

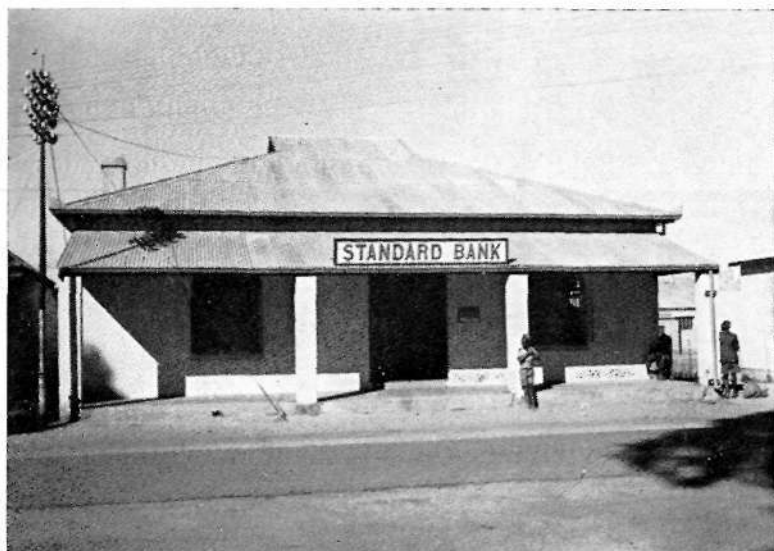
# RHODESIANA

PUBLICATION No. 14

JULY, 1966



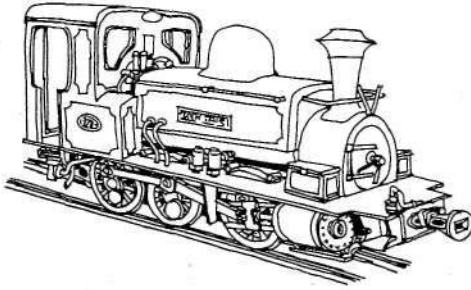
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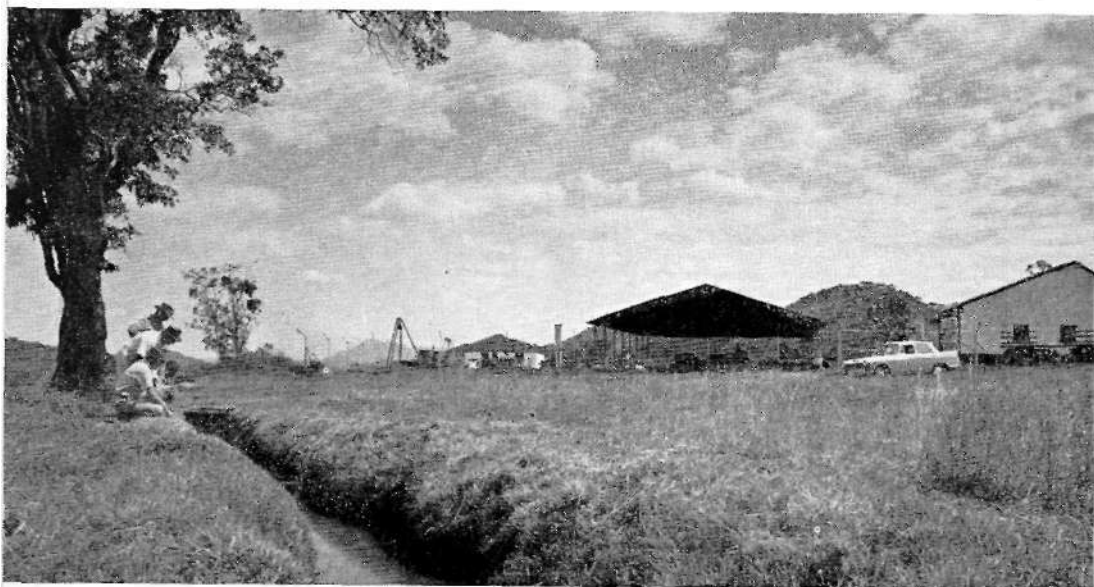
**RHODESIA RAILWAYS**

— A. M. MURRAY — R.R. 1091

# PREMIER ESTATE 1898-1966



At the opening of the first canal at Premier estate near Umtali in 1898, are from left to right: Mr. C. Weisenborn, who owned the estate, Maj. Randolph Nesbitt, V.C. (in the foreground) of Mazoe Patrol fame, Mrs. Randolph Nesbitt, Mrs. Adams and Mrs. Weisenborn. Premier was the first estate in Rhodesia to be irrigated.



The same canal in 1966. The implement shed and workshops of the Premier estate are seen on the right. The estate, which is administered by Anglo American Corporation, now produces 1,200 tons of oranges a year and has 350 acres under maize.

# RHODESIANA

Publication No. 14 — July, 1966

THE RHODESIANA SOCIETY  
Salisbury  
Rhodesia

*Edited by*  
**E. E. BURKE**

*assisted by*  
**COL. A. S. HICKMAN, M.B.E.**

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*The cover picture is from a drawing of the Pioneer Column crossing the Shashi River into Mashonaland, 11 July, 1890. (National Archives).*

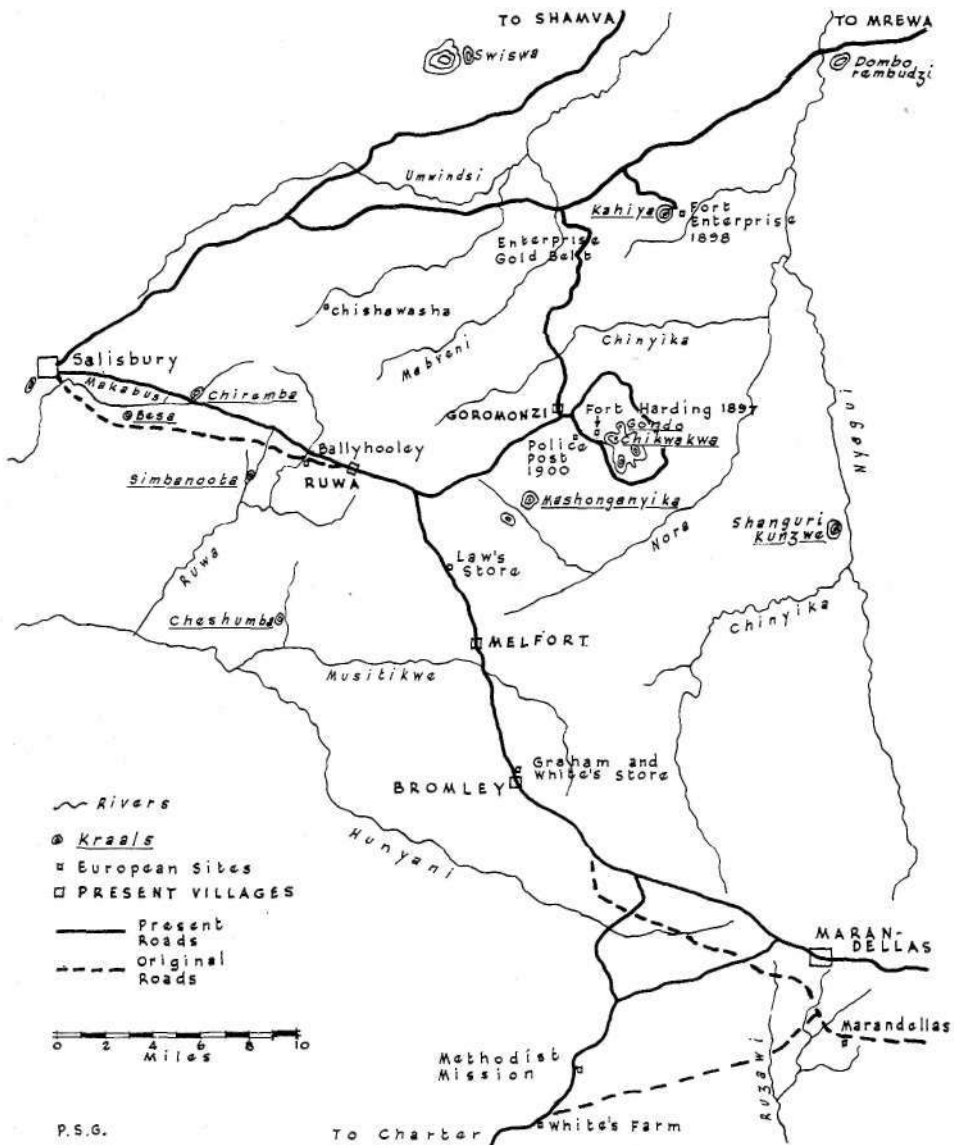


Plate 1



# The Mashona Rebellion East of Salisbury

by  
P. S. GARLAKE

The boundaries of the area dealt with here are virtually those of the present Goromonzi District. They correspond almost exactly with the area of Salisbury District in 1896—an arc round the east of Salisbury stretching almost to Marandellas, from Makumbi in the north, through Goromonzi, across the Umtali Road, to the Seki Reserve and Hunyani River in the south.

While this area knew none of the frequently described events of the Mashona Rebellion such as the Mazoe Patrol, the siege and relief of Hartley Hill or the Norton tragedy, the whole pattern of the Rebellion is here exemplified in miniature—the initial murders and acts of heroism when the outbreak caught all settlers unawares, then a period of strong patrols, kraal burnings and reprisals, all largely ineffective, followed by equally ineffective attempts at conciliation, and finally, a realisation of the true obstacles to a settlement, a firmer definition of aims, consolidation, and strong and continuous action leading eventually to the crumbling of the rebel leaders.

Impetus was given to this paper through the recent location and identification of two of the major sites in the area—Fort Harding and Chikwakwa's kraal.

In 1896 the Umtali road was Rhodesia's main artery of supply from the railhead on the Pungwe River and Beira, for the Matabele Rebellion had cut all certain communication with the south. Stretching out of Salisbury along this road were isolated European stores and a few farms—the Ballyhooley Hotel, a pleasure resort on the east bank of the Ruwa river twelve miles from Salisbury, owned by a chemist and his wife, Dr. and Mrs. Orton; Law's store six miles further on; then Graham and White's store near the present Bromley, and White's farm, twelve miles from Marandellas on the Charter road. Virtually the only other Europeans were the Jesuit missionaries at their pioneer mission, Chishawasha, and ten miles east of them the handful of prospectors and miners on the Enterprise Gold Belt. The Native Commissioner of the Salisbury District was Alexander Duncombe Campbell, one of the most knowledgeable and capable men of a very assorted group. He also owned a farm, managed by his younger brother, George, close to the kraal of Mashonganyika off the Umtali Road.

