenya African Secondary School Examination) which was the equivalent of Junior Secondary School Examination of today, in 1950, and its first candidates for the Cambridge School Certificate Examination attempted that examination in 1954.³

Such was the pioneer work of the Loreto Sisters in African education. They have since opened a day Secondary School for girls in Kiambu township (1965), a co-educational Day Secondary School at Changamwe near Mombasa (1968), and a boarding Secondary School for African girls at Matunda near Hoey's Bridge (1969). In the field of higher education they have, since 1962, opened the doors of their Msongari School, which was reserved for Europeans only during the colonial days, to African girls and the girls of other races as well. The school is now fully integrated, though it still receives no government grants.⁴

Also since 1965 the Loreto Sisters have started training local nuns at Msongari. Of the first class of three novices, two

1. Paper by Mother Francis Joseph O'Sullivan, op.cit.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Interview with Mother Francis Joseph O'Sullivan.
of them were African. It is intended that when these and those following them become professed nuns they will engage in educational work. It is the beginning of the localisation of this famous teaching order.

The Loreto nuns are keenly aware of the help and cooperation which they received from the Holy Ghost Fathers in the earlier difficult years, without which, they say, they might have achieved far less. They point to the interest shown first by Bishop Heffernan, then by his successor Archbishop MacArthy. They also point to the material, moral and, above all, spiritual support given them by such priests as Fr. Martin Reidy, Fr. John Reidy, Fr. J. Doody, and Fr. F. McGeogh; they further cite Fr. Austin Lynch, Fr. T. Maher of St. Peter Claver's, Fr. P. McGill and Fr. M. Higgins. In more direct educational work they state that the help given by Fr. J.J. O'Meara and Fr. J.C. O'Connor was invaluable: Fr. O'Meara gave them advice on such matters as curricula, syllabuses and logistics, and even tested the ability and assessed the prospects of their pupils in passing certain public examinations. Fr. O'Connor came in very useful in advising on the teaching of science subjects, for which Limuru was very poorly equipped. He encouraged them to use the Mangu laboratory, and the girls used to go to Mangu and spend a day there being shown as well as carrying out experiments in chemistry and physics.

(d) Other Helpers:

The Principal helpers of the Holy Ghost Fathers in matters of women's education, therefore, were the three nuns' orders: the Precious Blood Sisters, the Sisters of Our Lady of Africa, and the Loreto Sisters. All three orders still continue to render their services. They have in more recent decades been joined in this work by two other orders of nuns: the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy, and the Holy Rosary Sisters. The Sisters of Mercy since their arrival

1. Paper by Mother Francis Joseph O'Sullivan.
have been running a Women's Teacher Training College at Mbooni in the Machakos District, and a Girls' Primary School at Shauri Moyo in Nairobi. They have also started a secondary school for girls in Nairobi South, and are now rapidly expanding their work.¹

The Holy Rosary Sisters have distinguished themselves more especially in medical work, and they render a public service by running the Gatundu Self-help hospital under special arrangement between President Kenyatta and Archbishop MacArthy.²

The Franciscan Sisters were mentioned in an earlier chapter. They arrived in 1941 and started a Primary School and later a Secondary School for girls at Mangu.

In boys' education the help rendered by the Marianist Brothers at Mangu has already been noted. Another group that has rendered valuable service in Holy Ghost territory, though not directly under Holy Ghost auspices, is the Opus Dei.

This group as mentioned earlier arrived ten year's ago to start Strathmore College, a multi-racial College for Higher School Certificate work in arts and science. The Opus Dei also started Kianda College for secretarial work.³

3. The Sources of Holy Ghost Funds:

The achievements of the Holy Ghost Fathers in education become quite impressive when we consider that they had very limited funds.

The main source for financing their schools (as indeed most Catholic Schools) came from local sources. Each mission was expected to finance itself according to the means available. At the outset the Holy Ghost Fathers grew coffee on the land they had acquired,

1. Interview with Fr. J.J. O'Meara.
2. Ibid:
3. Interview with Mr. David Sperling.
and this provided a good amount of revenue for their missions in Kenya. Coffee farms were found at Bura, St. Austin’s, Kiambu, Limuru and Mangu missions. Some of these places also grew wattles for bark, and St. Austin’s in addition to its famous coffee plantation also raised a milk herd. Since not all missions could engage in these enterprises the Bishop required each mission to submit to him its accounts and also to work out a budget for its needs. The surplus funds were then turned over to the Bishop, and in this way the poorer missions were able to get a share of the income from the richer ones, and all were thus fairly treated.¹

It is this money that made possible the building of the many unaided schools which the Holy Ghost Fathers put up in their bid to provide a Catholic education without the encumberances of governmental action.

True some of the money came from abroad such as gifts to the bishop, individual priests, brothers and nuns, which went into a general fund, but such money came in spasmodically and no wise bishop could have entirely relied on such uncertain sources. A little more regular money came in annually from Rome mainly from a fund called “Peter’s Pence”, which derives from collections in Churches throughout the world on 29 June, the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul, for the extension of mission work. Similar small sums came in from worldwide charities such as that of the Holy Childhood, which is money collected through school children to help mission work. These funds which are controlled by the Cardinal Prefect of Propaganda in Rome,² often are not in sufficient amounts to pay for the widespread educational facilities of any Catholic diocese.

It can be seen therefore that the earlier success of the Holy Ghost Fathers in education was in face of great financial odds, and

1. Interview with Fr. J.J. O'Meara.
2. Ibid.
was made possible only because the priests, nuns, and brothers expected no salary and received none. This makes the colonial government's earlier reluctance to give their schools grants appear most inconsiderate.

Part of the Holy Ghost Fathers' problem of course stemmed from the fact that they were not only "Popish" Catholics in a country ruled by a British Protestant Government, but also that they were foreign in the sense of being French or in later years Irish. Furthermore, they could not bring themselves to cooperate so fully with the administration in the same way as the C.M.S., or Church of Scotland missions did, because they were determined to maintain their autonomy, as there was so much on which they could not compromise.1

4. The Impact:

It is in light of these various difficulties and disabilities that the extent of the contribution of the Holy Ghost Fathers must be viewed. But this is only one aspect of their contribution. Fundamental to this whole issue of educational advancement in East Africa as a whole and Kenya in particular, is the part they played in the very early pioneering days in learning and documenting the indigenous languages, an exercise which came in useful in effecting the "break-through" in the education of Africans. As an eminent scholar has put it:

"Nothing reveals the soul of a people so much as the tongue it speaks and nothing is conducive to intimate contact with a people than a thorough knowledge of its language. Hence the study of the native languages was the first duty."2

But although the above quotation indicates that the interest of the Holy Ghost Fathers in the study of indigenous languages had more to it than the mere need to get a medium for educating their

1. Interview with Mother Francis Joseph O'Sullivan.
parishioners, the fact still remains that their study of these languages was one of the contributions they made to education. They for instance helped popularise Swahili throughout the areas where they operated, and by the early 1880's they had even declared it an obligatory language in which their adherents had to say their prayers. In 1881 they established a printing press at Bagamoyo to print hymns and other simple literature in Swahili. By 1883 Fr. Charles Sacleaux had compiled a Swahili grammar as well as a Swahili-French dictionary and a French-Swahili dictionary. Fr. Sacleaux continued his documentation and study of the Swahili language until his death in 1943. His work was in part taken up by Fr. A. Loogman who, as we saw earlier, founded the Swahili newspaper Rafiki Yetu at Mombasa in 1925. Other pioneers in the study of Swahili who have already been mentioned are Fr. Marx of Bura, and Fr. Witte of Kabaa.

A number of other Holy Ghost Fathers concentrated on the study of local vernaculars. Fr. Hemery produced a Kikuyu Grammar in 1902 and a Kikuyu catechism in 1903; in the same year Fr. Flick wrote a Masai grammar, and in 1908 Fr. Miller and Fr. Mitrech also finished a catechism and grammar in the Taita language. Other contributions have followed since.

As far as Kenya is concerned the Holy Ghost Fathers operated mainly in the Coast Province, in the Kamba area, and in Kikuyu country. In all these areas they faced, especially in the earlier years, two major problems: first they found themselves at a disadvantage in a British colony where the authorities paid little attention to them, to say the least; then in addition they had to deal with some of the most "closely knit tribes" which at first clung so tenaciously to their customs that they resisted educational change.

2. Ibid, page 159.
Among the Akamba for instance it was a common practice for parents to "punish" their less worthy sons by sending (or threatening to send) them to school, while they gave their more favoured and reliable children what they considered the privilege of remaining at home to receive a traditional education and a dowry for an early marriage. They placed little worth on a school education in those days because it appeared to them to be so foreign that they saw no obvious reason or urgent purpose for it, and, besides, the Africans - the Akamba in particular - were very suspicious of the intentions of the missionaries in general. This in spite of the fact that in the nineteenth century most European missionaries came to eastern Africa specifically to try and evangelise the Galla or the Akamba: these were the tribes of East Africa known by name in the Europe of those days, the only other one being the Nyamwezi.

