

Cover sheet for an interview conducted in Zambia:

Mr. John Mwondela

8th January 1979 in Lusaka

Brief Biographical sketch (created after the interview, n.d.):

Born:	19 th July 1919
1927-30:	At school at Chitokoloki Mission
1937:	Had completed Standard VI while teaching
1939-41:	Jeannes course
1943:	Employed by government
Late:	Scotland
1952-56:	In Copperbelt
1956-62:	Back to Solwezi

The original cassette recording still exists. It is, however, very stretched. While two WAV files were generated and burned on a CD-R, they are only for parts of the interview indicated on the transcript: The first WAV file covers only pp. 1-6 of the transcript; and the second WAV file covers only pp. 11-12. (Pages 7-10 and pp. 13-22 were not legible and no longer exist except for the transcript.)

Note (1): Additional one manuscript page, n.d.

Note (2): Interview format almost same as used for Mr. Ngalande — see that file.

Note (3): See attached photograph of Mr. Mwondela's parents who are possibly the most highly educated Africans born in the NWP before World War II.

General note on all interviews and interviewees: These cover sheets were created from old notes 25 years ago. They contain key manuscript information in each interviewee's file. Often there is a short chronology of the interviewee's life written at the time of the interview. Most interviewees by this time (2006) are deceased; hence the huge potential value of this old interview. All interviews focused on education in the North West Province of Zambia mainly in the period from World War II until the 1970s. They often contain information on other topics that in some way related to education. All interviewees were in some way leaders of their own community or missionaries who had spent much of their life in the N.W.P. Most interview transcripts contain rectangular boxes for, or with, 5 numbers. These were used to code key data for research and writing in this pre-computer era. These codes are now meaningless for me and for any one else. Unless noted otherwise, these interviewees can be used by scholars without restrictions.

8/9/2006

3 5 4 0 0 to 3 5 4 9 19 A.D. Wilkin, Box 43, SOLWEZI

INTERVIEW WITH MR. JOHN MWONDELA BY DAVID WILKIN AT MR. MWONDELA'S HOME IN LUSAKA ON MONDAY, 8TH JANUARY, 1979, MID-AFTERNOON.

3 5 4 0 5

Mr. Mwendela: My name is John Mwendela. I was born at Chitokoloki on 24th July 1919. That was when many things really were not as they are now. That is where my father was doing missionary work together with Mr. ^{G.A.} Suckling, who opened the mission station in 1914. He came in 1911, but my father came to Chitokoloki in 1914 from Kavungu in Angola. So that is my background.

MR. MWONDELA'S FATHER.

Mr. Wilkin: Before you go on, I would like to hear a little bit about your father. I have heard indirectly a little bit. Why did he come to Chitokoloki? Did he have any education? What did he tell you about the early White men - missionaries and government officials - and what his relationship with them? And so forth.

Mr. Mwendela: I understand that when he was at Kavungu in Angola, he was employed by a senior missionary there. Maybe he was working in the house of that missionary. At that time he was able to read and write and he was a very keen Christian. He was one of the elders in the church. This, I should think, was late in the 19th Century.

When Mr. Suckling came to Chitokoloki to open this mission station, *after he had stayed at Kalezi Hill Mission in Mwinilunga for a year or two,* he had a partner - I can't remember the name. They started by settling at the confluence of the Kabompo. They discovered that the place was very bad because of mosquitoes. So they shifted to Chitokoloki and then this partner died. And so, Mr. Suckling had no one to assist him. At that time he wanted an African who was able to read and write and who had experience in handling people, to work with him. He couldn't find such a person around Chitokoloki, since it was a new place. Thus, he wrote to Kavungu, I think, and then the missionaries and the elders there decided on my father to come and help Mr. Suckling. That is how he came to Chitokoloki.

3 5 4 0 6 a

He was working as a partner, a friend, to Mr. Suckling. Suckling, himself, told me - this was after my father died - that "Your father was not my servant but was my friend. We were working together as friends". He was really a leader in such that he encouraged other people around to be productive in looking after themselves - you wouldn't just call it "agriculture" - because my father had bigger gardens. He could sell and get money out of it. My father later on - I don't know whether he learnt carpentry at Chitokoloki or in Angola - opened a big shop and was making chairs and tables to sell.

3 5 4 0 6 b

In fact, I have one of his old chairs from his workshop. It still is here with me. He was a good hunter. Again I have his old rifle although the Colonial Government didn't allow me to use it because it is so old. They warned me that if I ever used it, it would not kill what I wanted to kill, but ~~go somewhere~~ ^{the bullet would hit something} else! But I keep it as a souvenir. Through hunting, he could get meat to sell; meat to pay people to cultivate and help him in other jobs. So he got on through those activities.

3 5 4 0 7

He built a very big house in those days with glass windows and glass door. Although there were no iron ^{sheets} in those days, being far away from the line of rail, the house was thatched properly. I remember it was a house of four real big rooms, plus small pantries. He came to Chitokoloki, as I said, in 1914, but he died in 1927, leaving me a boy of about six years old, so I didn't see much of him.

He left mission work and went to Congo (now Zaire) and there he established himself again. He had a big camp of his own with many people and he entered into contract with miners. This would have been from 1924 to 1927, when he died. So he was producing timber to sell to the mines.

I stayed at Chitokoloki with my mother and my brother and sister because the house was in the village which they called Sapasa Village or Mwondela Village. There were so many relatives around so my mother was comfortable enough. She had a few people to look after her. So we stayed. I started schooling and I remember my first letter to write to my father. Mother was telling me what to write. Then I wrote to him. The big thing that he bought for me was a boy's bicycle. It was really thrilling for me to ride a bicycle in 1927.

I am the first born and I have one brother and one sister. But when my mother got married again, after the death of my father, we have another brother and sister.

3 5 4 0 8 a

Mr. Wilkin: Is there anything else we should add about your father? I know many people have said that he was an African missionary.

Mr. Mwondela: Yes I think that they could be right in describing him in that way, because he really came to this part of the country for missionary work. These other things were extras that he was doing.

Unfortunately, he died in the Congo whilst working there and my mother and relatives and his brothers sent some people to collect some property there and anything else that he left there, back to Chitokoloki.