Within the district was a multitude of Shona headmen under the paramount chiefs Seki, Chikwakwa and Kunzwe, their kraals all built on broken granite kopjes whose caves and cliffs were chosen entirely with an eye to defence against Matabele raiders. Seki's main kraal, under the headman Daramombe, was at Cheshumba eleven miles south-east of Salisbury close to the north bank of the Hunyani, at its confluence with the Musitkwe. Closer to Salisbury, Seki's

headman Simbanoota lived on the bank of the Ruwa (probably on the fortified kopje to be seen on the present Adelaide Farm: map ref. 1731C3 068206) and Chiremba on the Makabusi, close to the present Cleveland Dam. Closer still to Salisbury was Besa, only four miles from the town, beside the Umtali road in the present Coronation Park area. East of Seki's country Chikwakwa was paramount, with his kraal on the west side of the Goromonzi massif. Under him were Zhante, the commander of Chikwakwa's warriors, and the headmen Gondo, living on a separate kopje three-quarters of a mile north of Chikwakwa, and Mashonganyika, two or three miles south-east of Chikwakwa and close to the Umtali road. Ten miles north of Chikwakwa, on the eastern edge of the Enterprise Gold Belt, his brother Kahiya lived in the hills of Mashona Kop. Moving five miles east, Kunzwe (Nyandoro) was a powerful independent chief who lived on the west bank of the Nyagui river on and close to Shanguri hill, lands belonging by right to the paramounts Ruseki and Mangwendi.

These men were to form the hard core of the whole rebellion in Mashonaland, dominating and stiffening the resistance of the paramount chiefs further afield (men such as Mangwendi and his headman Gatsi near Marandellas and Makumbi, Chinamora and Msana to the north of Salisbury). Kagubi, the Shona *mhondoro* or spirit medium and leader of their rebellion, had lived and practised at Chikwakwa's and was married both to Mashonganyika's daughter and to women of Gondo's kraal, where he had lived prior to moving to Mashiangombie's kraal on the Umfuli river, twelve miles east of Hartley Hill. From Mashiangombie's he re-established contact with Chikwakwa just before the Rebellion. Zhante went to, Mashiangombie's and returned with Kagubi's instructions for rebellion, extremely eager to put them into practice.

On June 16th, 1896, rebellion broke out in the areas south and west of Salisbury and by June 19th the town was in laager. That evening the Native Commissioner, Campbell, rode out alone to warn the Europeans in his district. He reached Ballyhooley at dawn on the 20th and arranged for the settlers to assemble at his farm near Mashonganyika's which his younger brother, George, was managing. He went on ahead to Mashonganyika's, had a friendly meeting with this headman, and then left to continue his warnings and speed up the assembly of the settlers. When he returned, an hour later, all had changed. Zhante and Gondo swept into the kraal at the head of their men with Zhante shouting Kagubi's orders to kill. As Campbell returned he saw his brother struck down with kerries and axes and finally despatched by Mashonganyika himself, in the first of many killings all of which followed the same pattern. It was clear that A. J. Dickinson — a tailor, A. T. Tucker — the barman at Ballyhooley, H. Law of Law's store and J. D. Beyers — a nearby farmer, had all died in the same way as they approached Campbell's camp, the two latter killed by Mashonganyika's sons. The Ortons' cart arrived empty. Campbell and his companion, Stevens, escaped, riding through the firing of Zhante's men as he shouted that their time was also to come. Chikwakwa arrived at the kraal as the firing ceased. The Ortons in fact had been ambushed earlier and, abandoning the cart, escaped by horse, aided by a cattle inspector, Manning, and three loyal Africans. At the same time men from Sichumba's kraal attacked James White's store; Lt. H. Bremner of the 20th Hussars, a passing traveller, was killed here and White left

badly wounded and dying. Rescued by an African catechist, Muleto, and the headman Nengubo who tried to take him to the Wesleyan Mission (now Waddilove Institute), they were again waylaid by the same force. White, Muleto and two African children were killed. Mashonganyika was probably again present. To the north, at his mine on the Enterprise Gold Belt, J. D. Briscoe was captured and brought before Mashonganyika and Gondo at the kraal of Zawara, Daramombe's son, where the three headmen struck him down. Four African workmen died with him, while two others, taken for dead and thrown down a mine shaft, escaped to give evidence at the Rebellion's end. At the same time Simbanoota's men from Sichumba's kraal killed the storekeeper — H. Graham, a transport rider— Milton, another European and two Indians, near Law's store. The store was not touched and only looted and destroyed two months later. Other travellers caught on the road between Marandellas and Salisbury were also killed or suffered very narrow escapes.

By the end of the day of June 20th the country outside Salisbury was entirely abandoned to the rebels with the sole exception of Chishawasha Mission. Here the Jesuit missionaries were joined by the handful of miners and prospectors from the Enterprise Gold Belt. They were about to abandon the mission for Salisbury on June 20th when Fr. Biehler arrived with ammunition and a small Police detachment from Salisbury. Together they fortified the mission house and resisted siege and direct attack until relieved five days later. They retired to Salisbury and the mission was abandoned. Only four days later, on June 29th, the eight missionaries returned, with a garrison of ten European and ten African Police. They found the mission unharmed and from then on Chishawasha remained both a mission and the only Police post east of Salisbury. After the initial outbreak of the Rebellion, the rebels initiated little or no offensive action and were content to remain in their kopje strongholds, confidently expecting the Europeans to lose patience and withdraw completely from their country.

For the next six months the only means of attacking the rebels was by means of patrols leaving Salisbury and making brief forays towards their strongholds. Successes may have looked impressive in official reports, kraals were burnt and grain collected but rebel casualties were negligible; most frequently the kraals were found deserted and the true strongholds within neighbouring caves were untouched. Where resistance was met the defenders had an overwhelming advantage and caused a steady trickle of casualties, never showing themselves and picking off their attackers as they climbed the kopjes. Thus, Capt. J. F. Taylor's Natal Troop had burnt huts at Chiremba's and Besa's early in July, and three weeks later Lt. Col. R. Beal's column from Bulawayo, on a patrol to Chishawasha, killed Chiremba. Lt. Col. E. A. H. Alderson, arriving early in August to take over command of operations in Mashonaland, continued this policy and made it his own. For instance, Maj. C. W. Jenner was detached from Alderson's column on the march to Salisbury and burnt the deserted huts of Chikwakwa himself, while in September 100 of Alderson's men were beaten off in a four-day attack on Simbanoota's.

By November the rains were about to break and the situation in Mashonaland was quite unchanged. In the Matopos Rhodes had brought the Matabele

Rebellion to an end with his Peace Indabas. He, Earl Grey—the Administrator—and the British army commanders now came to Salisbury to arrange the withdrawal of the British troops to Beira, leaving the continuation of operations to a newly formed local body, the British South Africa Police, under Lt.-Col. F. R. W. E. de Moleyns. Grey, closely connected with the Matopos indabas and an admirer of Rhodes, decided to apply the same policy of negotiation in Mashonaland, separately approaching various chiefs and headmen.

These talks were doomed to failure for several reasons. Firstly, since the outbreak of war the European presence had been so rare, intermittent and ineffective that it had caused the rebels only minor inconvenience and given them no reason to doubt their strength or to believe that the European would even really want to return. Secondly, it was believed that the "cowardly and degenerate Shona", who were consistently underrated in every respect, must be getting their leadership from Matabeleland and therefore now that rebellion there was over it must crumble in Mashonaland without the need for further operations. Thirdly, it was widely believed that each chief could be dealt with individually and that the Rebellion lacked a head; thus Kagubi, the root of resistance, was ignored.

On November 16th, the day of Grey's arrival in Salisbury, Campbell and Jenner, backed by a force of nearly 400 men left encamped nearby, contacted Chikwakwa and spent two days attempting to persuade him to surrender. Suspicious and hesitant, Chikwakwa remained behind his defences and shouted down to the unfortunate Europeans seated at the foot of his kopje. Even so, gradually approaching nearer, he almost managed to convince Jenner, the man who had burnt his kraals three months before, that he was innocent of rebellion and that his men had only defended themselves. Nevertheless, he refused to advance the final ten yards and take a spade, symbol of peace and permission to plant his lands, from Jenner's hands. Jenner and his men moved on to Kunzwe's and repeated the farce.

With the failure of these talks Jenner recommended for the first time a firmer approach and proposed the building of a fort at Chikwakwa's. "His coming in in a proper manner would be absolutely certain the moment a fort was built or even begun and a first proof of his loyalty could easily be obtained by requiring him to find some boys to help build it". Jenner's advice was not acted on for three months but in December Lt. E. C. Harding, in one of the first actions of the new British South Africa Police, set up a Police post at Ballyhooley. On December 3rd he, Fr. Biehler and the Hon. H. Howard, Earl Grey's private secretary, held an unsuccessful indaba with Daramombe at Cheshumba's. Early in January, 1897, the authorities recognised Kagubi's prime responsibility and started to exert continuous pressure on him at his headquarters at Mashingombie's, from newly constructed forts nearby. Though attacks on him were never pressed home the threat was real and could not be indefinitely resisted. Therefore Kagubi prepared to return to his former home. Forewarned by the Chishawasha Fathers, Harding went to Cheshumba on January 8th, 1897, and offered £100 reward for Kagubi's capture, without result. On January 10th Kagubi's wives passed through Chiremba's on their way east, and cattle stolen from the outskirts of Salisbury were hurriedly driven through Simbanoota's for

the same destination. Failing to recover them, on January 13th Harding and twenty-five men destroyed this kraal, which had previously successfully resisted a ten times larger force. Every single chief and headman in the district was clearly in active support of Kagubi. On January 18th Kagubi had successfully reached Chikwakwa's and set up his headquarters at his former home with Gondo. Tribute and hostages started to flow in.

On the same day, Harding had parleyed with Seki with seeming success and he agreed to return a week later to receive Seki's surrender. On the 25th Earl Grey, H. M. Taberer—the Chief Native Commissioner—and Maj. A. V. Gosling (leaving his force of seventy European and thirty African Police, with two seven-pounders, camped at Law's store) returned to Seki, only to be told that he had to consult with Chikwakwa first—a chief with whom he had no connection at all. This was a transparent attempt to hide the fact that Kagubi's influence was now very real and his orders would be followed absolutely. That night the affronted Grey returned to the kraal with Gosling's force, which at dawn attacked and defeated Seki and dynamited his caves. After a day's rest, the force moved to Chikwakwa's, set up camp and started to build a fort opposite Chikwakwa's kopje, to be named Fort Harding after the first garrison commander.