But the Akamba were neither aware nor appreciative of their romantic popularity among the European strangers. Thus the Methodists who were guided by Krapf to the Tana River area in the 1860's failed to make an impression on the nearby Akamba. Nor were the later arrivals, the African Inland Mission, who arrived in the Kilungu area of Kamba country, in the 1890's. The Holy Ghost Fathers had themselves had to evacuate Kabaa, their first mission in Ukambani till Fr. Witte reopened it for purposes of a school in 1924, and through dogged efforts eventually made a near miraculous break-through. This success, indeed any success in those days, in the Akamba "wilderness" was an achievement of no mean value. The late Mr. Tom Mboya related an anecdote that seems to explain, at least in part, the early imperviousness of the Kamba to missionary influences. He said that they made up their minds about the white man's religion and all that went with it, after the first Akamba convert had the following experience with the missionary who baptized him. The missionary reportedly told the convert: "Now that you have been

1. Interview with Fr. T. Farrelly in 1968.
2. Interview with Mr. T.J. Mboya in 1969.
baptized it means that you must leave everything, you must break away with your past, you must become a new person." The convert listening with unbelieving consternation asked: "Did you say everything? Do you mean that I must now give up everything!" And the missionary, with a positive nod replied, "Yes, EVERYTHING." That was the end of it all. The disconcerted convert decided there and then that he could not make the grade. He knew for sure that he could not part with at least three things: the honey beer (uki), traditional medicine (muti), and women. It appeared to him that the missionary had ruled out all these things.

Whether this story is true or not, the fact remains that the Akamba, though an intelligent people, were among the most conservative tribes in this country in resisting the advance of the whiteman's ways and ideas. That the Holy Ghost Fathers succeeded here is one of the living evidence of their impact and the dynamic role they played in enhancing the cause of this particular type of culture contact.

Other tangible evidence of their success, as pointed out by Mgr. Brandsma, in his 1931 article quoted earlier, can be gauged by the clerks, craftsmen and other semi-skilled African workers whom the Holy Ghost Fathers produced in the days before the Government even began getting involved in education. It can further be seen in the very large numbers of teachers that Kabaa produced in its earlier years, in the secondary school products that both Kabaa and Mangu and their other institutions turned out over the years, and by the very effective efforts at girls' education as already narrated. Not least are their endeavours in the education of European, Asian and half-caste children, often with little or no Government subsidy; in the many more schools they have since opened for children of all races, including, in more recent post-independence years, Harambee Schools; and in their declared and evident willingness to continue being useful as long as

1. Interview with Mr. T.J. Nkoya in early 1969.
2. See Appendix I and Appendix II.
their services are required - and one cannot see that these services will cease to be needed in the foreseeable future.

It should also be mentioned that their presence as rivals no doubt spurred the Protestants on to more ambitious educational projects and, by the same token, vice versa. Furthermore, both Kabaa and Mangu, as also their Protestant counterparts, helped to dissipate the traditional strength of negative tribalism by bringing the children of many tribes together and making them learn to live in harmony and appreciate each other's qualities and each other's company. Indeed, as the late Mr. Tom Mboya pointed out to the author, it was Kabaa and Mangu which gave him his ability to deal with the Akamba and the Agikonyu, a situation which made him easy among them in later years and contributed to his meteoric rise in public life to become one of Kenya's most dynamic political personalities.¹

When their work is viewed in retrospect, it becomes clear that the Holy Ghost Fathers did reap their own share of mistakes. It has been pointed out that they, as all the other European missionaries, made the mistake of confusing the true Christian standards and those which were purely the result of western behaviour and culture: they used Christian arguments against African traditions, "which really were western cultural arguments." Their problem, it must be admitted, was that they found that African religion and culture were similarly entwined and so they figured that the impact of Christianity would have been weak if they accepted any of the African ways; but this cannot be accepted as a valid justification. However, the post-independence Christian social reforms are a step in the right direction.² Another justified criticism of their approach is the fact that, again like all missionaries, they failed to accept the products of their own education. Throughout the period of colonial administration there was a tendency to treat African products of the

¹ Interview with Mr. T. J. Mboya.
² Ibid.
educational system as if they were inherently incapable of taking responsibility. This if anything ought to have been a reflection on the work of the missionaries themselves but they tended to view it quite differently. Again their discipline was far too strict and the priest-student relationship took too much of the form of superior versus junior, to the extent that when the products of the system went out into the world for the first time life was an exasperating experience, even though many tided over it eventually. The many, many religious restrictions "which made little sense in real life," and the somewhat "unhealthy attitude" towards the female sex, made adjustment for the boys a difficult and energy-consuming business.

On the other hand it is a well known fact that education and much else in this country owes nearly everything to the pioneering work of the missionaries, among whom the Holy Ghost Fathers figured prominently. They helped to shape the outlook of the people, and although they made many understandable mistakes, they on the whole did a fine job. Mr. Mboya positively considered that "It is to be regretted that the values they instilled are being forced out of existence, especially as schools gradually become non-denominational...."

I reject the Marxist view that religion is the opium of the people. If this means that religion makes people docile then Marx was very wrong. For Christians have died as martyrs, have fought wars, have opposed governments etc. This is far from being docile." Mr. Mboya was saying this as a tribute to the Holy Ghost Fathers, but he made it clear that it applied to all missionaries worth the name.

As intellectuals the Holy Ghost Fathers were second to none in this country. Mr. Mboya has described them as the Jesuits of East Africa; and Hilary Ng’weno considers that through their policy of not spoon-feeding the students and their refusal to agree that education is

1. Interview with Mr. Hilary Ng’weno and Mr. B.B. Bangua.
2. Ibid.
3. Interview with Mr. T.J. Mboya.
4. Ibid.
for examinations, they have produced the largest number of intellectuals, writers and thinkers in Kenya. He says unreservedly that his ability to write is entirely a product of Mangu, and adds that almost all ex-Mangu people who have attained high positions are confident, relaxed and sure of themselves. Mboya, Ng'weno and all the other ex-Kabaa-Mangu students that I interviewed, while criticising some aspects of the Holy Ghost approach, were unanimous about the significant part that these missionaries have played in the educational development of Kenya.

Thus these men who were responsible for introducing coffee in Kenya - our nation's main cash earner today - can be proud of their record in the educational sphere as well. They faced many odds, and there were many things happening around them which they did not approve of and for which they cannot be blamed. Dr. Kieran has written this significant passage about them:

"It is ironic that the logic of developments pushed them into pioneering an educational system which inevitably brought with it all the attitudes they disliked in the Europe they had left, and (although they) introduced the crop (i.e. coffee) which was to support the settlers and a capitalist economy (which they disliked), they must be remembered for their schools and their coffee."\(^2\)

Their has been a quiet but nonetheless heroic contribution to the development of Kenya. Memories are short, and great contributions often go unsung, but history is not likely to belittle the part that the Holy Ghost Fathers have played in the advancement of this country.

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1. Interview with Hilary Ng’weno.
APPENDIX I

SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF THE HOLY GHOST FATHERS 1962

For Boys:

1. Mangu High School, Thika
2. Kabati High School, Mwala
3. Tala High School, Kangundo
4. St. Georges High School, Mariakani
5. Aquinas High School, Nairobi
7. St. Theresa's Boy's School Nairobi
8. Ituru High School, Thika
10. St. Mary's School Nairobi*
11. Muhoho High School
12. Kiriko Secondary School, Thika*
13. The St. Joseph's The Worker School, Thika*
14. Biberioni High School, Limuru*
15. St. Kevin's Boys Secondary School, Lower Kabete*
16. Makupa High School, Mombasa*
17. Thomeandu Secondary School, Kilome*
18. Kaumoni Boys Secondary School*
19. Gatitu Harambee Secondary School*
20. Miruria Secondary School*
21. Thigio Secondary School*

Higher School Certificate (Non-denominational)
Strathmore College.

For Girls:

1. Maryhill Girls School, Thika
2. Loreto Convent, Valley Road, Nairobi
3. Loreto Convent Girls School Limuru
4. St. Francis Girls Secondary School, Mangu
5. St. Theresa's Girls School Nairobi
6. St. Anne's Secondary School, Lioki, Kiambu*
7. Precious Blood Girls Secondary School, Kilungu
10. Our Lady of Mercy Girls School, Nairobi
11. Star of the Sea Secondary School, Mombasa
12. Matuga Girls Secondary School, Likoni
13. Huruma High School, Nairobi
14. Kiambu Township Girls School*
15. Ngarariga Girls Secondary School*
16. Kagwe Girls Secondary School*
17. Misyani Girls Secondary School, Kangundo*
18. Mulala Girls Day Secondary School, Emali*
19. Tala Girls Commercial Secondary School, Kangundo*
20. Loreto Convent School Mombasa*
21. St. Mary's Seminary, Kwale*

Mixed:
Sacred Heart Secondary School Mombasa.