3 5 4 0 8 6

I don't know, as he was in Congo, whether he was still in touch with Mr. Suckling. But his village was very close to the mission.

So because he was so outstanding in the Mwondela family, the brothers decided to keep the name. And so they were succeeding his name. His younger brother succeeded and became Mwondela. When he died, the third one became Mwondela. So all the children born from those two are also Mwondela. That is why "Mwondela" is now becoming a big name, because they inherited it from my father.

FAMILY BIOGRAPEY.

3 5 4 0 9

Mr. Wilkin: May we now skip to the opposite end, before we discuss your going to school, and discuss your own family - when you were married, your wife's full name, your children and how many grandchildren.

Mr. Mwondela: When children and grandchildren become many, some-times you forget how many you have! But I grew up at Chitokoloki and then got married there. My wife's full name is Kayina Doras Mwondela. We got married while I was still a mission teacher at Chitokoloki, in June 1936. Our first child was born at Chalimbana, Jeannes Teacher Training College as ~~they now call it~~ ^{it was called}. But in those days ~~they called it~~ ^{it was called} "Jeannes School". So I happened to be picked for two years training at Jeannes School. Then we went there and in 1940 we had our first child and so we called her "Jean", to remember the school. We had nine children, but now there are eight because one was killed by armed bandits ^{in 1973} here in Lusaka. Most of them are at work, having either finished Form II or Form V. But no one has gone to the University yet. My grandchildren are many - thirteen.

Mr. Wilkin: I am told that you play the organ, which you picked up by ear.

Mr. Mwondela: Yes, and now my son is very interested. He was recruited by a band called "Witch". So they have been twice to South Africa playing. They just came back about two days ago from Botswana. He is written as an organist - I don't know what type of music.

3 5 4 1 0 c

EARLY EDUCATION OF MR. MWONDELA.

Mr. Wilkin: Now let us go back to your own education when you started. Where you started. The date, the places, what the school day was like, what you studied in the lower and upper grades. Just whatever you would like to say about your own schooling in the early years.

3 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 0 | b

Mr. Mwendela: In my time schools were feared by children and some parents feared to take their children to school. Because of tradition, probably, they thought that the children would become Europeans and therefore not appreciate the village traditions.

But my case was not the same. I grew up at the mission station - although in a village, but close - so as soon as I was able to walk, I mean be on my own with other children, I started school presumably when I was six. That was 1927. We were just running around, playing and writing on sand. Our teachers were not trained teachers - people who were also able to read and write. We got on like that with the help of missionaries. So I did my primaries in 1927, 1928 and 1930. That was when we started to get some trained teacher. I have the first photograph of us at a boarding school at Chitokoloki. (He showed the photograph) I look very tiny!

Mr. Wilkin: What standard would you have been in at that time?

3 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 1

Mr. Mwendela: Because the system was different at that time; when you finished a certain textbook at that time - in those days they were just material, ^{words} things were written on a piece of cloth, almost like the Roman way - you ^{would be} transferred to another ^{advanced} class ^{after mastering the previous one.} So we were not sure which classes we were in. But I would reckon that at this stage, I should have been in Grade IV ^{those} days.

Mr. Wilkin: Who were some of the teachers in those ^{very earliest} days?

3 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 2

You said they were not well trained.

Mr. Mwendela: We had some missionaries who claimed ^{to have teaching knowledge -} I don't know whether it was just ^{by} experience or ^{by} training. But later, about three years after this, we had Mr. Reed, who was a trained teacher, an M.A., so he opened up the Teacher Training College, at Chitokoloki. ~~They~~ ^I was called ~~it~~ Normal School. And he started then producing trained teachers. Within my group, after ⁱnishing what I would determine was Standard IV (Grade 6), we were supposed to go to Mazabuka for teacher training, but Mr. Suckling feared the town influence on us and he decided to ask the trainees to send lectures to Chitokoloki so that someone could help us to study those lectures and later on to sit for Government exams. So we were studying those lectures and when we sat for Standard IV examination, now Grade 6, the examination included the teacher's examination as well. So we went through those and were classified as trained teachers.

3 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 3 | a

Mr. Wilkin: Now did you proceed straight through from Sub A and B to Standard IV without interruption or did you stop and teach?

3 5 4 1 3 6

Mr. Mwendela: Yes, this is a point. The missionaries were picking us from classes. When they saw that someone was bright enough that he could miss one or two lessons, he would be picked from that class to go and teach others. I was one of those. So, I was learning as well as teaching others at the same time. It went on like that until this examination came.

Mr. Wilkin: What subjects were you studying?
SUBJECTS IN SCHOOL - ESPECIALLY ENGLISH.

3 5 4 1 4

Mr. Mwendela: We were learning to read; learning to write; learning to read English; learning to speak English, because there were vernacular books as well as English; learning to count and calculate arithmetic.

Mr. Wilkin: Did you spend a lot of time on the Bible in religious classes.

Mr. Mwendela: Not a lot, but we were attending church services at the right times, but when it was time for school - in fact there was Scripture lessons just for a period - then we had other things also.

Mr. Wilkin: I would like to ask you more about English. You said you were learning to read and write English as well as your own languages. In what standard did this start? How did Mr. Suckling feel about your learning English?

Mr. Mwendela: Mr. Suckling had bigger ideas. He visualized that to do missionary work without educating people around you, you would not be with them for long because they would run away for greener pastures. But if you give them everything - you are training them and educating them to be self-reliant and continue with God's work around the mission. So I think he was right. He wanted to give education as he knew it. And there were books, presumably from Rhodesia or South Africa - I don't know where they were getting them from - readers, English readers - and we were struggling that way. It was difficult to learn English because there was no where else you heard it apart from the missionary. We were very keen to learn English because in those days if you ^{knew} had a bit of English, people in the society regarded you as highly educated because you could then become a clerk of the District Commissioner and things like that. So everyone was keen to learn English.

Suckling
policy

eng

...../

3 5 4 1 5

Mr. Wilkin: What time of day did you go to school in the early days?

Mr. Mwendela: We were going to school in the mornings and finishing off about mid-day. Because when one is young, ^{one} you can't be there the whole day so we went home and ate and so on.

CRAFTS IN SCHOOLS.

