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Sir Frederick Lugard, World War I and the Amalgamation of Nigeria 1914-1919

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SIR FREDERICK LUGARD, WORLD WAR I AND
THE AMALGAMATION OF NIGERIA
1914-1919

by

John F. Riddick

A Thesis submitted to the
Faculty of the School of Graduate
Studies in partial fulfillment
of the
Degree of Master of Arts

Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Michigan
August, 1966

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author wishes to express his appreciation for the co-operation of the following research institutions:

Boston University Library, Boston, Massachusetts
Kalamazoo College Library, Kalamazoo, Michigan
Michigan State University Library, East Lansing,
Michigan

Northwestern University Library, Evanston, Illinois
The University of Michigan Library, Ann Arbor,
Michigan

The Western Michigan University Library, Kalamazoo,
Michigan

I am most grateful for the encouragement, advice, and criticism of Dr. H. Nicholas Hamner, who directed the entire project. A debt of thanks is also due to Mrs. Ruth Allen, who typed the finished product, and to my wife, who assisted me in every way.

John F. Riddick

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INTRODUCTION

Throughout the First World War, world attention focused mainly on Europe's Western Front. There, the human carnage, the destruction, and the ruin created grave pressures which spread throughout the world. Though remote and detached, the continent of Africa encountered these powerful forces. In Nigeria, the focal point of this study, the conflagration impeded the colony's administrative development while it spurred its economic growth. Nor did it escape the blood bath, for Nigerian forces fought in both East and West Africa. Before the outbreak of the war, the British government had made the decision to give Nigeria a centralized colonial administration. The consequent efforts of the newly appointed Governor-General, Sir Frederick Lugard, to cope with the problems generated by the war and at the same time carry out the establishment of a central authority are the chief interests of this paper.

The plan to create a central government for Nigeria was based on the unification or the "amalgamation" of the Northern and Southern Protectorates, thus replacing two separate administrations. The Northern Protectorate had been governed by a High Commissioner who operated through a system of native rule called "indirect rule". In the

Southern Protectorate, a Governor had exercised more direct control making much less use of native leaders than in the North. By 1912 the Colonial Office had determined that the amalgamation of the two regions would be more efficient, would better harmonize the public works program, and would better use the Southern Protectorate's annual budget surplus.

The amalgamation plan called for the appointment of a Governor-General to serve as the central head of the colony's administration with the assistance of two Lieutenant-Governors who were to replace the High Commissioner in the Northern Protectorate and the Governor of the Southern Protectorate. On the local level in the Northern Province or former Protectorate, the system of indirect rule was to continue in effect. The key colonial officials at this lowest level were the Resident officers who would advise, guide, and sometimes assist the Fulani emirs to execute policy through their tribal structure. In effect since 1903, this system uniquely retained the tribal organization found by the British. In the former Southern Protectorate where considerable tribal disintegration had occurred, the Residents attempted to introduce indirect rule, but it failed to take root due partly to the war's influence.¹ Though extremely limited, enough

¹The best explanation of indirect rule is Margery Perham's Native Administration in Nigeria London: Oxford University, 1937.

centralization occurred in time to unite the colony and give it a general path to follow during the war.

Begun in January, 1914, under Sir Frederick Lugard, who was appointed Governor-General to put the plan into effect, amalgamation operated for only seven months before the outbreak of World War I. The resulting hostilities had a number of consequences. The first was a sharp setback suffered by the colonial administration through the absence of many civil servants upon whom unification depended. Economic growth, on the other hand, threatened at first was later stimulated by the war. One of the most significant results for Nigeria, however, was the fact that certain aspects of African nationalism which developed in the period of Wilsonian idealism at the end of the war, were ultimately to lead to the overthrow of "indirect rule" by opposing the disunity on which it was based. It is the purpose of this paper to examine the plan of amalgamation for Nigeria, its successes and failures under Sir Frederick Lugard, and the role of the war in this story.

CHAPTER I

LUGARD AND NIGERIA PRIOR TO AMALGAMATION

In 1912 when the plan for the amalgamation of Nigeria was accepted by the British government it was generally agreed that Sir Frederick Lugard was the only man who could successfully inaugurate the policy. Not only did he have the ability but he had spent the greater part of his life in various parts of the empire gaining the necessary experience. Frederick John Dealtry was born in 1858 of Anglican missionary parents in southern India. His mother, the former Mary Jane Howard, labored for the Church Missionary Society; and his father, Frederick Grueber Lugard, served as chaplain of the Madras section of the East India Company. The depth of his mother's capacity for religion and love clearly showed in Lugard's ability for affection and Christian ardor throughout most of his life. From his father the heritage of great physical strength and tenacity well marked Lugard's facility to endure the climatic extremes and the rigors of his efforts in Africa.²

Though born in India, young Frederick returned to England at the age of five. His mother filled the next

²Margery Perham, Lugard (London: Collins, 1960), I, pp. 23-25.

two years with her gentle training in industry, learning, and religion, which only ended with her death. The young lad's formal education followed with his attendance for three years at a Moravian school near Manchester. He found the brutal punishments of this institution not to his liking and was considerably happier in 1871 to enter Rossall in northern England. Operated by the Church of England, it offered a curriculum which paralleled the more liberal evolutions of British public education in the mid-nineteenth century. Lugard remained at Rossall until 1877 where in the last two years he earned prizes in divinity and modern history. During these years he experienced spells of emotional depression which brought periods of intense unhappiness. Their presence and depth suggest the roots of a very significant traumatic period a few years later in his life.³

With the question of a career before him, Lugard sought to join the army class of the India Civil Service, but failed to pass the examination. Turning to the regular army in 1877, he finished sixth among a thousand applicants and won entry into Sandhurst. Lugard's preparation was sharply curtailed by the problems of England's foreign policy. When the Russians, in 1878, challenged Lord Beaconsfield in the Near East, his class was commissioned after only eight weeks of training. Assigned

³Ibid., 36-40.

to the 9th Regiment of East Norfolk, the young subaltern joined it in India at the end of 1878.⁴

Life in India followed the usual pattern of polo, hunting, and the drill ground at Peshawar on the North West frontier. Enthusiastic in supporting the empire, Lugard marched with Gough's brigade through the Khyber Pass, and experienced action in Afghanistan in 1879. Of more substantive importance in these years was his aggressive driving force to get ahead. As a result of his ambition to become the Company's interpreter, he often worked late into the night, a habit he displayed later in Africa. In similar fashion, he studied to become a transport specialist in order to receive more income and acclaim and was promoted twice.⁵

Captain Lugard's army career abruptly ended in 1887. While a transport officer in Lucknow, he fell in love with a divorcee with a history of making conquests among reticent young officers, and shared with her the fullest capacity of his affections which totally encompassed his mental and emotional nature. Subsequently her departure for England, and her rejection of his suit upon his own return, shook Lugard to the roots of his sanity. The rejected lover sank into a state of shock and depression far deeper than ever experienced at Rossall. To escape his torment, he joined the London fire brigade

⁴Ibid., 41-46.

⁵Ibid., 47-61.

for the sake of excitement. Still deeply disillusioned, he took sick leave from the army and sought unsuccessfully a position with the Italian forces fighting in Ethiopia. Practically penniless, Lugard took deck passage on a coastal steamer which eventually deposited him in Mombassa, British East Africa. Here British Consul Henry O'Neill procured a position for him with the African Lakes Company which resulted in the start of a new life of much responsibility.⁶ Years later Lugard looked back and acknowledged the significance of his broken love.

The real key to the story of a life lies in a knowledge of the emotions and passions which have sometimes disfigured, sometimes built up character, and in every case influenced the actions recorded. Of these the sexual instinct is recognized as the most potent for good or ill and it has certainly been so in my life.⁷

His new employment exposed him to the dreadful ravages of the African slave trade in East Africa, especially in the Lake Nyasa region, and aroused his interests in its abolition through the extension of British control. Though religious motivation and humanitarianism had given considerable impetus to opposition to slavery at this time, Lugard's actions rather reflected his desire for adventure in order to blot out his unhappy memories. Despite his deeply religious youth, he did not become a crusader against the slavers until later. Never

⁶Ibid., 62-71.

⁷Ibid., 59.

had he felt so far from God.

Seriously wounded while attacking an Arab slave headquarters on Lake Nyasa, Lugard returned to England during the summer of 1889 to recuperate. At home he urged the establishment of a British sphere of interest to oppose the growing Arab power and new German explorations which threatened the existence of various missionary sects and promoted the spread of the slave trade in the Nyasa region. His goals, combined with the broader ideas of enlarging the empire held by Sir Harry Johnston and Cecil Rhodes, slowly brought the extension of British influence over this area.⁸

The year Lugard stayed on Lake Nyasa provided him with his own justification for fighting the slave trade. Though still occasionally despondent, he slowly emerged from his trauma and developed a deep humanitarian urge to protect the African and his culture from the devastation of slavery. Thus encouraged by the new friends he made who were important in African affairs and the stimulation of new interests, Lugard discovered a future in Africa.⁹

Dissatisfied with the derelict financial operations of the African Lakes Company, Lugard left it in 1889 to join Sir William Mackinnon's Imperial East Africa Company. For the next four years he played an important role in the extension of its interests in Uganda.

