

1. Introduction.

Until recently, the policy of the Department of Agriculture was almost entirely devoted to the problems of estate agriculture. Little was known about the considerable peasant and semi-peasant population which had grown up and investigational work on its problems is now only in its infancy.

Accordingly, a small area of land near the I.C.T.A. was investigated to discover the means of peasant livelihood and ways in which the agricultural practice might be improved. The area, delineated by Professor A. de K. Frampton, is not a full topographical unit but is a fairly representative section of such a unit. Due to previous ignorance of the area and the shortage of time, the boundaries were altered and certain parts of the information gathered apply to land outside the boundaries. This information is still relevant to the problems of the area, however.

The survey was conducted from January to April 1947 during the dry season. A lot of land was therefore seen uncropped and report on the condition of crops, particularly rice, is lacking.

The method of survey was mainly direct personal inspection of the area and conversation with sample peasants. Some of the information received is of doubtful reliability due to the difficulty of making peasants understand the question, of understanding the answer given and the tendency of the questionee to over or underestimate, particularly in the case of yields.

Further information was obtained from Crop Record Sheets collected by the Department of Agriculture (Map 3). These appear to be fairly reliable records of land use though not of a peasant's holding as each sheet applies to an isolated lot which may be only part of one fragmented holding. Further, inaccuracies are apparent on some sheets such as in the case of a man stating that he owned a donkey but no means of transport. These record sheets do not cover much more than half the area and tend to include the large lots

rather than the small ones.

The survey was undertaken in conjunction with my colleague,
Mr. D.W. Winter. The survey maps B.18 and B.23. Map 1 shows the

larger property boundaries.