

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS FILM

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

C0533/458

ORDER NO. ↪ FN/E475
CAMERA NO. ↪ 19
OPERATOR. ↪ EM
REDUCTION. ↪ 12
EMULSION NO. ↪ 341081
DATE. ↪ 3/7/72

CROWN COPYRIGHT

THESE COPIES ARE SUPPLIED FOR INFORMATION
AND RESEARCH ONLY-NO REPRODUCTION MAY BE
MADE FOR PUBLICATION WITHOUT THE ASSENT OF
THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

These tenders were referred to the Advisory Land Board in December, 1934, who considered that sufficient information in regard to the tenderers and their respective ability to farm and develop the land adequately was not available. A further report was accordingly asked for from the Provincial Commissioner, and the matter was again considered by the Board in January, 1935. The Provincial Commissioner endorsed the view of the District Commissioner that Mr. Randall would make the best use of the land. He reported that Mr. Gasson's financial resources were limited to a salary of £20 per month received by him in respect of his employment as salesman in a local store.

5. It appeared to the Board that the payment of instalments of Stand Premia and rent and the proper development of this property would be beyond Mr. Gasson's financial resources. As between the other two tenderers the Board considered that Mrs. Davies Evans had greater claim to a grant than Mr. Randall in spite of the discrepancy in the premium offered. This view was, however, not supported in Executive Council, which advised acceptance of Mr. Randall's offer.

6. Colonel Abbay is incorrect in stating that two land agents are members of the Land Board one of whom is the agent for Mrs. Davies Evans. Although Capt. W. Tyson was previously a member of the Board he resigned some months ago and there are now no land agents on the Board. The Unofficial Members are Mr. Conway Harvey (M.L.C.) and Mr. W. C. Mitchell, Managing Director of Messrs. North & Sons who has from time to time been a member of both Legislative Council and Executive Council.

7. Having regard to the provisions of Colonial

Regulations 184 and 185 and to the number of unfounded criticisms made direct to you by Colonel Abbay, I suggest that when he next disregards the usual procedure, of which he is aware, I should cause him to be informed that you will take no action on his representations unless they are made through this Government.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

A. W. Wade

ACTING GOVERNOR.

(Laid in RSO)

12

From Colonel B.W. Abbay, C.B.

P.O. NARO MORU.

KENYA COLONY.

12th. February 1935.

To The Secretary of State
for the Colonies,
WHITEHALL.

50

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that I, as one of the Senior retired officers in the Colony, have been asked to forward the petition of ex-Bombardier Gasson to you.

Copy to Kenya (2)

Bombardier Gasson, who owns sixty head of cattle, served through the war and retired after eight years service, coming to Kenya in 1923. He is of Yeoman stock from the Midlands, and his wife is also from a family of farmers, from South Africa. He is abstemious, reliable and very hard working, the ideal type of man for a settler. He has been waiting twelve years for a Government farm.

In November 1934, a 1000 acre Government farm at Manyuki - L.O. 4429/9, was advertised as being for sale by tender. To my knowledge three people applied for this land, which is sufficiently watered, entirely self-contained, so as to be in no way essential to any of the neighbouring large estates, and, therefore, an ideal small holding and is the best farm in the District.

The persons applying for the land were 'A', a rich South African farmer, owning a large acreage, 5000 acres; 'B', a person owning land in several parts of Kenya, a large land owner, and ex-Bombardier Gasson. 'B' is very rich, of a county family and has recently been trying to sell some of her land obtained from Government through her land agents, Messrs. Tyson. She has quite recently leased a Government farm to a

Settler, so that she is one of the last persons who should have been allowed to buy more Government land. Ex-Bombardier Gasson has sufficient means to farm.

The Director of Lands, knowing the strong feeling that existed in the District, and how much he is distrusted by Settlers, referred the matter to the Land Board, which consists of a member of the aristocracy, a man of good family, and two land agents. Such a Board would never consider the claims of a 'small' man such as ex-Bombardier Gasson, against those of 'A'.

It is needless to say the Board allotted the land to 'A', a gross and scandalous injustice, but such is justice in Kenya for small men.

The whole policy of the Land Department in Kenya is a cruel and brutal one, no consideration is shown to the 'small men' and they are kept hanging on, waiting for land for years and frittering away their money. Their only appeal is to this Gilbertian Land Board. If they own cattle they are doomed to lose them as there is no security of tenure to a man renting land and he can not cultivate.

Having served the British Crown for over 30 years, I say with confidence, and I am sorry to have to say it, that the distribution of land by the Kenya Government is a disgrace to the British Empire.

The whole position is as bad as it can be, and it will be at once understood that the number of men who want land, and are refused it, being treated as imbeciles, is not only increasing in number, but in uncontrolled hatred against the Kenya Government, and the anger against over-taxation is nothing compared to the rage engendered by the land question. If it is asked, should Mr. Lennox of Lennox Castle

be allowed to buy two good farms at 5/- per acre, while people who do not come from a castle, unless with influence, can not get land at even 3/- per acre. That they were put up to Auction is no answer, most Government Auctions are a farce.

Ex-Bombardier Gasson requests that having been kept waiting so many years he may be allowed to buy land by tender, and that the Land Advisory Board be re-organised on democratic lines.

I regret being obliged to use the tone I have in this letter, but nothing but the plainest speaking can be strong enough, and ex-Bombardier Gasson's future, and cattle, are in imminent danger.

I have been on the Board of Directors of the Kenya Co-operative Creamery for two years and on the Committee of the Mt. Kenya Association for three years, so know what I am writing about, and I repeat that except for the rich, justice does not exist in Kenya.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

B. N. Abey

Colonel.

(retired).