⁸Ibid., 119-59.

⁹Ibid., 159-60.

Trekking into Africa's interior in 1890, he was confronted with diverse problems in Buganda, the principal Kingdom of Uganda. His immediate duty concerned the establishment of the Company's jurisdiction by treaty negotiation with a less than friendly native host. Likewise, a small, though lively, civil war caused added difficulties. By throwing his support to the side of King Mwanga of Buganda in the fray, Lugard was charged by French Catholic missionaries with allowing atrocities, neglecting protection of the priests, and showing partiality to Protestant missions. These allegations touched off an international row between the Quai d'Orsay and the British Foreign Office. When the East Africa Company decided to evacuate Uganda for financial reasons, despite his success, he returned home in 1893 to clear his name and seek support for the continuance of Company influence and British prestige in Uganda.¹⁰

After almost two years, Lugard successfully turned aside the French charges in a Parliamentary inquiry and saw with great personal satisfaction his own ambition realized, the declaration of a British protectorate over Uganda. To plead his case, he had written The Rise of Our East African Empire, a massive two-volume study which recounted British involvement; he had contributed numerous articles to newspapers and periodicals; and had lectured

¹⁰Ibid., 209-341.

widely in England and Scotland. Privately he had conferred with the expansionists Joseph Chamberlain, Lord Rosebery, Sir John Kirk, and Sir Percy Anderson, supplying important arguments and details for debate.¹¹ He viewed his success as the fulfillment of pledges of support made to the missionaries and natives of Uganda; as well as his own ambition to retain the Nile valley, to secure new markets, and to restrict the slave trade.¹² Despite his accomplishment, Lugard was not given a dearly desired appointment to return to Uganda. Consequently in 1894 he accepted Sir George Goldie's offer to work for the Royal Niger Company in West Africa.

Prior to Lugard's entry into West Africa, English interests for two centuries had centered first on the slave trade, and later on the exploration of the Niger River. Discovering the wealth the Dutch and Portuguese had accumulated, Liverpool slavers began operating off the West African coast, and by 1713 dominated the trade to the New World. Subsequently, an estimated 24,000,000 slaves were taken by European traders with 22,000 leaving annually from Nigerian ports.¹³ When attention began to focus on abolition of the trade, the entry of missionaries

¹¹Ibid., 473-78.

¹²Frederick D. Lugard, The Rise of Our East African Empire (London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1893), II, p. 592.

¹³Michael Crowder, A Short History of Nigeria (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1962), pp. 174-75.

and traders in legitimate goods into the interior spurred exploratory operations of the Niger River. As a result Mungo Park, Hugh Clapperton, and John and Richard Lander explored for the first three decades of the nineteenth century before definitely determining its entire course.

The gradual rise of the anti-slave trade movement resulted in England's deeper involvement in West Africa. In 1772, Lord Chief Justice Mansfield ruled in Somerset v. Knowles that once a slave arrived on English soil he became a free man. Braced by this decision, William Wilberforce, Granville Sharp, and Thomas Clarkson were instrumental in outlawing slave trading by parliamentary action in 1807, followed by the abolition of slavery in 1833. To translate abolition into reality, the British Navy patrolled the West African coast during the 1830's and 1840's but with little effective result. Consequently, treaties were negotiated with coastal native chiefs in order to gain their cooperation in suppressing the trade.¹⁴

From the 1840's through the 1880's there was a gradual penetration of Nigeria's interior. Dr. William Baikie's discovery of quinine moderated the effects of some of the hazards of Nigeria's severe climate, thus permitting European entry. In January, 1852, Lagos was seized as a British sphere of influence to impede the slave trade. A decade later Lagos was annexed and

¹⁴Ibid., 108-15.

proclaimed a British colony. In the years that followed, surrounding areas were added in order to abolish slavery.¹⁵ During the 1870's attention focused on the settlement of tribal wars in the interior which had halted the flow of palm oil, benniseed, and ivory to the coast. At the same time British traders tried to break the native middleman's control of this trade with the interior.¹⁶

The Berlin Conference of 1884-1885 officially sanctioned British claims to Nigeria. British declaration of the Oil Rivers Protectorate, the Niger delta area, followed immediately in June, 1885, with the creation of the posts of Consul and Vice-Consul for outlying points, and a Commissioner and Consul-General based at the port of Old Calabar. In 1893 by an Order in Council, the territory was expanded to include the immediate hinterland, and was renamed the Niger Coast Protectorate.¹⁷ The enlarged jurisdiction included all areas under treaty to England along the coast, but not those lands along either side of the Niger River in the interior which were under the control of Sir George Goldie's Royal Niger Company.

¹⁵Sir Alan Burns, History of Nigeria (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1929), pp. 95-128.

¹⁶Crowder, op. cit., pp. 164-65.

¹⁷Burns, op. cit., pp. 144-65.

From 1886 to 1900 the Royal Niger Company represented the only source of British influence in Nigeria's interior. The charter granted to Goldie called for the abolition of slavery, respect of native customs and laws, freedom of trade, and the collection of duties to cover the expenses of administering the natives. To the advantage of the Crown, the use of the charter company permitted the spread of British rule without the large accompanying costs. Disregarding the charter's guarantee of free trade, the Company monopolies squeezed out the Brassmen, a native tribe which made its livelihood by transporting goods from the interior to the coast. The embittered tribesmen recoiled at their treatment and launched a vicious assault on the Company headquarters at Akassa in 1895. The attack and various malpractices led Lord Salisbury to review the Company's charter and revoke it in 1899.¹⁸

Lugard's first assignment on joining the Royal Niger Company caused him to make a dramatic dash to Borgu in northwestern Nigeria to insure British jurisdiction through a treaty with King Nikki. Only five days after his success with the king, a tardy French expedition bent on the same purpose arrived.¹⁹ In 1895 and 1896, Lugard left West Africa temporarily for

¹⁸Ibid., 151-64.

¹⁹Crowder, op. cit., pp. 174-75.

financial reasons to take a position with the British West Charterland Company in South Africa. While looking for diamonds amidst the wilds of the Kalahari, he received an offer from Joseph Chamberlain, Secretary of State for Colonies, to head a West African military force.²⁰

Lugard accepted and returned immediately to West Africa. For the next two years he organized and trained a force of 2,000 to 3,000 native soldiers to be used to insure the British claims to Nigeria's hinterland. Ultimately forcing the French to the point of armed conflict on the western border, England obtained its demands in an Anglo-French Convention signed June 14, 1898.²¹

A year and a half later on January 1, 1900, the British government took control of all areas formerly belonging to the Royal Niger Company. The administration was reorganized to include: Lagos Colony, Niger Coast Protectorate, Protectorate of Southern Nigeria, and Protectorate of Northern Nigeria; the latter two being governed by a High Commissioner and Governor respectively. Further changes occurred in 1906 when the Lagos Colony and Niger Coast Protectorate merged into the Southern Protectorate. At this time administrative responsibility for the colony was shifted from the Foreign Office to the

²⁰Perham, op. cit., I, pp. 561-62.

²¹Ibid., 616-703.

Colonial Office. Finally, the name "Nigeria" was chosen for the colony in preference to Niger Sudan, Negrettia, and Goldesia.²²

From 1900 to 1906 the most significant development in Nigeria's history was Lugard's introduction of indirect native rule as a means of colonial administration. In 1900 as the High Commissioner of the Northern Protectorate, he found British control tenuous at best. With a tiny military force he proceeded to depose all Muslim emirs who refused to recognize British suzerainty, to abolish the slave trade, to guarantee freedom of worship, and to rule justly along the general prevailing guidelines of European morality. Rejecting some Fulani leaders and accepting others loyal to his will, he successfully established his administration at Zaria, Kontagora, Kano, Sokoto, and other major centers in Northern Nigeria by 1904.²³

The crux of Lugard's success was the retention of the Fulani tribal system as he found it. Using its well developed administrative organization, he installed British Resident officers alongside the emirs and District officers with lesser chiefs. This meant the formation of a dual structure of native chiefs and British officials at the higher levels of tribal organization.

²²Crowder, op. cit., p. 192.

²³Perham, op. cit., II, pp. 87-135.

The British officer served alongside the native chief as an adviser to insure that the High Commissioner's policy was followed and that loyalty was constant. In addition the Resident officer acted as a source of appellate justice in the Native Court system, for cases with major sentences of death or long imprisonment were referred to him by the District officer.²⁴

Lugard's personal creation worked amazingly well, providing the British with an effective control of a huge area at very little expense. Its only major disruption was the Satiru Uprising in February, 1906, which, however, was rapidly crushed by Lugard and the loyal Sultan of Sokoto. From 1906 to 1912 the consolidation of the institutions and practices of indirect rule proceeded under the direction of governors Sir Percy Girouard and Sir Hesketh Bell.²⁵

Meanwhile from 1900 to 1912, governors Sir R. D. R. Moor and Sir Walter Egerton directed the extension of British rule in Southern Nigeria. The slave trade was abolished and those already slaves were legally recognized as such by a House Rule law, a unique protective tribal custom of Eastern Nigeria. In 1906 the Colony of Lagos amalgamated with the Southern Protectorate under the leadership of Egerton. The next few years

²⁴Sir Frederick Lugard, "Tropical Africa," Edinburgh Review CCXXIX (April, 1919), pp. 372-73.