Fort Harding was a rough square, about 40 ft. across, with walls of piled stone topped with sandbags. It crowned a low knoll about 500 yards west of Chikwakwa's kraal and was separated from it by the steep gullies of a small stream. The knoll offers no natural protection, but its slight eminence does command good views towards Chikwakwa's and Gondo's kraals. Within the fort, at first only a single tent was pitched. Later, probably after Chikwakwa had been conquered, it also contained the strange corrugated iron command post shown in a drawing by Gosling himself (*Plate 2*): a rectangular, one-roomed

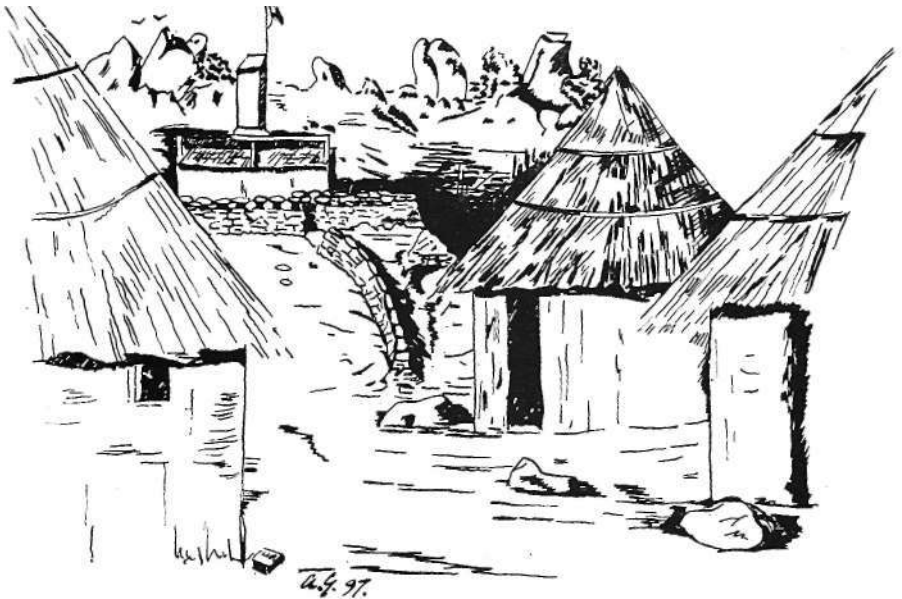


Plate 2 Sketch of Fort Harding, by Major A. V. Gosling, 1897.

(*The Outpost*)

building with a thatched verandah and a sentry box, facing the kopje, erected on its roof. On the protected, western side, away from the kopje, the boulders of the knoll were cleared to form a short access road for guns and transport up into the fort {*Plate 4*} and at its foot several huts were erected for the garrison. Among the rock outcrops further west and south the tents and waggons of the attacking force were camped. Here the typical impedimenta of 19th Century warfare can still be found—rusted food tins, fragments of stoneware bottles and Martini Henry cartridge cases. Though the walls have entirely disappeared, traces of the fort can still easily be distinguished on the farm Warrendale, some 200 yards east of the road through the farm (map ref. 1731C4 302238).

Facing and dominating the fort is Chikwakwa's kopje, steep, boulder strewn and some 200 ft. higher than the fort. At the head of a gully directly opposite the fort a stone-walled enclosure still remains, adjoining a series of stone-walled Shona graves. It was here that Jenner parleyed with Chikwakwa. Beyond this many small caves, amidst the huge boulders that form the skyline of Plates 3 and 4, are protected by walling, some showing every evidence of hurried construction. The main caves used by Chikwakwa are 300 yards north-east of this point, immediately below the summit of the massif (map ref. 1731C4 312237). They are not visible from the fort. Here, protected again by short lengths of walling sealing most entrances, large scatters of broken pottery still remain on the cave floors. A minor oddity is the rusted food tins amongst them—a thing not found at any similar site. These are not of the military types found near most forts of the period and are most likely the relics of the looting of Law's store. These caves face north at the head of the long rocky slope that stretches 400 yards north to a small stream and vlei, across which the sheer granite cliffs of Gondo's kopje rise directly from the vlei (map ref. 1731C4 316247). Appearing almost impregnable this kopje is, in fact, more exposed to quick surprise attack than Chikwakwa's, the approaches to which are extremely long, arduous and exposed to ambush, particularly on the Fort Harding side. Gondo's stronghold could also more easily be brought under fire from the fort itself.

On January 30th the fort was complete and a home-made Union Jack hoisted and the scene photographed {*Plate 3*}. Gosling withdrew leaving Harding in command of a garrison of twenty European and twenty African Police. Again an attempt was made to get Chikwakwa to surrender peacefully and W. L. Armstrong, Native Commissioner of Mtoko, arranged a five day truce for Chikwakwa to discuss peace terms with his men. This truce was so scrupulously observed that arrangements were made for three men captured during it and taken to Salisbury to be returned to him, even though they claimed they were not his men and had no wish to return. Chikwakwa did not return the compliment and one night his men cut loose three of the Police horses. Gondo did not even take part in the talks but calmly continued to strengthen the defences of his own kraal. On February 4th the truce expired and Chikwakwa rejected the peace terms, blaming not himself or Kagubi for this but his "young men". Henceforward, events moved fast. Lt.-Col. de Moleyns arrived on February 7th with thirty European and African Police as reinforcements. Still Chikwakwa was unafraid — the next day his men sallied out from the kopje to fire on a patrol led by de Moleyns. They inflicted no casualties but lost one man them-

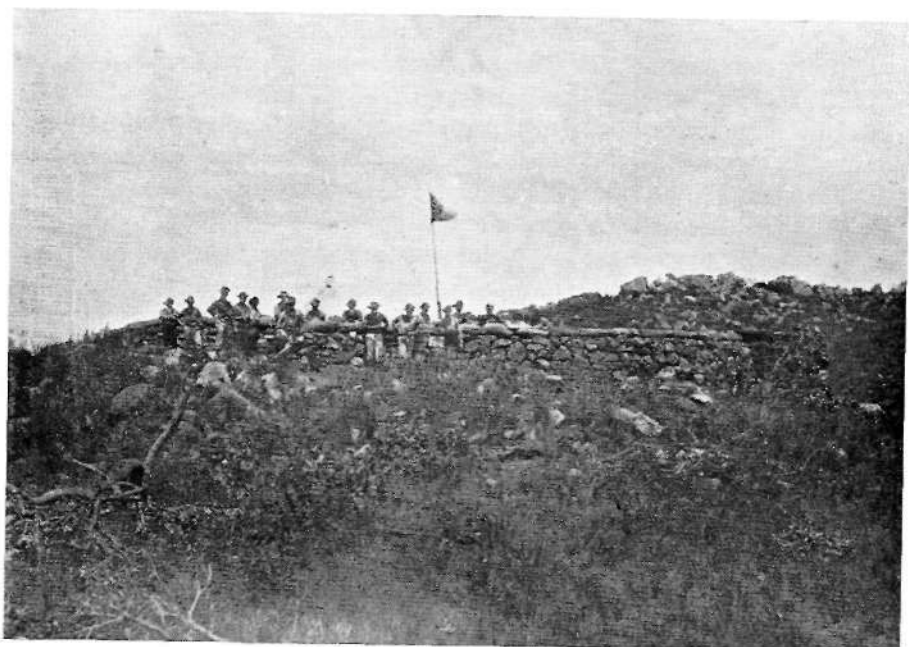


Plate 3 Fort Harding, photographed by E. C. Tyndale-Biscoe, January 1897  
(National Archives)

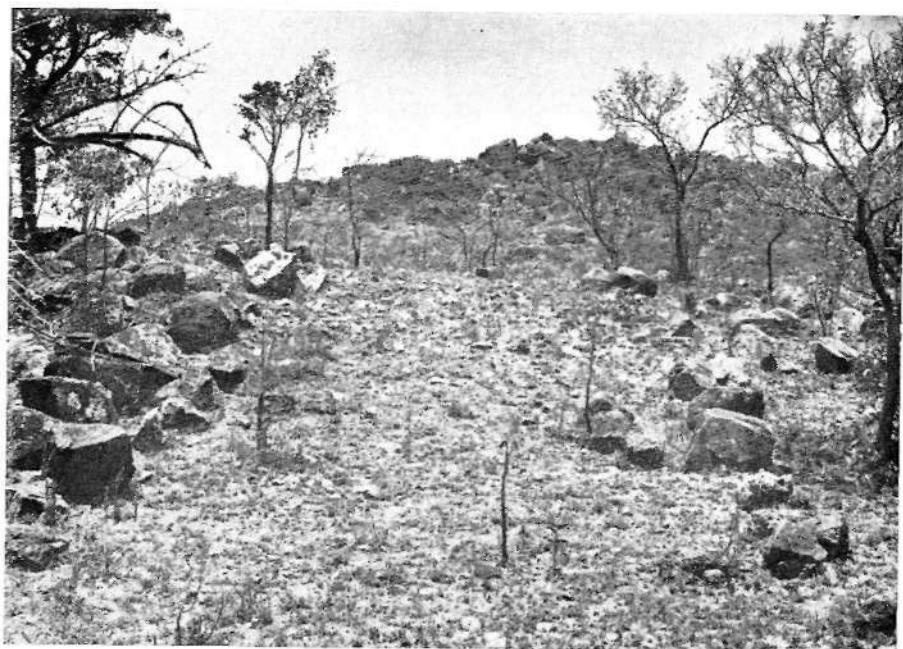


Plate 4 The access road into Fort Harding, with Chikawka's beyond, 1965.  
(P. S. Garlake)

selves. Thenceforward, they contented themselves with jeering and swearing at the Native Police from their kopje. On February 10th, Captain J. J. Roach, with forty more men and a third seven-pounder gun, arrived to take command. Roach commenced intermittent shelling of both Chikwakwa's and Gondo's kraals — a hopeless task for the rebels were dispersed and shielded from sight during the day and only retired to the caves during the night, where they were equally immune from shelling. Earl Grey, on a short visit to the fort, watched and commented caustically on the results of this process. Harding meanwhile was destroying crops while the African Police collected poles and constructed the huts behind the fort. This work continued for two more days during which a further contingent of twenty-five African Police arrived at the fort to reinforce the final attack. This came at dawn on February 16th. Harding led the assault with twenty-nine European and sixty-five African Police, attacking Gondo's kraal first. As he did so the fort, supported by Roach and the Maxim guns, opened fire with the seven-pounders on the caves. Once Gondo's kopje was taken his cave was surrounded and a Police post established at it, which commanded the easiest and shortest route across the stream and up the kopje to Chikwakwa's cave. The Maxim gun was then moved up and brought to bear on Chikwakwa, to return his fire. Meanwhile the dynamiting of Gondo's caves commenced. Chikwakwa's stronghold was now rushed and again successfully taken without loss.

Though the success of this action marks a major turning point in the Rebellion, with the main rebel strongholds destroyed, the Shona dispersed and a permanent post established in the heart of rebel country, yet the Rebellion was by no means over. All the leaders escaped. Kagubi with his usual shrewdness had, in fact, left a few days before the attack and gone seventeen miles north to Swiswa, a prominent kopje on the southern border of the present Chinamora Reserve. Most of the other leaders and many of their men had fled north and east, some only to Kahiya's but most beyond the Nyagui river to Mrewa's and Mangwendi's country, Gondo as far as the Bogoto mountains. Chikwakwa had sought refuge with Kunzwe, and Zhante was at Tafuna near Shamva. Yet within a few days, at Chikwakwa's itself some were "still around living in small groups visiting the gardens with the old idea that they can evade the white man and that burnt empty huts don't matter." Indeed, a week after Chikwakwa's had fallen Mashonganyika's was attacked by a large force under Gosling with almost complete failure.

