Summary
Since the beginning of the 21st century, archivists in Uganda have been pursuing a number of projects to make previously inaccessible archival collections available for research. All of this work of archival rehabilitation makes it hard to see the longer history of control and curatorship in the management of Uganda’s public record. Uganda’s archives have, over the course of decades, been rearranged and pruned in response to changing political and intellectual demands. In the 1950s and 1960s British and Ugandan officials sought to shield the paper record from examination. This regime of access control deprived campaigners of inspiration and evidence. During the 1970s, with the ascendancy of Idi Amin’s government, archives were rendered into a national patrimony. Civil servants hastened to ensure that the record of their accomplishments was stored in safe custody. Since the late 1980s the government of Yoweri Museveni has disinvested the state from the legacies of the past. For the Museveni government the slow decay of the public record has allowed the foreclosing of divisive debates about history.

Uganda’s political history has been episodic and interrupted, and every new regime has had to struggle anew to author a narrative about national self-becoming. That is why Uganda’s governments have taken such dramatically different positions on the management of historical knowledge. Opening or withholding archival materials is a way of editing the public record. It makes some kinds of information state secrets and renders other aspects of the past into a legacy, a source of inspiration and orientation.

Keywords: Uganda, archives, Idi Amin, Milton Obote, Yoweri Museveni

Introduction: Archive Work in Uganda
The archives of local government in Kabarole District (western Uganda) were kept in the attic of an old building on the outskirts of Fort Portal that had once been the headquarters of the district’s administration. When I visited the repository in 2005, I found that the archive boxes were occupied by wasps. They had built their nests everywhere—on the flaps of the boxes, on the bottom of the wooden shelves, on the file covers themselves. It took more than a week to clear the attic of its inhospitable residents. One morning I found myself standing back-to-back
with a valiant records officer, cans of insecticide in both hands, spraying waves of angry bugs as they surged toward us. We went through five cans of Doom, two cans of Kill, and one can of Bop. None of them worked particularly well.

Since then I’ve been working with colleagues and students in Uganda to organize, catalogue, and (in some cases) digitize endangered government records in Uganda. In 2009 the wasp-infested archive in the attic was moved to the campus of Mountains of the Moon University, located in the center of Fort Portal. Using funds from the Cooperative Africana Materials Project—a consortium of university libraries convened by the Center for Research Libraries in Chicago—we hired a small team of university graduates and trained them in archival method. Desks and shelves were constructed by local carpenters; file folders, brushes, and other cleaning supplies were sourced from Kampala; and acid-free file boxes were purchased from India and shipped to Fort Portal. Over the course of several months the team removed the files from their moldy folders, extracted staples, clips, and other bits of metal, and placed the papers into new file folders. Once the files had been cleaned the team set to work reboxing and recataloguing the collection. In 2011 several scanners and computers were purchased, and over the ensuing year the whole of the archive was digitized.

Figure 1. Digitization team at Mountains of the Moon University, Fort Portal, 2013.

Once this first project was complete, other local government archives were brought into the university’s collection. The first was the archive of the Tooro Kingdom, which had been kept in a basement below the local government council chamber. To excavate the old files the team
had to remove a pile of disused bureaucratic paraphernalia—typewriters, bicycles, cyclostyling machines—that had built up at the entrance. Later, Mountains of the Moon University acquired the archives of Hoima District, which had been stacked high on shelves in a shed behind the local government headquarters. Over the course of more than ten years, the team at this provincial university created a digital archive of 500,000 scans. In an unlikely place, Mountains of the Moon University has built what is probably the largest digital repository of government documents in Africa.¹

Figure 2. Reading room at Mountains of the Moon University, 2017.

Alongside this digitization project, I have been working with teams of students from Makerere University, the University of Michigan, and other institutions to organize and preserve paper archives around Uganda. In 2011 and 2012 a team of students from Michigan and the Makerere Institute of Social Research worked with the archive staff to organize a great amount of material in the National Archives, creating a nine-volume catalogue to describe the collection. In 2013 a team from Kabale University and Michigan organized the substantial archive of Kigezi District, in southern Uganda. In 2015 a large group of Michigan students, working with colleagues from Busoga University, rescued the endangered archives of Jinja District from a watery doom. That archive was kept in a basement that had flooded during the seasonal rains. The team brought the papers aboveground, dried everything out, scraped off the mud, organized the files, and created a catalogue for the whole collection. In 2018 a large team—composed of students from Makerere, Michigan, and other institutions—organized the archives of Uganda’s High Court. The files had been kept in a series of basement rooms in a
glorious old building at the center of Kampala. The archives—which are now available for research at the National Archives—consist of 70,000 case files dating from the late 1930s onward.

![Figure 3. Drying files in the council room, Jinja District Local Government, 2015.](image-url)
Figure 4. Cataloguing team working on the archives of the Judiciary of Uganda, 2018.

A number of other institutions have likewise been engaged in preserving endangered and decaying archival collections. The Church of Uganda recently digitized its extensive archive, and the British Library has sponsored small-scale digitization projects focused on private archives in Uganda. The Uganda Broadcasting Corporation is currently digitizing its impressive photographic archive with support from the University of Michigan and the University of Western Australia. The biggest development is the opening of an excellent new building for the National Records Centre and Archives. Since the opening of the building in 2016 the archives staff has taken custody of thousands of boxes of files from government ministries. These files have been accumulating in warehouses, storerooms and offices since the time of Uganda’s independence.
In this way a substantial number of previously inaccessible archives have been made available for examination. All of this is a great boon for scholars and citizens alike. It has enabled research on subjects that have hitherto been closed, and a group of enterprising scholars are pursuing research that takes advantage of these materials.²

This flurry of activity makes it hard to see the longer history of control and curatorship in the management of Uganda’s public record. These archival collections have not been lying fallow, awaiting attention from preservationists. There is a history of custodianship here. Over the course of more than seventy years the public archive has been rearranged, edited, curated, and pruned in response to changing political and intellectual demands. In the 1950s and 1960s British and Ugandan archivists sought to protect the paper record from examination. This regime of access control was meant to create and maintain official secrets. It deprived political campaigners both of inspiration and evidence. During the 1970s, with the ascendancy of Idi Amin’s government, there was a radical opening of government work. Quite suddenly, archives that had been closed to public view were rendered into a national patrimony, and civil servants hastened to ensure that their accomplishments were recorded for the posterity. Since the mid-1980s, Yoweri Museveni’s government has disinvested the state from the legacies of the past. The dilapidation of Uganda’s government archives reflects the current regime’s self-interested insistence that Ugandans should look to the future, not the past, for inspiration and direction. The slow decay of the public record has been a way of discouraging debate about divisive issues.
In Uganda there is no storehouse of shared historical experience that can lend credibility and authenticity to the contemporary political order. Uganda’s history has been episodic and interrupted, and every new regime has had to struggle anew to anchor itself in relation to a narrative about national self-becoming. That is why Uganda’s governments have taken such dramatically different positions on the management of historical knowledge. Archival science is never simply a technical matter. Opening, organizing, or withholding archival materials is a way to edit the public record. It makes some information into state secrets and renders other aspects of the past into a legacy, a source of inspiration and orientation.

