GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS
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ANNUAL DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS
RELATING TO SIERRA LEONE
1893-1961

Introduction to the microfilms by
David C. Dorward, M.A., Ph.D.

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1981
The Annual Departmental Reports relating to Sierra Leone are a complementary series to the earlier microform collection of Annual Reports of the Governor, Blue Books and Government Gazettes, titled Government Publications relating to Sierra Leone (EP Microform, 1976). For the purposes of organization, the departmental collection has been divided into nine sections; Administration, Finance, Judicial and Police, Natural Resources, Social Services, Transport and Public Works, Communications and Post Office Savings, Commerce, and Miscellaneous. Within each section, departmental series have been organized in chronological order, prefaced by selected extraordinary reports and sessional papers of particular relevance, and followed by related sub-sections. Specific bibliographic and historical information relating to discrete collections, as well as more complete explanations of the functions and activities of departments where their titles are not self-explanatory, are given in the detailed departmental list below.

The origins of modern Sierra Leone can be traced back to the attempts of a group of British businessmen and philanthropists, commonly known as the Clapham Sect, to found a settlement of freed slaves on the Sierra Leone peninsula in 1778. British colonial rule in Sierra Leone commenced in 1808, when the tiny Freetown enclave became a Crown Colony under the direct responsibility of the British government which ruled through a Governor. At various periods during the nineteenth century, the Governor of Sierra Leone also served as Governor-in-Chief of Britain's other West African possessions. As late as 1888, the Governor of Sierra Leone was responsible for the administration of the Gambia. However, formal British authority remained confined to the Freetown peninsula until 1896, when the hinterland which comprises the greater part of what is today Sierra Leone was declared a British Protectorate. It was only after the establishment of the Sierra Leone Protectorate that British colonial administration and technical departments began to assume a complexity which warranted separate departmental reports. During the nineteenth century much of this information was published in abbreviated form in the Government Gazette or in the Governor's Annual Report.

GROUP I  ADMINISTRATION

The administrative boundaries within Sierra Leone underwent a number of radical alterations during the period covered by these administrative reports. Major revisions occurred in 1920, 1924/25, 1929/30, 1935, 1940-45. Consequently such administrative divisions as Kenema, Bombali and Moyamba refer to different areas at different times and readers are cautioned to bear this in mind.
In 1945-46, constitutional amendments were enacted by the British to establish a Protectorate Assembly as a means of countering the political aspirations of the Colony's educated elite by enlisting the support of the more conservative provincial Chiefs and as part of a belated attempt to redress the political, economic, and developmental imbalance between the Colony and Protectorate.
Reel 6 Estimates 1954-1960/1
Reel 7 Memorandum on the Estimates 1950-1953
Standing Committee on Finance and the Estimates 1950-1951
Financial Report 1912-1932
Reel 8 Financial Report 1933-1949
Reel 9 Financial Report 1950-1960/1

Income Tax was introduced on the 1st April, 1944, under the Income Tax Ordinance No. 1 of 1943.

GROUP III  JUDICIAL AND POLICE

The maintenance of 'law and order' was regarded as a principal function of British colonial government.

Reel 10 Police 1922-1939, 1947-1959
Reel 11 Prisons 1914, 1919-1961
Supreme Court and Circuit Court 1923, 1925-1926, 1928-1930

GROUP IV  NATURAL RESOURCES

Reel 12 Sierra Leone: Reports on botany and geology
by G.F. Scott and Miss Catherine A. Raisin (C6998) 1893
Swamp Rice Cultivation in Sierra Leone (SP4/25) 1925
Report of the Rice Commission on its enquiry into the position of the rice industry (SP7/27) 1927
Report by Professor C.Y. Shephard of the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture on his visit to Sierra Leone (SP4/35) 1934
Report by F.A. Stockdale, Agricultural adviser to the Secretary of State for the colonies, on his visit to Sierra Leone (SP2/36) 1936
Agricultural possibilities of the colony peninsula (SP8/38) 1938
Botanical station 1896
Agriculture 1912-1918, 1921, 1929-1939

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During the period 1922 to 1928, the Agricultural Department was amalgamated with the Forestry Department as the Department of Land and Forests. See Reel 15.

Agriculture 1929-1939
Reel 13
Agriculture 1940-1961
Rice Research Station Summary 1934-1953
Rice Research Station 1953-1960

Reel 14
Forestry

The establishment of the Sierra Leone Forestry Department was preceded by two major preliminary surveys, by Unwin and Lane Poole, whose reports preface those of the Department.

Unwin, Report on the Forests and Forestry Problems in Sierra Leone 1909
C.E. Lane Poole, Report on the Forests of Sierra Leone 1911
Report by the Forestry Authority, Sierra Leone (British Empire Forestry Conference) (SP7/24) 1924
Forestry Department 1912-1916, 1921, 1929-1960/1

During the period 1922 to 1928, the Forestry Department was amalgamated with the Agricultural Department to form the Department of Land and Forests. See Reel 15.

Reel 15
Land and Forests

The departmental series is preceded by the preliminary report of the first Commissioner of Land and Forests, M.T. Dawe. In January, 1922, the Secretary of State for the Colonies had decided that, in view of the close interdependence of agriculture and forestry, it was desirable to amalgamate the former Agricultural and Forestry Departments under one head and so constitute the Land and Forests Department. Behind this official explanation lay a desire to reduce the establishment costs of the Government of Sierra Leone at a time of falling revenue and the post-World War I recession. Similar considerations of revenue and expenditure led to the prolonged delay in establishing both fisheries and veterinary services in Sierra Leone.

