SOIL SURVEY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF IFE

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The University of Ife, the "state" University of Western Nigeria, was established in 1961 on a temporary campus in Ibadan. This year the University is moving to its permanent home at Ile-Ife, the spiritual and cultural center of the Yoruba empire. The 14,000-acre "campus" is believed to be the largest in the world. Of this, 3,000 acres has been set aside for the development of the University Farm, also probably the largest single University Farm in the world.

The Department of Soil Science at the University of Ife is not actively engaged in soil survey work. All surveying is carried out by the Soil Survey Division of the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources. Consequently, when the site for the University Farm was selected by staff members of the Faculty of Agriculture, the Soil Survey Division was called upon to make a detailed soil survey of the proposed area.

Field Work

A base map (1:8,000) of the 5,470-acre area to be surveyed was prepared from a contour map with a 5-ft contour interval previously prepared by the architectural firm designing the University. Supplementary information was obtained from aerial photographs. Under tropical rain-forest conditions, aerial photographs are not as useful in delineating soil boundaries as might be desired. This is especially true for the soils derived from metamorphic rocks, where the soil pattern is extremely complex. Consequently, the rigid grid survey method was adopted.

In this system, parallel traverses were cut at 10-chain (660 feet) intervals over the entire area. The soil was then sampled to a depth of four feet at 5-