

How the Colonists came to be here

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This is how I know it. It was told to me. I didn't see it myself. It was not until I became an adult that I understood.

It is said that a person came here who was a German. He lived there in the Bisikene area of Digodigo. His house was like those in Loliondo. The German ruled people harshly. A British man was in Kenya, while the German ruled here among us. The British man left Kenya and came to Kura.

He asked, "That German who rules and tortures you, where is he?"

He was told, "He's in Soyeta."

He said, "Would you know the day when he travels?"

They answered him, "Yes."

"Well then, watch him. As soon as he goes on a journey, come tell us."

Truly those colonists came to hide themselves along the road from King'orane in foreign parts. And his headquarters were in Erughata, and they were mainly in Erughata and Ngaresero. They had three houses; in Ngaresero, there in Erughata, and here. The house here was like the one in Loliondo. In Erughata it was like in Monduli. In Ngaresero it was like in Arusha.

Anyway, the colonists came to ambush the house in Erughata. The German was killed by the British colonist. Well, all of his Tanzanian guards became afraid, running away until they came to Erughata. The German colonist's guards were left behind. They went to Ngaresero to give report of what had happened there. They were brought to Arusha. Now the Germans left Arusha and came to beat up on the people of Digodigo. They went around killing people. Now that was the beginning of the first war. It continued for some time until it ended.

In the end, the British man ruled. He seized authority. He was the one who led the work on the colonists' road. The British man was in charge of all the roads. I tell you, the German used to ride a horse – that was his car. But then the road was made from Arusha to Karatu. What happened was that Batemi were seized to work on the road from Karatu to Loliondo. The ones who worked on the road from Karatu to Loliondo were of the age-set named Shabai.

Well, the colonist continued to hire people for work. The British man didn't kill people, he hired them. When he had to transport things, he found day workers. He made the roads from this house to Loliondo, to everywhere. People continued in this way until Nyerere came to bring us independence. That is how I have been told the story.

The road was made first by the age-set Shabai. The next to work on it were the Ngweryenda. And we who continued building were the Orumeryadi. I myself worked on the road until Kakesio, coming from Loliondo to Kakesio. We placed the road to pass through Endulin on the way to Kakesio. Now other comrades of ours came to bring the road down to the place called Snake's Camp near Karatu where there's wilderness. They left the road there, and we continued.

We were getting a salary, a salary of four shillings a month. We worked for almost five months at building the road. Sometimes our salary was a bit more; then we got five shillings.