²⁵Crowder, op. cit., pp. 202-208.

were spent in construction of a communications system. Lagos harbor was dredged, roads into the interior built, telegraph lines installed, and a railroad from Kano to Lagos laid.²⁶

In 1914 Nigeria's amalgamation was to occur only because of Lugard's genius. In April, 1911, Sir John Anderson of the Colonial Office wrote Sir Frederick, "We are anxious to amalgamate the Nigerian Administration. We are agreed that you are the man if only you will take it for sufficient time...to give it a good start."²⁷

Lugard, now married and Governor of Hong Kong since 1906, eagerly accepted Sir John's invitation. Returning to Nigeria, he spent 1912 and 1913 as Governor of both Protectorates while preparing for the consolidation.²⁸ Sir Frederick's²⁹ goals for unification were to provide better financial management, to co-ordinate policy at the highest levels, to better divide the colony on an ethnic and geographical basis, and to establish a comprehensive public works program.³⁰

²⁶Burns, op. cit., pp. 202-11.

²⁷Peter de Jongh, "Nigeria, Two Imperialists and their Creation," History Today XIV (December, 1964), pp. 835-43.

²⁸Lugard's title was "Governor-General" from 1914 to 1919. His successors, however, were called simply "Governor".

²⁹Lugard received his baronet while serving in Hong Kong as Governor.

³⁰Eme O. Awa, Federal Government in Nigeria (Berkeley: University of California, 1964), p. 8.

In Nigeria the history of British interests up to 1914 centered upon commerce, Christianity, and enough government to insure effective control. Due to the rigorous climate large European settlement and expropriation of native land and authority had failed to be a problem. Furthermore, with the lack of men and money indirect rule utilizing the native governing structure to the fullest extent had developed in Northern Nigeria. On the other hand, direct rule developed in the Southern Protectorate where the tribal structure was much more loosely organized, the administrative forces were more numerous, and existing concepts of colonial rule were different. Thus the goal of amalgamation was to bring the two dissimilar areas together by establishing a central government over the entire colony. This task, however, was to become immeasurably more difficult with the beginning of World War I, for the conflict forced many administrative and economic changes on Nigeria. These in turn were to challenge Lugard's ability to reconcile them with the political system he hoped to install.

Lugard's capacity to meet the challenge before him was partly dependent upon his previous experience. Integrated within his personality was a tendency toward periods of deep depression. In compensation for them were his vigor and aggressive drive which also overcame the burden of work and the shortage of personnel. His

personal identification with his task led him to demand the centralization of power around himself, and only the projection of his own policy. As Governor-General this trait impeded making rapid decisions and rejected potentially valuable suggestions from subordinates. Extremely sensitive to higher authority and criticism, Lugard often used poor communications as an excuse to thwart and evade direction from London. To his credit, however, he applied a deep knowledge of African affairs and a determination to accomplish his mission.

CHAPTER II

WORLD WAR I, AMALGAMATION, AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS

On the morning of January 1, 1914, Sir Frederick Lugard proclaimed the amalgamation of Nigeria amidst a solemn setting of imperial grandeur and royal dignity. Viewed by the Colonial Office as the only servant of the Crown skillful enough to succeed, Lugard was brought back from Hong Kong and directed to centralize the colony's administration in basically his own fashion. As a result of his prior Nigerian experience, he realized that the task was fraught with difficulties including poor communications, fragmentary government authority, poor climatic conditions, and would demand separation for long periods from his wife. Despite these vexatious problems, he had eagerly accepted the post not only for the distinction it offered, but also out of a sense of duty to the empire.

The job of unifying the two patterns of government found in the old Protectorates into one was to be accomplished by the Governor-General who was invested with almost total power. The Legislative Council, appointed by the chief executive, consisted of about a dozen officials and citizens, two of whom were usually Africans. The Council examined all regulations issued by the

Governor-General for the area formerly known as the Lagos Colony.¹ In addition Lugard created the Nigerian Council which met once a year to hear his "State of the Colony" address. The group included himself, his immediate staff, between twenty and twenty-five Senior Residents, and three African appointees from both the North and the South. Neither of these institutions had significant power to check the executive branch, but seemed rather to serve only as democratic window-dressing. On Lugard's departure, both were discarded.²

The administration of indirect rule in Northern Nigeria remained intact at amalgamation. The only modification was the de-emphasis of the Resident's powers in favor of the Governor-General. This reflected Lugard's desire to hold all the reins personally. In the South the haphazard system of direct rule, which left large segments of the province with few controls, was slowly replaced by indirect rule along the same lines as in the North. Theoretically the day-to-day administration of each province remained in the hands of two lieutenant-governors allowing Lugard to rule from Lagos eight months and to spend a working vacation in London with his wife the remainder of the year. Actually he handled

¹Sir Alan Burns, History of Nigeria (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1929), p. 214.

²Michael Crowder, A Short History of Nigeria (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1962), p. 215.

even the smallest details whether in Lagos or in London.

Lugard's immediate plans were to establish similar methods of colonial rule in each of the former protectorates, and install a public works program which would help to bind the colony together. The first goal depended on maintaining indirect rule in the North, and on its successful introduction in the South. Thus, in the latter area he planned the development of new British Resident and District officers to supervise the tribal leaders and the creation of a common judicial system for the entire colony. In the public works sector, Lugard proposed the construction of a new trunkline railroad between Kaduna and Port Harcourt. The improvement of the harbor at Port Harcourt was also a major project. The financial obligations incurred in the deficit-ridden North would be met by the use of some of the South's annual budget surplus. In this fashion Sir Frederick hoped ultimately to tie the colony together in a single administrative entity.

The coming of World War I, however, altered many of Sir Frederick's objectives. The most serious disruption was the delay in installing indirect rule in outlying areas of the Southern Province. This left British control in a doubtful stance during a period when a serious native rebellion could have threatened the government's existence, with the absence of the Nigerian Regiment first in the Cameroons then in East Africa. The plans

calling for the establishment of a central administrative structure for the colony were also postponed. Primarily due to Lugard's dominating personality, and partly to the distraction of the war, a well developed central secretariat awaited the arrival of Sir Hugh Clifford as the colony's governor after the war. The construction of a communications system tying the colony together was slashed to only the most essential projects. Likewise, programs were delayed in medicine, public health and sanitation, and education. Generally Lugard unified Nigeria only along the lines of administration, finance, justice, transportation, and defense. The rest remained until after the war. One bright spot was the development of the North's resources during the conflict which modified the need to use the South's budget surpluses.

The single most significant influence of the war was the shortage of civil servants. Lugard's administrative staff was reduced by one-third; in certain specialized skills the reduction was even more drastic. For example, forty-five per cent of the medical staff left for other duty.³ Many of those called away came from the junior and middle ranks were officials who had the responsibility of establishing the foundations of amalgamation. Some went to serve in the expanding Nigerian

³Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, Vol. XXXVI (Accounts and Papers, Vol. V), Cmd. 468, December, 1919, "Report by F. D. Lugard on the Amalgamation of Northern and Southern Nigeria and Administration, 1912-1919," p. 11.

forces as officers while others took supporting non-combat positions within the administration. As the conflict progressed it took a considerable toll of personnel traveling between London and Lagos. Lugard reported in June, 1918, that seven of the twelve ships of the Elder Dempster fleet had been sunk by German submarine action. A total of ninety-eight military and civil officials were lost in these tragedies, not counting their wives and children.⁴

For those who remained, the burden of the war and amalgamation became highly wearisome. By 1917 the shortage of staff was so acute that leave was granted only if a specific medical recommendation was made.⁵ West Africa commenting on this curtailment indicated the dark opinions which resulted.

To the weary official who has worried through eleven months' grind in Lagos with his home leave well in sight, and has just been told he can't go home at the end of the year and must look to a postponement of his leave till after the war, nothing seems cheerful or bright, and Lagos is suffering from a wave of pessimism and depression. Everyone is under the weather a bit and the usual Coast grumbling and growling has redoubled itself.⁶

Statistics bear out the impression that prolonged tours of duty with an intensive amount of work in addition to

⁴Margery Perham, Lugard, II (London: Collins, 1960), p. 558.

⁵"West Africa News and Notes," West Africa, March 17, 1917, p. 118.