Mr. Wilkin: In addition to the subjects that you have already noted that you learned, did you learn any crafts, any woodwork, etc?

Mr. Mwendela: Yes. We learnt a lot in woodwork, in carving, weaving - weaving particularly. We were taught how to make mats out of sisal and how to dye sisal so that we had colours as we were weaving.

Mr. Wilkin: Where did they get the sisal from?

Mr. Mwendela: There is bush sisal, which looks like sisal but is a shorter plant which you pluck from the ground and prepare it. In fact the real sisal ^{which was planted around the mission station} is not so good. It ~~is~~ ^{is} long and ^{one couldn't} you can't handle it properly. But this bush one ^{was} ~~is~~ good; ^{one could} you can handle it properly and dye it and then weave it. In other words we were using local materials.

3 5 4 1 6

SCHOOL LIFE AT CHITOKOLOKI.

Mr. Wilkin: At the time you were in school, were there any girls in school? If so, were there separate schools?

Mr. Mwendela: When we started as children, we were all learning together. But when the whole education system improved and boarding schools established, girls were then separated from boys and there was a boys boarding school and a girls boarding school.

Mr. Wilkin: Were there many girls in school?

Mr. Mwendela: There were many girls in school. Parents eventually realised that when you send your girl to school, it is when she is brought up properly. She gets married properly and produces children. So parents were keen to send their girls to school.

Mr. Wilkin: So who was in charge of the boys boarding and the girls boarding? Was Mrs. Suckling?

Mr. Mwendela: Mrs. Suckling was in charge, but the mission was big and it had many other staff, so there were others like Mrs. Reed, who was also in charge at one time. Another lady was also in charge at a different time.

On the men's side, we had Mr. Daniel Ndumba, who is dead now, who was in charge of boarding when we were all teachers. He was Mr. Suckling's favourite. He was more-or-less like a child to him. *to Suckling*

WAV file one stopped here

...../

stopped

3 5 4 1 7

Mr. Wilkin: Were there any other Zambians besides Mr. Ndumba, who were very active in the school and a little bit ahead of you?

Mr. Mwondela: Well, on the school side, he was the "capitao", as they called him, and not "Headteacher", and myself and Mr. Mbilishi and Mr. Silas Chizawu; Mr. Yotah Muhila and Mr. Sakatengo (who is dead) - all of us were teachers. He was also a teacher but in charge of boarding as well. So, we worked together and helped each other.

Mr. Wilkin: So you were one of the first along with these men you have just named. These were sort of your classmates?

Mr. Mwondela: Yes.

Mr. Wilkin: When did a few outsiders come, like from Chavuma - Mr. Sachilombo Manuwele.

Mr. Mwondela: Those came much later. They found us already established teachers. They started also at Chavuma - their classes there, but at Chitokoloki, they developed Standard IV and V and VI - which is equivalent to Form II these days. Because Grade 7 should be equivalent to Standard IV. And when they finished Chavuma school, they used to come to Chitokoloki. Chitokoloki was considerably ahead of every ~~other school~~ *other school in the province.*

CHITOKOLOKI: AN EDUCATIONAL CENTRE AND MR. SUCKLING. 3 5 4 1 8 a

Mr. Wilkin: Why do you think Chitokoloki was so much ahead? Was this because of Mr. Suckling's attitude?

Mr. Mwondela: It was definitely Mr. Suckling's attitude because when he started this kind of education, he was working against the wishes of other missionaries. They did not like him doing that kind of work but he insisted because he saw the future. He was ahead and Chitokoloki results in the whole Northern Rhodesia, as it was then called, were very high. So much, that some boys used to come from Western Province - Mongu, Kalabo and elsewhere - trying to seek for places at Chitokoloki school. The results were the best.

Mr. Wilkin: Now that you have mentioned this about Mr. Suckling, let me ask you more. Some Zambians have said that he was very much opposed by other missionaries, even in C.M.M.L. That they opposed him to the point of being active against him. They felt he was going too far.

Mr. Mwondela: Yes, they are right because they didn't talk openly these things but we could assess the situation.

3 5 4 1 8 6

Mr. Wilkin: In other words, they tried to hide it from you but it was still quite obvious.

Mr. Mwendela: Yes, it was obvious, because Suckling, himself, would tell us what others were thinking about this type of education that he was offering us. But he was so established, was so senior that they just couldn't do anything. Any report that they sent anywhere would come back to him for comment on. He would convince people receiving such reports.

3 5 4 1 9

Mr. Wilkin: Now you showed me pictures of your brothers and sisters. Did they go to school as well?

Mr. Mwendela: Yes they went to the same school. Later on my sister got married to a teacher and they are still living in Zambezi. (His name is ^{Musan Yamba.} ~~Sawuyamba.~~ He is also a teacher at Makondo School.) My brother also went to Chalimbana for two years training and came back and was Headmaster at Zambezi (then called Balovale Upper Primary School) and then from there he joined Government and ^{became Education Officer.} ~~was then in education.~~ Later on he joined politics.

3 5 4 2 0

Mr. Wilkin: At that time were you and your friends satisfied with the education that you were getting?

Mr. Mwendela: We were satisfied at that time with what we were getting. In fact, there was a time when one Government Education Officer, an expatriate, came to Chitokoloki and found that our teacher at that time, Mr. James Caldwell, had gone over the limit - over the syllabus. He was teaching us some higher things which were not supposed to be taught at that level. So he asked him to reduce it. So we had no where else to get more education. In fact we would have liked to have gone on and on until university but there were no facilities to continue, so we just took what we were able to find.

TEACHER TRAINING AND TEACHING.

3 5 4 2 1 a

Mr. Wilkin: Now you have mentioned Standard IV was with teacher training; what actually happened? When did you sit exams? What other training etc.?

Mr. Mwendela: What happened was that we had these lectures and the examination was conducted by the D.C. at the Boma. So we were trembling because of the exams and because it was an office where we normally didn't enter; to be able to sit there and think freely was a bit of a problem. But we were comforted. We did our Standard IV examination there. It was mixed with papers on the teachers' examination.

