

History of the Area

The College New Farm consists of an area of 300 acres situated North and South of the Churchill - Roosevelt Highway at its junction with the Southern Trunk Road. Previous to 1914 the site was occupied by peasant holdings and a small sugar estate. Between 1914 and 1919 it was planted to bamboo by the Trinidad Paper Pulp Company, on cambered beds separated by deep drains. A cutting cycle of five years was planned but was unsuccessful owing to insufficient growth and in 1940 the Estate was abandoned.

In 1946 it was leased to the Imperial College with the object of (a) providing facilities for experiments in the field and with livestock and (b) giving students practical instruction in Crop and Animal Husbandry.

Up to the present, (January, 1951), 140 acres have been cleared and brought into cultivation; the area south of the Churchill - Roosevelt Highway being still in bamboo.

In 1939, the Soils Department of the College carried out a preliminary investigation into the soil conditions influencing the poor growth of bamboo (1). Following upon this, Weatherly in 1942 made a detailed investigation into the autecology of bamboo in 'good' and 'bad' areas and came to the conclusion that, in the main, the differences were due to soil moisture conditions.(2).

More recently, the soil types in the cleared areas have been described by Hardy (3), Chenery (4), Hewitt (5), Darcel (6) and Vernon (7). This paper is a continuation and extension of the work so far carried out.