**Secrecy and the Colonial Archive**

The years immediately following the Second World War saw the creation of new routines and new rules that regulated access to the ever-growing archive of colonial government. In 1950 Uganda received a large consignment of new typewriters from Britain. Obsolete machines were replaced, and a new typing pool, staffed with ten European women, was created. They worked with Remington typewriters, then the quietest machines available. There was a second typing pool staffed with seven Africans, some of them men. These typists served an ever-expanding bureaucracy. From 1955 confidential correspondence transmitted between government offices in Entebbe and Kampala was placed in color-coded metal boxes, which were locked with keys kept in the personal possession of high-ranking government officers. Green boxes were for the Ministry of Social Services; blue boxes for the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources; the Ministry of Commerce and Works used purple boxes. There were five black boxes, which were for the Governor and the Chief Secretary. Only three people had keys to open them.

These and other measures grew out of officials’ sense of insecurity, for in the mid-1950s the Uganda government felt itself to be under examination by British and African critics. In 1953 the governor had deposed the Kabaka, the ruler of the kingdom of Buganda, in punishment for the Kabaka’s refusal to cooperate with British directives. His deposition ignited a furor, and within weeks Ganda activists had organized a sophisticated campaign to secure the Kabaka’s restoration. The campaigners were well connected, enjoying the support of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Fabian Colonial Bureau. The Kabaka’s lawyers, trained in British universities and law schools, brought the case before the British courts. This legal and political pressure ultimately compelled the government to reverse course, and in 1955 the Kabaka of Buganda was restored to his position. On his return to Uganda, he was met by a crowd that numbered in the hundreds of thousands.

It is not a coincidence that Uganda’s officials would in those years adopt new routines to secure their paperwork. In 1950 the Chief Secretary prohibited the use of ballpoint pens in official correspondence. It was too easy to forge signatures signed with them. He also directed that “top secret” correspondence was never to be committed to the postal service. It was to be delivered, by hand, by a government official of European descent. Government officials were obliged to use different forms of storage for different kinds of paperwork. “Classified” papers could be kept in wooden cabinets with locks, “secret” papers had to be kept in lockable steel filing cabinets, and “top secret” papers had to be locked in the office.
safe. Officials were to ensure that waste paper, duplicating stencils, blotting paper, carbon copies, and other things used in the production of secret correspondence were destroyed by fire. Typewriter ribbons were to be locked away in a safe.

Uganda was the first territory in British East Africa to appoint an archivist. His name was Patrick English. Upon his arrival in 1951 he found government paperwork piled in heaps in the basement rooms below the offices of the secretariat. English set the oldest material in order, creating file series—A.1 for letters prior to 1893, A.2 for letters received, C.1 for treaties—that as of 2021 were still in use. English was proud of the two years’ work he had done: “I flatter myself that they show that in the modern Englishmen the instinct for pioneering has not died out,” he later wrote. These old files—dating to the late 19th century, up to the year 1902—were made available for researchers’ use. Mr. English’s successor thought the archive to be exemplary: the “atmosphere seems ideal for the preservation of paper,” and the “only sources of destruction which have been at work have been white ants.”

Access to government archives dating past 1902 was strictly limited. Even researchers working in government service had to get permission from the Chief Secretary to quote from recent correspondence in their publications. In 1956 the Chief Secretary told a group of researchers from the East African Institute of Social Research to leave footnotes to government records out of their publications. He knew that “considerable importance is attached to the inclusion of proper footnotes in theses, particularly by certain universities.” But the Uganda government, he said, was “anxious to avoid promoting an embarrassing series of demands for access to Government archives which would only have to be refused.” The Uganda government’s reluctance to open its archives was legally validated in December 1958, when the Public Records Act was adopted by Parliament. It established a fifty-year rule for access to government records in Britain and its colonies.

The foreclosure of research on contemporary history was not uncontroversial. Historians and other scholars put pressure on government bureaucrats, arguing for greater transparency and more access. The anthropologist Aidan Southall, for example, made a meticulous survey of the archives in Jinja, in Uganda’s east. By reading the cross-references indexed on the file covers in Jinja he identified specific papers kept in the Chief Secretary’s office in Entebbe, then wrote to the Chief Secretary with a long list of files that he wished to consult. Other researchers pursued a more confrontational strategy. In 1961 the young American historian Richard Rotberg, who was researching the origins of African nationalism, requested access to confidential files kept in the secretariat archive. When he was refused access, he published a newspaper editorial complaining about the Uganda government’s restrictions.

At the very time Rotberg was conducting his research, government officials in Uganda were involved in a massive effort to purge, redact, and reorganize the official archive. It was called Operation Legacy. Operation Legacy was the British government’s effort to limit what the independent governments of Africa could know about the colonial states they had displaced. By the early 1960s the constitutions of independent African territories were being negotiated in London, and many government ministries were headed by African politicians who were members of nationalist parties. Operation Legacy was driven by British officers’ conviction that

“we must NOT pass on any material [to African governments] which may
1. embarrass Her Majesty’s Government or any other Government ... or
2. lead to the identification of a source of police intelligence.”

A great number of things had to be edited out of the archival record. The protocol instructed officers to weed out papers concerning the “subversive activities of the Indian government,” papers concerning trade unions, papers that “might be interpreted as showing religious intolerance on the part of Her Majesty’s Government,” or papers that “might be interpreted as showing racial discrimination against Africans, or Negroes in the USA.”