3 5 4 2 1 6

After this examination, we waited a while for results, so we were taken on as trained teachers, but more-or-less like pupil teachers, while awaiting our results and the proper assessment of our salary. So this took us a few months and then we were properly assessed and established as trained teachers and then got our Government scheduled salary. Then after that, after some years of teaching, a Government officer in education came around to Chitokoloki to try and pick two out of many teachers ^{to be sent} ~~so we would go~~ to Chalimbana

for Jeannes training. *By that time I had passed my 5th class I was already teaching. I passed in 1937.*

3 5 4 2 2

Mr. Wilkin: Now were you teaching only at Chitokoloki, or did you go to some of the out-schools?

Mr. Mwendela: I was teaching at Chitokoloki Mission while at the same time assisting in distributing equipment to the village schools where other teachers were teaching. So I was busy teaching, while at the same time on weekends, Saturdays, or doing holidays, other teachers from village schools came to the mission for their chalk, their exercise books, pencils, slates and so on. So I was assisting in distributing these things and keeping record. So I was not spared to go out; I was so useful at the mission station.

3 5 4 2 3

JEANNES TRAINING.

Mr. Wilkin: Now I stopped you when you were mentioning a man came to pick two people to go for Jeannes training. Could you go on and explain.

Mr. Mwendela: He came around in 1938. The missionaries had difficulty in picking someone because we grew there and were ^{more} ~~or~~-less like children to the missionaries and it was difficult for them to pick one and leave the other. But this independent man came and particularly between me and Mr. Mbilishi, it was difficult ^{as to} ~~who~~ to pick. So this man looked at our work in classes and recommended to the missionaries that I should go to Chalimbana. I believe what impressed him in my class was the record I was keeping and the illustrations I was making. I was good at illustrating my lessons, so he found my blackboard very beautiful and the records that I kept on the walls. He did not tell me, but he told the trained Jeannes teacher who came around with me, that "You should take this one and take him to Barotseland, and Barotse National School and show teachers what they should do". So I knew that he was impressed. That is how I was picked.

3 5 4 2 4

Mr. Wilkin: Could you now tell about your journey to Chalimbana what it was like there, the training, etc.

Mr. Mwondela: It was certainly the first long journey that I made, although I had made journeys to Angola to see my uncle. But this one was from Chitokoloki to Mongu by boat. (My wife was with me.) I should also mention that Mr. Silas Chizawu was also picked. We went together - him and wife and myself and wife. So, the four of us went together to Mongu and joined the group there of other students going to Chalimbana and various places. We were all taken in a big lorry. It wasn't a comfortable bus as these days. We sat at the back like luggage, but we managed and came to Lusaka. School transport came to fetch us from Lusaka to Chalimbana. There we had an experience that we never had before, we were given houses but they said you build your own kitchens in your own spare time. So we had to embark on building kitchens. This was cutting trees, sticking them around and making pole and dagga and thatch and that was a kitchen. We had to clear our surroundings. They were newly built houses. We had to establish ourselves there. The school was new. There was no classroom block. Our classroom blocks were just shelters. Our desks were tops of paraffin boxes. That is how we started. We went on like that for a year until the school was finished and then occupied proper classrooms. So at Chalimbana we were trained in all activities, so that we would know a little bit of everything to help the villagers as we went back. So agriculture, husbandry, gardening, things like that, ~~we~~ were being taught ~~how to do them~~ ^{to us.}

Our wives were doing domestic science - knitting and sewing and child care and all that - to be able to work with women when we ~~were~~ ^{would be} taking charge of schools, and so on. They ^{trainers} were very serious in their ~~method of training~~ ^{method of training} the students ~~because they~~ were being graded and being given marks each time ~~they~~ ^{they} showed progress ^{to proceed} on any ~~subject~~ ^{subject}. They were being taught also on how to look after houses. These were not cement floors but ordinary dagga floors, ~~but~~ how to keep the floors shine and neat - all sorts of methods which we don't use now but ^{which} were necessary then.

My wife enjoyed her course and it helped us ~~to~~ because what ~~they were taught~~ ^{was learned}, they could ^{be} practiced in the home.

Also, my first child was born there, in the first year, in December, and we called her Jean.

...../

3 5 4 2 6

Mr. Wilkin: Can you recall if you had any classmates from Mwinilunga or Kasempa? Was there anyone else there, besides you two from Chitokoloki?

Mr. Mwondela: We had a classmate from Mwinilunga but he is dead now - Mr. Leonard Kawaṅu. (His son is the manager of the International Airport here. I met him recently.) He was the only one from Mwinilunga, plus the two of us from Chitokoloki.

Of course, we made other friends, but not from the North-Western Province. There might have been someone from Kasempa, but doing a different course. I can't remember.

We went there in September 1939 and were there in 1940 and finished up in 1941. We had a long tour also to Nyasaland (Malawi now). Our Principal wanted us to see other places where Jeannes work was being carried ^{out} and see what was going on and it was a good experience and very enlightening and we could see what they were learning in classes and what was being practiced. We could meet other

Jeannes teachers; although in Nyasaland they were emphasizing mostly agriculture rather than schools, but when we went ourselves, it was more on the schools side than agriculture. But all the same, we were happy to see what other countries were doing.

3 5 4 2 7

Mr. Wilkin: Before you went to Chalimbana what was your salary as a teacher, and how did this change after you finished your work and became a Jeannes supervisor?

SALARIES

Mr. Mwondela: When I told young people in the Public Service Commission my first salary, they kept on laughing at me! During the time I was studying at Chitokoloki, men's salary was 5/- a month with three ^{years} ~~years~~ of cloth as extra, as ration. This sounds very small, but in those days, you could buy short trousers for 2/6 - half a crown. You could buy a shirt with two shillings. So as things were cheap, even the standard of living was very reasonable. You could buy a chicken with a six pence. You could buy a goat for 2/6 or 5/-. And 5/- in that time was reasonable. But when I became a pupil teacher waiting for Government salary, I was being paid seven shillings and six pence. That was 2/6 above the ordinary salary. That ^{to} was enough at that time, but when Government salary came, I was now getting a salary of 21/-, which is a salary of four men. The missionaries thought that was really too much so they ^{persuaded} ~~deserted~~ us to have a portion for God's work,

Side one ended
WAV File
2 starts here
(but very stretched)

3 5 4 2 8

so I can't remember how much we were giving, perhaps two and six, for God's work at the Mission. So that went on.