Higher School Certificate:
Loreto Convent Msongari*

Teacher Training Colleges:
Loreto Convent Kiambu T.T.C. (Women)
Our Lady of Mercy Mbooni T.T.C. (Women)
St. John's T.T.C., Kilimambogo (men)
St. Mary's T.T.C. Kiteta (mixed).

Note: Schools shown with * were unaided or "Harambee" in 1968.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Mission School</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Denomination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>C.M.S. Rabai</td>
<td>1847</td>
<td>C.M.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>United Methodist Ribe</td>
<td>1862</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>C.M.S. Freretown</td>
<td>1875</td>
<td>C.M.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Madrassa Burhania (Mombasa)</td>
<td>1877</td>
<td>(Muslim)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Roman Catholic Bura</td>
<td>1892</td>
<td>R.C.M. (Holy Ghost)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>United Methodist Mazeras</td>
<td>1894</td>
<td>United Methodists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Kangundo School</td>
<td>1896</td>
<td>Africa Inland Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Buxton School Mombasa</td>
<td>1897</td>
<td>C.M.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Church of Scotland, Kikuyu</td>
<td>1898</td>
<td>Church of Scotland Mission</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>C.M.S. Kabete</td>
<td>1900</td>
<td>C.M.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>St. Austin's Nairobi</td>
<td>1900</td>
<td>R.C.M. (Holy Ghost)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>All Saints Kiambu</td>
<td>1902</td>
<td>R.C.M. (Holy Ghost)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Roman Catholic Nyeri</td>
<td>1903</td>
<td>R.C.M. (Consolata)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Africa Inland Mission Kijabe</td>
<td>1903</td>
<td>Africa Inland Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Africa Inland Mission Machakos</td>
<td>1903</td>
<td>Africa Inland Mission</td>
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<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>C.M.S. Dabida</td>
<td>1904</td>
<td>C.M.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>C.M.S. Waithega</td>
<td>1904</td>
<td>C.M.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Roman Catholic Kibuye</td>
<td>1904</td>
<td>R.C.M. (Mill Hill)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Roman Catholic Mumias</td>
<td>1904</td>
<td>R.C.M. (Mill Hill)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
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<td>1904</td>
<td>R.C.M. (Consolata)</td>
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<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Lumbwa Industrial Mission</td>
<td>1905</td>
<td>7th Day Adventist</td>
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<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>Church of God Bunyore</td>
<td>1905</td>
<td>Church of God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>C.M.S. Maseno</td>
<td>1906</td>
<td>C.M.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>Roman Catholic Mangu</td>
<td>1906</td>
<td>R.C.M. (Holy Ghost)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>St. Teresa's Convent Nairobi</td>
<td>1906</td>
<td>R.C.M. (Holy Ghost)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>Roman Catholic Kakamega</td>
<td>1906</td>
<td>R.C.M. (Mill Hill)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>Roman Catholic Mungoiri</td>
<td>1907</td>
<td>R.C.M. (Consolata)</td>
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<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>St. John's Riruta</td>
<td>1909</td>
<td>R.C.M. (Holy Ghost)</td>
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<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>Church of Scotland Tumutumu</td>
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Appendix II (i) continued.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME OF SCHOOL</th>
<th>YEAR OF FOUNDATION</th>
<th>MISSION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>33. Seventh Day Adventist Gendia</td>
<td>1909</td>
<td>Seventh Day Adventist</td>
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<tr>
<td>34. C.M.S. Embu</td>
<td>1910</td>
<td>C.M.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. Roman Catholic Fort Hall</td>
<td>1910</td>
<td>R.C.M. (Consolata)</td>
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(11) MISSION SCHOOLS FOUNDED BETWEEN 1911 TO 1924

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME OF SCHOOL</th>
<th>YEAR OF FOUNDATION</th>
<th>MISSION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. C.M.S. Nairobi</td>
<td>1911</td>
<td>C.M.S.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Seventh Day Adventist Kamagambo</td>
<td>1911</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Seventh Day Adventist Kisii</td>
<td>1911</td>
<td>Seventh Day Adventist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Roman Catholic Gaichanjiro</td>
<td>1911</td>
<td>R.C.M. (Consolata)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Roman Catholic Icacagi</td>
<td>1912</td>
<td>R.C.M. (Consolata)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Roman Catholic Gecondi</td>
<td>1912</td>
<td>R.C.M. (Consolata)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Roman Catholic Aluor</td>
<td>1912</td>
<td>R.C.M. (Mill Hill)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. C.M.S., Mutira</td>
<td>1912</td>
<td>C.M.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. C.M.S. Kabare</td>
<td>1913</td>
<td>C.M.S.</td>
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<td>10. C.M.S., Kathukani</td>
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<td>C.M.S.</td>
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<td>11. Roman Catholic, Liki</td>
<td>1913</td>
<td>R.C.M. (Holy Ghost)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Roman Catholic, Asumbi</td>
<td>1913</td>
<td>R.C.M. (Mill Hill)</td>
</tr>
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<td>13. United Methodist Church, Meru</td>
<td>1913</td>
<td>United Methodist</td>
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<td>14. Roman Catholic, Karima</td>
<td>1913</td>
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<tr>
<td>15. Roman Catholic, Tetu</td>
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<td>R.C.M. (Consolata)</td>
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<tr>
<td>16. Roman Catholic, Tusu</td>
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<td>R.C.M. (Consolata)</td>
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<tr>
<td>17. Roman Catholic, Gaturi</td>
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<td>19. Africa Inland School Mulango</td>
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<td>Africa Inland Mission</td>
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<td>20. C.M.S. Butere</td>
<td>1917</td>
<td>C.M.S.</td>
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<td>22. Roman Catholic Mombasa</td>
<td>1920</td>
<td>R.C.M. (Holy Ghost)</td>
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<td>23. Roman Catholic Kilungu</td>
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<td>24. Roman Catholic Rangala</td>
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<td>25. Catholic Mission Kibuye</td>
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<td>26. C.M.S., Wusi</td>
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Appendix II (ii) continued.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>School Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>C.M.S. Kahuhia</td>
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<td>C.M.S. Kaloleni</td>
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<td>29.</td>
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<td>Maragoli School Vihiga</td>
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<td>Friends Africa Mission</td>
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<td>32.</td>
<td>Church of Scotland, Chogoria</td>
<td>1922</td>
<td>Church of Scotland</td>
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<td>33.</td>
<td>Salvation Army School, Nairobi</td>
<td>1923</td>
<td>Salvation Army</td>
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<td>34.</td>
<td>Nyangori School</td>
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(IV) MISSION SCHOOLS FOUNDED BETWEEN 1925-1929

<table>
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<th>No.</th>
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<td>Roman Catholic Mbitini</td>
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<td>Roman Catholic (H.G.)</td>
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<td>Salvation Army Thika</td>
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<td>Salvation Army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Nilotic Independent Miss Ogada</td>
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<td>Nilotic Independent</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Roman Catholic Kilimambogo</td>
<td>1927</td>
<td>R.C.M. (Holy Ghost)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>St. Mary's Training School Yala</td>
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<td>R.C.M. (Mill Hill)</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>Salvation Army, Malakisi</td>
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<td>Salvation Army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Roman Catholic Nyabururu</td>
<td>1927</td>
<td>R.C.M. (Mill Hill)</td>
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<td>11.</td>
<td>Roman Catholic Nangina</td>
<td>1927</td>
<td>R.C.M. (Mill Hill)</td>
</tr>
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<td>12.</td>
<td>Salvation Army, Pangani Nairobi</td>
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<td>Salvation Army</td>
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<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Salvation Army Maragua</td>
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<td>14.</td>
<td>Salvation Army Saba Saba</td>
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<td>Salvation Army</td>
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<td>15.</td>
<td>Salvation Army Donyo Sabuk</td>
<td>1929</td>
<td>Salvation Army</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

(iv) GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

(a) Pre-1911

**European:**

European School, Nairobi 1910 (founded by Uganda Railway in 1904)

**Indian:**

Government Indian School, Machakos 1910 (founded by the Uganda Railway and taken over by the Government in 1912)
Appendix II (iv) continued

(b) 1911 to 1924

European:

1. European School, Nakuru 1911
2. Central School, Eldoret 1915

Indian:

1. Government Indian Elementary School, Nairobi 1911
2. Government Indian School, Fort Hall 1920
3. Government Indian School, Kisumu 1922
4. Government Indian School, Thika 1923
5. Allidina Visran High School Mombasa 1923

Arab and African:

1. Arab School, Mombasa 1912
2. Ukamba Native School, Machakos 1913
3. Ali Bin Salim School, Malindi 1919
5. Village School, Mamburi 1920
6. Coast Technical School, Waa 1921
7. Village School, Ganda 1921
9. Native Industrial, Training Depot, Kabete 1924
10. Village School, Kwale 1924

(c) 1925 - 1929

European:

1. European School, Kitale 1925
2. European School Thika 1926
3. Farm No. 140, Uasin Gishu 1926
4. Concordia 1926
5. Farm No. 139 1926
6. Farm No. 674 1926
7. Farm No. 3 1926
8. Sergoit
Appendix II (iv) continued.