In February 1961 government officers in Uganda were instructed to split their files in two. They were to create a separate file series, labeled “DG,” where controversial papers were to be placed. Once purged of controversial things, the remaining papers—called a “legacy file”—could be handed on to the African officials newly responsible for the running of government departments. The parallel DG file was to be kept secret. Even the existence of the parallel archive was to be kept secret: officials went through each public file, using an “obliterating agent” to ink out “some of the more disreputable references in our various secret indexes” located in the Entebbe archives. DG files were to be handled by government officials who were “British officers of European descent.” It was a massive undertaking. In the Chief Minister’s office alone some 1,500 DG files were created between January and October 1961. All of this work had to be done surreptitiously, without attracting the attention of the Chief Minister himself, the politician Benedicto Kiwanuka.

That is how—in darkened rooms, after working hours, behind locked doors—the archives of Britain’s government in Uganda were edited to disguise inconvenient truths. Most of the DG files that British officials surreptitiously created were transported to Britain on a Royal Navy warship in April 1962. A further four cases of records were sent to London via the Royal Air Force on October 5, 1962, a few days before Uganda’s independence. A great amount of paperwork was destroyed. In March 1961 local government officials were instructed to incinerate intelligence reports that were more than a month old. Some officials—apprehensive, perhaps, about the loss of institutional memory—ignored the circular. Today the paper record reflects their hesitation. In recently catalogued archives in Kabale, Kabarole, and Moroto districts there are thick files containing colonial-era intelligence reports. In other districts the 1961 instructions seem to have been carried out with enthusiasm. The archives of Hoima District—which have recently been digitized—bulge with paperwork about all manner of government business, but there are no intelligence or security files of any kind.

Uganda’s nervous officials were by no means unique in their urgent efforts to clean up their archives. The same thing was happening all over the British Empire. The colonial government of Malaya prepared for independence in 1957 by sending five truckloads of government papers to the Royal Navy base in Singapore, where they were destroyed in the incinerator. In the Gold Coast—where independence came in 1957—fifteen bags of top-secret material were removed from the public archives and secretly sent off to London. They included files on “Communist Links and Influences,” “Disturbances in Ashanti,” and surveillance files on Kwame Nkrumah. Northern Rhodesia’s colonial government created a secret file series—which they labeled “Watch”—where politically sensitive or legally incriminating papers were placed. To disguise the removal of the politically sensitive material, dummy file covers had to be created, populated with inoffensive paperwork. By 1995—after
decades of sorting, pruning, editing, falsifying, and evacuating archives—some 21,000 files had been secretly sent to Britain from all over the empire. They were stored in the top-secret military installation at Hanslope Park, where they occupied 16,000 shelf feet in an archive repository.

There were a great many loose ends. In Uganda the main impediment to Operation Legacy was the volume of paper involved. From an early date it became clear that no one had time to go through the whole body of archival materials kept in the Chief Secretary’s offices. It was decided, therefore, that older files were not to be sorted. They were handed on to Milton Obote’s new government without editing. “I think we must take a risk on all papers before [1950] and regard them as history,” wrote a regretful British official, “although of course there are probably some dirty papers amongst them.”

Uganda’s African politicians were largely ignorant of the extent of the cleanup work that British authorities were conducting. It was in Kenya, not Uganda, that African leaders launched a serious campaign to undo “Operation Legacy.” Some 1,500 top-secret files had been removed from Nairobi to London just before Kenya’s independence. In 1967 Kenya’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs requested the return of this archive to Kenya. In 1981 Robert Ouko, Kenya’s Minister of Foreign Affairs, again wrote to British officials to request the return of the secret archive; and in 1983 Kenyan archivists made a survey of the holdings at their national archive and produced a list of missing files that they demanded to be returned. The British responded to these and other requests by denying that the secret archive even existed.

The Kenya papers—along with the rest of the archives stripped away from Britain’s colonies at the end of empire—were to remain a secret until 2011, when a lawsuit initiated by ex-Mau Mau combatants brought them to public notice. In all, some 8,000 files, from every corner of the mid-20th-century British Empire, have been released as part of what is called the Hanslope Park Disclosure. Today formerly colonized peoples are using them to unmask the violence and injustice that attended the end of Britain’s empire. Authorities in the kingdom of Bunyoro, in western Uganda, recently instructed a British law firm to sue the United Kingdom for “invasion, atrocious human rights abuses and grabbing of their land during the colonial period.”

A Nervous State

The most daring act of archive preservation in Uganda’s history took place during the dying hours of Milton Obote’s first presidency. On the night of January 25, 1971—as troops loyal to Uganda’s army commander, General Idi Amin, were busily securing the airport, the radio station, and other government buildings—a loyalist of the old regime, Colonel Oyite Ojok, hurried into President Obote’s office in Kampala. He rifled through the desk, bundled together an assortment of top-secret files, placed them into a suitcase, and set off at a run for the parliament building, just next door. There was a secret tunnel connecting the basement to a privately owned garden, some 150 yards away. Colonel Ojok made it through the tunnel with his suitcase full of files. On reaching the garden, though, he stopped to reconsider. Did he find it difficult to climb over the garden wall with the suitcase weighing him down? Was he startled
by the approach of another person? For whatever reason, Colonel Ojok vaulted over the wall, leaving the suitcase, the files, and his identity card just inside the tunnel, where they were later found.32

Colonel Ojok’s daring act of archive preservation highlights the importance that President Obote’s government attached to information management. Secrecy was a matter of life and death.

Milton Obote’s government inherited from its British predecessor a well-founded aversion to historical research. Like the colonial administration, Obote’s government found itself locked in a competitive relationship with the kingdom of Buganda. In May 1966 Obote sent the army in to crush the palace at Mengo, the administrative center of Buganda, and in the ensuing battle as many as 1,000 people were killed. The Buganda kingdom—along with Uganda’s four other kingdoms—was abolished, and political power was consolidated in the hands of President Obote. In the aftermath of these events the Obote government kept nervous watch over Ganda politicians. Research projects based in the defunct kingdom of Buganda were closed down.33 In 1968 the American sociologist Russell Middleton requested permission to study the “social factors related to self-esteem among the African people of Kampala,” in order to compare their situation with black Americans’ experience. Middleton had published several well-regarded essays about race in the United States.34 In Uganda, though, his research made officials anxious. One official thought Middleton’s research did not “promote the development of this Country,” and warned that “it would also be unwise at this stage to allow people of this nature to flood the country.”35 “This Ministry is highly inflammable,” wrote another official, “and publication of certain aspects of it could cause Government serious embarrassment.”36