⁶"West Africa News and Notes," West Africa, April 7, 1917, p. 166.

an exhausting climate increased the illness among the Europeans. For example in 1916, only thirty-four officials were returned to England for medical reasons, while fifty-four cases occurred in 1917.⁷ When leaves became shorter and travel to England more difficult or impossible, Buea, the captured former German summer capital in the cool refreshing Cameroon mountains, grew in popularity as a vacation center.⁸

As a result of the reduced civil service staff, the native leaders lost touch with, and confidence in, the British system. Furthermore, with the substitution and constant reassignment of Resident and District officials, the Nigerian no longer felt a close rapport with his British adviser, and grew suspicious of the replacements. In Southern Nigeria another result was the failure of the Governor-General to establish indirect rule over much of the eastern section where the most tribal disintegration had occurred. Finally the lack of staff prevented Sir Frederick from beginning education and health programs throughout all of Nigeria.⁹

⁷Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, Vol. XXXV (Accounts and Papers, Vol. IV) Cmd. 1-31, November, 1919, "Nigeria, Report for 1917," p. 17.

⁸"West Africa News and Notes," West Africa, May 5, 1917, pp. 231-32.

⁹Perham, op. cit., II, pp. 540-41.

Another major problem was the fact that Lugard faced numerous extra military considerations which required some correlation with his amalgamation program. Though considered the titular commander in chief in Nigeria, the Governor-General was quickly reminded by the Colonial Office of his purely administrative role. Experienced as a military leader and creator of the West African Frontier Force, Sir Frederick accepted this dictum, but not without some remorse. The provision of all possible aid to his military leaders, however, kept Lugard amply employed. The various commands included Colonel F. H. G. Cunliffe, who operated along the Cameroon-Nigerian border in the Northern Province, Brigadier-General Charles Dobell, commander of all land forces in Southern Nigeria, and Admiral Cyril Fuller, who headed all naval operations. The campaign in the Cameroons also required his cooperation with the French and Belgian military leaders. Thus, Lugard played a dual role behind the lines as a policy maker and as a supplier and trainer of Nigeria's military forces.¹⁰

In the Northern Province Colonel Cunliffe launched initial exploratory actions across the border toward German strong points at Mora and Garua. Similarly, southern forces struck at Ikom in the Cameroons. In each case these forces were ambushed and thrust back

¹⁰Ibid., 529-30.

with large losses, especially among the European officers.¹¹ Meanwhile a segment of the Nigerian Regiment arrived in German Togoland, but found that hostilities had already ceased.¹² During the lull which followed this introductory phase of the war, the Governor-General made campaign plans and organized additional Nigerian forces.

The most immediate object of military interest was the fine deep-water port at Douala in the Cameroons. From Douala, railways ran northward which General Dobell planned to follow into the interior. Along the northern Cameroon-Nigerian border, Yola, on the Benue River, and Kanuri Maiduguri served as bases from which Cunliffe could proceed in a southward sweeping movement. The Germans would thus be pinned between the two pincers.¹³ Forces were gathered from all available troops in British West Africa to implement the attack upon Douala. The Nigerian Regiment, the Nigerian Land Contingent and the Nigerian Marines were organized totaling 7,000 rank-and-file and 350 European officers. At this point it was necessary for Lugard to consider the requirements for internal stability. With the loyalty of the Southern

¹¹Ibid., 534.

¹²Arthur N. Cook, British Enterprise in Nigeria (London: Frank Case & Co. Ltd., 1964), p. 202.

¹³Perham, op. cit., II, p. 528.

tribes untested and largely unknown, he was especially anxious to maintain a domestic constabulary. Eventually he settled for an armed civil police of twenty officers and eight hundred native troops for both the Northern and Southern Provinces respectively.¹⁴

The combined Anglo-French army, led by Dobell and Fuller, captured Douala after meeting practically no resistance in October, 1914. The thrust northward, however, was disappointingly slow to Lugard as Dobell's Nigerian and Senegalese forces encountered tenacious German resistance. Furthermore, the command of various new troops from the Gold Coast, Sierra Leone, India, and Belgian Congo made matters difficult. In the north Cunliffe captured Garua, bypassed the mountain stronghold at Mora, and began his advance southward. The final prize eluded Cunliffe and Dobell, however, as the Germans slipped into neutral Spanish Rio Muni escaping encirclement. Lugard viewed these events skeptically, but as Perham suggests, with the eye of a restless warrior.¹⁵ The campaign's casualties numbered about one thousand, and it cost a million pounds sterling. Since some fifty thousand natives served as either carriers or soldiers, the termination of the Cameroons campaign released these

¹⁴Sir Charles Lucas (ed.) The Empire at War IV (New York: Humphrey Milford, 1924), p. 529.

¹⁵Perham, op. cit., II, pp. 535-43.

forces for duty in East Africa.¹⁶

The recruiting and training of natives, to strengthen the ranks of those sent to the Cameroons and later East Africa, relates here more to Lugard's administration than to their strategic use. During the Cameroons campaign, a center was established at Douala for training with later sites at Zungeru, Lokoja, and Ibadan. At Zungeru schools for training inexperienced Europeans as officers and natives as non-commissioned officers were in operation.¹⁷ In November, 1916, some of these soldiers left with Cunliffe's force of 3,000 Nigerians to join General Jan C. Smuts forces in East Africa. Despite the grueling character of the climate and the operations, the Nigerians acquitted themselves well, especially in the Rufiji Valleys in the southeastern portion of German East Africa.¹⁸

During the war, Lugard dealt with the related problems of internal security, the processing of prisoners of war, and the expansion of administrative jurisdiction into British occupied segments of the Cameroons. Of the three, security based on the pacification of the natives received most of his attention. On the whole, Nigeria's

¹⁶Lucas, op. cit., IV, pp. 118-19.

¹⁷Ibid., 134.

¹⁸Perham, op. cit., II, pp. 547-49.

natives gave their loyal support to Lugard's administration. This was particularly true in the Northern Province where his stature and influence had been acknowledged since the installation of indirect rule in 1904. Even when Turkey joined the Central Powers in November, 1914, the Northern emirs continued to support England. These Muslim leaders encouraged recruiting; contributed large sums of money to the Prince of Wales Fund and other charities; sent Lugard letters of support; and offered daily prayers for a British victory. In the hope of gaining support and disrupting internal affairs, the Germans conducted raids along the eastern frontier contiguous to the Cameroons, but failed to have any appreciable effect.¹⁹ Consequently, the firm loyalty of the northern tribes relieved Lugard from tying down large numbers of troops to insure internal peace. In Southern Nigeria a number of small uprisings occurred, but for reasons other than military loyalty, and thus will be examined later.

In 1917 a major Muslim revolt did occur in the French colony of Niger, north of Nigeria. After the capital at Agades fell and a native army began marching toward Sokoto, Lugard joined the French in actively crushing these dissident rebels. With most of the Nigerian troops in East Africa, a force was raised in Northern Nigeria which joined the French to smash the

¹⁹Ibid., 541-42.

uprising. The importance of these events is that they resulted in many loyal responses by the Nigerian natives, which allowed Lugard to continue his policy of indirect rule, the heart of his amalgamation administration.²⁰

The processing and care of the steady influx of German prisoners sent from the Cameroons added another administrative burden. A prisoner-of-war bureau was established to maintain detention camps at Ibadan. Accused of harshness in separating wives from husbands, Sir Frederick attempted to make amends by offering the women his silk pajamas which, however, were refused. In another case a German missionary who had already been promised his freedom was caught twice trying to blow up a gunboat. When questioned, he retorted that he was a soldier first for the Fatherland, then for the Lord. Thankfully, Lugard shipped most of the eight hundred prisoners to England by the end of October, 1914.²¹

The capitulation of the Cameroons in February, 1916, terminated German control. Throughout the campaign, Lugard had consistently advocated a division of the colony by which England would receive a strip of land to include Douala; France would be left with the rest. Sir Frederick's "earth hunger" was sorely disappointed

²⁰Lord Lugard, The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa (Hamden, Connecticut: Archon, 1965), p. 223.

²¹Perham, op. cit., II, pp. 544-45.

in early March, 1916, when the Colonial Office directed that a major portion of the Cameroons, including Douala, be given to the French. What Great Britain did receive included: 18,350 square miles in the south joined to the Southern Province, 9,770 square miles incorporated with Yola Province, and 3,030 square miles attached to Bornu Province.²²

In April, 1916, Sir Frederick toured the Cameroons while establishing his administration there. He failed to be impressed by the British gains since it appeared he had inherited nothing but more problems. The extension of supervision over these sections drew heavily upon his already depleted civil staff. Furthermore, the re-establishment of communications was required, and the reorganization of commercial trade, disrupted by the war, was necessary.²³ Lugard governed British occupied Cameroons through the rest of the war. At the Paris Peace Conference a final division was made between England and France, and mandates created.

Other minor, yet irritating, influences resulted from the war. For Lugard, his cherished scheme of governing eight months in Nigeria and four months in the Colonial Office in London was suspended. In other

²²Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, Vol. XXII (Accounts and Papers, Vol. IV) Cd. 8434-3, January, 1918, "Nigeria, Report for 1916," p. 36.