JEANNES WORK

But after the training at Chalimbana, we were now transferred from Mission to Government. Mr. Suckling tried to fight against it, but Government said it couldn't let some remain mission employees while others were Government. Thus, after that training as Jeannes supervisors, we were Government employees. So I entered Government service in 1943, I think it was. But I was still working in Zambezi and later on, from Zambezi still, I was picked to go to Britain.

3 5 4 2 9

Mr. Wilkin: Before you tell about that, I should like to hear about your work as a Jeannes teacher. What experiences you had, what did you do in the villages, what was your relationship between government and mission. In other words, a little more detail about that period.

Mr. Mwondela: My work was to try and help teachers to do their work properly. I would come to a school and check the records of the teacher: his preparation, his schemes of work, and see ~~what~~ whether that agreed with Government syllabus; whether he is following that, and see what equipment ^{there} ~~was~~ was, for the children and himself, and whether it is adequate for him to carry out his work properly. And how he manages to keep the school - cleanliness and appearance of the children and himself and things like that. Then what is his relationship with the parents - how are parents benefitting from the school? What sort of things do they copy from the school? If nothing, then I would introduce a few ideas about what he should do and what villagers should do to support the school and things like that. Then I made a tour around the district - covering several schools and make my report to Government what I have seen, what I have done, and I propose what should be done. Then we were not supposed to give copies to missionaries, but because they were their schools, I went to them and talked to them about the things that I have seen and things that needed improvement and so on. We were not supposed to give copies to missionaries because as employees of Government, we were only supposed to report to our employer. You only talked to someone you went to help. It is my boss who, if he wants, would write to the missionaries.

WAV file 2 5 stopped here (top 5 stretched)

3 5 4 3 0

As Jeannes supervisors, we were under what was then called "Superintendents", now Chief Education Officers. So North-Western was part of Copperbelt Province so Headquarters was Ndola. So we wrote our reports to Ndola. Later on Headquarters was made in Solwezi, but it didnot stay long and came back to Ndola. That is where our reports used to go, copied to District Commissioners of the district.

3 5 4 3 1

Mr. Wilkin: Now you mentioned Mr. Chizawu was also trained, so did you divide what is now Zambezi/Kabompo between you or how did this work actually?

Mr. Mwondela: When we came from Chalimbana, we were all at Chitokoloki Mission waiting for directives. Then, later on Mr. Chizawu was given, I think, the Lunda schools on the Eastern side. Then there was a tug of war between Mr. Suckling and the District Commissioner at that time. The District Commissioner wanted me to go to Kabompo and work there. Mr. Suckling said "No". He wanted me to go to the Western part of the Zambezi and work there. So with the struggle, I was even delayed in starting my work until

3 5 4 3 2

Mr. Suckling won the battle. So I went to the Western side of the Zambezi and I opened a school called Kashona. I named it "Kashona Model School". That is the school I planned myself and helped to build. I built my own house there. I wanted it to look really a model for the village schools and so I was told it was Model. Then I operated from there and went to schools and came back to write my reports there. Some times those teachers who were able, would come to Kashona and see how teachers there ran this school. They were under my supervision all the time so they were really up to what I wanted them to be. That is how I operated as a Jeannes supervisor.

3 5 4 3 3

Mr. Suckling and the B.S.A.C. and Colonial Officials.

Mr. Wilkin: Could you make some comments about the relationship between missionaries and government officials before the late 1940s. You mentioned earlier, for example, when we were not recording, that Mr. Suckling and your father had to defend the people against the Government.

Mr. Mwondela: Yes. In those very early days of Mr. Suckling and my father, the Government which was established in the country was not the Colonial Government. It was the British South African Company. The officers from the Company were trying to establish discipline, to establish taxes and to make sure that everyone respected the authority; so they were moving on horses in those days - bicycles

3 5 4 3 3 6

were even few - no proper roads. They had messengers which were acting like police, sometimes like solders and these people were very, very cruel. They expected everybody to pay poll tax despite the fact that there was no employment anywhere.

I don't know where they expected people to find money, but Zambezi people being so industrious used to move long distances to Lobito Bay and do their business. Sometimes they took things from here I don't know what - and used to exchange for other things there and come with things like plates and the stuff they put in the mouths of those muzzle loading guns, we call it fundanga. That was very valuable in the country because people used to hunt and defend *themselves* with it, so whoever got it was able to sell it to very many people. So trading with Angola, the Portuguese along the coast, helped them to bring a lot of things. So they were able to pay their poll tax.



Those who were unable were being arrested. Sometimes imprisoned. Sometimes doing some jobs around the Boma. So the way they were being arrested appeared to be something like a hunter with an animal, almost trying to kill. They would not arrest in peace but with all the forces they could apply - sticks, beating them, and people used to die through beating and when Mr. Suckling picked a case of that nature, he would write very far - to the higher authorities, who would perhaps look into the matter and tell the District Commissioner's to be very careful. So when they used to know that this missionary had this stand, they were abit careful in handling people.

3 5 4 3 4 a

Even when the situation changed from the South African Company to the Colonial Government, the District Commissioners were equally rough. They had not settled down to show people a different attitude. They seemed to carry on that attitude from the British Company and at that time we had a Governor of Northern Rhodesia in Lusaka, so Mr. Suckling had an access to the Governor at any time he thought he would, so they still regarded him as high - high enough to damage their position as District Commissioners. So there was that carefulness through his stand.

The way they were going around was very interesting. Throughout their term of office, one good thing they were doing, as they were going around checking villages, was to send a word that the District Commissioner would be coming at such a month,

3 5 4 3 4 b

and at such a time and at such a village and so everyone was busy. They must make all villages clean. They must dig latrines and make sure that when the District Commissioner comes around he was satisfied. So people were so busy cleaning the villages ~~that~~ that helped people keep clean villages.

3 5 4 3 5

Mr. Wilkin: How would you say Government's attitude changed in this period up to 1949, towards the people in general and education in particular?