Officials in Obote’s government spent an astonishing amount of time assessing and superintending researchers’ work. In 1966 the Secretary of the Cabinet sent a detailed letter to a Makerere undergraduate detailing what, exactly, he could research for his thesis project, which concerned the history of Busoga.37 That a senior government official would be so intimately and carefully interested in the work of a callow undergraduate highlights the anxieties that historical research raised for men in power. Even research that would seem, on the face of it, to reinforce the authority of the government generated suspicion. In 1967 the Slovenian researcher Viera Pawlikova applied to the government for permission to do research on “Anti-British resistance in 19th century Uganda.” She requested access to files concerning the great leaders of anticolonial struggle: the Nyoro king Kabalega, the priestess Muhumuza, and others.38 It was a thrilling project, but the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Internal Affairs was unimpressed. He coolly told Ms. Pawlikova to create a list of subjects that she wished to address, furnishing “all useful scientific references” and an annotated list of files. He was careful to tell her that “records whose disclosure may be detrimental to the interest of the Republic of Uganda” would be closed to her.39

That is why, in the 1960s and early 1970s, so much of the work done on Uganda’s history was concentrated on the distant past. For scholars it was an escape hatch, a way of avoiding confrontation with government officials. “My research interest in Busoga is limited to the long period in history before Europeans entered Busoga,” wrote a doctoral student named David Cohen in a 1966 application for research clearance. “I pledge that I have no interest in the present political goings on, and that I have the good sense to keep from becoming involved
even in the slightest way.”

Cohen was to author a foundational work—*The Historical Tradition of Busoga*—based on the oral remembrances of elders. The book contained no references to government archives. In 1969 Makerere University’s History Department launched the “History of Uganda” project. With funding from the Rockefeller Foundation and the Ford Foundation, the project organized oral history projects targeted at rural Ugandan localities. All of the research projects that the earnest students of Makerere pursued were grounded in the distant past. The publications that emerged out of the “History of Uganda” project were groundbreaking in their careful focus on precolonial history and in their embrace of oral history as a methodology, but the authors studiously avoided any engagement with contemporary politics.

Access to the paper records of government was strictly limited. Officials were told to lock confidential files away in cupboards and drawers, and to keep the keys in their personal possession. Waste paper, defective copies, and drafts of secret documents were to be destroyed. In December 1970 the president’s office created its own archive repository. It was to house “all the numerous documents from ministries and the public properly sorted out and easily available when requested by the president.” Documents classified as “Top Secret” were to be kept in the personal possession of the president’s private secretary.

All of this attention to access belies the fact that, off in the provinces, a great many government archives were turning into rubbish. In 1969 an accountant who was inspecting a government-run hostel in Kigezi District happened upon three gunny sacks full of papers in a storeroom. Dating to the 1940s, they were the files of Paulo Ngologoza, one of the great men of the former age. In a region without kings or chiefs the British had made him head of the local government, a powerful position without precedent. His position was discontinued at the time of his retirement, and the files of his office were junked. The accountant who found them reported that the papers had been crushed under the weight of the vehicles that were parked in the hostel’s shed, so that “most of the files were also torn and others scattered.” Convinced that the papers would be “useful records for future reference or history rather,” the accountant gathered up the decaying paperwork, tied it in into nine bundles, and brought the lot over to the offices of the district’s clerk.

It took heroic and unusual efforts to make Paulo Ngologoza’s files into an archive, subject to an official regime of preservation and organization. The same was true for many other archives held in Uganda’s districts. In 1968 an official described how, in more than one storeroom, he had encountered cases where the files have been left unattended on damp floors, with the result that the pages have got gummed together, the ink has spread and the whole file is a mass of illegible writing, very often on paper which has decayed to the extent that it just crumbles to pieces. Or, there are cases where the files have been left unattended, and when they are wanted some years later, the only remnant is the mud of white ants who have attacked the files.

This same official reported that, in district government offices, clerks had the “habit of just chucking the file into the nearest available receptacle, quite often with no security at all.” On one occasion the writer had found a peanut vendor in Entebbe selling his nuts wrapped in the papers of a government ministry.
Why, at a time when scholarly research was supervised and controlled with great care and attention, were so many archives in Uganda’s districts disordered, junked, or exposed to water and decay? They were obsolete. For the Obote government the archives of local government did not merit preservation, curatorship, and attention. Local heroes did not deserve to be remembered. Obote’s regime could not claim power on the basis of a mass struggle, or as the outgrowth of an interregional campaign against colonialism. After 1966—following the abolition of Uganda’s kingdoms—the Obote government was struggling to consolidate political life around the central government. Officials had little reason to regard the records of the old political order as worthy of study or conservation.

Figure 6. Unearthing the archives of the Tooro Kingdom, Fort Portal, 2014.

Like the British government of colonial Uganda, Milton Obote’s regime felt itself under pressure from Ganda dissidents who claimed—on the grounds of their glorious history—a predominant role in public affairs. Obote’s regime narrowed knowledge about the past in order to deprive sophisticated campaigners of information and close off a potentially important resource for opposition. It was not a time for transparency. Neither was there space for curatorship.

Making History in the 1970s

Idi Amin overthrew Milton Obote’s government in January 1971. His coup ushered in a new epoch in Uganda’s history. There was much to document, much to record. The campaigning momentum of the Amin years created a vast concourse of paperwork that needed to be organized, catalogued, and archived. That was how the accomplishments of the time could be remembered and celebrated. It was a way of taking credit.
President Amin came to power vowing to roll back the lassitude and corruption that had crippled the Obote government. For every social problem there was a campaign. Targets were set, people were mobilized, rallies were held. The anniversary of the January 1971 coup was an annual occasion for taking stock and for manufacturing evidence showing victories won and obstacles overcome. In 1976 the organizing committee marked the 5th anniversary of the coup by composing a book “showing the achievements of the military government within the last five years.” President Amin himself embarked on a county-by-county tour of inspection. In every county and district officials were obliged to produce evidence of forward progress. The chief of one county in western Uganda had much to report: the number of children in schools had doubled; thirty new block farms had been opened up; one hundred springs had been cemented; and fifty new roads had been built. It is not clear where these impressive numbers came from: the chief did not mention any baseline statistics with which to contrast the innovations of the past five years. Regardless of their provenance, signs of progress were essential.

The need to document, record, and preserve the accomplishments of the time obliged Uganda’s note takers, secretaries, and scribes to be evermore careful in their work. Shortly after the coup the permanent secretary in the Ministry of Public Service wrote to local government authorities about minute-taking. Government officials were obliged to keep minutes in English, not in the vernacular languages of Uganda. It was an administrative convenience, a way of allowing officials from outside the locality to read the paperwork. It was also a way of ensuring that the records of government could be understood by posterity. “Our records in the office should be up to date and uniform as much as possible,” wrote a district commissioner in western Uganda, “in order to help the future generations of public servants who might not have translators.”