²³Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, "Report on Amalgamation," p. 72.

matters, completion of the Northern capital at Kaduna was halted, while the Southern administrative center remained in Lagos rather than making the transfer to the healthier Yaba. The diminished steamship schedules reduced postal service to England to a fortnightly basis.²⁴ The outbreak of epidemics of smallpox and yellow fever in the Benue River valley topped off matters and pointed up the need for a public health program.²⁵

Despite the war, however, several parts of Lugard's program for the newly unified colony were enacted. His first step toward introducing more control was the subdivision of the old Southern Protectorate. The three former provinces, Eastern, Central, and Western, were abolished and the area reorganized into nine more closely paralleling in size the twelve provinces of the North. In this fashion, the Governor-General swept away an administration which was alarmingly independent and replaced it with one suitably loyal to himself. As had been done in the Northern Province, a British Resident officer, cast in the Lugardian mold, was installed in each province. Assisting each Resident were twelve aides, who usually served as District officers. To complete his reorganization, Lugard initiated indirect rule in various sections

²⁴Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, "Nigeria, Report for 1917," pp. 22-28.

²⁵Ibid., 17-18.

of the South by giving tribal leaders more responsibility. No other civil policy meant as much to him as this effort to install the native administration. Not only would it create greater similarity of local government in the two regions, but it also would add a certain personal distinction to see his creation in operation.²⁶

Another primary step in Lugard's design was the creation of uniform native courts for the whole colony. Formerly the Supreme Court had headed a system which proved irresponsible and irregular in operation. Sir Frederick replaced it with the kind used in Northern Nigeria. Thereafter only Europeans and the operation of European law remained under the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court. For the native a provincial court system was established and operated by the Nigerians under the guidance of Resident and District officials. Major sentences in excess of six months, twelve strokes of the lash, or fifty pounds, required the Governor-General's confirmation. The political officers who managed the system generally followed Lugard's suggested court procedures set forth in his Political Memorandum, a handbook for the civil service in Nigeria. Though the Colonial Office raised some objections at his failure to separate the judicial from the executive powers, Sir

²⁶Perham, op. cit., II, p. 424.

Frederick maintained his strict personal control. Thus it was again left to his successor to revise the system.²⁷

The enactment of Lugard's court plan in 1914 represented the beginning of the native administration. In the Southern Province the judiciary's operation, however, functioned haphazardly because of conditions entirely unlike those found in Northern Nigeria. Rather than the highly centralized, detailed, political, and social patterns of the northern Fulani tribes, the Yoruba, and especially the Ibo, tribes were widely dispersed and decentralized. Without tribal centralization no leader was widely recognized. Consequently the court system lacked the social base upon which to conduct its affairs over a broad geographical area.

The introduction of direct taxation into Southern Nigeria in 1916 to meet revenue shortages opened the way to consolidation of local tribal authority upon which the judiciary and other aspects of the native administration could base effective operation. The former practice of having a variety of native functionaries collect various types of tributes led Lugard to combine them into one payment to be made to a single tribal authority. In this fashion Sir Frederick attempted to focus power and respect in one leader; or to make the southern alafin like the

²⁷Ibid., 426-27.

powerful northern emir. Once the tribal society broadened, it offered a better opportunity for native administration to begin its rudimentary functions. Though this development remained largely in an embryonic stage, it is important in this case to note that the financial demands of the war gave the initial impetus to its growth.²⁸

In Northern Nigeria the degree of financial independence to be given the native administration formed the principal problem in Lugard's civil policy during the war. The issue evolved from Lugard's conception of centralized control over the emirates' native treasuries. The retention by the emirs of their revenues began during Sir Frederick's absence in Hong Kong. Following amalgamation, the Governor-General commenced to include these native funds in the government's general revenues. In response, the Colonial Office directed Lugard to maintain a distinction between the two, thus tacitly supporting indirect rule with local independence and decentralization. Sir Frederick refused to accept the Colonial Office's policy and instead conceived of controlling native funds by drawing on them in payment for government services. Rebuked by the Colonial Secretary, Sir Louis Harcourt, Lugard persisted; for his budget estimates of 1915 charged the native treasuries with expenses more

²⁸Ibid., 443-44.

closely related to central expenditures. This procedure was also rejected. On his fourth effort, he accepted large grants from the emirs for the expenses of the Cameroons campaign in order to release government receipts for other purposes. The Colonial Office also denied Lugard this scheme.²⁹

These differing views were never resolved for Lugard continued to advocate a highly centralized government under his own personal supervision. Sir Frederick recognized Nigeria as being in a primary stage of development with possible self-rule on the very distant horizon. The Colonial Office, however, envisioned some measure of self-government at an earlier time, thus it encouraged the operation of independent treasuries as a training ground in fiscal matters. Here Lugard's strong sense of centralism as Governor-General contradicted the plan for indirect rule he had advocated as High Commissioner. The former wanted decisions made by the central government, which meant by himself. The latter, however, desired decision making to be accomplished on the local level which, at the time of indirect rule's creation, again meant himself. The explanation of this dichotomy lies within Lugard's own personality. As a vigorous ambitious man who was highly sensitive to criticism, he simply

²⁹Ibid., 480-87.

meant to gather power into his own hands at whatever level of administration he served.

In some instances in the Southern Province the installation of Lugard's amalgamation programs caused a number of minor uprisings. The first disorder occurred in Iseyin in southwestern Nigeria in October, 1916. With the recent introduction of indirect rule, the relationship between the British administrator and the native chief was uncertain and the influence of the war added to its instability. Furthermore Lugard's newly installed Native Court System caused resentment among the native functionaries who had lost their positions in the former judicial system. Finally, some mistrust grew between the natives and newly placed District officers who had yet to build their usual rapport with the tribal chiefs.³⁰ As a result, the Iseyin revolted, killed two government officials, and threatened to spread rebellion throughout Yorubaland. Quick punitive action by the area's Resident officer, the alafin, and Lugard, however, nipped it in the bud.³¹

A second native rebellion, the Egba Uprising, also occurred in Yorubaland in June, 1918, resulting from the hatred and accusations arising out of the Ijemo Massacre

³⁰Raymond L. Buell, The Native Problem in Africa I (New York: Macmillan Company, 1928), p. 708.

³¹Perham, op. cit., II, p. 447.

in 1914 when Lugard had reduced the independent status of this area and brought it within his jurisdiction. The pot of discontent boiled over at the efforts to introduce direct taxation. A number of natives, veterans of the Cameroons campaign, joined the revolt burning railroad stations, destroying railroad track, and cutting telegraph lines. Several British and native officials died before forces, recently returned from East Africa, stamped out the rebellion killing at least five hundred rebels.³²

Smaller native disorders, more directly connected with the war's influence, persisted throughout the amalgamation period. Early in the conflict, a Christian prophet who called himself Elijah II attracted a substantial following. Rumors had given the impression that the British were evacuating the Eastern delta region. Into the apparent void Elijah II hoped to advance by assisting the Germans and by claiming independence for his people. The principal factor of disenchantment with British rule in this area pertained to the collapse of the palm oil market upon which the delta people depended. With the revival of the trade, the movement subsided.³³ Generally the remaining disorders requiring punitive

³²Burns, op. cit., pp. 227-29.

³³Crowder, op. cit., p. 223.

patrols were caused by the lack of British administrative supervision.³⁴ While these disturbances were isolated and resulted in little total consequence, they diverted Lugard's attention from more important matters and represented small areas where his policy of indirect rule was not operating successfully. They cannot be considered a part of a nationalist movement.

It is true, however, that a small though highly important outcome of World War I was the awakening of African nationalism. The myth of European superiority crumbled when the Nigerian soldier was taught to kill white men. As a result, the concept of equality between the native and European grew. Likewise Europe's inability to govern itself effectively without a disastrous war encouraged the African to question its right to govern Africa.³⁵ Both hastened the westernized Nigerian to seek a lowering of the social barriers maintained by British officials. The frustration of his attempt to attain an equal footing abetted rudimentary currents of protest and dissatisfaction.³⁶

³⁴Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, Vol. XXII (Accounts and Papers, Vol. IV), Cd. 8434-33, January, 1918, "Nigeria, Report for 1916," p. 30.

³⁵J. D. Fage, Introduction to the History of West Africa (Cambridge: University Press, 1962), p. 194.

³⁶Wade Ademoyega, The Federation of Nigeria (London: George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., 1962), p. 116.

The prevalence of idealistic statements related to self-determination made by Woodrow Wilson and Lloyd George during the war also stimulated the growth of nationalism in West Africa. Wilson sought:

An impartial adjustment of all colonial claims, based upon a strict observance of the principle that in determining all such questions of sovereignty the interests of the population concerned must have equal weight with the equitable claims of the government whose title is to be determined.³⁷

While these words were meant to be applied to occupied European territories, it roused considerable thought in Africa and some group action. Concurrent with the Peace Conference, a Pan-African Congress met in Paris. Led by W. E. B. Dubois of the United States and Blaise Diagne of Senegal, the conference expressed the African's right to participate in government as fast as development permitted. The Garvey Movement in the United States and Africa, guided by the young Jamaican firebrand, Marcus Garvey, sought the return of all Negroes to their homeland, an Africa for Africans. In October, 1920, the National Congress of British West Africa agreed on a petition to the Colonial Office expressing the desire for greater participation in the colonial government.³⁸

³⁷Cook, op. cit., p. 245.