Mr. Mwondela: It was better in that by that time they were meeting people now who were able to talk to them in English, people who would understand what they were talking about and so that eased them abit. When you talk to someone and he understands, you feel abit comfortable, but when you talk to someone who is all the time fearing you, wanting to run away, then you become irritated at times. So I think that brought the change, because then they had a number of clerks who could work in their offices. They did not have messengers who were educated at that time, but they had a few clerks working with them. People were paying their taxes now more freely; people were getting employment here and there - those who could go to the Copperbelt would go back home. So things became more reasonable.

3 5 4 3 6

Mr. Wilkin: When you went to Chalimbana and went to Nyasaland and met people from different places, did you feel that the education you had seen at Chitokoloki was about as good as elsewhere? or how did you compare things.

Mr. Mwondela: I learned that Nyasaland was much ahead of Northern Rhodesia, in that they had places like Livingstonda, but there I found that in primary schools the emphasis was more on their vernacular. It was taught to a greater extent and they were more inclined to agricultural activities because that was their main activity in the country. I think they were ahead in certain fields, but we appeared to be ahead in Northern Rhodesia as far as English Language was concerned. I did not visit Livingstonia where I was told there were more educated people, higher training maybe.

3 5 4 3 7 a

FIRST GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS IN NORTH-WESTERN PROVINCE.

Mr. Wilkin: Before you went overseas in the later 1940s, had the Government opened any school? You mentioned your brother being the Government Head-Teacher at Balovale. Had they opened that school, or any schools, yet?

7
NUSG

3 5 4 3 7 b

Mr. Mwendela: Yes, the school at the Boma was a government school, so they were able to transfer. In fact after my brother's office, they transferred someone from the Copperbelt to the Boma, Mr. Mandona; he is still with government. He was the next Head-Teacher of that primary school.

That was the only government school. They tended to have Boma schools as government schools. That was the only government school in the whole district. It was directly under government until later on, they introduced a system of Local Education Authority schools.- they were being called "L.E.A. Schools". These became more and more in the country, as opposed to mission aided schools.

WORK OF A JEANES TEACHER (ADDITIONAL).

3 5 4 3 8

Mr. Wilkin: I need to take us in a full circle back to the Jeanes teachers as I have just thought of something else.

Would you compare what you did with that of the modern-day primary school inspectors? Or would you say it was more than that?

Mr. Mwendela: Yes, it is more-or-less like the inspector of today, but a Jeanes supervisor had two things: inspection of schools and inspection of villages. In villages he was concerned with agriculture ^{+ village welfare.} In schools he was concerned with the education of children ^{+ work of teachers.} So he had two things to do - more than just an inspector of schools.

OVERSEAS STUDY.

3 5 4 3 9 a

Mr. Wilkin: Now, regarding your first journey overseas to Britain. Can you give me the background of how this came about, and then what it actually was like and so forth. Then what you did when you came back.

Mr. Mwendela: After I started this Kashona Model School that I was talking about, then I was visited by one of the Education Officers from Lusaka. He came right up to the school. In fact he prepared his cold lunch in my house and we were chatting, and so he was asking me, "What else do you do apart from your work?" I said, "I have registered myself as a student in Rhodesia. I am taking correspondence course to improve my English". He well, "Oh, are you?" and I said, "Yes". "He said within a year's time, you will no longer continue that because we are thinking - he was whispering to me in confidence - of sending you somewhere". But he did not give me details.

3 5 4 3 9 b

And then I was on leave and I went to Angola I to see my uncle. Then as I left, at Lusaka, they announced there were courses overseas they would like to send people for training in education. So the Chief Education Officer, Ndola, received many applications from employees in the Government - Teaching Service. I did not know this. So he ignored all their applications. He applied on my behalf so that I could go. I went to Angola without knowing and on my way back, just as I entered Chavuma at the boundary, people came to me to say, "You are late! You are late! You are going to Britain. You are wanted". I said "How?" Then when I came home, I found that this was the situation. So the Education Officer wrote to me to say this is what I did for you but it is late now; I suppose I did the right thing. I thanked him very much, and he said that "Next year, we shall look into your case". This would have been Mr. Treiger. (He is no longer with us. I understand that he is in West Africa, or maybe Britain.) So that is how I went. We were so many who came for interview in Lusaka at the Secretariat. People who were interviewing us were top officials, including the one I remember who was a "big" Missionary in the Northern Province, Sir Stewart GoreBrown; He was a friend of Mr. Suckling. So out of very many - I think we were over fifty - they picked only four and I was one of those four.

So two of us went to Scotland at Moray House, in Edinburgh. We stayed there two years. Our friends who were going to London were only staying one and half years, but we stayed a complete two years. There, we were just thrown into their own classes, whereas in London it was a special course for overseas students. With us we were lucky because we were just put together with Scottish students who were doing their teacher training and so on. So we were learning together.

Mr. Wilkin: Were you at Moray House before Mr. Aaron Ngalande?

Mr. Mwendela: Yes. He went there much later.

When I came back, that is when I parted with Zambezi District. I was posted to Ndola, while other friends of mine were in other towns in the Copperbelt. We were given the title of "Assistant Education Officers" or "Educational Officer's Assistants". We were the first Africans - we were 4 Zambians then - to be given a motorcycle as government transport to help us to go around schools. So we were inspecting schools in that way. This would have been from 1952 to 1956.

...../

3 5 4 4 0

Then in 1956, I was transferred to Solwezi. I stayed in Solwezi six years, looking after Local Education Authority Schools in Mwinilunga, Kasempa and Solwezi Districts. I was then using a Land-Rover and a driver. By that time they had introduced the titles of "Manager of Schools". So as District Education Assistant, we were more-or-less attached to the Education Officer, ^{with little position of responsibility} ~~who has no report (2) to~~ ~~report from~~ ~~for you (?)~~, you are only reporting things to him. But when we were appointed as Manager of Schools, we were on our own. You ^{organize} ~~have arranged~~ your work and you do what you think should be done. You only reported to the Chief Education Officer. So I did that six years in Solwezi.

Then from there, I transferred back to Ndola.

3 5 4 4 1

Mr. Wilkin: Before you describe Ndola again, let me ask you a little bit about what you saw in the North-Western Province at that time in those districts compared to your home district. Did you feel that by this time these districts were about the same level educationally or was Zambezi still ahead, due to the influence of Chitokoloki?