Amin’s officials thought of themselves as history makers. When in 1975 the government official responsible for Rwenzori district was transferred to another place, he made a point of emphasizing—in a meeting with his colleagues—that his deeds should be remembered:

Be it therefore recorded in the annals of Rwenzori District that whatever I did and whatever the Pioneer District Officers now on transfer elsewhere in Uganda did were done for God and Our Country.

Where else did the annals of Rwenzori—or any other district—reside except in the files of local government? There was no public library in which the founders of the new order could commemorate their achievements. It was in the paperwork of government that the men of the Amin regime hoped to record their achievements. That is why—throughout the 1970s—so many civil servants were prodigious producers of paperwork.

Today the district archives of Uganda bulge with paperwork produced by local government officials who photocopied, duplicated, and distributed their reports to fellow officials scattered across Uganda. For example: the committee responsible for organizing the “Keep Uganda Clean” in Masaka district, near Kampala, copied the minutes of their meetings to every provincial governor in Uganda. I found their reports in the archives of Fort Portal in western Uganda. The district agriculture officer in Bundibugyo, on Uganda’s western border, sent copies of a 1976 letter addressed to one of his subordinates to all of Uganda’s district agriculture officers. Marooned in Uganda’s most remote principality and lacking petroleum
to fuel his motorcycle, the officer had not left his office for five months. But in postal correspondence, copied and distributed around Uganda, he found a means to address a wide audience with evidence of his work.

The archives of the Amin government are full of duplicated paperwork produced by people who, like the official in remote Bundibugyo, felt the need to broadcast news of their successes. It was a way of ensuring that their valorous deeds would be noticed, credited, and valued. The paperwork they produced became a patrimony that could document the many triumphs of the regime. In a 1977 circular, the national archivist wrote to all of Uganda’s provincial governors to proclaim that archives were “the instruments from which the present and future generations can learn about the history of this nation in its correct perspective.”

The documents “depict our national heritage,” she argued, and “care should be taken to see that they are being properly stored, preserved and well looked-after.” She ordered that archive files should be stored in rooms without leaks or insects, and warned that officials from the archives department would soon tour the provinces, inspecting the condition of archival material.

The following year President Amin retained the services of a consultant from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to assess Uganda’s national archives service. J. M. Akita was the former chief archivist of Ghana. He spent a month in Uganda, and reported that the national archives were in a state of disorder. There was no room for sorting files in the basement repository where they were kept, and neither was there a reading room where researchers could access the collection. The archive repository had been full since 1962, the year of Uganda’s independence, so in every government ministry there was a proliferation of archive files stored in attics, basements, and other out-of-the-way places. Mr. Akita recommended a dramatic expansion of Uganda’s archival infrastructure. He wanted the national archives to be moved from their remote location in Entebbe to Kampala. He recommended the creation of a conservation laboratory where damaged files could be properly restored. And he suggested that the staff establishment should be expanded to sixty people.

By the time Mr. Akita’s report was published in early 1979 the time for historical preservation had expired. The Amin government was confronting an invasion from Tanzania, and by April that year President Amin had fled the country. Mr. Akita’s report, with all of its grand plans, was doomed to be ignored. It came from a different era. In its unrealized ambition, it is a marker of the aspirations of the 1970s.

**Archives and the Contemporary Order**

The tumult that marked the end of Idi Amin’s government resulted in the destruction of a great amount of paperwork. The district archives in Mbarara were destroyed when the Tanzanian army camped near the headquarters and used the old papers as kindling for their cooking fires. In Lira—in the north—the district headquarters was sacked in July 1985, when the soldiers of Tito Okello overran the town. Looters axed through the doors in the administration building, leaving none of them unopened. They took away office chairs and desks, used tables as firewood, and removed all of the seats in the district council chamber.
Filing cabinets were carried away. The looters dug into the strongroom and destroyed the boxes of tax tickets kept by the district’s assessors. The cashbooks and ledgers were used as kindling.59

Some of Uganda’s government archives came to a spectacular and fiery end, but there was no systematic campaign of destruction following Idi Amin’s overthrow. The most pressing danger was mold, insects, and vermin. The National Archives were kept in Entebbe, in the same warren of basement rooms where, in colonial times, British archivists had stored them. There was only one archivist in government service—Eugene Wani—who had formal training.60 In 1988 the government sent out a notice inviting Ugandan citizens to use the archive, which then held 50,000 files.61 But when an official from the Ministry of Works came to conduct research, he found the repository in a jumble. Only one light bulb worked properly, and the papers were “covered with water resulting from a leaky roof which had remained unattended for several years.”62 By 1990, when the International Development Research Centre made a survey of Uganda’s national archives, they found that the archives were kept in what the surveyors called “cramped and ill-lit accommodation.”63 There were no boxes, for the archive had last received an allotment of cardboard boxes in 1955.64 In 2000 the Danish International Development Agency installed metal shelves, cleared the repository of termites, and equipped a new conservation room.65 But—with the exception of the oldest files, organized in the early 1950s by Patrick English, Uganda’s first archivist—none of the holdings in the Uganda National Archives were catalogued.

It was not the time for archive work. The National Resistance Movement had come to power in 1986 after a long and bloody guerrilla war. The new president Yoweri Museveni and his colleagues considered their regime to be the harbinger of a new epoch. An official described the paradigmatic government officer as “the model of the new man. He is the paragon of talent and good manners, he is the messenger of the new civilization and the propagandist of the Era of the Wananchi [the People].”66 Authorities in the resistance movement thought themselves free from the burdens of history: they were “completely disencumbered of a shameful past,” and were therefore “free to think and act.” They sought to direct citizens’ attention toward a bright and promising future, not toward the benighted past.67

This is all a way of explaining why, by the 2000s, so many of Uganda’s archives were endangered. In a former time they had been critical to the maintenance of exclusionary regimes of information; access to them had been carefully monitored and controlled. In the wake of Yoweri Museveni’s revolution government archives had become detritus, leftovers from an old and embarrassing era. In Soroti the district’s archives were kept in a shed made of iron sheets. There was a termite mound adjoining the shed, and many of the files had been turned into mulch. In Jinja the archives were kept in a basement below the district headquarters. When it rained the basement flooded with water, and hundreds of files had turned into a gelatinous mess. In Kigezi district the files were kept in an attic above the headquarters building. The attic was stuffed full of bureaucratic debris, making it impossible to access the archive.68