³⁸James S. Coleman, Nigeria, Background to Nationalism (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963), p. 140.

In the immediate sense, these embryonic facets of nationalism had little direct bearing on Lugard's amalgamation. Indirect rule continued to be the standard of colonial administration in the decades immediately following the war. Its meaning only became clearer in the light of events which took place after World War II.

CHAPTER III

WARTIME ECONOMICS AND AMALGAMATION

World War I exerted an economic influence on Nigeria's amalgamation in two distinct ways. First, as a part of the British Empire, the colony furnished raw materials to bolster Great Britain's ability to wage war. Second and less significant, it supplied and equipped troops for the two local African campaigns against the German Cameroons and German East Africa. The first spurred the increased use of palm products in England as lubricants and food, hence stimulating the development of this resource and adding considerably to Nigeria's overall wealth. The demands of the local theaters of action, however, meant the expense of raising and maintaining forces which cut into funds earmarked for furthering unification.

The initial impact of the war was the rapid disruption of Nigeria's economic affairs. The dislocation of her trade abroad presented the most serious problem, for the immense German market, accounting for 44% of all Nigerian exports and 14% of the imports, had ceased. In 1913 the total value of sales to Germany had reached

£3,885,000 or nearly half of the colony's total trade.¹ The loss was promptly reflected in the depressed state of exports in palm kernels, groundnuts, and hides and skins.² As a result, the export companies combined and cut amounts paid the native producers to insure a small margin of profit. Later when prices for palm crops advanced above pre-war levels, the failure of the companies to restore the natives' share led to charges of exploitation.³

The shortage of shipping further complicated her foreign commerce. The requirements of the war diverted many vessels from the trade routes while others were sunk by the German Navy. Throughout the war years the tonnage entering Lagos harbor averaged only half the 1913 figure of 884,740 tons.⁴ The limited shipping space for exports forced Lugard to devise a system of allotment which will be investigated later.

¹Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, Vol. XXXVI (Accounts and Papers, Vol. V), Cmd. 468, December, 1919, "Report by Sir F. D. Lugard on the Amalgamation of Northern and Southern Nigeria and Administration, 1912-1919," p. 30.

²Sir Charles Lucas (ed.), The Empire at War IV (New York: Humphrey Milford, 1924), p. 123.

³Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, "Report on Amalgamation," p. 30.

⁴Ibid.

Several internal problems arose to cause hardship. At the beginning of the war, exporters in Nigeria suffered from the shortage of credit. The usual facilities in England had been quickly absorbed into the war effort in Europe. Consequently, with his crop of palm products sitting unprofitably in Lagos due to the lack of shipping, the exporter felt the pinch of no profits or credit with which to continue operations. His plight did not improve because a shortage of specie also contracted the general economy.⁵ Economic conditions reacted as well to the adjustment of England's industry to the war effort and the resulting drastic cut in the number of exports to the colonies. As the war progressed their scarcity and expense of transportation greatly increased the cost of living. In addition the Cameroons campaign contributed to the disruption of the economy with its shifting of men and material from their usual roles.⁶

The initial economic consequences of the world conflict lasted for only eighteen months. The temporary depression was replaced with a period of economic expansion which lasted throughout the war. Thus as hostilities continued, significant commercial trends developed which had a prominent effect on Nigeria's commercial structure. Changes of special importance concerned: increased exports, new markets, the spirits imports, and

⁵Ibid.

⁶Lucas, op. cit., IV, p. 123.

the domestic economy.

During the war the increased export of palm kernels, palm oil, and groundnuts to Britain constituted an important economic development. The value of the palm products rose from £5,000,000 in 1913 to £8,500,000 by 1918.⁷ Exports in groundnuts, mostly from Northern Nigeria, rose from practically nothing to £710,308 by 1917.⁸ Due to the shortages in England, groundnuts were used in margarine and cattle feed while palm oils formed lubricants and soaps.⁹

The amount of commercial activity was illustrated by the increase in value of trade from £12,798,000 in 1913 to £16,935,129 in 1918.¹⁰ This was a remarkable 11% increase in the value of total trade during the war when compared to other British colonies in West Africa. In the Gold Coast, for example, total trade fell nearly 50%. The expansion increased the collection of revenues from

⁷Margery Perham, Lugard II (London: Collins, 1960), p. 558.

⁸Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, Vol. XXXV (Accounts and Papers, Vol. IV) Cmd. 1-31, November, 1919, "Nigeria, Report for 1917," p. 6.

⁹Lord Lugard, The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa (Hamden, Connecticut: Archon, 1965), p. 43.

¹⁰Perham, op. cit., II, p. 558.

£3,048,381 in 1914 to £4,014,190 in 1918 or roughly 25%.¹¹ It can be assumed that domestic output also grew though no definite figures are available to measure it. In the wide perspective the war's demands accelerated the development of Nigeria's natural resources which broadened the economic base. Thus, additional revenue became available to finance a part of both Lugard's amalgamation programs and the local war expenses.

In Northern Nigeria the war stimulated growth of export goods for the first time. As we have seen, the groundnut crop underwent enormous development. The export of hides and skins advanced in value to nearly £100,000 in 1917; while newly established tin mines extracted £1,500,000 of ore, tripling the 1913 value.¹² The attempt, however, to develop a cotton culture was largely unsuccessful due to drought and pestilence.¹³ For many years Northern Nigeria ranked as a poor neighbor in commercial wealth to the longer developed more affluent Southern Province. The additional sources of revenue, however, moderated to a degree the original need to amalgamate the two regions.

¹¹Sir William N. M. Geary, Nigeria Under British Rule (New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc., 1965), p. 263.

¹²Perham, op. cit., II, p. 558.

¹³Lucas, op. cit., IV, p. 126.

A second trend begun by the events of the war involved shifting and creating new markets for the 44% of Nigeria's exports formerly sent to Germany. While initially stalled, the loss was eventually absorbed by England's increasing needs for palm oil.¹⁴ Trade with France also increased, for example the export of palm products grew slowly from 90,000 tons in 1914 to 270,000 in 1917. Business with the United States, however, rose spectacularly from £236,000 in 1915 to £1,118,000 in 1917. Accounting for this was the sizeable portion of Northern Nigeria's exports of hides and skins which went to the United States.¹⁵

On the other hand, because the decline of imports added greatly to the rising cost of living in Nigeria, Lugard found it necessary to grant a war bonus to government officials to enable them to meet their financial obligations. One example of the increase was the price of kerosene which skyrocketed by 200% when its import was cut by 80%. Foodstuffs were scarce and high-priced as the succor of native troops cut the amount available. Highly incensed by the "unpatriotic" deed of importing English goods which could better be used in the war

¹⁴Michael Crowder, The Short History of Nigeria (London: Faber and Faber, 1962), p. 222.

¹⁵Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, "Nigeria, Report for 1917," p. 7.

effort in Britain, Lugard encouraged the substitution of domestic agricultural and building products.¹⁶

As the Governor-General urged self-sufficiency, some attention was given to the expansion of local products. Growth subsequently occurred for Lugard reported in 1916 that Nigeria had ceased to import foodstuffs from England. Food was either home grown, or imported from the United States.¹⁷ In addition to agricultural products, the development of domestic coal and tin resources advanced. Under Sir Frederick's direction, a cord and twine industry, which had been a £45,000 pre-war import, was started. The pre-occupation of skilled European labor with the war necessitated the training of local native craftsmen, especially in the field of carpentry.¹⁸

Restrictions on the importation of spirits resulted more from the policies of Sir Frederick than from the demands of war. He concluded that strong spirits generally brought ill effects to the native users. Accordingly, duties were increased in January, 1915, to 7s. 6d. per gallon; in 1916 to 8s. 9d.; and finally to 10s. in 1918. Between the rigors of war and the increased duty, entry

¹⁶Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, "Report on Amalgamation," pp. 32-33.

¹⁷Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, Vol. XXII (Accounts and Papers, Vol. IV), Cd. 8434-33, January, 1918, "Nigeria, Report for 1916," p. 7.

¹⁸Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, "Report on Amalgamation," p. 33.

of spirits dropped from 4,000,000 to 269,000 gallons in the period from 1913 to 1917. Limitation, however, proved to be an insignificant factor in the social life of Nigeria in the face of domestic production. Of considerable relevance, however, was the sharp reduction of taxes collected on the sale of spirits during a period when they were badly needed. In 1913 income from their importation amounted to £1,140,000 or 30% of all imposts received. By 1917 this source had been slashed to £89,000.¹⁹ In order to replace these revenues, an export tax on cocoa, palm oil, and palm kernels was introduced in October, 1916. In 1918, the list expanded to include groundnuts and hides and skins.²⁰ Overall, the limitation endeavor failed as natives obtained, through home stills, all the liquor apparently needed tax free. Oddly, an official Colonial Office investigation determined a much lower incidence of intoxication occurring in Lagos than in London.²¹

Another area of activity in the public sector of the economy concerned the extension of government support to a number of public works projects. Though limited funds restrained the number undertaken, they did include:

¹⁹Geary, op. cit., pp. 258-59.