After this the district lay quiet for five months — Gosling led sweeps through Chinamora's and Makumbi's while Harding and Armstrong were raising loyal Mtoko Africans and operating in the Mrewa area. Here in a sharp action against the rebel refugees at Domborembudzi on the Nyagui river on March 19th, Zhante's four sons were killed.

In June, Gosling returned to Fort Harding with a formidable force of 160 European and 100 African Police, with three seven-pounders, and on June 19th attacked and finally took Mashonganyika's, losing Tpr. J. Close killed. This stronghold was so thoroughly destroyed over the next six days that only one rebel escaped alive from the caves, Mashonganyika's son, Wampi. On the day of the assault, Gosling moved on and finally defeated Kunzwe in an attack



in which he lost Sgt. W. M. Robinson and four African Police killed while Tprs. S. H. Bennison and G. Irwin died three days later of wounds received in the action. Gosling left fifty men behind to build and garrison a fort at Kunzwe's.

The casualties from these two actions, together with two men of the Fort Harding garrison, are probably buried in the unmarked graves of a small cemetery still to be seen two hundred yards south-west of Fort Harding. There are two enclosures: the smaller has four simple graves, formerly enclosed by an earth bank or hedge, probably those of the African Police. Beside it, the second and larger enclosure is surrounded by a low stone wall and contains six graves, two marked by iron crosses of the type used during the Rebellion. The latter graves are probably those of Cpl. C. Davids and Tpr. H. White who died of fever at Fort Harding in April 1897\*. The other four graves are very probably those of Close, Robinson, Bennison and Irwin.

From now on, the rebels suffered continuous harassment—Cheshumba's was destroyed on July 12th and Kagubi's kraal near Swiswa was attacked on August 14th, but he had again fled north. By the end of that month, peace was in sight and on September 2nd in the broken mountainous country of Bogoto, far beyond the Nyagui river, all the leading European figures, de Moleyns, Gosling, Harding, Armstrong and Campbell met the paramounts Mangwendi (representing Mrewa also) Kunzwe, Seki, Ruseki and Chikwakwa and arranged peace terms. Campbell went back to set up his headquarters at Fort Harding and here throughout September, October and November he received the rebels who came in to surrender and hand in their arms. On October 8th Zhante had attempted to surrender to Campbell but was told to return with Gondo and Mashonganyika. By November, Campbell had the personal satisfaction of having all the rebel leaders and all his brother's killers under arrest. Their trials, in which Campbell's evidence was of major importance, took place in the succeeding months. Kagubi was tried and executed for murders in other districts. Mashonganyika and his two sons Wampe and Rusere were found guilty of the murders of George Campbell, Law and Tucker and executed—the executioner by strange irony being yet another Campbell, Stuart D. Campbell. Evidence was insufficient to convict the others of personal participation in killings — though almost all fully admitted their complete guilt to the courts and thereafter sullenly ignored the strange scruples of European processes of law. Zhante, after an attempt to get him to turn Queen's evidence was abandoned, had the charge against him of Campbell's murder withdrawn as did Gondo and Chikwakwa. Chikwakwa was also found not guilty of the murder of Law and Tucker, and Kunzwe was never tried. Zhante and Gondo were eventually sentenced to eight years imprisonment for their attempt to murder A. D. Campbell himself and Zhante received a further five years and thirty lashes for assaulting Campbell's African milker.

These results are, however, probably an accurate reflection of the true roles of the rebel leaders. One gets the impression that neither the major chiefs nor

\* The Goromonzi police records confirm that Tpr. H. White is buried in one of these graves, but record the other grave as being that of H. Standing who died in 1901, but give no proof or details of the latter.

the ordinary Shona fully supported the Rebellion but rather the inner circle of powerful headmen under whose influence the chiefs were — an influence which they however accepted completely and sought neither to temper nor restrain. It seems clear that it was not the paramount chiefs Chikwakwa and Seki nor, even less, Kunzwe who, under Kagubi, instigated the killings and kept the resistance going but their headmen. All the chiefs may well have wanted to surrender in November, 1896, but none was prepared to face their headmen's disapproval be the first to do so and. Zhante, Gondo and Mashonganyika had incited the killings, kept blood lust high and taken no notice of any peace attempt. Mashonganyika, who had risen to considerable influence through his relationship by marriage with Kagubi, had been present at many of the atrocities of the first days, often striking the final death blows himself. Zhante returned from his first meeting with Kagubi a complete firebrand, but his traditional authority was not particularly great. It is revealing that when Kagubi returned to the area it was not with Chikwakwa or Kunzwe that he settled but at Gondo's.

Immediately after the dispersal of the rebels from Chikwakwa's Campbell, had recommended plans for a final Shona re-settlement in new areas as far as possible free from defensible kopjes. After peace came these recommendations were implemented. The boundaries of the present Tribal Trust lands follow them almost exactly. Fort Harding and the Police post at Kunzwe's were finally abandoned in the middle of 1898 and replaced by Fort Enterprise, on the edge of the Enterprise Gold Belt after which it was named, eleven miles to the north of Chikwakwa's and close to his brother Kahyia's kraal. Vestiges of its numerous buildings, and the stone walls of the main house, can be found today on the boundary between the present Mashona Kop and Neptune farms (map ref. 1731C2 352388). Fort Enterprise was extremely unhealthy and claimed the lives of at least three of its garrison who are buried in a small cemetery below the fort. At the end of 1900, because of this health problem, the Police post was moved back to the vicinity of Chikwakwa's and established near the present Goromonzi. The site of the original camp is on the west side of the road leading to Chikwakwa's, on Warrendale Farm (map ref. 1731C4 291239). The outlines of eight rectangular brick buildings still stand behind a stone gun emplacement facing towards Chikwakwa's kraal.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Mr. E. E. Burke of the National Archives for bringing the original photographs of Fort Harding to my attention. It was a study of these photographs that led to the location and identification of this fort. They were taken by Commander E. C. Tyndale-Biscoe and are now in the papers of the Hon. L. Cripps in the National Archives.

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# The Countess de la Panouse

by R. ISAACSON

The Vicomte Edmond de la Panouse took his first look at what was to become Rhodesia, and his home for ten exciting and adventurous years, in about 1882.

A French nobleman with a family background of famous lineage, he had laid the foundations of a brilliant career in the French Naval Marine in the 1860's, distinguished himself in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, had been awarded several decorations including that of Chevalier of the Legion of Honour, and won such high recognition that no less than Field-Marshal McMahon himself had requested the Vicomte's appointment as his Aide-de Camp.

True to French tradition, however Fame, Fortune and Distinction were to be as nothing when Romance supervened in the person of Marie Heilbron, a singer at the Opera Comique in Paris. Heilbron was prominent and famous enough in her profession to earn honourable mention in the history of the French theatre, and there was, and possibly still is, a sculptured bust of her displayed in the Foyer of her Theatre.

An affair with a singer would in itself have been a black mark in Edmond's naval career; the fact that she was also a foreigner, a Belgian, did nothing to improve the situation; final misfortune, however, lay in that she was also a Jewess! The young Vicomte's marriage to her in 1881, though possibly a romantic triumph, inevitably encompassed his final and complete material ruin. He was compelled to resign his commission, became separated from his family and friends, and financial collapse was soon added to his other misfortunes. Whether this was due to the traditional extravagance attributed to his bride's profession or, as is more likely, to the failure at this time of the bank in which his money was invested, has not been clearly established. However, even Romance could not withstand such a combination of misfortune, and the inevitable break-up of the marriage soon followed. These rapid disasters compelled the young Count to leave his homeland in that same year, 1881.

Mlle. Heilbron died of typhoid in Nice in 1886. She had become extremely wealthy, and as a final touch of Romance, had left her former husband an annuity of 1500 francs a year (a substantial sum in those days) of which he was apparently not aware until his return to France in about 1902.

Leaving France, the young Vicomte made his way to England, staying at the French Embassy in London where his cousin held the post of Military Attache. Whilst at the Embassy, probably at some official function, it appears he was introduced to Rhodes. An inspiration to recoup his fortune in Africa — the Land of Opportunity — was inevitably implanted by this great enthusiast for that country, and it was not long before he set out. Although the record of this journey is extremely scanty, information recently acquired indicates that the main object of the journey was to be a hunting expedition into the Far



Miss F. Pearson, 1890.

(R. Isaacson)

Interior and that the acquisition of ivory was to provide the money-spinner he needed. His expedition was guided by Selous, and took him as far north as Lake Nyasa. His success with "over 100 elephant" was unfortunately nullified by the total loss of his hoard of ivory to marauding natives.

Recorded reference of the Count's appearance in Lobengula's country is available in Fr. Prestage's Diary in which are mentioned several meetings with de la Panouse both at the Jesuit House in Old Bulawayo as well as at Lobengula's Kraal.

The only other documented reference for this period appears in a book with the rather precious title of "How I became a Governor" by Sir Ralph Williams (John Murray, London 1913). The latter, on safari from Bechuanaland, had penetrated as far north as Pandamatenka and was spending some badly needed recuperative days at the Jesuit mission there in late 1883. He gives the following version of his encounter with de la Panouse:

"While at Pandamatenka we received a visit from two other white men who had walked into the country, the Count de la Panouse and Mr. MacIntyre. The former had been Aide-de-Camp to Marshal McMahon, the President of the French Republic, and had married the famous singer, Heilbron. Why he had drifted thither I do not know. He was a cheery little Frenchman and full of fun. He got into great disgrace with my wife who discovered him making his cigarettes out of the leaves of an English Bible which he had somehow annexed, and he got well scolded for it. Mr. MacIntyre was the brother of the well-known prima donna, Miss Marguerite MacIntyre."

No further record has been found of the Count's life and activities at this period which, however, must clearly have been full of adventure. It was at this time that, in common with so many others who roamed here, he developed a conviction in regard to the gold potential of this territory; a conviction which was finally to bring him back as a permanent settler.

He returned to England in 1889 with the firm purpose of raising the necessary financial support for proper exploitation of the vast mineral wealth of his newly found Eldorado. In this enterprise his timing was certainly propitious' coinciding as it did with Rhodes's negotiations with Her Majesty's Government for the formation of the Chartered Company for the large scale penetration and exploitation of this potential. Certainly de la Panouse's efforts were reasonably successful and he was able to launch two Companies, the Anglo French Syndicate, and the La Panouse Mining Syndicate. The latter, the Directors of which were C. E. Nind, H. Robinow, E. Bernheim, J. Dreyfus and J. J. Coghlan, was registered in Kimberley with an issued capital of £20,000.

His stay in England was, however, not devoted solely to matters of finance. His Gallic ardour fortunately found its fulfilment close at hand in the person of a chambermaid serving at the hotel in which he was resident. She was Fanny Pearson, a fresh and attractive country girl of eighteen. This romance, it appears, took on rather more than the usual casual proportions and culminated in Fanny's departure with the Count when, the time came for his return to Africa.

It is perhaps amusing to note that whereas the Count's name is listed on the passenger list of the *Hawarden Castle* (2,722 tons, accommodation 50 passen-



The Vicomte de la Panouse, 1900.