9. European School Nanyuki 1927
10. European School, Mombasa 1927
11. European School, Rumuruti 1928
12. European School, Parklands 1929
13. European School, Westlands 1929
14. European School, Broederstroom 1929

Indian:

1. Government Indian Girls School Mombasa 1925
2. Government Indian School, Lamu 1926
3. Government Indian School, Nairobi Secondary 1929

Arab and African:

1. Government African School, Kapsabet 1925
2. Jeanes School, Kabete 1925
5. Government African School, Loitokitok 1929
7. Government African School, Kinango (Digo) 1929
### APPENDIX III

**TEACHER TRAINING INSTITUTIONS IN KENYA 1925-1931**

**AVERAGE ROLL FOR THE RESPECTIVE YEARS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>School</th>
<th>1925</th>
<th>1926</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>H. G. M.</td>
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<tr>
<td>C. M. S.</td>
<td>Kaloleni</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>St. Mary's Yala</td>
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<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>African School Machakos</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
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<td>Tumutumu</td>
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<td>A. I. M.</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. M. S.</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>C. M. S.</td>
<td>Kahuhia</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Seventh Day</td>
<td>Kamagambo</td>
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<td></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>34</td>
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<td>African Sch. Kapsabet</td>
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<td>Church of God</td>
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<td>Church of God</td>
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<td>19</td>
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# APPENDIX IV

## TIMETABLE OF KABAASCHOOL 1925

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Saturday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>Rise</td>
<td>Rise</td>
<td>Rise</td>
<td>Rise</td>
<td>Rise</td>
<td>Rise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.10</td>
<td></td>
<td>Breathing Exercises before going to Church for Mass</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.45</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Singing in the Church</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.00</td>
<td>Catechism</td>
<td>Catechism</td>
<td>Catechism</td>
<td>Catechism</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.15</td>
<td>Drill</td>
<td>Drill</td>
<td>Drill</td>
<td>Drill</td>
<td>Drill</td>
<td>Drill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Arranging Beds - Sweeping - Breakfast - and other tasks.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Arithmetic both Mental and Written</td>
<td>Solfeggio</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.30</td>
<td>Handwork</td>
<td>Handwork</td>
<td>Handwork</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.00</td>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>Reading</td>
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<td>Reading</td>
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<tr>
<td>12.50</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Litany and Angelus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.45</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Writing preceded by a quarter of an hour mental Arithmetic</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>Bathing</td>
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<td>4.00</td>
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<td>Old Testament</td>
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<td>Old Testament</td>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
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<td>5.00</td>
<td>Recreation</td>
<td>Recreation</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.10</td>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>Hygiene</td>
<td>Manners</td>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>Hygiene</td>
<td>Football &amp; Fishing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.40</td>
<td>Evening Prayers</td>
<td>Prayers</td>
<td>Prayers</td>
<td>Prayers</td>
<td>Prayers</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>Supper</td>
<td>Supper</td>
<td>Supper</td>
<td>Supper</td>
<td>Supper</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>General knowledge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Short prayers then to bed</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX V

THE FIRST OFFICIAL REPORT ON KABAA: BY MR. E.E. BISS INSPECTOR OF SCHOOLS

"1. Father Witte, a Hollander who speaks many languages, among them fluent and very good English, is in charge of this new institution for the training of teachers and came to see me at Thika. As his postal address is Chania Bridge, I had hoped I could get out to see the school, but it is thirty two miles from there and cannot be reached by car, the journey involving arrangements for mules, etc. Father Witte had cycled."

"2. He explained to me that there are three Bishops related to Kenya. Fr. Witte and his institution are related to the first of these, and he is to train teachers for all their mission-stations.

"3. Kabaa: F.W. gave me the following information about his work. Boys are sent from all their mission-stations to be trained as teachers. They include boys from 8 tribes. The course extends over 3 years, after which they are bound to teach for 5 years on a moral, not legal contract signed when they enter and again after the first three months. 1½ hours a day are spent in practical occupations, e.g. building, road-making, gardening, matweaving, string-making. The boys are 14–20 years of age (estimated). They generally know the three R's in their vernaculars and have some knowledge of Swahili in which their teaching is conducted. All learn English. They also study Geography, History – the lives of the great men (sic)– and the Old Testament, Arithmetic, mental work being given three times a day, singing – songs and hymns (sic), Drill – 1 hour daily. The Father is making text books and song sheets of which he showed me cyclostyled samples. Regular and firm discipline is insisted upon.

"4. The school has at present only 5 acres of land, but application has been made for more. This should meet with support, for a lay brother, skilled in agriculture, has been promised, and will shortly join the staff.

1. This report is reproduced in full in the Kabaa Journal entry for 28 June 1925.
2. These were the Bishops of the Holy Ghost Fathers, the Consolata Fathers and the Hill Hill Fathers, respectively.
3. Eventually the teacher of Agriculture who turned up was Mr. Oomen, who was a layman, not a Brother.
"5. The most urgent need of the school is money for equipment and I recommend that £100 be inserted immediately in the Supplementary Estimates for this purpose, the money to be paid out on a satisfactory inspection report and on the production of supporting vouchers."

(The Inspector of Schools then went on to say that Fr. Witte had given him the figures showing the expenditure incurred from September 1924 to May 1925.1)

Mr. Biss concluded his report as follows.—

"I recommend that this important institution should be included in the 1926 Estimates on the usual terms pending the result of inspections. My reason for doing so at once is that too great important cannot be attached to this work of training teachers on which the whole future of the schools depends. The Roman Catholic Missions, with all other branches of educational work in Kenya, are severely handicapped by having almost no reliable teachers especially for the out-schools. It is therefore in the highest (sic) advisable that Government should render financial support to voluntary efforts of this character".2

2. Report of Mr. E.B. Biss, Inspector of Schools, Kenya, forwarded to Fr. Witte by the Director of Education, on 24th June 1925.
APPENDIX 6 (a)

KABAA SHUJAA

1. Skuli yetu juu-Hata Mbinguni
   Skuli yetu ya Kabaa!
   Mpaka kufa kwetu Hatuachi kuipenda
   Lakini Skuli ni nini-la sis sote?
   Sifa yetu ni yake Hapa na popote!

KIVITIKIO: Kabaa shujaa!
   Juu Hata mbingu u-la-la
   Utashinda
   Twaapa kwa Mungu

2. Sasa Kabaa na daima-Mamaetu mtukufu Tukimkana.
   Je si sawa-Na Kunkamataa Mungu?
   Lakini Mama yetu, -Hutaona haya:
   Sifa yako popote Tutaipeleka.

3. Kabaa-Raha neno moja ni shauri letu tu
   Hatutuki aibu, La! Tutajiheshimu.
   Hata kama uzee-Umetufikia
   Tutakaa daima: Watoto wa Kabaa.

(Free Translation of Kabaa Shujaa: Appendix 6 (a)

TRIUMPHANT KABAA

1. Our school soars up to the heavens,
   Our school of Kabaa!
   We shall love it until our death
   But what is the school - if not ourselves?
   Our reputation is hers - Here and everywhere.

CHORUS: Victorious Kabaa!
   Up, right to the heavens
   Thou shalt triumph!
   We vow before God.

2. Kabaa now and always, If we forsake our great Mother
   Is it not the same as denying God?
   But Mother, thou shalt not be shamed
   Thy fame everywhere we shall spread.

   CHORUS

3. Happy Kabaa, our word is our honour
   We do not want shame; We shall respect ourselves.
   Even after we attain old age.
   We shall always remain Kabaa children.
APPENDIX 6 (b)

SISI WAKRISTU WAKATOLIKI

1. Sisi Wakristu Wakatoliki
   Si kuwa midomo tu, la! kwa moyo
   Hata matata twayachekea
   Baadaye yatukwisha hayo

   Chorus: Katoliki, nje na ndani
           Hatuna haya hatuna hofu
           Nguvu kwa vita, raha kwa kushinda
           Mfalme Yesu, Bendera Msalaba
           Twimbe na moyo, twimbe-na midomo,
           Sisi Wakristu wa daima.