²⁰Lucas, op. cit., IV, p. 125.

²¹Geary, op. cit., p. 259.

building the Eastern Railway, mining of coal and tin, maintaining ports at Lagos and Port Harcourt, and constructing the new northern capital at Kaduna. The Eastern Railway, the most important of these projects, was proposed to run from Port Harcourt to Kaduna where it would intersect with the Lagos-Kano trunkline. The expenditures for war, however, limited its construction to the Udi coal fields only, a length of 151 miles which opened September 1, 1916. With the paucity of coal imports late in the war, deliveries from the Udi Fields maintained the operations of the Lagos-Kano line. Due to the lack of funds, further rail development and normal maintenance was deferred. Thus during the amalgamation period only one segment of railroad was constructed, which contributed little to the unification of Nigeria.²²

The expansion of transport facilities spurred the development of tin mining whose export increased considerably during the war. Tin had been mined since 1903, but with the demands of war its extraction and value had risen. Centered around Bukuru, the open pit mines lay only two days away from the coast once a railroad to Kano was installed.²³ Though Lord Scarbrough, Chairman

²²Lucas, op. cit., IV, p. 123.

²³J. B. Appleton and W. Belden, "Northern Nigeria - A Study in Political Geography," Economic Geography, XII (October, 1936), 338.

of the Nigerian Chamber of Mines, reported in 1917 that the war had curtailed some prospecting and limited the tonnage available for shipping the ore, tin exports had doubled by 1916 reaching 7,250 tons.²⁴ Also stimulated by the war, coal mining increased to supply the railroads and the dredging operations in Lagos harbor.²⁵

The construction and maintenance of port facilities at Port Harcourt and Lagos provided two profitable centers of commerce. Reduced expenditures held back some development of wharf facilities at the former; while the lack of coal temporarily stopped dredging operations in the latter. Consequently the depth of water over the bar fell to thirteen feet in 1915 which threatened to close this important port to ocean-going vessels. Coal from the Udi mines, however, restored dredging activities which lowered the bar to nineteen and a half feet in 1916 and to twenty-three feet by the end of the war.²⁶

A major facet of the public works program called for the transfer of the Northern Province's capital from Zungeru to Kaduna. Kaduna offered a more congenial climate to the British officials with its cooler temperatures and pure water at an altitude of 2,000 feet. Because of

²⁴"Commerce, Finance, and Mining," West Africa, February 3, 1917, p. 9.

²⁵Lugard, op. cit., p. 421.

²⁶Geary, op. cit., p. 254.

the financial austerity imposed by the war, the quarters that were erected housed only the military, public works, postal and Police department.²⁷

The installation of waterworks in Lagos aroused considerable controversy as a segment of the public works program. The system provided for two hundred street fountains and three hundred fire hydrants. The water filtered through a two million gallon tank with a six million gallon tank in reserve. Building costs were £310,000 and the annual outlay reached £21,000. To meet a part of the expenses, a £5,000 annual water rate was levied on Lagos residents which resulted at its initial collection in serious rioting in 1916. Thereafter the tax was collected without difficulty.²⁸

In retrospect the war had a mixed influence on Nigeria's public works program during amalgamation. Through the period from 1914 to 1919, the most essential aspects of Lugard's plan took root. Hostilities meant some projects developed slowly or were delayed, while others that were important to the war effort were pushed to completion. For instance, Port Harcourt, the Eastern Railway, and increased coal and tin mining found definite stimulus from the war. Four years of conflict

²⁷Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, "Report on Amalgamation," p. 28.

²⁸Geary, op. cit., pp. 253-54.

caused a number of disruptions and alterations to Sir Frederick's public works program, but it failed to uproot it totally.

The foundation of the public works program rested upon the financial soundness of Lugard's fiscal policy. Amalgamation planning had called for the extension of Southern Nigeria's surpluses to supplement the earlier imperial grants in aid to the Northern Province. The amount of the grant was reduced in 1914 from £300,000 to £100,000, and was to cease in 1918. Despite the budgetary experimentation and the rigors of an unexpected war, Sir Frederick maintained a balanced budget in all but one of the war years. In fact, with increasing revenue from expanding exports, a surplus often existed allowing for the local prosecution of the war and domestic development.

The increasing amounts of revenue collection occurred after an initial dip in 1914 and 1915 as the economy adjusted to wartime conditions. In 1913 receipts amounted to £3,198,000 while in 1914 and 1915 they fell to £3,048,000 and £2,703,000 respectively. With the payment of new taxes, the total jumped to £2,931,000 in 1916, to £3,450,000 in 1917, and £4,014,000 in the last year of the war. Recovery of the government's income followed increased exports and the

collection of new taxes.²⁹ In October, 1916, such leading exports as cocoa, palm oil, and palm kernels fell under a new 25% surtax. Two years later hides and skins and groundnuts became subject to the same export tax.³⁰ Other revenues included a 30% tax on railway freight, 25% tax on imports, and increased royalties on tin.³¹ As has been pointed out, Lugard complicated matters further through his limitation of spirits imports which cost him nearly £1,100,000 in revenue annually. The substitution of other taxes and prosperous times, however, allowed the Governor-General to maintain his high principles.³²

Government expenditures mounted with the war's expenses, but overall remained in balance with receipts. Through some manipulation of funds, Lugard closed his accounts for the first year with a surplus of £80,000 rather than the officially expected deficit of £200,000. The only deficit occurred in 1916. In 1917 a £158,000 surplus was recorded, followed by the next year's excess of £700,000. Confident of Nigeria's economic strength, Lugard requested the imperial government to allow Nigeria to take over £6,000,000 of the empire's war debt.

²⁹Ibid., 263.

³⁰Lucas, op. cit., IV, p. 125.

³¹Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, "Report on Amalgamation," p. 46.

³²Geary, op. cit., p. 258.

Allocation of budget funds for civil service employees decreased during the war as nearly a third were re-assigned to other parts of the empire or to the army. A last figure, the public debt increased to a moderate £8,500,000 which consisted largely of construction costs of the Eastern Railway.³³

The war expense amounted to £1,355,000 according to Sir Charles Lucas's calculations. The Cameroons campaign totaled about £1,000,000 which Nigeria bore almost entirely. In the East African operations Nigeria contributed £134,000 toward the empire's expenses. During the war the growth of pensions and gratuities for dependents of those Englishmen lost accounted for another £100,000. Lucas also estimated a loss of £60,000 in revenue during the Cameroons campaign.³⁴ The significance of Nigeria's military expenditure was the ease with which they were absorbed into the colony's prosperous economy based on new revenues and Lugard's initiation of direct native taxation.

Direct taxation in Southern Nigeria developed into an important segment of Sir Frederick's amalgamation plans. The need of new revenue sources during the war required its early use. Sounding out the Colonial Office in 1915, he found considerable skepticism to his

³³Lucas, op. cit., IV, pp. 123-26.

³⁴Ibid., 129.

policy as memories quickly recalled Sierra Leone's disastrous experiment with direct taxation in 1898. The Colonial Office objected because of the absence in the Cameroons of pacifying forces if disturbances erupted. With the successful collection of a direct tax on households, land, and cattle in Northern Nigeria prior to amalgamation, Lugard confidently pressed his arguments until he gained official approval in 1916. The tax fell on land and produce in the areas under well developed indirect rule while a capitation tax was collected from the pagan areas in central Nigeria. Introduced in Yorubaland, Egba, and Benin, he planned for these receipts to help cover the revenues lost on the reduced liquor imports.³⁵ While some disturbances occurred in Yorubaland in 1916 and Egba in 1918, the natives generally accepted the levies as indicated by the £72,000 collected in 1918.³⁶

Lugard combined the imposition of a direct tax with the introduction of other facets in his policy of indirect rule. Payment of the direct tax necessitated reform of the prior system of rates and the position of the tribal chief. By combining the payment of tributes to one native leader, a position of power was constructed similar to

³⁵Arthur N. Cook, British Enterprise in Nigeria (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1964), p. 202.

³⁶Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, "Report on Amalgamation," p. 15.

that of the emir found in Northern Nigeria. As a result, Sir Frederick intended to halt the disintegration of tribal authority in Southern Nigeria. Once centrally recognized native leaders were installed to collect the tax, they carried out native court reforms also which completed the basic structure of indirect rule. Installation of the framework of local government, however, received its impetus from the establishment of direct taxation.