(R. Isaacson)

gers, 120 crew) which sailed from London for Cape Town on July 30th, 1890, no mention can be found of Fanny's name. The Vicomte is entered as "the Vicomte de la Parouse"; occupation "none"; (the word 'Gent' is pencilled in the margin beside this). A possible explanation of this omission is that Fanny financed her own passage but in the 'steerage' where names of passengers were probably unlisted, and that it was her determination which decided that the dalliance at the hotel should acquire a more permanent result.

Their appearance in Kimberley is recorded, and here the Count busied himself with the finalities of his Syndicates, and with the fitting out of an expedition to the north. This could have been no easy matter as the Pioneer Column was being equipped at the same time. However, the Count's entourage was finally assembled at Mafeking from where they set out on their trek. Following close on the heels of the Pioneer Column they arrived within a month of the hoisting of the Flag by the Pioneers in Fort Salisbury. Their party, travelling in three wagons (in which they continued to live for several years after their arrival), included — apart from the Count and Fanny — Buck, an American prospector, Hancock, an engineer, and Stewart as interpreter. The latter died of a heart attack on the journey, and a coffin and burial had to be organised en route — no easy matter. In addition, the journey was fraught with the usual hardships of river crossings, sand, and wild animals, so graphically described in so many accounts of similar journeys of this period. In all these struggles and hardships Fanny played a full part as a member of the expedition. She assisted when the inevitable and frequent breakdowns occurred, and learned that proficient use of both pistol and rifle which were to stand her in good stead in subsequent adventures.

This expedition gave rise to what has become one of the best known stories of the de la Panouse couple: The inclusion of Fanny Pearson (as she still was) in the party created a very special problem. In view of the essentially military character of the occupation of Mashonaland by the Pioneer Column, and until a more settled state of affairs could be assured, the entry of women into the territory was expressly forbidden. This difficulty was overcome by the stratagem (which apparently fooled no one, and to which the authorities appear to have, in fact, turned a blind eye) of the cutting of Fanny's tresses, dressing her as a boy — she was a small and trim slip of a girl — and naming her 'Billy'. The name stuck, and she was in fact known for the rest of her stay in Rhodesia as the Countess Billy.

The Count and his party lost no time in setting about the business for which they had come. They proceeded immediately to the Mazoe area where they set up camp, and where, as early as December, 1890, the "Great Waterfall" and several other claims were registered in the name of the La Panouse Syndicate. One of his claims was visited by Dr. Jameson and favourably commented upon in his official reports to Cape Town. In December, 1891, progress, although slow, was accompanied by hope and optimism, and in the *Rhodesia Herald* of March 25th and April 1st, 1893, we note: "The Count is meeting with considerable success. As development proceeds, the mine is getting richer and work is being done on very high grade quartz", — and "Panouse Syndicate commencing work on the Rhodes and Kimberley Reefs. Anglo-French Syndicate, represented





The Countess de la Panouse in a picnic party during the Rebellion, 1896.  
(National Archives)



At the Bechuanaland Trading Association mess room, Salisbury, about 1894. L. to R. Vicomte de la Panouse, T. Judson, Countess de la Panouse.  
(National Archives)

by Panouse, proceeding with work on the Empire State Reef. Copper has proved abundant."

However, it seems that, as with so many others engaged in similar enterprise at this time, this optimism was not blessed with realism and it was not long before the Count, through his mining ventures, began to find himself in financial difficulties. Several court judgements are recorded against the Count and a writ of execution of May, 1893, met with a *nulla bona* return. And so, clearly, other means of livelihood had to be devised.

It was in these circumstances that Billy found her farming background standing her in good stead. They had moved nearer to Salisbury, and now leased the farm 'Avondale' adjoining the town. It was not long before a thriving enterprise in the production of milk, butter and eggs had been established. According to one observer: "There are 350 oxen and cows, some pigs . . . and also 24 hunting and watch dogs! The dairy is astonishingly clean, it produces some excellent butter which would earn a prize even in England".\* The same writer goes on to give an accurate and detailed description both of the site on which their farmstead had been established as well as the buildings, the house being described as like a French castle. The description of the site clearly places it as on the crest of the Avondale Ridge, a site which was to become known as "Countess Kopje".

Meanwhile, too, the Count was not idle and we hear of him at this time (1894) engaging himself in the arduous, though profitable, business of transport, mainly to the new railhead inland from Beira, at Chimoio (Vila Pery).

And so their fortunes began to be re-established, and it seems that it was in these circumstances that they were at last able to give some thought to the regularisation of their social status. Their Marriage Certificate (p. 19) is surely a document of unique interest.

Shortly after the marriage Billy gave birth to her first child, a daughter, who was patriotically named "Alice Rhodesia". Dr. Jameson was the godfather, but unfortunately the child survived only a few weeks. She is, however, remembered by the naming of Alice Lane in Avondale, at the head of which her parents lived.

But the comparative prosperity which accrued to the Count and Billy as a result of their farming and transport enterprises was to be shortlived. The outbreak of the dreaded rinderpest decimated the herd of cattle which was the very foundation of Billy's undertaking and it was not long before her farming was brought to an abrupt end.

Fortunately the Count's transport concern was not seriously affected by the rinderpest as the mules which he used as draught animals for his wagons were immune. But it was not long before disaster struck yet once again, and on Wednesday June 24th, 1896, the *Rhodesia Herald* carried the following report:

"On Tuesday afternoon the Count de la Panouse, and Messrs G. Lamb, Hudson, Haig, Finch, Davidson and Miss Carter, came into town in a cart, the party having been attacked this side of Marandellas and fired at all the way to Ballyhooley. The natives were in force in places,

\* 'Rhodesie et Transvaal' by Albert Bordeaux (Libraire Plon, Paris, 1898).

Form No. 2. - Marriage Register

No.	When married	Name	Condition	Occupation or calling	Age	Residence	Consent - by whom given or judge's order.
3	23 <sup>rd</sup> July 1894	<del>Arthur Felix</del> Charles Emma Korné de la Penrose	widower	farmer	49	Avondale farm Salisbury	own consent
		Fanny Pearson	spinster	none	22	Avondale farm Salisbury	own consent

J. P. Pearson }  
 Fanny Pearson }  
 witnesses to the marriage } W. H. Brown.

I do hereby certify that the above marriage was contracted by the parties therein on the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of July 1894 in my presence and in the presence of the persons who have signed their names as witnesses under and by virtue of the Marriage Act, 1860.

Witnessed at Salisbury this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of July 1894 }  
 W. H. Brown }  
 Acting Registrar, Magistrate

and came as close as 30 yards to them keeping up a stinging fire. How the party escaped is a mystery. They passed on the road the dead and horribly mutilated bodies of J. Weyers, his wife, girl and baby. They picked up a Cape boy badly wounded. At one spot they were so thickly surrounded and hard pressed that the little party gave up hope and Miss Carter is stated to have borrowed a revolver to save herself from death by the assegai. The Count and his companions showed lots of pluck and endurance and these qualities undoubtedly saved the day. The natives did not make any considerable attempt to shoot the horses, but the mules belonging to the Count were shot."

The Mashona Rebellion was now in full cry, and whilst the above was only one of the many incidents taking place almost simultaneously all over Mashonaland, the report of this heroic journey and the miraculous escape of the Count and the rest of the party was to capture the imagination of no less a literary personality than John Buchan, and a full account of the incident forms one of the chapters in his book 'Famous Escapes' (Thomas Nelson, London, 1922).

Meanwhile, Billy too was experiencing her full share of the anguish occasioned by these troubled circumstances. An anguish, however, which only served to give further evidence of her splendid courage and good humour — qualities that fitted her so admirably for her role as Rhodesia's first woman pioneer. The story of her experience in the Rebellion is repeated in almost every book on the Pioneer period. However, no apology is necessary for making the following extensive quotation from Col. Baden Powell's book 'The Matabele Campaign' (Methuen, London, 1897), where the incident is given from first hand experience and is told with candour, freshness and a real sense of atmosphere:

"Dined at Lord Grey's tonight, and there also dined the Count and Countess de la Panouse. No more interesting couple could be found in the country. I listened open-mouthed to their adventures . . . The Countess, living out at the farm, five miles from Salisbury, received warning by messenger to come into laager; and when she delayed about it, they sent four friendlies as a guard for her. Her account of it, told in a very matter-of-fact cockney way, was most refreshing:—

'You see, they had murdered our neighbours that day, and I couldn't help thinking about it. So I didn't go to bed that night, but just put on a blouse and skirt, and lay down on the bed, after barricading the door. Well, in the night I was startled first by a waggon going past at full speed; drivers yelling at the mules and cracking their whips — this was the waggon going to Mazoe to rescue the women there.\* I could not sleep. By and by I heard a noise, and looking through a hole in the door, I saw niggers — plenty of them — close to the house and on three sides of it. I got the rifle, slipped on my bandolier, seized up my revolver belt, and jumped out of the back window and ran. As I got over the wall of the garden, I upset an iron bucket with an awful clang. At the same time my boy, running out of the kitchen, knocked against two frying pans that were hanging up

\* At this date the track to Mazoe led close beside the high ground of Avondale ridge,

there, and made worse din. But he got away and joined me in the bush above the house. There we hid for the rest of the night behind a grave-stone.\* They did not burn the house, and next morning after waiting some time to see if any of them were about, I got so impatient about it that I sent the boy down, to see if my sewing machine was all right, and he soon came back with it. He had found it close to the well: a nigger had got it and was clearing with it, when he was assailed by one of the Zambesi boys. Lucky they killed him a few yards from the well; another step and my sewing machine\*\* would have been down the well. But the Zambesi boys were all killed — lying about the front door. Well, then we made our way into Salisbury; and I had no sooner got there than I found that, like the stupid I was, I had brought the revolver case, empty — in the confusion I had left the revolver behind. So, says I, I must go back and get that revolver. There was a patrol just then going out, so I got them to let me go with them and back to my house. I made my way through the murdered Zambesi boys, but I didn't stop to look at them, I was that anxious to get my revolver; and I got it alright, and glad I was to come away with it; not but what it's getting worn out now, I think, as it wouldn't act the other night when I wanted it to; but it's the one I've shot a lion with, so I like it. Oh, he was only a very old lion, but ye see, he used to come pretty near every night to our camp, and snap up one or other of the dogs. One night he even got into our dining hut, where there was a ham hanging from the roof; he got on to the table to reach it down but the table was a rickety concern and came down with him, and I had stupidly left the cloth on overnight, and a nice lot of holes he made in it with his claws. Well, one evening I hear the old brute moving in the sluit close to the camp; so I called to the boy to get the gun, and come up with me into the waggon, and I took the revolver. Soon we heard the lion coming along the path, kicking oranges, them hard-rinded things — with his feet. I says to the boy, "There he is, shoot!" But the boy couldn't see him; and so I says, 'Oh, if you're going to take all night to shoot him, here goes!' and with that I up with my revolver, and lets off a shot at him. The lion sprang forward to the waggon, and I give him another, that sent him back where he came from, and he rolled about a bit in the sluit, and died there. I had hit him right in the neck ...

