

## Meaning of Gombolola Names, Rukiga County, Kigezi District

**Rwamuchuchu** Gombolola. Literally means ‘place of dust’, The name is taken from the name of a hill which is in the other side of the swamp east of Mpala on which in the dry weather, dust devils rise

**Nyakashenyi** Gombolola. The old name of the place is ‘Rwara’ (from *okwara* – to be many, to multiply). The present name arises from the fact that the people had diminished through war, famine & pest so that the old men said “Call this land no more Rwara but Nyakashenyi for it is deserted” (from *okushenya* – to be lost, deserted). A comparison to this is found in the story of Ruth, chapter 1 verse 20, “Call me not Naomi, call me Mara, for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me”

**Nyarusanje** Gombolola. There are two theories, the first probably correct

- (a) That it is the place of *emisanje* a type of reed
- (b) That when one Rubagiri came back from fighting one Ntale he passed this way and all his troops filled the valley & the people fled up the hills saying *aliasahanje*<sup>1</sup>

**Bukinda** Gombolola. There are two theories

- (a) The name is derived from the verb *kakenduhira*, ‘to tighten the belt’, since the soil of Bukinda is heavy & the people said “we must tighten our belts to hoe this land” – hence the name Bukinda, ‘the place of the people who have tightened their belts’.
- (b) That it is the place of *amakinda*, a short spear grass that grows there

**Kashambya** Gombolola. The place of *emisambya* trees (kind of alder)

**Kamwezi** Gombolola. Literally *ka-muhesi*. A long time ago there lived a man called Muhesi who lived on a nearby hill. He dug a well & people went there to draw water, they said “We shall go to Muhesi” – “*Tugenda Kamuhesi*” & so the name became settled

Source: Cambridge University Archives. Unfortunately I did not take the source or reference; but it is of late colonial origin & compiled by a fluent Rukiga native English speaker, a civil servant or missionary

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<sup>1</sup> This is likely also to be a folk memory of Rwabugiri, king of Rwanda died 1895, returning from an invasion or raid in Ankole