When my colleagues and I began organizing and cataloguing these and other archives we brought to light a great many things that had been dead, buried, and lost to history. In 2018 a large team of students from Michigan and Makerere worked with Uganda’s judiciary staff to organize the thousands of case files kept in the basement below the High Court in Kampala.
One morning in August I opened a file labeled “High Court case 41 of 1981: Uganda versus Abdullah Nasur.” In an envelope at the front of the file were three things—a ring, a golden rosary, and half of a Biro pen, each of them tagged as an exhibit. The file concerned the murder of Francis Walugembe, who had once the mayor of Masaka, one of Uganda’s leading towns. One afternoon in September 1972 he had been picked up by a group of soldiers and taken to the military barracks outside Masaka. While a crowd watched, Lieutenant Nasur—an intelligence officer—walked out from the barracks and told Walugembe to say his prayers. Walugembe was holding the rosary when Nasur stabbed him, first in the throat and again in the abdomen. He licked the blade as he tucked it back into his belt. That evening the body was summarily buried in an unmarked grave in the city’s cemetery. There Walugembe’s remains lay until 1979, when they were unearthed during an investigation into his murder. The police identified the body by the class ring he had on his finger, by the pen in his shirt pocket, and by the rosary in his hand.

Figure 7. Personal effects of Francis Walugembe, archives of the Judiciary of Uganda.

Holding the rosary in my hands forty years after his violent death, I quietly said a prayer for Walugembe and his family, then tucked all of these things back into the envelope. Recovered from the basement where they had been stored, they have been brought back to life as archival objects. They await redeployment as a memorial, as a museum exhibit, or as evidence.
Conclusion

There are reasons to think that the Ugandan government is taking seriously its duty to Francis Walugembe and all those whose historical experiences are recorded in its archives. In 2016 Prime Minister Ruhakana Rugunda officially opened a new building in the center of Kampala to house the National Archives and Records Centre. The structure was funded by the World Bank and built by a Chinese company. There is a fire suppression system and five cold rooms in the basement where fragile materials can be kept. There is an elevator. There is a room specially dedicated to digitization, and another to microfilming. There is even a fountain adjoining the grand entrance. In many ways this new structure heralds a new era in the history of archival management in Uganda. At the ceremony opening the new building the State Minister for Public Service promised that

In the 1970s, confidential government records could be found in markets used for wrapping merchandise. I am happy to inform you that government now attaches great importance to information and that has stopped. You will never see our rolexes [flatbread sandwiches] with confidential government information. 69

And yet—even with this and other promises of support—the position of the Uganda National Archives remains precarious. The World Bank and other development agencies funded the building to promote transparency in government business. It was part of a $70 million project called the Uganda Public Service Enhancement Program. 70 The project was meant to include—among other things—a new Civil Service College and an automated payroll system. Over the course of years, however, the project was scaled back, as several of the donors withdrew their funding, complaining of corruption at the Ministry of Public Service. By 2015, when the World Bank closed the project, the building was not operational. It was handed over to the Uganda government without shelves, desks, computers, or other essential equipment. 71
Today it remains unclear whether the National Records Centre and Archives will have the legal and financial resources it needs to do its work. At the time of writing the staff establishment stood at five people. The timeworn shelves, desks, chairs, and tables from the old repository in Entebbe had been moved into the new building in Kampala. The internet had not been connected, even though the building was designed to be fully networked. The costs of running the air conditioner far outstripped the institution’s budget, and so the air conditioning was ordinarily kept off. Thousands of boxes of new material continued to arrive from government ministries that had, since the 1960s, been accumulating great piles of paperwork, but the staff to organize and catalogue this newly acquired material was small. In 2017 half of the building was requisitioned—at the direction of the president—by the Commission of Inquiry into Land Matters. The commission’s staff occupied the library, the search room, the offices, and several of the storage rooms and partitioned them to suit their purposes. The books, newspapers, and files were pushed off to one side, and the staff of the National Archives was relegated to the basement.

The administrative position of the archives is similarly cloudy. The 2001 National Records and Archives Act, which would establish the National Archives in law as an independent agency of government, was never been adopted by Uganda’s parliament.\(^\text{72}\) The National Archives sits within the Ministry of Public Service, the government entity responsible for the management of the civil service. The ministry’s view of archival preservation is severe. Its retention and disposal schedule sets out strict timelines: documents relating to the “routine functions and
celebrations” of government are to be destroyed ten years after the event; case files for criminal and civil cases are to be destroyed twelve years after the litigation is completed; flimsy files—copies of outgoing correspondence originating in government offices—are to be destroyed after six months. This aggressive plan for the destruction of government records is —according to the minister—a means of “saving on storage costs, space, equipment, and time,” allowing the archives to “manage Government records in an efficient and effective manner.”

The paper archives of Uganda have endured through the changing tides of history. In the years before the country’s independence they were carefully edited to ensure that they did not reveal embarrassing truths about British colonial government. In the 1960s they were placed off limits by a government convinced that historical research would undermine its authority. In the 1970s the archives were revalued and made, briefly, into a patrimony that could testify to the achievements of the time. Since the 1980s they have largely been neglected, hidden away in forgotten corners of dilapidated buildings.

It is ironic that, as they become subject to a new regime of curatorship, the paper archives of Uganda face new and pressing dangers. These dangers do not come from the paranoia of British censors, or from the dangers of water, mold, and decay. They arise from the implacable efficiency of archivists.

Primary Sources

The National Records Centre and Archives is located in Wandegeya in Kampala, on Lourdel Road, in a large unmarked building adjoining the Ministry of Health. The oldest materials, which date to the late 19th century, are the papers of the colonial secretary, the administrator who was responsible for the government bureaucracy. The papers—which are brittle and urgently need preservation—were originally organized by Patrick English, the first professional archivist in Uganda, in the 1950s. During the 2011–2012 cataloguing project the newer material in the archive was placed into several deposits, each of which corresponds to the categories in which the files were originally indexed. There are three deposits from the governor’s office: the Secretariat collection, which contains papers of a general kind; the Secretariat Topical collection, which contains files organized by subject; and the Chief Secretary collection, which appears to have been organized by the British bureaucrats who censored the archive during the last years of British government in Uganda. There are several deposits in the archive that originate from other government offices: the Public Works Department, the Supervisor of Elections, the Civil Reabsorption office, and the Office of the President. There are in addition deposits from Eastern and Northern Provinces.