"But if the Countess was amusing and original, so was the Count

\* The gravestone mentioned is that of Trooper J. Upington who was the first of the Pioneers to die in Salisbury. He is buried in the Avondale churchyard where his grave and the grave-stone referred to, can still be seen.

\*\* The reference to the sewing machine has a subsequent and additional interest: during interviews (which a colleague of the writer's was able to achieve just before the Countess died) the aged Countess made clear and emphatic mention of this machine which must have been an extremely valuable and highly prized possession in those days. She mentions having brought it with her from England and having made good use of it during the trek from Mafeking into Mashonaland in 1890, in order to keep the party's clothing in repair. It is interesting that the recollection of the possession of this homely piece of equipment should have remained with Billy for 67 long years - a true indication of its value when comforts and amenities were almost entirely non-existent.

in his way. He had been a great elephant hunter in Central Africa. Used to hunt like Selous, in only a shirt, belt, and hat; no shoes. Killed 103 elephants in one season. Ever charged by an elephant? No, but an elephant was charged by him. Following up a wounded elephant, it took down a steep hillside in thick bush. He tore after it, an elephant goes very slowly down a steep place, so he rushed on to it before he saw it. However, he put up his heavy rifle and fired up into its head and killed it, but the angle of the gun was so great as to knock him down, the stock in its recoil cutting his cheek all open and leaving him senseless. His boys went back and told his friends in camp that both he and the elephant were killed, the elephant having put his tusk through his cheek. 'Srough my cheek! The elephant had a tusk so long as my body, and so thick as my leg, how can he put it through my *cheek* ? I should have no *face* left'.

"The Count upon coming into laager at Salisbury after the loss of his donkey-waggon, was made a trooper. He, an ex-captain of the navy, with four war medals, while his commanding officer was a barman at one of the public houses! The excuse for this apparent anomaly was that he had known what it was to be an officer, and he might now let the others have a chance of trying. The troop consisted of 120, but of these only 50 were available for duty, the rest were nearly all officers.

"In spite of having lost everything, the Count and Countess seemed very cheerful and hopeful, and are longing to work again on their farm. They deserve to prosper."

Despite Baden Powell's kind wishes, it seems unlikely that they came true. Historically speaking, however, it seems that the story of this colourful and adventurous couple ended at this point. Nothing further, or at least of any consequence, appears to be recorded of their experiences and life in Rhodesia between the above and their final departure from the country in 1900. It was at this time that they seem to have given up the unequal economic struggle, and to have utilised their remaining resources to finance their journey back — first to England where they spent almost two years with Fanny's relatives. After this they returned to France, settling first at Monte Carlo where the Count found a kindly disposed member of *his* family, and finally in the village of Clans, near Nice in the Alpes Maritime. From here, and as a consequence of considerable correspondence, the Count succeeded in his application for the pension to which his (1876) award of Chevalier of the Legion of Honour entitled him. This, together with the annuity from his first wife, the singer Heilbron, gave the family a certain degree of comfort. They had, indeed, become a real 'family' too. Their second daughter, named Blanche, was born in 1902, and with the re-establishment of the family fortune, they built, in this village of Clans, the Villa Blanchette, named after their daughter, and as a hedge against possible further financial disaster. Here, at last, the Count found it possible to live the life of a local squire, to which his birth at least had entitled him. People in the village of Clans who still have recollections of the family recall that "the Count was very unpretentious and cultured. He was very religious and, with his family, attended all the services. When he took off his hat the village children used to laugh because he had an

enormous wart on his head. He sometimes spoke about his tiger and elephant hunting. Mme. de la Panouse, who spoke French very badly, made her own bread which was cooked in the communal oven". They kept chickens (leghorns, it was insisted by my informant) and sold eggs. "Eggs from my farm" Blanche used to say as she delivered them in her little basket.

The rather humdrum existence of a French bourgeois family must have been in complete contrast with the hectic life of action, adventure, and precariousness which they had known in Africa, and it is difficult to believe that this contrast was accepted without, at least, some regret. However, the Count was advancing in years, and in 1918, at the age of 73, he finally passed away. According to my 'village of Clans informant' it appears that when he died, contrary to local custom which demands that one should watch over the dead man, Mme. de la Panouse got rid of the young country woman who was to have spent the night by the corpse. "I have looked after him well," she said, "Let's leave him."

After the death of her husband, which doubtless also ended both the Legion of Honour Pension and the Heilbron annuity, Fanny soon again found herself in financial difficulties. The Villa Blanchette had to be sold, and as, too, her social standing in her adopted village of Clans had been undermined by the loss of her husband, she decided to move to a neighbouring village (Val de Blore) where, for a time, she ran a small pension or boarding house. The Count's family, it appears, made what would seem a rather lefthanded gesture of assistance: the daughter, Blanche, was placed by them in a Convent in Switzerland. Although it was intended that she should become a nun, she appeared to have developed no sense of vocation and finally left the convent, married, and with her husband, today runs a small hotel in Nice.

Fanny's financial circumstances appear to have become increasingly reduced and in her latter years she entered an Old Aged Home and seemed destined to end her days in poverty and obscurity. However, for this to have happened would have seemed, to the writer, to have been an entire negation of the value of human personality. Without venturing too far into the realm of mysticism it is surely not too much to suggest that human personality has a strength and a permanence that must find at least something in the nature of continuous expression. And so with Billy. This colourful and adventurous character was destined to blazon just once again and make her final impact in the pages of Rhodesian history. The telling of this and her final chapter is closely bound up with, and in fact based upon, the writer's interest in, and research into, the de la Panouse history. The story of this interest and research will, it is hoped, carry the sympathy of the reader who has come this far.

This story began in 1960, when I purchased a plot in Avondale on which I proposed to build my house. On this site there stood at this time, the house (built in 1914) which had previously belonged to Col. Macdonald, a brother of J. G. Macdonald — one of Rhodes's biographers. As this house was too large and unsuitable for my requirements, I had begun its demolition preparatory to building afresh, when I was approached by Col. Hickman for permission to carry out some digging and investigation of the site which, he then informed me, had in fact had an earlier occupant. The remains of this previous dwelling, built in rough stone set in red clay, were still in existence. At the time I had

only the sketchiest knowledge of Rhodesian Pioneer history, and now made my first acquaintance with the Vicomte de la Panouse and his Countess 'Billy' through the Baden Powell extract (quoted above) which Col. Hickman gave me to read.

It would, surely, have been a dull and insensitive mind which failed to respond to the stimulus of such a story in regard to a place where one was proposing to live. Although I am unable to report any genuine stories of 'ghosts walking across my lawn', I did find myself becoming increasingly absorbed in the lives of these two interesting and colourful people. I acquired and read all the books I could find in which this couple were mentioned; these books, incidentally, formed the nucleus of an additional interest — the collecting of Rhodesiana. However, the sketchy, though interesting, snippets of information which these sources brought to light were clearly insufficient to satisfy the desire for information which had been aroused. Search at the National Archives provided some additional facts, but again these only served to whet the appetite. I developed a strong sense of almost identification with the Count and Billy, and felt very strongly that people of such character and colour could not, and should not, be allowed to just flit across the Rhodesian scene, and to disappear leaving so completely unrounded a picture. They were, after all, the very stuff of history and I felt very strongly that they should be remembered as something more than the incidental participants in a couple of rather sensational incidents.

I felt, quite wrongly, as it turned out, that some written record in the form of letters or possibly even a diary, ought to be found to exist. I determined, therefore, that I would make every possible effort to discover these, or any other information that might be available, but with my entire lack of training or qualification in the field of research this turned out to be no easy matter. My only real qualification was my absorbing interest in my subjects, a stubborn persistence, and the interest and enthusiasm which my story never failed to arouse in friends and potential helpers. I, of course, wrote many letters to local old hands, to a variety of newspapers, to the Director of the French Archives and, on his advice to the present bearers of the de la Panouse name in France who proved to be close enough relatives to provide some additional leads and information. Space here does not permit to give an account of the details of the search which however included a motor tour of France in order to meet these relatives, correspondence with many people in France, England and even America, and an (abortive) effort with a firm of Private Investigators. All this has provided me with endless fascination, the meeting of many interesting and charming people, and with that most satisfying of emotions — the successful conclusion of a project, with, moreover, a rather unexpected result.

During the course of these researches it soon became evident that such further information or evidence as was to be found was most unlikely to become available in Rhodesia or even in Africa. The attempt to conduct such research from a distance of 5,000 miles was clearly to prove impossible, and equally clearly, contacts had to be established in France, especially, whose interest as well as expertise could be relied upon. I find it somewhat more than strange that I rarely failed to arouse real interest in the Panouse story and in the project I had undertaken, and that offers of assistance were so often and so selflessly



forthcoming: Miss Mary Edmond, a B.B.C. News Editor and an amateur historian, was introduced to the writer by a mutual friend; her researches into the history of Fanny's forebears in England, her almost miraculous contact with Fanny's living niece near London, and the obtaining of a series of photographs of great charm (some of these have been reproduced here) — all this is itself a story of real fascination. It is a matter of considerable pleasure to express my gratitude to Miss Edmond for her unflagging interest, the persistence of her researches, and the selflessness with which she passed on to me the information she acquired.

My contact with Madame Odette Guitard was certainly quite remarkable. I heard from Fr. Rea of St George's College that he had learned, through a friend, that Madame Guitard had visited Salisbury and was engaged in research into Rhodesian history for the production of a book ("Que sais-je? Les Rhodesies et le Nyassaland", Presses Universitaires de France, 1965) she was writing. Madame Guitard had expressed a mild interest in her encounter, during the course of her researches, with the name of a compatriot — the Vicomte de la Panouse — as having played a not inconsiderable part in the early history of this country. Although she had by this time already left the country, Mme Guitard's address in France was made available to me and her reply to my letter to her was most encouraging. As a professional historian (she was at this time Professor of History at the Sorbonne in Paris), she undertook the required research with the expertise and attention to detail it had so badly lacked. The information I had managed to acquire up to that time seemed to indicate that the search ought to be concentrated upon the finding of the daughter Blanche who, it will be remembered, was born in France after the return of the Count and Countess de la Panouse to that country after 1900. Within the space of a few months Madame Guitard was able to report to me that, having started her research project with examination of the Marine (Naval) Archives, and the Archives of the Legion of Honour, she soon obtained a fairly comprehensive picture of the Count's naval career. In addition, his belated application for pension rights to the Society of the Legion of Honour led to the village of Clans from which it had been sent, to the finding of the Villa Blanchette, and the contact with Blanche herself was clearly only a short step on. Neither Madame Guitard or myself were, however, in the slightest degree prepared for the completely unexpected denouement which followed: that there was more than good reason to believe that the Countess 'Billy' herself was likely to be alive at the immense age of 92! Madame Guitard gave me this astounding piece of information when I was finally able to meet her in Paris in October, 1964, to discuss with her the progress of our project. Her information led her to believe that if Billy was indeed alive, that her circumstances were likely to be in a fairly parlous state. I mentioned to Madame Guitard that I felt, without being absolutely certain, that as a Rhodesian Pioneer of 1890 vintage it was more than likely that Billy would be entitled to a pension or grant which would alleviate such a state of affairs. I undertook to investigate the position, on my return to Rhodesia, if Billy could indeed be found to be alive.