Mr. Mwondela: At that time these other districts had come up tremendously because some people who had been at Chitokoloki and trained there, were loaned back to their home countries to help in education. We had big Local Education Authority Schools being run by local people. In fact, when I was in Solwezi, I had the Minister of Home Affairs, Mr. Mark Tambatamba as Assistant Head-Master to the Head-Master whom I was supervising. In fact, I helped him to become a Head-Master later on. People like Mr. Tito Kibolya, who was an M.P. for five years until he failed this time, was Head-Master at Kasempa. I left Mr. ^{Sankalimba} ~~(2)~~, he is now District Education Officer as Head-Teacher of the primary school in Solwezi. So at that time education had gone up even in those other districts.

3 5 4 4 2

Mr. Wilkin: Did you ever met Mr. Letchford and the Mutanda people? Were they still running their teacher training at that time?

Mr. Mwondela: Yes. Mr. Ginger Wright was at Mutanda when I was there and he was helping to run that school. ~~In fact, he is the man who had introduced Kaonde as a language on the radio.~~ At Kasempa, I didnot know the missionaries much, but Mutanda being close to Solwezi, I was seeing them quite often.

3 5 4 4 3 a

Mr. Wilkin: Now in your role as a government officer that you were back in Solwezi, 1956-1962, would you say that the missions still controlled the schools but the Government was now incharge? What was the relation of the Government and Missions?

3 5 4 4 3

Mr. Mwendela: Yes. Missions were controlling more schools than Government. Although I have mentioned three districts, Kasempa had only one L.E.A. School - at Kasempa - Solwezi had ⁴ Lamala, Lamba Kapijimpanga and Solwezi, itself, about four, Mwinilunga had three L.E.A. Schools. What used to happen was that government was assisting the missionaries in running these schools. They would estimate the teachers' salaries equipment, and payers(?), and so on and make a sum. Out of this sum, I don't know whether they were getting 50% from government or a little bit more. The rest would be from their mission fund. So for that they were also subjected to inspections and made reports, and so on. Government controlled all syllabuses and examinations by that time.

3 5 4 4 4

Mr. Wilkin: So it was really for the missions to cooperate with government, rather than the government to cooperate with them.

Mr. Mwendela: Yes, it was for the missions to cooperate with government.

Mr. Wilkin: By that time would you ^{say} education had come closer to the people? Were the people happier with education by that time?

Mr. Mwendela: When I started to school ~~that was~~ ^{the time} when some people were running away. ^{But by the time in question} ~~By that time~~ people had already seen the value of education, so the problem was to find room for all the children, in certain cases. In other cases there were still vacancies for children to come. ~~No,~~ I would say by that time that parents had known that education was essential.

3 5 4 4 5

Mr. Wilkin: Would you say that by this time in the 1950s when you were back, that people had began to see the North-Western Province as a political unit, despite the differences between the Lunda, Luvale and Kaonde?

Mr. Mwendela: No. At that time only the leaders, who were being brought into political meetings, like provincial Councils to discuss matters of the province and district meetings to discuss matters of the district. That is the time when leaders were beginning to think as a unit, but it wasn't so much with ordinary people. I think it is after independence, when political parties have worked hard in the villages, that is when people begun to see how necessary it is for people to work together.

Mr. Wilkin: Is there anything more that you would like to say about this period when you were back in the North-Western Province.

3 5 4 4 6

Mr. Mwendela: When I was posted to the North-Western Province, it came about because in Lusaka, when I was on leave in Zambezi, I met one big boss in Lusaka - not Mr. Treiger - but at that time, Mr. Cottrell, who was above Mr. Treiger. So he spoke to me, that he would like one to go to Zambezi and look after schools in the district. He proposed that he would make me occupy what is now the secondary school. There used to be a businessman's house, a very good house there, Mr. Rudge. When he left that house was vacant and he said that would be your centre and you would operate from there. That was the arrangement. So I asked to go North-Western because they were thinking that I should look after rural schools surrounding Ndola, Kitwe and so on. But I thought that I would take up that chance which was more interesting. But when they transferred me to Solwezi the Provincial Education Officer there thought that if I went to Zambezi, I would be involved in tribal frictions between Lunda and Luvale. So he said you better be here rather than go to Balovale. He sent nobody there; it was just left like that. There was nobody then. So that was how I was stuck at Solwezi. I was then given the L.E.A. Schools in three districts.

3 5 4 4 7

Mr. Wilkin: About this time, I believe, the C.M.M.L. missions were one of the first, or the first, group of missions to give their schools over to government except for those at the stations. Can you recall why this was? Was this because of the Lunda - Luvale quarrels or what was the background?

Mr. Mwendela: After having described the stand of Mr. Suckling, nobody else, I think, would do quite the things he used to do. They found it expensive to run these schools on their own, with little help from government. So they felt that the missions had done their part to open up these places and it was really the work of the government to bring education to the people. The missionaries should bring the Word of God. So, I think, that is one of the reasons they gave up their schools. It was becoming too difficult to continue.

It was not the ~~quarrels~~^{squabbles} that made them do this. After all schools were in villages and wherever they were, those in Lunda villages were learning Lunda and those in Luvale villages were learning Luvale. So as far as that was concerned, there was no problem. It was the running of the schools which was becoming expensive.

Mr. Wilkin: Now after you left the North-Western in 1962, would you like to give a quick summary of your work in education until you left the field.

4 5 4 4 8

Mr. Mwendela: Well, in education, as I was saying, I started off as a mission teacher and this took me seven years and after my training at Chalimbana, I joined government and this took me about 21 years and then when leaving education, perhaps I should mention what the other people did for me. The Managers of Schools in the whole Copperbelt Province were very sad that I had to leave so they made a gathering, 1967, and privately arranged to give me a present. So they bought me a copper tray and two mugs. (He showed them to me.) These were a remembrance. They used to pick me as their spokesman; their chairman of their meetings. Whenever we wanted to say something to government, I would stand in their place, so they appreciated this.

Then, I now came to Lusaka and joined the Public Service Commission as Secretary. I stayed in that position for a year and then I was as brought in a member of the Public Service Commission. Therefore, they had to retire me from the Civil Service to do that job. So I did it from that time up until this time I am elected as Member of Parliament.