After the national archive was moved to its new building, thousands of boxes of archival material came into the repository, as government ministries divested themselves of papers that had been accumulating since 1962. At the time of writing none of this newly acquired material was available for researchers to use, although it was being
organized and catalogued. The Ministry of Public Service has encouraged archivists to relocate material held by district governments to Kampala, where they can be properly cared for. The district archives of Kotido, Moroto, Soroti, Mbale, and Jinja were relocated to the building of the National Records Centre and Archives, and staff created handwritten transfer lists for several collections. These lists are available for researchers to consult. The Jinja archives <https://derekrpetersondotcom.files.wordpress.com/2015/07/jinja-district-archives-catalogue.pdf> were catalogued in 2015, and are now accessible at the National Records Centre and Archives.

Outside Kampala, district government archives are kept in varying degrees of order. The archive in Kabale District <https://derekrpetersondotcom.files.wordpress.com/2015/07/kabale-dist-archives-catalogue.pdf> was organized and catalogued in 2013, and is kept in a well-lit attic above the district headquarters. The archives of Kabarole District, <https://derekrpetersondotcom.files.wordpress.com/2015/07/kabarole-dist-archives-catalogue.pdf> and Hoima District <https://derekrpetersondotcom.files.wordpress.com/2015/07/hoima-dist-archives-catalogue.pdf> are digitized, as is the archive of the Tooro Kingdom <https://derekrpetersondotcom.files.wordpress.com/2015/07/tooro-kingdom-archives.pdf>. These are available for researchers to consult—either on paper or in digital form—at the Centre for African Development Studies, Mountains of the Moon University. The district government archives in Bundibugyo were organized by the records officer in the early 2000s, and are accessible through the offices of the Chief Administrative Officer. The archives of Lira District are in a state of disorder. They can be accessed through the district records office. The archives of Kasese District are kept—bundled in twine—in a shed adjoining the records office. There are archives in Masindi, Gulu, and other districts as well.

The Uganda Broadcasting Corporation (U.B.C.) holds a very substantial collection of photographs in its headquarters building on Nile Avenue in Kampala. Over 70,000 negatives and several hundred prints have come to light as part of a preservation project organized by the U.B.C., with funding and support from the University of Michigan and the University of Western Australia. The preservation team has thus far digitized more than 30,000 negatives, and a catalogue for the whole collection is available <https://derekrpetersondotcom.files.wordpress.com/2019/07/ubc-film-negative-archive-database-2018.09.21.xlsx>. Researchers wishing to use the photographs should consult the U.B.C. access policy <https://derekrpetersondotcom.files.wordpress.com/2019/07/ubc-access-policy.docx> and fill in a permission form <https://derekrpetersondotcom.files.wordpress.com/2019/07/ubc-permission-form.docx>. At the time of writing access to this collection was only possible for users who presented themselves at the U.B.C. building.

Church archives in Uganda are generally well kept. The archives of the (Anglican) Church of Uganda are held in the library of the Uganda Christian University in Mukono. They were originally put in order through the efforts of librarian Fred Mukungu. In 2006 Yale Divinity School furnished funding and expertise to digitize the whole of the collection. The work was done—over the course of years—under the careful stewardship of the archivist Christine Byaruhanga. The whole of the Church of Uganda archive <https://primarysources.brillonline.com/browse/archives-of-the-church-of-uganda> is available as a pay-for-access database managed by Brill Publishers. The archive of the Catholic Diocese of Fort Portal, in western Uganda, was digitized through a project financed by the University of Notre Dame. This well-organized archive can be accessed through the offices of Virika Cathedral, outside Fort Portal. The archives of the (Catholic) Archdiocese of Kampala date to the late 19th century, and consist largely of the papers of the Pères Blancs, the White Fathers missionaries. The papers are kept at the campus of Rubaga Cathedral in Kampala.

The archives held in Makerere University’s library are full of interesting things. There is a very large collection of newspapers, including invaluable copies of many of the older newspapers published in Uganda’s vernacular languages. This collection can be accessed in the Africana section, which also holds a number of important archival
collections, many of them assembled by the historian John Rowe. These include the papers of the statesman Apollo Kaggwa, the missionary Apolo Kivebulaya, and the politician Yusufu Bamu'ta. There is a substantial collection of administrative paperwork from the Buganda Kingdom [http://www.makula.mak.ac.ug:8080/lib/item?id=264779&theme=maklib1], and an important archive of the political party Kabaka Yekka. There is also a substantial collection of papers from the Church of Uganda held at Makerere, most of them pertaining to the early life of the church.

In the storerooms of the Central Police Station in Kampala there is a substantial collection of case files and other paperwork relating to legal investigations. The material dates from the 1950s to the 1990s. The archive was put in order by University of Michigan doctoral student Doreen Kembabazi in 2015, and a handwritten catalogue was created. It is hoped that the collection will be transferred to the National Records Centre and Archives in due course.

A number of privately held archives are available online. The papers of Ham Mukasa [https://eap.bl.uk/project/EAP656>, eminent Ganda politician of the early 20th century, were digitized through a project organized by the British Library. The medical records of the Albert Cook library [https://eap.bl.uk/project/EAP617> at Mulago have likewise been digitized by the British Library. The digital collection consists of patient records from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The papers of Eridadi Mulira [https://www.repository.cam.ac.uk/handle/1810/257498>, politician and philosopher of the mid-20th century, were digitized by the Centre of African Studies at the University of Cambridge.

The National Archives of the United Kingdom holds a very considerable amount of archival material pertaining to Uganda. Much of it originates from the Colonial Office, and is therefore outside the scope of this review. But several hundred files kept in London originated in Uganda. These files were created as part of “Operation Legacy,” and were shipped to London in 1961 and 1962. They are available for researchers under the file series FCO 141 [https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C12269323>. These files overlap very substantially with files held in Uganda's National Archives, and it is hoped that the Uganda files in FCO 141 will soon be repatriated to Uganda, where they were created.

