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## ABROMA TO ZIZIPHUS AND BEYOND - Forests, Surveys, Rivers and Roads of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan 1899-1956

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**Indexes:** Trees and Shrubs; Photographs, Maps, Diagram; References and Bibliography.

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**What this book is about:** I originally began this book solely as a history of the woods and forests of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, and their management, no more, no less. During the research however, it became apparent that it was not possible to simply look at the forests and exclude all else. Not to include the surveys, map-making, rivers, roads, railways, communications, weather, etc., was to do half a job badly. Also, I needed to know why the British were there.

The first Chapter speaks of how the British came to be in the Sudan, the events over time leading to the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium of 19th January 1899, and the subsequent administration of the Sudan. The ensuing Chapters tell the tale of exploration of rivers and forests, surveys of huge tracts of land hitherto unmapped, clearing the rivers of sudd for transport and communications, building wells, hafirs, roads and railways. The experimentation for re-afforestation, management of woods, saw-mills, steamers, and much more. The successes, the failures, the deaths.

The book is in chronological order, and therefore 'future' events are, in the main, not spoken of until their turn. Each year from 1899 to 1956 is looked at separately, and information for each of the Provinces has been kept together as far as possible, year by year, recording the changes with Governors, Forestry staff, and so on. Specific dates, times, places, and people are recorded, giving a down-to-earth human aspect to the book, with a 'now' feeling, rather than a feeling of old history.

The Sudan suffered the usual hardships, famines, floods, locusts, and much more, in daily life during the years of the two World Wars, as well as the privations, controls, war regulations, restrictions, and so on, enforced by war itself. After the Second World War the slow rebuilding process began, forestry regeneration for fuel, plantations, orchards, pomology, surveys of forests and land, and the awakening of political attitudes.

The final chapters give an indication of why the Independence of the Sudan came when it did, the events leading up to it, and the change-over from British administration to Sudanese administration. The book has to stop at some point, and I made the decision it would be soon after Independence Day, 1st January 1956, and although the day is mentioned it seemed more appropriate not to include any Independence Day photographs or dialogue, in order to leave room for unanswered questions, to have an 'incomplete ending' to reflect the continuation of life regardless of what man does to it, and for this reason there are no conclusions.

Almost all of my research is from primary documentation from the time period, and everything is fully referenced. I do not speak or read Arabic (although I am learning) and so am limited to documents, reports, diaries, written in English. The Sudan Government Administration in the Provinces was run solely by men, and the reports were written by men, for other men to read, and therefore the emphasis was masculine on the presentation of facts. Women were rarely spoken of in the official Government Reports, however, overall feelings of compassion, respect and humanity from the administrative staff working in the Sudan are evident throughout the reports, sprinkled with good humour.

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