2. Raha machoni, nguvu moyoni
   Nafsi yetu na Dini ni moja
   Ingaliwuwa lazima kufa
   Hata mmoja hakani Bendera.

3. Wengi wandufuwasiomjua
   Mwanga wa kweli Yesu Mkombozi
   Tuwasawaniwe na mfano wetu
   Njia ya kwenda kwake Mwokazi

4. Watu wa Kenya ndugu wapenzi
   Tokeni giza angalieni
   Mbele yenu mje juu ya mlima,
   Kwenye wokofi na kwenye heri

   2nd Chorus: Katoliki tukiwa pamwe
                Kama ni safi na kama bora
                Tuombe sote tupate popote
                Dini ya kweli yenyezuzima
                Neno la Yesu lipate timizwa
                Kundi moja kwa Mchunga mmoja.
FREE TRANSLATION OF SISI WAKRISTU WAKATOLIKI (Appendix 6 b)

WE ARE CATHOLICS

1. We are Catholic Christians
   Not on the lips but at heart.
   We laugh at troubles
   Because they will soon end.

First Chorus: Catholics, internally and externally,
   We are neither ashamed nor afraid;
   Strength in battle, joy in victory:
   The King (being) Jesus, the flag (being) the Cross;
   Let's sing with the heart, let's sing with the mouth,
   We perpetual Christians.

2. Happy faces, strong hearts
   Our person and (our) Religion are one;
   Even if we were to die (for it)
   Not one would deny the Flag.

First Chorus.

3. There are many unfortunate ones who know not
   The True Light - Jesus the Saviour;
   Let's show them by our example
   The path that leads to the Saviour

First Chorus.

4. Our people of Kenya, dear brethren
   Get out of the darkness, Look
   Ahead of you and come to the hill
   Of succour and of peace.

Second Chorus. Catholics, whenever we be together
   Where it is decent and fitting,
   We should all pray that everywhere may be found
   The true religion which brings life;
   That the word of Jesus may be fulfilled;
   One flock, one Shepherd.
1. Sisi ni watu wa Kabaa, Tralalalala-tralala.
Wataka jua kututambua! Tunacheka daima
Mbali uchungu, kama ukungu Retteketete-ketetekete.
Jua la raha juu Kabaa Retteketete-ketetekete.

2. Sisi ni watu wa Kabaa-kama moja Kabila:
Taifa zote za nchi yote kwa kindugu Tunakaa.
Imani moja-Amani moja Retteketete-ketetekete.
Tukipigana - Tunapatana Retteketete-ketetekete.

3. Sisi ni watu wa Kabaa, Kazi zetu wajua?
Kila hekima tunaipima Kushindwa?
Hakuko, la Dini Hosabu Drill na Adabu Retteketete-ketetekete.
Nakadhalika Tunazishika Retteketete-ketetekete.

4. Sisi ni watu wa Kabaa-ntaeleza mana?
Tunapatana, tusipokoma: Kujifunza-hufunza n
Nuna-kubaya - Regea haya Retteketete-ketetekete.
Tunajishinda na tunashinda Retteketete-ketetekete.

5. Tembea ni hoja tu, kwakawaida moja tu:
Kulala ni usiku kazi mchana tu.

6. Nazetu nyimo-ni mafundisho - kwa vijana pia!
Utwae kinanda mbele ya banda kwako nyumbani ukika
Namwonzi wako taketi kwako, atapika chakula
Kazi ikisha, rudi nyumbani utaona raha!

7. Kwasababu mapatano yetu kiwa hai,
Hulalamiki hulalamiki (bis)

8. Na pipelipo, twende mbio twimbe siku zote, N
Na pipelipo twende mbio, tuimbe na leo.
Hipfalderire, hipfaldera! Kisa, kisa falderaldera
Nani ametuonya kwa usafi utapata afia.

9. Kengele italya, itatuimbia:-
Hakuna watu safi kama ni wa Kabaa (bis)

10. Hela, hela, hola, keni na moyo, (ter)
Hele hele, hole keni na moyo (bis)
keni na moyo.
6 (d) MVULANA WA SHAMBA

1. Wakati wa masika Njia ni tope mno ndio:
   Na mvulana wa shamba) Afrika na mambo Na fimbo lake.
   Na nguo zake, na jembe lake, na kisu chake,
   Na kibandiko kibandiko na kibandiko kizuri mno.

2. Namtoto wa mwalimu jina lake Anna akimngoja mlangoni
   Mvulana akipita na fimbo na fimbo yake.

3. Eh! Mtoto wa mwalimu unafanya nini?
   Simele ni pite mimi sinichokose ni na fimbo langu.

4. Ndipo eh pita weve mchumba wangu wangu
   Padri kaniambia Njooni kwsha kesha kwangu Na fimbo lao.........

6 (e) FOOTBALL

1. Football ni furaha yetu hoyoho hoyoho hoyoho!
   Hivi ni desturi zetu hoyoho hoyoho hoyoho.
   Kila siku kwisha zote
   Kazi zetu na bidii Ndipo kwenda sisi sote—Tukicheza hivi:
   Hoyoho hoyoho hoyoho!

2. Ukijua mchezo huu HO.
   Hila hila vaa nguo: Ho..
   Utapewa nguvu haki kwa miguu na mwili ninani atakushitaki
   Kuwa mlaji wa uji Ho..

3. Watu wapumbavu hawa — ho.../ wanapenda kula dawa Ho..
   Huogopa kuumizwa Miggu pia kifu.
   Wanapashwa kushurtizwa
   Hay toa bakor Hoyoho hoyoho ho...

6 (f) KABAA POT FOURRT

1. Yakuwa tu watu wazuri tunajua:—
   Ndio maana tunaraha/Yakuwa tuwatu wazuri tunajua
   Tuna raha daima, daima, daima tunacheka tu
   Daima daima tunacheka tu sana.
2. Lakini ukikuwa ukimtafuta mchumba
Tezama sana hali na pesa.
Labda utatubu ukimchukuwa himu:
Umemwoa naye ni mbaya.

3. Na watoto huenda kulala Uwinguni zikija nyota
Malaika wanatulinda usingizi ni mtamu bwana.

4. Usikeshe bure (bis) mchana uja mapema (bis)
Ewe bwana tafanya kazi zako jee;
ukikeshwa, usipolala we!

6 (g) ONE, TWO, THREE

1. Nakuumbia ndugu yangu ONE TWO THREE
Utakuja kwangu kesho 1, 2, 3.
Kwa Chakula changu tamu,
Kwa Pepsi Kola na Dimu,
Kwa karamu ya siku Kuu 1, 2, 3.

2. Nitanunulia Kuku 1, 2, 3.
Shingo kukata na Kisu 1, 2, 3.
Kupika Punga na Mchuzi.
Kesho takuwa Arusi tutakuja kweli sisi 1, 2, 3 (bis)

6 (h) MAGARI MAVILI

1. Wajua wewe habari ya watu wawili na gari jee?
Ngoja nikuambi Ah.
Kila moja na gari lake, na farasi na male yake.
Tambua tambua rafiki yangu (bis)

2. Wa kwanza na sherehe mno,
Na Farasi yake mpika mbio njia ni pana sana
Mt u yake maoni mambo.
Kulala tamu bwana

3. Wapili wana taabu mno.
Na Farasi yake mpiga mbio njia nyembamba sana
Na mwua mbaya na pepo kwenda taratibu bwana
Karibu karibu rafiki yangu (bis)

4. Na sasa wajua mwisho we,
Wa Watu wale wawili jee?
Wapili akapona!
Bahati yake kurudi salam,
Wakwanza harudi tena:
Alala njiani rafiki yangu njia rafiki yangu.
## APPENDIX VII (a)

### (a) TEACHERS’ EXAMINATIONS 1928-1934:

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<th>SCHOOL</th>
<th>1928</th>
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<td>18</td>
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<td>Govt. African S. Machakos</td>
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<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yala</td>
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### Appendix 7 (continued)

#### (b) PRIMARY SCHOOL EXAM. RESULTS 1928-1931

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APPENDIX VIII (i)

THE FIRST STUDENTS WHO LEFT KABAA TO TAKE UP JOBS

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME OF STUDENT</th>
<th>HIS MISSION</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Michael Mwaora*</td>
<td>Lyoki*</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Stefan Gecoke*</td>
<td>Lyoki*</td>
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<td>3. Januari Gaichokia*</td>
<td>Kyambu*</td>
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<td>4. Sebastian Nyaga</td>
<td>St. Peter Claver's Nairobi</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Stanslaus Kalioki*</td>
<td>Mangu</td>
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<td>6. Emili Kanyinge</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Dominiki Njogona*</td>
<td>Mangu</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note:  
a) They left at the end of 1927  
b) All were B-Teachers  
c) The spellings are as in the original

APPENDIX VIII (ii)

SWAHILI TEXT OF THE PROMISE MADE BY THE KABAA "GRADUATES" OF 1927

1. Kuacha tembo kabisa  
2. Kuacha soksi na viatu (exc. sandals)  
3. Kuepuka na (a) maradhi, (b) kuchanua na (c) kupanua nywele.  
4. Kuepuka kukaa hata kidogo, peke yake na binti  
5. Kujenga (kukaa) karibu na misheni  
6. Kuacha (a) helmet (b) double hat (c) suruali ndefu
APPENDIX IX (i)

Agreement signed by the Kabaa High School pupils in 1930:

"For the greater Honour of God, for the benefit of our ignorant brethren and for our own eternal benefit, we the undersigned solemnly agree and bind ourselves on this first day of January 1930, in conscience and before the law:

"1. To stay for 3 years in the Catholic High School, at present at Kabaa, and to follow all its Rules faithfully.