The letter I received from Madame Guitard, dated November 8th, 1964, giving me the news of her finding of 'Billy' is a real gem:

"Dear Mr. Isaacson,

Countess Billy is alive, lying in bed in Pavilion 2A at the Hospital Pasteur in Nice. I had a first interview with her yesterday.

I gathered from various sources as well as from herself that she is practically alone and absolutely penniless

Now let me tell you how things have been going since Friday: as the weather was glorious I decided I could safely drive to the village in the mountains where she had last been heard of".

Madame Guitard then goes on to give a detailed account of her meeting with the local Mayor, and how she was finally given the name of the hospital in Nice. She continues:

"As it was getting late I drove back to Cannes and the next day, that is yesterday, I went to the hospital. I spent more than an hour with Mme de la Panouse. It was quite a shock for her to be confronted with the forlorn past.

I offered her a little parcel of sweets and it seemed to her almost incredible. The old lady has tremendous pluck and does not want to die. She said she needed some massages but had no money to pay for them.

I then told her that she might be entitled to a Pension as a Pioneer's widow; she hardly believed it, but she said if I could write the letter for her, she would sign it. The letter I have drawn up is here, and I have also had a 'photocopy' of her identity card legalised.

Do you really think you could obtain that Pension or any subsidy which could improve the last days of this poor creature? She really deserves it for she has dignity and pride. If she could live in a special home for old people and invalids, the nurse says that she has a sound heart and could outlive this winter very well.

I intend to have a real talk with her next Thursday and shall prepare a little questionnaire to aid her memory."

This dramatic re-appearance of Rhodesia's first woman pioneer, the sympathy of the Rhodesian Government in almost immediately granting her a most generous pension — this story captured imaginations and, as is well known, made headlines in leading newspapers throughout the world.

And so Fanny Pearson, Countess 'Billy' de la Panouse, re-established herself at the end of her life once again as the colourful and romantic personality she had always been.

She died in Nice, in the home of her daughter Blanche, on July 17th, 1965.

# The Start of Geodetic Survey in Rhodesia

by

M. O. COLLINS, C.B.E.

On his appointment as Federal Director of Surveys Brigadier M. O. Collins commenced an investigation of the early history and development of survey work in Central Africa in order to provide a background to the work of his own Department. He thought of continuing this research until he had established a complete record of the past of survey in this country and his plan divided the subject into four distinct phases —

- i) The early explorers;
- ii) The first Surveyor-General of Rhodesia, Andrew Duncan, and his controversies with early cadastral surveyors;
- iii) The commencement of Geodetic Survey by Sir David Gill, Her Majesty's Astronomer at the Cape, and J. Orpen, the second Surveyor-General of Rhodesia;
- iv) The actual work of the Geodetic Survey.

Work on the first part of this plan was summarized in the *Map showing routes of the early European travellers in the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland* (Federal Atlas map no. 18), issued in 1964 and obtainable from the Department of the Surveyor-General in Salisbury.

This article is part of the third section, the story behind the beginning of Geodetic Survey and it is published here, on its own, as the history of the inception of a particular aspect of good order and government.

E.E.B.

It is an interesting fact that the effect of a strong personality is rarely restricted by territorial boundaries. So it was with Sir David Gill. Soon after his appointment as Her Majesty's Astronomer at the Cape in 1879 he began, as he puts it, to study the general question of the survey of the country because in his view his preliminary investigations showed that, apart from MacLear's short arc of meridian\*, there existed no survey in the Southern Hemisphere of sufficient accuracy, and extent, to be of value for geodetic purposes.

He thought of Southern Africa and probably even of the whole continent, as something which must be dealt with comprehensively, and not as a series of separate piecemeal problems.

Moreover his enthusiasm and his personal standing in the scientific world were such that he was able to make suggestions, and even recommendations to local Administrators which were treated with respect and consideration,

\* Sir Thomas MacLear was Her Majesty's Astronomer at the Cape from 1834 to 1870

whereas in a lesser man his suggestions might well have been considered gratuitously officious. He was encouraged in such an outlook by his contacts with Cecil Rhodes, but he was in no sense a mouthpiece for Rhodes. His vision, though scientific, was similar to that of Rhodes and their contacts, therefore, resulted in the co-ordination of common aims, which in both cases, only recognised the oceans and seas which surrounded Africa as factors which might affect, but not necessarily limit, their practical conceptions.

For such a man it would have been almost a duty to keep in touch with those who were administering the country in order to help them with his advice, rather than waiting on them to ask for it. At any rate, early in 1897 he seems to have had an opportunity to meet and discuss survey matters with Earl Grey, who was then Administrator of Rhodesia. It seems likely that he made an opportunity for this discussion on one of Earl Grey's visits to Cape Town, as there is no record of Sir David Gill having visited Rhodesia at that time. The discussion, as Sir David Gill puts it, was on the desirability of systematic survey as a first essential to a sound system of land tenure in a new country, and Gill was at pains to prove to him the impossibility of surveying a country or of granting indisputable titles to land by surveys made in a patchwork way.

It is of course possible that Grey himself may have approached Gill in the first case, because of the constant wrangling which had been going on amongst the land surveyors in Rhodesia, or because Mr. J. Orpen, the then Surveyor-General, had pressed him to do so.

There is evidence that Orpen knew what Gill was after, but, such as it is, it seems to indicate that it was Gill's idea in which Orpen acquiesced rather than the reverse. Gill stated that he had had unofficial correspondence with Orpen, and as a result of this he approached Earl Grey. Such an arrangement would be perfectly understandable, as Orpen was essentially a cadastral surveyor and might have felt that an approach by Gill would carry more weight and be better presented than any approach by himself. He was clearly very friendly with Gill because he signs himself in one letter to Gill as "yours very faithfully although I did not steal your spectacles". At any rate Earl Grey must have been convinced because he asked Sir David Gill to write to him formally on the subject. This Gill did on January 28th, 1897, and the following is an extract of parts of the letter:—

"The point in my mind is the question of your survey.

You have a new Surveyor-General, who, unless I am mistaken, will be in complete sympathy with what I am about to say.

The point which is always so difficult to bring home to the lay-administrative mind is that it is impossible to survey a country properly or to grant indisputable titles to land by surveys made in a patchwork way.

When Government has a particular bit of land to dispose of, it seems to be supposed that one has only to send a Surveyor to set up beacons, survey the ground and bring back a diagram of these beacons — and sell the land according to this description.

Assume the Surveyor to be competent and honest, the result will be certain points marked on a piece of paper, representing pretty accurately the shape of the piece of land so surveyed, but in marking places there

will be no sufficiently well marked topographical features, such as well defined river boundaries, etc., to locate precisely in the country where the particular farm is, there will be nothing to indicate the Latitude and Longitude of any particular feature on the Map, (i.e. its position on a general map of the country) and there will be no *accurate* topography on the diagram, because the price which the surveyor receives for such Survey makes it impossible for him to include accurate topography in his work. With the approximate methods of base measurement necessarily used by such a surveyor there will also be some appreciable error in the *scale* of the map, and beyond a rough orientation by a compass (and the direction of the Magnetic Meridian is subject to large secular variation) there is nothing to indicate the line North of the diagram.

Afterwards when you come to patch such surveys together you can see that no small trouble must arise, and that shortcomings and overlaps occur. But this assumed that the surveyor is honest and capable — you can imagine the additional complications which will arise when the "Sworn Surveyor" is both dishonest and incapable — and the history of human nature is too well known to suppose that any class of men will remain honest and capable if there is no system of check on their work, and if imaginary and cooked surveys, which cost little trouble, are regarded of equal weight in the eyes of the Law, and are as well paid for as those of the most careful and accurate surveyor. Then comes the further possibility — the dishonest proprietor. A particular piece of land is bought from Government. The proprietor finds a convenient spring, or piece of rich land outside his boundary — there is no neighbour to be hurt, or perhaps only a distant proprietor. It is not a difficult matter to shift a beacon — there is no one particularly interested, and the beacon is shifted. Years pass; it is found that the area of one man's land is too great and that of his neighbour too small according to the diagrams. The evidence of the diagram goes to show that a particular beacon has been shifted — but of course our dishonest proprietor had no sooner shifted his beacon than he began to show the boundaries of his property to all his friends, and they are all afterwards prepared to swear that this has always to their certain knowledge been the boundary; and "the evidence of the oldest inhabitant" is that which the Courts seem to love. The Courts are of course justified in this otherwise absurd system, by the prevalence of bad survey — especially in the past. In this way large tracts of land have been stolen from the Government in Cape Colony.

There is one, and only one, remedy for all this, and that is to connect all detached surveys with a general system of triangulation — and it will save the Government and the inhabitants generally a vast amount of money *to establish this triangulation as quickly as possible*, so that every farm survey when it is made, may at the same time be connected with existing well established points of this rigorous system.

Were this done all robbery of Government land would be rendered

impossible, and geometric evidence might be substituted in Court for the unsatisfactory evidence which is accepted at present.

With the universal experience of the civilised world at my back, I do not hesitate to say that it is a waste and extravagance to postpone the commencement of a principal triangulation of your vast country. You have a comparatively clear field before you now, and the sooner you begin to base your land tenure on a sound system of survey the sooner will you establish a system of sound title and sound evidence of title in the country, and the sooner will you stop the wasteful system of survey in proceeding from small to great instead of from great to small.

It is an opportunity such as seldom occurs to an Administrator, and I hope you will be in a position to take advantage of it.

How much will it cost? That is of course the first question — that has always been the stumbling block which has made the Administrator or Minister "penny wise and pound foolish".

The lay official or Minister will propose the construction of a railway or telegraph which offers no immediate prospect of paying interest on its cost, because of the prospective advantage which he can foresee to the country; but it is far more difficult to make him understand the similar necessity which exists for preliminary systematic triangulation, and the wasteful folly of delaying such work.

Every civilized country in the world has been, in the end, compelled to come to that, but not until a crop of legal troubles due to inaccurate survey has been laid up which take a century to set at rest — not until four or five times the cost of a systematic survey has been spent in misdirected effort — and not until the value of geometric evidence (the only reliable evidence) has been damned in the eyes of the Law by the evidence of inaccurate and unchecked surveys.

The question has an important scientific side also, but that cannot probably appeal to you in the present state of your finances. It made a strong impression on Mr. Rhodes when I represented it to him before the outbreak of your recent troubles, and he promised, from that side alone, to take the question into serious consideration. I refer to the matter and Mr. Rhodes' interest in it in a paper which I communicated to the last Geographical Congress in London.