4 5 4 4 9

Mr. Wilkin: My questions are about finished, but would you like to reflect in general about the changes that have resulted in education over the years since your early years.

Mr. Mwendela: Sounds broad, but in short, one would say that there was a period when people were afraid of education; there was my period of being a teacher when people were learning with interest to try and grab anything that they came across. We are coming to the stage now where, although people are scrambling for positions in schools, but whether it is from the teaching side, or from the pupils' side, seriousness appears to be disappearing slightly. Particularly in village schools, you hear stories that teachers spend more time in drinking and so children will follow ^{Suit. I still think that the} effort we put into teaching in my time, does not compare with the effort the primary teacher is putting in at this time. Maybe it is due to modern methods, environment, or children are picking up things easily, that makes teachers feel less inclined to keep it up. But that is the feeling I have. We have more children these days than we used to have but we were hammering them more in those days than these days. Some of us are parents these days and we get a book of our child and see what is going on and you can't see anywhere a teacher had sat with this boy and given him an example. It is all mark, mark. One doesn't know where they are marking themselves or being supervised, one doesn't know. We used to give a lot

3 5 4 5 0

of homework which you don't see these days.

Mr. Wilkin: Now how would you reflect on what ^{you} consider your new role as a new politician to be in improving our educational system in modern Zambia to bring it up to world standards.

Mr. Mwendela: I have already vowed that when I have a chance to visit my constituency, I will not leave the schools out. I will have time to go to one of the schools and sit down and see what the teachers are doing and give myself a picture of what is happening now. Because parents are complaining bitterly these days - I am talking about Zambezi now. They say, "Most of our children are failing and why is it so in Zambezi, and perhaps the North-Western Province", I am trying to follow that thinking and see where the mistake is.

Mr. Wilkin: I wish you good luck in your new role as M.P.

I am very thankful for your time in answering questions, some that no one else has been able to do so.

3 5 4 5 1

Is there anything that you would like to add about education?

Mr. Mwendela: Well, perhaps one other thing that we have not discussed are the things that were happening during my time of administration in education. There were more practical schools, like trade schools, which helped children that were not able to proceed with their education to learn something that they would carry home, perhaps be a bricklayer, or a carpenter, or things like that. They used to help. I believe in the new system of education that this is coming back, so that every child will learn something, even if he is not able to reach the university,

Mr. Wilkin: In other words that was developing in the period when you were in education? And then we let it down for a while, and now we need to bring it back.

Mr. Mwendela: Yes, it was developing. I think it is coming back.

At that time we were all looking at teaching in a different way at that time. Maybe that was the trend. We thought that Africans were advancing too fast in education and there was nowhere else to take them, therefore there were these other activities to be able to train them, to make them able to useful rather than leaving them without anything. Some people thought it was bad, was retarding their progress but now we are seeing the value in that. So in our own system we ~~want~~ ^{need} that sort of thing to be accommodated somehow. So that those that have the brains can go on to the university. Those who have limits at least will gain something from the schools.

Additions

P. 1 Mr Suckling needed a partner
at Chit from Cavungo because ? married
Mrs Yeall Kawungo (or Kalene?) & because
Mr Mwonela spoke Luvate (??)

P. 9 * Addition

By that ^{time} I ^{had} ~~on~~ passed my
~~ST. III~~ while I ^{was} ~~&~~ already teaching
O I passed in 1937.

Additional materials resulting from the interview

Mr. John Mwondela

Interviewed on: 8th January 1979 in Lusaka

- **Two letters from me in 1978 and 1979 following the interview. No further correspondence can be located.**
- **I am not sure if the comments in the interview were corrections after I replayed the tape or given to me verbally by Mr. Mwondela. They all seem to be my handwriting.**

General note on all interviews and interviewees: These cover sheets were created from old notes 25 years ago. They contain key manuscript information in each interviewee's file. Often there is a short chronology of the interviewee's life written at the time of the interview. Most interviewees by this time (2006) are deceased; hence the huge potential value of this old interview. All interviews focused on education in the North West Province of Zambia mainly in the period from World War II until the 1970s. They often contain information on other topics that in some way related to education. All interviewees were in some way leaders of their own community or missionaries who had spent much of their life in the N.W.P. Most interview transcripts contain rectangular boxes for, or with, 5 numbers. These were used to code key data for research and writing in this pre-computer era. These codes are now meaningless for me and for any one else. Unless noted otherwise, these interviewees can be used by scholars without restrictions.

7/15/2006

43, SOLWEZI
xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

xxxx

28th March 1979

Dear Mr. Mwendela,

Herewith the three enclosures as we agreed last Sunday:

(1) The paper that several of us wrote in mid-1977 on the "Economic Development of the North-Western Province" and an explanatory cover letter dated 18th October 1977.

(2) Your copy of our 8th January 1979 interview script.
I have now added your corrections to my original copy.

(3) Your father and mother's photograph (your original plus one new print made from the re-photographing process - if you want more let me know) and also Mr. Suckling's photograph which I decided not to re-photograph at this time.

It was a pleasure to have had a chance to see you again for a brief chat last Sunday. I look forward to seeing you whenever you get up to Solwezi.

Very sincerely,

P. David Wilkin

43. SOLAWEZI
XXXXXXXXXXXX

22nd January 1979

Mr. John Mwendela,
%P.O. Box RW 138,
LUSAKA

Dear Mr. Mwendela,

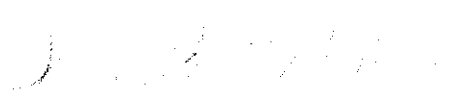
It was a pleasure to have had a chance not only to meet you, but also to interview you about your past work and experience in building a modern education system for Zambia. You certainly do recall a lot about the past and indeed, as I had hoped, were able to answer some questions that others lacked knowledge about.

I shall be transcribing the tapes of our interview within the next six weeks and will send you a copy when I finish. Hopefully we will then have a chance to meet again and you can add or change anything that you think is necessary.

I am also due to be in Lusaka for a conference beginning on 12th March, so if you are still there, I shall very much hope that we can make some negatives of the photograph of your father as I would very much like to include it in my book. If you are in Zambezi, we can set a later date.

Thanks again so much for taking time to talk with me.

Very sincerely,


P. David Wilkin