"2. To teach after the end of our studies, for at least five years, anywhere our legitimate Ecclesiastical Superiors will send us to teach, either in a school as a teacher, or in another job, if we are told so, by our example - where we shall ever hold ourselves ready to assist the Mission when possible.

"3. To pay back to the school a part of our tuition, either by reduced salary from the Bishop and as he shall state, or if we receive a salary other than from the Bishop, to pay back such a part of it, as will cover for each month passed at the school the sum of 15 shs.

"4. If for any reason, through our fault we shall leave the school before the end of our studies, we recognise the duty of paying at least shs. 15 for every month passed in the school."
THE FIRST 27 PUPILS OF KABAA HIGH SCHOOL

1. Sirillus Ojoo
2. Atanas Gechanga
3. Filipo Makumi
4. Simon Gohu
5. Lukas Thuo
6. Alfons Omar
7. Stefan Kemani
8. Alberti Odongo
9. Didakus Ooko
10. Leander Kajulo
11. Kilian Ngala
12. Paul Njoroge
13. Julius Thuo
14. Francis Ondo
15. Paulo Katala
16. Lukas Kibe
17. Stefan Nyamawi
18. Laurent Kasungu
19. Petri Ngalaa
20. Alberti Kearie
21. Daniel Mzungu
22. Atanas Moiya
23. Norbertus Odondo
24. Gregori Gecharu
25. Mikael Wanjuge
26. Mishel Mshindani
27. Josef Gathinji
### APPENDIX X

**COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF GRANTS-IN-AID TO MISSIONS (1911 to 1917)**

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* (a) Grants for passed pupils

** (b) Grants for tools
APPENDIX XI

(i) ECCLESIASTICAL SUPERIORS OF THE HOLY GHOST FATHERS:

a) When the Vicariate was still called Zanguebar:

Bishop Armand Maupoint, (Bishop of Reunion) 1860-1863
Fr. Antoine Horner, C.S.Sp. 1863-1880
Fr. Edward Baur, C.S.Sp. 1880-1883
Bishop John de Courmont, C.S.Sp. 1883-1896
Bishop Emile Allgeyer, C.S.Sp. 1896-1913

b) When the Vicariate was called Zanzibar (from 1906)
(Bishop Emile Allgeyer, C.S.Sp. up to 1913)
Bishop John G. Neville, C.S.Sp. 1913 to 1930
Bishop John Heffernan C.S.Sp. 1932-1945
Bishop John Joseph MacArthry C.S.Sp. 1946-

c) When it became the Archdiocese of Nairobi
Archbishop John Joseph MacArthry 1953-

(ii) EDUCATION-SECRETARIES HOLY GHOST MISSION TO 1949

Fr. C.T. MacNamara C.S.Sp. 1924-1934
Fr. M. Murren C.S.Sp. 1934-1936
Fr. M.J. Reidy C.S.Sp. 1936-1940
Fr. J.J. O'Meara C.S.Sp. 1940-1948
Fr. J. Kavanagh C.S.Sp. 1948
Fr. H.J. Farrell C.S.Sp. 1949-

(iii) EDUCATION SECRETARIES-GENERAL

Fr. J.J. O'Meara, C.S.Sp. 1950-1965
Fr. R. Ndingi 1965-1967
Fr. I. Onyango 1967-1969
Mgr. J. Njenga 1969-
APPENDIX XII

The Principals of Kabaa-Mangu High School

1) Kabaa High School:

1. Fr. Michael Joseph Witte, C.S.Sp., 1924-1934
2. Fr. Alphosus Loogman, C.S.Sp., 1934-1936
5. Fr. Paul White, C.S.Sp., 1939-

ii) Mangu High School: (Holy Ghost College Mangu):

1. Fr. Robert Farrelly, C.S.Sp., 1940 (January)
2. Fr. Peter J. Kelly, C.S.Sp., 1940-1942
7. Fr. Frank M. Soughley, C.S.Sp., 1952-1953

***************

15. Mr. Raphael J. Njoroge 1970-
Catholic High School
Kabaa, P.O. Thika
7th January, 1934

Your Excellency,

When reading from a paper, a few weeks ago, I met a name which I first thought was that of my own. But reading it more closely, I understood it was a little different from that of mine, for it read thus: Sir Aloysyus Joseph Byrne. Only the two words 'Sir and Byrne' made the difference, for I am called Aloysyus Joseph Obunga.

I have been in the above High School for three years, and have, by the help of God, tried the Senior Secondary School examination. Now we have been told by our Principal that we cannot continue with our studies beyond the Senior Secondary in this College. I find it very difficult to stop studying while I am still very young. I can easily study for ten or eight years more, because I am only about eighteen years old. And if God pleases I may, after studying for some years, do the work of priesthood.

As there are no Colleges and Universities in this Colony, I wish very much to apply for Black-Rock College in Dublin, and then, if possible for St. Gregory's University in Rome. But when I think of the poverty which prevails at home, I sometime stoop down and think why I live during these hard times. Sometimes a voice in myself tells me that I am only building the castle in the air when thinking of advancing beyond the Secondary Studies. I sometimes compare myself to a plant which struggles for life in a poisoneous atmosphere, for I am troubled daily by those thoughts which look almost impossible to be fulfilled.

I lastly thought of applying to Your Excellency, my namesake. I understand the present economical depression, but if you can help me to study furtheron, I will be very much pleased. Our Father Who is in heaven will pay you a hundred-fold, for it would almost be impossible for me to pay you back.

Rev. Father Witte, the Principal of the Catholic High School Kabaa will readily tell Your Excellency about my character if Your Excellency will like to know who I am.

Your obedient Servant,

Aloysyus Joseph Obunga
APPENDIX XIV

PATRONS

a. THE KABAA-MANGU OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION.

(1) His Honour the Chief Justice of Kenya, Sir Joseph Sheridan.

(2) His Lordship Dr. J.W. Heffernan, Vicar Apostolic of Zanzibar.

(3) A. Walter, Esq., O.B.E., Director, B.E.A. Meteorological Service.

(4) Captain E.G. St. C. Tisdall, D.C., Nairobi.

(5) T.C. Colchester, Esq., Municipal Native Affairs Officer.

(6) Rev. Father P.O. White, Principal of Catholic Schools, Kabaa.

(7) Rev. Father J.J. O'Meara, Principal, Catholic College, Mang'u.

b. EXTRACT FROM "MR. CATASSO", LEAFLET FOR EX-KABAA BOYS

"HABARI"

Skuli za Kabaa zina watu 332 sasa: hata nyumba hazitoshizwa kufuweka watu wote. Katika watu hawa kuna Waa-

Rev. Father White, aliyekeuwa amewekwa St. Peter Claver, Nairobi, amekuja Kabaa. Amewekwa kufanya kazi ya kufunza Waalimu, na siku hizi Teacher Training imewekwa peke yake, ikiongozwa na Father huyu. Wanafunzi wa Teacher Training hawafuati tena mafunzo katika High School wana classroom yao na wanafunzwa daima kwangoza skuli, jinsi ya kufundisha kila somo mbali mbali, wakitumia vyombo kwa kadiri ya class na somo linalofunzwa.
APPENDIX XV

THE KABAA-MANGU OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION

LIST OF MEMBERS FOR THE YEAR 1941-42

2. Francis J. Khamisi, (Chairman), Nairobi.
5. W.J.K. Kioko, (Hon. General Secretary), Nairobi.
6. Alfons Oloch, (Hon. Treasurer), Nairobi.
8. Bartholomew Adambo, (Hon. Joint Secretary, Nairobi.
10. Daudi Ng'ang'a, Catholic Primary School, Lyoki.
15. Barnabo Lusia, C.M. Kilungu.
17. Linus Jaoko, Catholic Schools, Kabaa.
25. Rafael Rungene.
27. Francis Odada, Catholic Bookshop, Nairobi.
29. Peter Mwaugu, Govt. School, Kabianga, Kericho.
ADDRESS OF HIS LORDSHIP THE BISHOP

The following is the text of the speech of His Lordship Dr. J.W. Heffernan, D.D., C.S.Sp., at the Annual Day of Kabaa-Mangu Old Boys' Association, which was delivered at 5.0 p.m. on Sunday, September 27, 1942:

"I must first of all congratulate all of you who have been responsible for the bringing of the Association of the Old Boys of Kabaa and Mangu into being. I congratulate you on your initiative and courage and on the success of the Association's first year. A special word of praise is due to you on the excellent way your Annual Report has been prepared and on its fine delivery by your Chairman.