No conclusive evidence exists, but Lugard's policy of direct taxation may have brought some unexpected consequences. He himself observed in 1922 in The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa that in Uganda, the payment of direct taxes broke down some of the tribal structure. The disintegration of tribal feeling led to an attachment to national feelings. The same result occurred in Nigeria where the rise of nationalism paralleled the introduction of direct taxation during the latter years of the war. If the relationship of direct taxation and the rise of nationalism in a broad sense held true for Nigeria, Lugard was actually promoting the undoing of his tribally based system of indirect rule.³⁷

Turning to other economic matters, the temporary

³⁷Lugard, The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa, p. 378.

shortage of currency during the war threatened to disrupt economic activity. For centuries in Nigeria, cowries, manillas, and brass rods formed the basis of a native money. In 1913 silver was introduced and the issue of florins, shillings, sixpence and threepence coins was authorized. By 1916, however, the growth of trade expanded beyond the possibilities of this currency causing a shortage. The total effect of the various war charities also tended to drain additional specie from the economy.³⁸ Furthermore, the use of currency in Nigeria suffered on two counts. Silver coins of much intrinsic value were often melted down for ornamental use or simply hoarded, while paper money of low denomination deteriorated quickly in the warm tropical climate.³⁹

The West African Currency Board formulated a number of solutions to solve the problems. The issue of West African Currency Notes in denominations to an amount slightly in excess of £2,700,000. Another stopgap measure was the declaration of United Kingdom currency as legal tender. Finally, some Bank of England notes and Treasury notes circulated in Nigeria, but not as legal tender. These relatively limited measures generally

³⁸"West Africa Notes and News," West Africa, February 3, 1917.

³⁹Geary, op. cit., p. 265.

eased the inconvenient and annoying specie shortages imposed by the war.⁴⁰

Shortages in tonnage and consumer goods required the establishment of regulatory committees and legislation. The pressure created by the lack of export shipping forced Lugard to appoint a committee to allocate the available space. Following negotiation with representatives of Elder Dempster & Company,⁴¹ an agreement was reached which assigned 60% of available space to freight brought to the port by railroad and 40% to the island products from the Lagos area. The accord successfully released the jam of railway rolling stock loaded with produce at Lagos and satisfied the demands of the large exporters and lagoon traders.⁴²

The increasing flow of exports created the need for proper methods of inspection and assurance of uniform purity. A dispute, however, arose as to the place of inspection; at the point of production or the port of exit. The former was the choice of the exporter who wanted guarantees on his purchases, while the producers liked inspection at the harbor where it would not directly concern him. Determining the spot was stymied

⁴⁰Ibid., 263-64.

⁴¹Principal shipping line between Lagos and London.

⁴²Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, "Report on Amalgamation," pp. 30-31.

until 1917 when a weak ordinance emerged leaving the decision in abeyance during the remainder of the war.⁴³

Control of the sale of foodstuffs also required Lugard's attention. In March, 1917, the Governor-General assigned the Lieutenant-Governor of the Southern Province, the Comptroller of Customs, and one other official the task of regulating the sale of food. The short supply of provisions normal in the European diet particularly needed the committee's attention. Meanwhile, Lugard established another committee including the Resident of Buea, the Marine Officer, and one other to designate maximum prices for supplies entering the British administered section of the Cameroons.⁴⁴

The total scope of Lugard's economic policy reflected the liberal thought of England in the last two decades of the nineteenth century. The Governor-General had had little academic experience with economics throughout his life. His education and his life's work had been that of a political officer. In a day when the state's economic role was minimal, Lugard likewise paid little attention to affairs. For example, he included extremely little economic information in his handbook, Political Memoranda, for the use of the civil administrator in

⁴³Ibid., 42.

⁴⁴"West Africa Notes and News," West Africa, March 17, 1917, p. 118.

Nigeria. Essentially, he followed a pattern of solving problems pragmatically as they arose within the context of limited state action and the free trade doctrine.⁴⁵

Lugard on a number of occasions expressed his conception of Nigeria's economic role within the empire. When frightened empire officials recommended that protective tariffs be continued after the war, he qualified his approval with numerous conditions. At another time, the suggestion to inaugurate a monopoly and plantation economy in Nigeria met with his vehement rejection. Despite the questioning of traditional values during the war, Sir Frederick varied little from the principles of free trade and private enterprise.⁴⁶

The formation of economic policy was a cooperative effort between Lugard and the Colonial Office. The Governor-General offered his recommendations which were accepted or reshaped to fit the entire needs of the empire. The annual budgets submitted to London were generally accepted. Specific policy decisions, however, occasionally found Lugard and the Colonial Office at odds. In such instances, as in the matter of direct taxation, he displayed an insistent stubborn quality which eventually won his point.

⁴⁵Perham, op. cit., II, pp. 554-56.

⁴⁶Ibid., 563-73.

CONCLUSIONS

Sir Frederick Lugard's rule in Nigeria suffered certain maladies throughout the war years. The most immediate problems evolved from his personal inability to delegate authority to his subordinates. With exceedingly difficult communications, the lack of decision making powers often left a Resident officer handcuffed. The burden of detail which thus fell on the Governor-General prevented development of the broad policies which local newspaper critics thought should be introduced to lead the colony toward eventual self-rule. On the other hand because of his concentration on administrative minutia, he also failed to remove certain obvious contradictions in his plan of amalgamation.

For example, Sir Frederick thought that indirect rule would not only maintain the integrity of the native tribe, but at the same time make it possible for British control and influence to filter into the indigenous societies through an English adviser to the tribal leadership. Thus he expected the gradual assimilation of western ideas in such areas as education, medicine, law, and economics. Yet the training of teachers, lawyers, clerks, and other professionals meant the creation of a westernized native elite which, in the years

following Lugard's rule, was rejected by its former native society. Furthermore it held a worldly vision much broader than that of a tribal unit.

The preservation of Nigeria's northern and southern divisions also helped to prevent full amalgamation. First, it continued separate administrative policies for all matters other than defense, transportation, justice, and finance. Lugard justified this arrangement on the grounds that Northern Nigeria's administrative progress could be slowed until indirect rule in Southern Nigeria advanced to a comparable stage. Second, unification occurred only at the top of the colony's government. The variations between the two sections continued to exist hindering the germination of a united colonial government with a uniform policy. The maintenance of the division encouraged rivalries to arise and accentuated their differences. Following independence in 1960, these sectional deviations continued and were to play a key role in national politics.

It could be asserted that the war prevented later changes from being made in the governing structure. There is little merit in this suggestion as Lugard particularly desired to maintain the system for the benefit of his own designs. Furthermore, he never suggested the need or wish to advance to the total centralization of the colonial government.

Sir Frederick's insistence on implementing his Scheme further impeded Nigeria's unification. The Scheme was devised by Lugard to allow him to administer Nigeria from both Lagos and London. To cope with this plan of administration, the Governor-General refused to construct a large centralized administrative staff in Lagos, for this would necessitate either his constant presence or the onerous task of allowing an assistant to govern in his absence. Either choice seemed repulsive to an individual who was very much his own man. As a result Lugard maintained essentially the same system that was in effect before amalgamation, with two lieutenant-governors to rule in his absence. While daily affairs generally fell under the purview of the lieutenant-governors, substantive policy and most decisions of any significance continued to be made by Lugard; sometimes inconveniently located in his basement quarters at the Colonial Office.

In fairness to Lugard, it must be pointed out that his system was based on the art of the possible. Under the circumstances could any other course of action have been followed, especially after 1914? Despite his positive and contradictory nature, Nigeria did withstand fairly successfully the immediate pressures of the war. Perhaps this was Lugard's strongest point, for major changes in the administration occurred under the two governors who followed Sir Frederick. As a whole

Lugard's system of amalgamation remained rather artificial in its construction around himself.

The very exigencies brought on by the war suggest the long tenure of Sir Frederick in Nigeria. If circumstances had been otherwise, his consistent disobedience of Colonial Office policy might have created a serious attempt to find a more compliant substitute. Lugard's stubbornness and deception in the use of direct taxation and native treasuries caused the Colonial Secretary, Sir Louis Harcourt, many irritations. Sir Frederick's strong will, the war, and his "indispensable" status, however, insured his position.

A natural product of war is change. In the case of Nigeria this is especially true due to the simultaneous installation of a centralized government. As we have seen, the economic expansion of Nigeria's natural resources during the conflict contributed immediately to the colony's wealth and forecast a bright future. Much less spectacular was the attempt to establish a uniform rule throughout the colony which suffered from a large man power loss and the aberrations of its leader.

In a much larger sense the amalgamation period represents a significant turning point in Nigerian history. The political and economic union of the colony marked the first stages of its emergence from the "Dark Continent" into the world's family of nations. Divided along

tribal lines, cursed with slavery, undeveloped economically Nigeria turned its back on "barbarity" and began to learn the political, economic, and social values favored by the Western World. This movement was significantly aided by the participation of the African in the hostilities which drastically lowered his vision of the European's superiority. Similarly the growth of an African intelligentsia and a new national awareness spurred the drive for greater political participation.

British involvement up to the end of World War I had encompassed the humanitarian interests of restricting the slave trade, the economic interests of exporting tropical products, and the political interests of colonial control for reasons of power and prestige. World War I, however, marked the decline of concern for abolition and the end of European competition for colonies in Africa. Activities between the wars were to concentrate on Nigeria's economic value to England while after World War II they were to be concerned with the native's drive for independence. Thus by 1919 with the end of the war and the completion of Lugard's amalgamation, it might be said that Nigerian history had reached the end of the beginning.

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