Links to Digital Materials

Uganda National Records Centre and Archives

Chief Secretary’s Office [https://derekpetersondotcom.files.wordpress.com/2015/07/chief-secretarys-office-deposit.pdf>

Civil Reabsorption [https://derekpetersondotcom.files.wordpress.com/2015/07/civil-reabsorption.pdf>

Elections [https://derekpetersondotcom.files.wordpress.com/2015/07/elections.pdf>

Office of the President [https://derekpetersondotcom.files.wordpress.com/2015/07/office-of-the-president.pdf>

Provincial Papers [https://derekpetersondotcom.files.wordpress.com/2015/07/provincial-papers.pdf>

Public Works Department [https://derekpetersondotcom.files.wordpress.com/2015/07/public-works-department.pdf>

Secretariat [https://derekpetersondotcom.files.wordpress.com/2015/07/secretariat.pdf>
Secretariat “Topical” collection  

Jinja District Archive  

Centre of African Development Studies, Mountains of the Moon University

Tooro Kingdom Archive  

Kabarole District Archive  

Hoima District Archive  

Kabarole District Forestry Office Archive  

Uganda Broadcasting Corporation Archive  

Kabale District Archive  

Church of Uganda archive  

Albert Cook library  

Ham Mukasa archive  

Eridadi Mulira papers  

Further Reading


Peterson, Derek R. “Uganda’s History from the Margins.” *History in Africa* 40, no. s1 (2013), s23–s25.


**Notes**


4. OS file note, 2 September 1955, file S.5282D, Office of the President (OP) Confidential papers box 53, UNA).


6. Acting Chief Secretary, circular, 17 July 1950, 452/3, Kabarole District Archives.

7. Chief Secretary, circular, 3 July 1950 452/3, Kabarole District Archives.


10. Fowle to Librarian, Colonial Office, 12 December 1955, file S.17043, box 59, OP Confidential papers, UNA.

11. “Access to archives,” file C.7724, box 40, OP Confidential papers, UNA.

12. Cartland to de Bunsen, 24 August 1956, file C.7724, box 40, OP Confidential papers, UNA.

13. Lennox Boyd to Officer Administering Uganda, 12 December 1958, file C.7724, box 40, OP Confidential papers, UNA.

14. Aidan Southall to Chief Secretary, 2 October 1956, file C.7724, box 40, OP Confidential papers, UNA.

15. Richard Rotberg to C.S., Entebbe, 31 August 1961, file C.7724, box 40, OP Confidential papers, UNA.

16. P. S., Office of the Chief Secretary, to P. S., Chief Minister, 22 September 1961, file C.7724, box 40, OP Confidential papers, UNA.

17. R. Clifford, file note, 21 April 1960, FCO 141/18409, British National Archives (BNA).


19. K. Waterhouse to W. Webster, 27 February 1961, FCO 141/18409, BNA.

20. Governor to Secretary of State, 22 March 1961, FCO 141/18409, BNA.

21. Secretary to the Governor to P.S. Security and External Relations, 26 October 1961, FCO 141/18409, BNA.

22. Chief Secretary, circular standing instructions, 3 March 1961, file S/INT 1, Moroto DA box 14, UNA.


24. F. Mills to MacMullen, Sarawak, 18 May 1963, FCO 141/19929, BNA.


27. S.A.S. file note, 10 March 1961, FCO 141/18409, BNA.

29. Robert Ouko to Lord Carrington, 9 July 1981, FCO 141/19913, BNA; and Record of a meeting held on 26 May 1983, FCO 141/19913, BNA.


32. Kampala to State Department, 22 February 1971, file POL 15–1 1/1/71, RG 59, SNF 1970–73, box 2644, U.S. National Archives.

33. Secretary of the Cabinet to Emery Bundy, 11 July 1966, Educ 5/4, Jinja District Archives.


35. P. S., Ministry of Regional Administrations, to P. S., Ministry of Internal Affairs, 13 August 1968, file C.7724, box 40, OP Confidential papers, UNA.

36. A. Mubanda, P. S., Ministry of Regional Administrations, to P. S., Ministry of Public Service, 26 October 1966, file C.7724, box 40, OP Confidential papers, UNA.


38. Viera Pawlikova to Permanent Secretary of Cabinet Affairs, 7 December 1967, file C.7724, box 40, OP Confidential papers, UNA.


43. Godfrey Uzoigwe to D.C. Fort Portal, 19 March 1969, 468/1, Kabarole District Archives.


45. Frank Kalimuzo to all District Commissioners, 29 February 1964, file S/INT 1, box 14, Moroto District Archives, UNA.

46. P. P. S. to Secretary for the Cabinet, 15 December 1970, file C.4180, box 2, Office of the President (new series), UNA.

47. Examiner of Accounts, Kigezi District Administration, to Administrative Secretary, 16 September 1969, Edu 1 “Research Personnel” file, Kabale District Archives.

48. F. Rodrigues to Secretary of the Cabinet, 14 September 1968, file T/C 17473, box 68, OP Confidential (new series), UNA.

50. Minutes of the committee organizing celebrations for the 5th anniversary of the 2nd republic of Uganda, 18 December 1975, ADM Central 4/11, Jinja District Archives.

51. County Chief, Butebe, Burahya, to D.C. Toro, 8 June 1976, 983/3, Kabarole District Archives.

52. W. Musoke Mutayanjulwa to all administrative secretaries, 21 May 1971, file CRA/238, box 85, OP Confidential papers, UNA.


54. D. C. Rwenzori to all members, Rwenzori District Team, 21 January 1975, file with no cover Kasase District Archives.

55. Minutes of a meeting concerning the Keep Uganda Clean campaign, Masaka, 3 September 1974, 352/1, Kabarole District Archives.


59. Administrative Secretary, Lira, to P.S., Minister for Local Government, 6 January 1986, “Office Organizations” file, box with no number, Lira District Archives.

60. Eugene Wani to P. S., Office of the President, 13 August 1986 file C/7724/1 vol. IV, box 7, OP (new series), UNA.


62. Assistant Secretary, Ministry of Works, to P.S., Office of the President, 2 November 1988, file C/7724/1 vol. IV, box 7, OP (new series), UNA.

63. International Development Research Centre, project summary, n.d. (but 1990), file C/7724/1 vol. IV, box 7, OP (new series), UNA.

64. Eugene Wani, “Brief for the proposed archives and records management workshop,” 4 November 1990, file C/7724/1 vol. IV, box 7, OP (new series), UNA.


68. District Executive Secretary to Senior Records Assistant, 10 May 1991, “Research Personnel, General” file, ADM 87, Kabale District Archives.


74. The archive catalogues listed here were created by a team at Mountains of the Moon University (MMU), not by Uganda government archivists. At the time of writing this collection of archives—which originate from western Uganda’s local governments—are kept at the MMU campus in Lake Saaka, outside Fort Portal.

**Related Articles**

- Reading the Archives as Sources
- The Internet and Social Media as Sources
- Archives and Historical Sources for Tanzania