"All of you realize that 'Union is strength.' Individually you can do very little but together you can accomplish great things. You have been more fortunate than your fellows - you have received a better education, a better training. Therefore you are the 'Elite' among your own people, and you can do a tremendous amount of good for them, for your country, and incidentally for yourselves.

"However, because you have received a certain amount of education and are looked upon as the 'Elite' you have got to guard against an exaggerated idea of your own importance. Humility is truth. You can be great and do something serious and big only if in your heart you know and realise how small you are without Almighty God - how little and worthless you are yourselves, and that God alone is great."
"Because of your position, you will be drawn into political life. And there is no reason why you should not take an interest in the political welfare of your country and people. But beware of agitators who try to cause enmity between tribe and tribe, between race and race. Always think and act in close contact and whole-hearted co-operation with those who have the responsibility of governing the country. I do not belong to Government, as you know. But I do see and believe that the present administration is all out for your welfare, and I would go so far as to say that you will never have a more devoted body of men - devoted wholeheartedly to your interests than the Chief Native Commissioner, the Provincial Commissioners, and the District Commissioners, all over the country. This I know from my own personal experience and observation. They are, of course, men and hence fallible, but they are men to be relied on, to be consulted and to be followed.

"Naturally you expect me to say something on the religious side in your life. Having left school, being deprived of many of its safeguards, and having left behind its rules and regulations, you will be inclined to be carried away by your new-found freedom and to forget many of the lessons learned. In your new life you will have money, nice clothes and free time. All very good, but for certain characters, and indeed for very many of you, most dangerous. If you wish to keep on the right path my advice to all and each of you - the closest contact and the closest co-operation with the Mission and the Fathers wherever you may be. Here, again, you
you have men entirely devoted to your interest. Do not be afraid to consult them. Always make it a point to listen to and to follow their advice. You can always count on them and let you also ever so act that they can at all times count and call upon your help.

"If the Kabaa-Mangu Old Boys' Association is directed along these lines it will be a source of tremendous good not only to its members but to Religion, to Government, and to the Country. But if it follows other lines of action its influence for good will be nullified."
APPENDIX XVII

Holy Ghost College Mangu

Constitutions For The Board of Governors.

In accordance with the Self-Governing Schools (Grant-in-aid) Rules 1943 it has been decided that the Holy Ghost College, Mangu, shall be managed in future by a Board of Governors. The rules with regard to the Membership and duties of that Board are set out in the following constitutions:

1. Members of the Board:

   His Lordship the Bishop.
   The Provincial Commissioner, Central Province.
   Two representatives nominated by Director of Education.
   The Vicar Delegate.
   The Education Secretary, Holy Ghost Mission.
   The Headmaster of Mangu and one other member of the European Staff, to be nominated by His Lordship the Bishop.
   A representative of some other Catholic Secondary School, to be nominated by the Bishop.

2. The college shall be conducted on sound Christian principles. Roman Catholic teaching and influence shall be dominant.

3. The ownership of the school and of all the fixed assets remain vested in the Ecclesiastical Authorities of the Catholic Church.

4. The management of the College shall be subject to His Lordship the Bishop in all matters pertaining to religion, morals and right conduct. It shall be under the control of the Board of Governors as regards its educational policy and the means taken to implement it. This control shall be subject to the directions given by Government through the Department of Education.

5. The Headmaster shall be responsible for the studies, conduct and discipline of the pupils and shall furnish an annual report on these points to the Board of Governors.

6. The Headmaster shall see that the teaching is conducted on lines laid down by the Education Department, especially as regards
syllabus, timetable and teaching methods. He himself shall
determine the textbooks to be used and shall ensure that such
books are not repugnant to the Religious Beliefs and Moral
Standards of Roman Catholics.

7. Changes in the European Staff shall be made by His Lordship the
Bishop. Those in the non-European Staff shall be made by the
Headmaster. In all cases the Department of Education shall
be notified.

8. The Board of Governors shall meet at least once a year.
A Chairman and Secretary shall be chosen from amongst the
members of the Board and shall hold office until the next
Board meeting. As members of the Board both these officials
have the right to vote. The Chairman has also a casting vote.
The Chairman shall convene an emergency meeting at any
time, if requested to do so by any two Board members.

9. The Board shall send to the Director of Education an annual
report on the general conduct of the school and any other
specific information requested by him.

10. The Board shall see that the College is conducted on sound
financial lines. At each annual meeting, audited accounts of
the previous year and estimates for the following year shall
be submitted by the Headmaster.

11. In the exercise of their powers the Board shall observe the
requirements of the Education Ordinance 1942, and shall not
encroach on the authority and responsibility of the Headmaster.

12. All Board members or the Bodies they represent have the right
to delegate a substitute who shall take their place at a meeting
and be empowered to act for them.

13. If a nominated member is unacceptable to His Lordship the
Bishop or the Director of Education, he shall be replaced.

14. The Secretary shall send a copy of the minutes to each member
of the Board as soon as possible after each meeting. He shall
also give the members notice in due time of the date of the
At all meetings, the presence of six members constitutes a quorum.

(N.B. Taken from File No. T.C. 1337, folio 4A).

APPENDIX XVIII
Holy Ghost College Mangu

First Time-Table: 1940.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Mon.</th>
<th>Tue.</th>
<th>Wed.</th>
<th>Thu.</th>
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<tr>
<td>7.30</td>
<td>All:</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Physical Training</td>
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<td>Form I</td>
<td>Maths</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Mr. I. Mkok</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>II</td>
<td>Biology</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fr. G. Foley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.40</td>
<td>III</td>
<td>Maths</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fr. O'Meara</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.45</td>
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<td>Swahili</td>
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<td>10.55</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>Scriptures</td>
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<td>Study</td>
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<td>Study</td>
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<td>1.45</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>History and Geography</td>
<td>Fr. Foley</td>
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<td>II</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Fr. Foley</td>
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<td>Study</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>Study</td>
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<td>3.25</td>
<td>III , IV: Study Hist, Study Hist Study</td>
<td>Fr. Foley</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
All houses to be painted with oil paint immediately.
(One was done this year—two last year).
Picture rails in all rooms.
All rooms in all houses to be ceiled (sic).
Hangers and hooks to be erected.
Baths to be installed in addition to showers.
Door to cut off kitchen corridor.
Backdoor to kitchen for use of servants.
New house for Mr. Nammamba. (There are only four houses. The fifth teacher lives in a small mission house without a bath!)
The houses should be graded by the House Grading Committee to adjust rents.
Why 1/- per month for water is charged (sic). This should be covered by the house rent of Shs. 11/- according to the Lidbury Report.
Why is there a charge for electricity?
The P.E.O. should give the terms of service to teachers in writing!
He should also lay out clearly their rights and privileges.
Masters should not have to contribute to the new Pension Fund.
Service should be sufficient.
There is too much supervision of boys by the Fathers.
Masters on duty must not have (sic) to refer disciplinary faults to the Father in charge of discipline.
Masters must be allowed to punish boys or let them off without reference to anybody.
Masters should be allowed to hold meetings with the boys when they so desire. (The present rule is that the teachers must get permission...)
All events taking place in the school must be known to the teachers at least a week before the events take place.
Towels and soap should be placed in the African staff lavatory and towels should be washed weekly by the Mission boy.

(N.B. Taken from File No. T.C. 1337, folio 198/1)
LIST OF SOURCES

a) DIARIES:

Kabaa Journal 1912 to 1943
Mangu Journal 1940 to 1961

b) ARCHIVAL MATERIAL:

Kenya National Archives:

(Note: Many files were consulted but the following yielded the relevant information)

K.N.A.:

D.C./MKS/10A/4/1: "Ukamba Province
File: Establishment of Roman Catholic Mission in Kabaa (Kabaa) 1912-1914."