M.T. Dawe, Report of a journey through the colony of Sierra Leone by the Commissioner of Land and Forests, 1923

Land and Forests 1922-1928
James Hornell, Report on the Fishery Resources of Sierra Leone 1928
Fisheries 1958-1960
Proposed creation of a Veterinary branch of the Land and Forests Department (SP9/24) 1924
J.H.B. Best, Veterinary officer for Nigeria, Report on his visit to Sierra Leone (SP2/41) 1941
Veterinary 1947-1961
On the 30th March 1937, Major N.R. Junner, the first Director of the newly established Geological Department, arrived in Freetown from the Gold Coast. His first Annual Report for 1927/1928 covered the period from his date of arrival to the end of 1928, as well as the results of a brief preliminary investigation by Major Junner in 1926, when he was still on the staff of the Gold Coast Geological Survey.

From 1930 to 1938 the Geological Department included the Mines Department, under the various titles of Geological and Mines Department or Geological Survey and Mines Department. In 1939 the Mines Department was separated from the Geological Department, the latter like many departments ceasing to produce Annual Reports during the war years, from 1939 to 1946. For the Annual Reports of the Mines Department from 1939, see Reel 38.

Proposed topographical survey of the Protectorate of Sierra Leone and proposed survey school (SP10/25) 1925
Survey 1925-1934

In 1935, the Survey Department became the Survey and Land Department, not to be confused with the Land and Forest Department, 1922 to 1928.

Survey and Lands 1935-1939, 1945-1960/1
Report on soil conservation 1948
Soil conservation and land use in Sierra Leone (SP1/51) 1951

GROUP V
SOCIAL SERVICES

The Education Department was founded in 1909 and subsequently legalized by the Education Ordinance of 1911. Before 1909 an Annual Report on Elementary Schools in Sierra Leone was submitted by the Inspector of Schools.

Education Department Triennial Survey 1934-1957
Education 1955-1957
Competitive exhibition of schoolwork 1958-1960/1
Report on Protectorate education 1895-1896
Educational policy in the Protectorate (SP5/37) 1914-1915

Correspondence re proposed Sierra Leone College of Agriculture and Protectorate Teachers Training College at Njala (SP13/25) 1925
Njala Training Scheme (SP6/37) 1937
Njala Training College 1939, 1946-1950
| Reel 20 | Sanitary Report on the City of Freetown | 1897-1898 |
| Reel 21 | Medical | 1898-1913 |
| Reel 22 | Medical | 1914-1926 |
| Reel 23 | Medical | 1927-1937 |
| Reel 23 | Correspondence relating to a general survey of disease in the Protectorate of Sierra Leone (SP4/27) | 1938-1959 |

The 1944/45 Report on Social Welfare was issued by the 'Welfare Department'. However until 1951 the Welfare Department was a sub-department of the Education Department.

- Public Service Commission 1954-1955, 1961
- Public Relations 1947-1957
- Information 1958-1960
- Development Estimates 1960-1961
- Progress Report on Development programme 1946-1951

Reel 25 | Labour | 1939/40-1961 |

H.A. Nisbet, who was seconded from the Labour Section of the Kenya Native Affairs Department, assumed duties as Labour Secretary, Sierra Leone, on 22 July 1939. His duties were to oversee the mobilization and utilization of native labour within Sierra Leone as part of the British war effort. In July 1940 the Secretary of State for the Colonies approved the proposal by His Excellency, the Governor, for the formation of a Labour Department and provision was made in the 1941 Establishment.

GROUP VI

TRANSPORT AND PUBLIC WORKS

| Reel 26 | Public Works | 1914, 1919-1938, 1945-1960/1, 1950-1960/1 |
| Reel 27 | Port and Marine | 1921-1960/1 |
| Reel 27 | Road Transport | 1914, 1947-1949, 1952-1959/60 |
| Reel 27 | Railway | 1908-1920 |
| Reel 28 | Railway | 1921-1938 |
| Reel 29 | Railway and Port of Freetown | 1945-1957 |
| Reel 29 | Civil Aviation | 1958/9-1960/1 |
| Reel 29 | Air Services | 1951 |

Air Services | 1939 |
GROUP VII COMMUNICATIONS AND POST OFFICE SAVINGS

From 1922 to 1936, the Annual Reports of the Post Office include the Annual Report of the Post Office Savings Bank.

Reel 30
Post Office
Posts and Post Office Savings Bank
Post Office
Posts and Post Office Savings Bank
Post Office
Posts and Telegraphs
Posts and Telecommunications
Post Office Savings Bank
Printing and Stationery
Broadcasting

GROUP VIII COMMERCE

Reel 31
Comptroller of Customs

Reel 32
Trade

Reel 33
Trade

Reel 34
Trade

Reel 35
Trade

Reel 36
Trade

Reel 37
Trade

Reel 38
Report on Co-operation in Sierra Leone
Registrar of Co-operative Societies
Department of Co-operation
Produce Marketing Board
Mines Department

GROUP IX MISCELLANEOUS

Reel 39
Monuments and Relics Commission
Meteorological Observations

Reel 40
Staff Lists

Reel 41
Staff Lists

Reel 42
Staff Lists

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