1/1834: "Roman Catholic School, Kabaa 1926"
1/1835: "Roman Catholic School Kabaa, 1928."
1/572: "Roman Catholic High School (Kabaa) 1929-1934."
1/577: "Roman Catholic High School, Kabaa 1929-1934."
1/1360: "Roman Catholic Mission of the Holy Ghost Kabaa 1934-1940."

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION CLOSED FILES

Examination Results files 1926-1945.

K.N.A.:

1/3269: "Holy Ghost College Mangu, 1951."
1/1092: "Roman Catholic Mission Bura 1930-1944."
1/167: "Grants-in-aid Special 1926."
1/144: "Colonial Office Advisory Committee on African Education 1927."
1/145: ditto
1/170: ditto 1935.
1/569: "Central Advisory Committee 1923."
1/745: "Central Advisory Committee"
1/1018: ditto
1/3306: "Grants-in-aid to Mission Schools (Teachers)."
1/647: "Education Policy 1955."
1/177: "Capital Grants to Missions 1952-1953."
1/203: "Capital Grants to Missions 1950."
1/206: "Grants to Missions 1948-1957."
1/1497: "Conference of Directors of Education in East Africa."
1/393: "St. Johns T.T.C. Kilimambogo."
1/394: ditto
1/395: ditto
1/396: ditto
1/122: "Alliance High School Board of Governors 1927."
1/1026: "Alliance High School"
1/36: "Catholic T.T.C. (Yala, Eregi) 1926."
1/670: "Roman Catholic School (Yala) 1928-1929."
1/529: "Mill Hill Mission Nyanza."
1/8: "White Sisters' Convent 1929-1944."
1/140: "White Sisters."
1/161: "White Sisters Special School 1957-1962."
1/36: "Roman Catholic Limuru 1926."
1/117/1: "Roman Catholic Mission Limuru (sic) 1928."
K.N. (cont.)

1/694: "Limuru Girls School 1953."
1/695: "St. Mary's School Nairobi."
1/699: "Loreto Convent Moongari 1953."

C) BOOKS:


T. Jesse Jones: Education in Africa (Report of the Phelps-Stokes Commission in West and Southern Africa)

in

T. Jesse Jones: Education/East Africa (Report of the Phelps-Stokes Commission in East Africa)

The Catholic Directory of East Africa 1965

d) PRINTED PAMPHLETS:


In His Footsteps, published in Durban with the permission of the Management Board of Catholic Youth and Family.

"Mr. Catasso!" Newsletter of Kabaa Old Boys (now defunct).

Kabaa-Mangu Old Boys Association (Leaflet) 1942.

The Sisters of Our Lady of Africa, printed by Wood Westworth and Co. Ltd., Lancashire, and published by the "White Sisters."
e) **KENYA GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS**
   
   Government Printer, Nairobi.
   
   Evidence to the Kenya Education Commission 1919
   
   
   Kenya Education Department Annual Reports 1924 to 1969.
   
   Africa Education In Kenya (J.L. Beacher 1949)
   

   Kenya Education Ordinance 1911.
   
   Kenya Education Ordinance 1924.
   
   Kenya Education Ordinance 1931.
   
   Kenya Education Ordinance 1942.
   
   Kenya Education Ordinance 1962.
   
   
   Kenya Education Ordinance 1968.

   OTHERS.
   

   f) **NEWSPAPERS.**

   
   The Catholic Times of East Africa
   
   Rafiki Yetu, (now defunct) Published in Mombasa
   
   East African Standard, (Nairobi)
   
   The Leader, now defunct (Nairobi)
   
   Habari (Kenya Government newspaper now defunct)
   
   Bareza, (Nairobi)
   
   *The Daily Nation* (Nairobi).
g) **UNPUBLISHED WORKS:**

(i) **Major Works:**


(ii) **Papers:**

- Golden Jubilee Publication (Kabaa) written by an anonymous priest, 1912-1962.
- "History of Catholic Education 1860-1924" by Fr. C.T. MacNamara.
- Fr. C.T. MacNamara's "Circular to Missions August 1925."
- Fr. C.T. MacNamara's "Circular to Missions 1934."
- Fr. C.T. MacNamara's "Appreciation of Fr. Witte."
- "Historical Background of Catholic Education" by Fr. J.J. O'Meara.
- "The Missionary Sisters of the Precious Blood" written by Mother Adelberta of Riruta Convent.
- "The Sisters of Our Lady of Africa" written by Mother Elizabeth and Sister Edmunde of White Sisters Convent Thika.
- "The Loreto Sisters" written by Mother Francis Joseph O'Sullivan of Msongari.

h) **LETTERS:**

To: J.N.B. Osogo (1968-1969)

From: Fr. C.T. MacNamara C.S.Sp.
- Fr. R. Farrelly, C.S.Sp.
Fr. Grennan C.S.Sp.,
Fr. O'Brien C.S.Sp.,
Mother Francis Joseph O'Sullivan
Fr. G. Ellis C.S.Sp.
Fr. P. Fullen C.S.Sp.
Fr. N. Macauley, C.S.Sp.
Fr. H. O'Reilly C.S.Sp.
Fr. T. Timmins, C.S.Sp.

To John Abuoga


1) PEOPLE INTERVIEWED

Missionaries:

His Grace Archbishop MacArthy, at his Residence Nairobi (1969)
Fr. Jacques Horber at St. Georges Giriama.
Fr. N. Macauley, C.S.Sp., at St. Austin's, Nairobi (1968 & 1969)
Fr. Martin Reidy C.S.Sp., at Limuru (1968)
Fr. John Reidy C.S.Sp., at Riruta (1969)
Fr. J.J. O'Meara, C.S.Sp., at St. Francis Church Parklands
Nairobi (1968)
Fr. M.F. Soughley, C.S.Sp., at St. Mary's School Nairobi (1968)
Fr. Paul White at Matuu Mission (1969)
Fr. T. Timmins Catholic Education Secretary Machakos (1968)
Fr. T. Farrelly C.S.Sp. at St. Mary's School Nairobi (1968)
Fr. H. O'Reilly C.S.Sp., Secretary to the Archbishop (1968)
Fr. Delaney, new Superior-General, at St. Austin's (1969)
Brother James Kilroy, S.M. of Aquinas School Nairobi (1969)
Bro. John Scheider of Mangu High School in (1968 and 1969)
Mother Francis Joseph O'Sullivan - Loreto Convent
Msongari (1969)

Mother Superior of "White Sisters", Thika,

Ex-Kabaa Students,

Mr. Atanas Kanyuru Gichanga at Kanjeru 1969
Mr. Joseph Nguri at his hotel in Thika (1968 and 1969)
Mr. Cyrillus Ojoo at Siaya (1968)
Mr. Francis J. Khamisi of Baraza, at Nairobi (1968)
Mr. Felix Kapteni, Kabaa, in 1968 and (1969)
Mr. Atanas Muia of E.A. Breweries, Nairobi, (1968)
Mr. Ignatius Mkok of P.E.O's Office Embu, (1968)
Mr. Peter Kibukosya of City Education Office Nairobi (1969)

Ex-Kabaa-Kangu Students,

Mr. Stephen Kioni of Kenya National Union of Teachers
Nairobi (1968)
Mr. John Malinda of Teachers Service Commission Nairobi (1968)
Hon. G.G. Nthenge, M.P., at his business office in Nairobi (1968)
Mr. Ambrose Lukalo, of B.A.T., Nairobi (1968)
Mr. Joseph Karanja, of Community Development, at Nairobi (1968)
Mr. Peter Otieno Nyakiamo, of Barclays Bank Nairobi (1968)
Hon. Thomas Joseph Mboya (R.I.P.) M.P., at his home Nairobi
(1968 & 1969)
Hon. Lawrence Sagini M.P., at his Office Jogoo House Nairobi (1969)
Mr. Karuga Koinange, University College Nairobi, (1969)
Mr. Samuel Waruhau, Advocate, Nairobi (1963)
Mr. Hilary Ngweno, in Nairobi (Just before proceeding to Harvard) (1968)
Mr. Herman Muraya, Administration Kiambu, (1968)
Mr. John Abuoga, at Woodley Estate Nairobi (1969)
Mgr. John Njenga, Catholic Education Secretary General (1969)
Fr. Isdore Onyango (R.I.P.) in (1968)
Dr. Michael Migue of Kenyatta Medical School Nairobi (1968)
Dr. Hilary Ojiambo of Kenyatta National Hospital Nairobi (1968)
Mr. Paul Erulu While on a visit to Nairobi, (1969)
Mr. Barage Wanjui of East African Industries Nairobi, (1969)
Mr. James Ombere Okotch, of Ministry of Commerce and Industry Nairobi, 1969.
Mr. Dennis Afande, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Nairobi (1969)