If by these arguments I have convinced you of the necessity for the work, I shall be glad, if you desire it, to enter further into the practical question, "How the work should be done and what it will cost?"<sup>(1)</sup>

Interest in this letter lies in its initial approach wherein it offered a solution to a problem which must undoubtedly have been disturbing Earl Grey, particularly as before Orpen's appointment there is ample evidence of considerable disagreement between the Land Surveyors, led by Fletcher and Orpen, and Duncan, the first Surveyor-General. There is also evidence that all those practising Land Surveying were split up into a number of parties whose attitude to each other could only be described as pharasiac. It seems evident therefore, that he may have asked Gill to produce a solution to this technical quarrel.

It is also of interest to see how Grey conveys Rhodes's approval to his scheme on a purely scientific basis outside the Administrator's immediate interest and therefore in no way producing any implication of interference by Rhodes.

Earl Grey's reaction to this letter was positive and immediate for on the 5th March, a little over five weeks later, Gill was asked to send the details of his practical proposals for doing the work.

It is interesting, moreover, that despite the very limited knowledge of the country and the fact that any maps must have been poor in quality, if they in fact existed at all, Gill was able to put down practical proposals for doing the work and telegraph these to Salisbury on March 11th, five weeks after he had been asked for his plan. His reply to the Administrator was in fact as follows:—

"Your wire March 6th. Have collected best information procurable here. Consider most efficient and economical plan to carry chains only 15 to 20 miles broad of single triangles along certain lines of which most pressing is chain from TATI through BULAWAYO and SALISBURY and subsequently extended as far in direction of BLANTYRE as circumstances require. Another chain should run along thirtyfirst meridian of longitude from VICTORIA to SALISBURY extended North and South of these points as may be required. Loops of cheaper triangulation beginning and ending on these chains could include all the more important areas of Rhodesia. Cost about One Pound per square mile or twelve to fifteen thousand for both these chains if carried to borders of Rhodesia. Initial cost of instruments, waggons, carts, bullocks, mules, horses, tents and equipment two thousand five hundred pounds. Actual cost four thousand a year for about three years. This of course for principal triangles only which are your first essential.

Submitting two schemes one by local surveyor assisted by members of Mounted Police and other by officers and men of Royal Engineers".<sup>(2)</sup>

In his letter of March 12th, 1897, to Earl Grey which followed his wire he first outlines once again his scheme for chains of primary triangulation interconnected by those of a secondary order. He then goes into details of the stores and equipment and labour required, and produces a resulting cost in conformity with his wire. Scheme I, which he advocates, describes the arduous life and hardships to be expected and the type of man required for the work. Gill explains that the land surveyor normally makes about £1,500 a year, but those selected for the work "must have a strong preference for Geodetic work and be prepared to regard it as an honour and a distinction worth some pecuniary sacrifice to be employed on it". He considered that a salary of £1,000 per year was the lowest sum that could be offered. Gill then went on — "I am prepared to recommend two Government surveyors (that is Cape Government Surveyors) in whom I have absolute confidence — Mr. A. Simms and Mr. R. A. Fletcher. Mr. Simms worked for me for some years at the Observatory, passed the examination for Government Land Surveyor with distinction and has been to Rhodesia and worked successfully there. He served in the Rebellion and his name was mentioned in Selous' book. He is a nephew of Simms (of Troughton and Simms) the great mathematical instrument makers of London. He worked for some

years with his uncle where he was employed on the final testing and adjustment of instruments prior to their release from the workshop. He then came to the Observatory and studied for the survey examination. He is a born surveyor with a love for accurate work — a reliable and energetic man with a splendid physique. He has shown his capacity in Rhodesia for the Work of the Country, and I would rely on him in every way."

Mr. Fletcher, he said, he knew less intimately, but Simms thought highly of him.

The employment of Simms and Fletcher, with some British South Africa Police, Cape Coloured drivers and Africans, was his scheme No. 1. Scheme No. 2 was to utilise parties of Royal Engineers, but Gill preferred his first alternative. Ultimately Fletcher declined the appointment because of changed circumstances due to the death of his father, which compelled him to earn more money than that obtainable in Government employ. MacDonald was appointed in his place. Finally Gill recommended "that the Geodetic Survey of Rhodesia would be carried out on the same lines as in this Colony viz. — the Surveyor-General to be responsible for finance and accounts and I for the scientific work. I need not add", he goes on to say, "that my services are entirely at your disposal (for the love of the work) but I do not know if Mr. Orpen desires such an arrangement, and if not any suggestions or advice I can offer are at his disposal".<sup>(3)</sup>

As a result of this correspondence the Executive Council meeting in Salisbury on March 25th, 1897, passed the following resolution:—

"Trigonometrical Survey. The Council resolves that the recommendations of the Surveyor General in regard to the Trigonometrical Survey of the Territory be adopted and that he be instructed to communicate with Dr. Gill of the Cape Observatory with a view to carrying out these recommendations."<sup>(4)</sup>

There then seems to have been a lapse of time. Simms was appointed as the Officer-in-Charge of the Survey by Orpen on May 12th, 1897, but it was not until August 19th that Milton wrote to Gill agreeing to his scheme, and confirming that Orpen agreed to the divided responsibility. On September 2nd, 1897, Gill formally notified his acceptance of the arrangement. It is interesting that Sir David should have been party to such an arrangement which, whilst workable in Cape Town where those concerned could go and see each other, was bound to add a load to Simms which might well prove intolerable as there was no certainty that Orpen would agree with Gill on some matters. It would have been so much better for all concerned if Orpen had been made fully responsible with Gill as his adviser. At least Simms would have known where he stood.

Similarly notification of the resolution of March 25th by the Executive Council was sent to the War Office on August 17th, 1897. The War Office replied on the 28th August. The reply said "the experts in the intelligence division concur with Dr Gill's proposal and also in his opinion that the method that he suggests will be the most efficient and economical plan for laying down a framework of accurate triangulation, as a basis upon which surveys of all kinds can be founded ... with ease, simplicity and cheapness. I would also observe that in the execution of this project an eventual connection with the Cape chainwork of triangulation which already extends into Bechuanaland and to the North of Natal should be



borne in mind. This will not have been overlooked by Dr Gill."

The letter was signed J. C. Ardagh, Major General and Director of Military Intelligence, and was presumably intended to reinforce Gill's views, though there would seem no reason for such reinforcement. A similar letter was sent by the local Administration to Sir Clement R. Markham, K.C.B., of the Royal Geographical Society, but there is no trace of his ever having taken sufficient interest in the project even to reply.<sup>(5)</sup>

#### SOURCES

1. *Report on the geodetic survey of part of Southern Rhodesia, executed by Mr. Alexander Simms, government surveyor, under the direction of Sir David Gill.* . . . (Geodetic survey of South Africa, v.3, Cape Town, 1905) p. i-iii
2. Report on the geodetic survey of Southern Rhodesia, by Sir David Gill, appx.2., (in LO 4/1/2 Nat Arch)
3. *ibid.*
4. Executive Council Minute, no 47 of 1897 (in EC 3/1/3 Nat Arch)
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# The Outbreak of the Matabele War (1893) in the Light of Recent Research

by  
S. GLASS

The Matabele War occupies an interesting place in the history of the later Nineteenth Century. For it removed the last of the native powers that had hampered Imperialist expansion in Southern Africa. The Matabele, under their ruler, Lobengula — who was the last of the great native Kings—were defeated; after 1893 the process of taming the African nations that had developed in Southern Africa was more or less complete. In addition, it was a war that illustrated the power vested in the chartered companies that had come on the African scene during the last twenty years of the Nineteenth Century.

My interest in this war stems from the year 1959, when I left South Africa to live for a time in Southern Rhodesia. Professor Keppel-Jones, then working on the history of Southern Rhodesia, suggested that I might look into this war, particularly at its causes about which we knew little. Thus there was given to me a topic that proved to be of enthralling interest, and which has enabled me to produce two theses. The first was entitled "The Background of the Matabele War" and dealt with the policy of Dr. Leander Starr Jameson towards the inhabitants of Mashonaland and Matabeleland. The second, called "Sir Henry Loch and the Matabele War", was a study of many aspects of this war, of its causes and its course, of the men and interests involved, and of events and incidents connected with the campaign. In this sense the title was not, perhaps, an apt one, but I did endeavour to keep, as a thread running through the work, the attitude and policy of the High Commissioner, Sir Henry Loch, towards the British South Africa Company and the war that it brought about. Here I give an abstract of some of the aspects of these theses, and of the conclusions that I reached.<sup>1</sup>

It would, I think, be wise to commence with a brief summary of the war itself. In dealing with the campaign of 1893 I like, for convenience, to divide it into two parts. First, the events up to the first clash between the white settlers in Mashonaland and the Matabele, and second, the events from the time of that clash onwards. This first clash took place near Fort Victoria on July 18th, 1893: an important and significant date, and one to be borne in mind, for it was this event that was the cause of the war. There followed some eleven weeks, during which preparations for war proceeded apace. Finally, on October 5th, 1893, Loch gave Jameson permission to advance into Matabeleland with the forces of the British South Africa Company. This he followed up with instructions to



Lord Loch, a cartoon by 'Spy' in 'Vanity Fair'.

(National Archives)

the Imperial forces under Lt.-Col. Hamilton Goold Adams to march from their base at Macloutsie and to proceed towards Bulawayo from the south.

Two armies, if such is not too grand a name for them, thus moved towards the Matabele capital. The one was what might be called an amateur force. It consisted of two columns, the Salisbury and the Victoria, under the overall command of Major Patrick Forbes. The line of march was in a south-westerly direction from Mashonaland; after fighting two pitched battles, these troops of the British South Africa Company took occupation of Bulawayo on November 4th, 1893. For the success of this lightning advance the credit lies partly with the spirit and determination of the men, partly with the lack of red tape, and partly — if not greatly — with the new Maxim machine guns that mowed down the Matabele in a way that the more conventional weapons of earlier native wars could never have done.

The other army was under the command of an Imperial officer, Col. Goold Adams. "With him was his own regiment, the Bechuanaland Border Police, and an equal number of Company troops led by Commandant Raaff. This stalwart veteran of the Zulu War had raised his force in Johannesburg — an enlistment campaign, incidentally, which led one newspaper to rejoice in the fact that the Rand was thereby being purged of its riff-raff.<sup>2</sup> This force, which advanced on Bulawayo from the south, could not move without the sanction of the High Commissioner. Goold Adams was an unimaginative officer, and it was in a most leisurely fashion that he moved towards the north. Unhappily for Loch, the lines of communication proved inadequate once the column had left its base, and his subsequent messages to Adams, beseeching him to take Bulawayo before the Company forces could arrive there, were not received until it was too late. Not until November 15th did the Imperial forces enter Bulawayo, eleven days, be it noted, after Jameson's little army had taken the town.<sup>3</sup>

With that background, we may now turn to the subject under discussion, namely the interpretation of the war in the light of recent research. It is essential that the outbreak of the war be viewed in the context of Imperialism as it was in the last fifteen or so years of the 19th Century. The scramble for Africa by great powers such as Britain, France and Germany, was not necessarily a scramble by the governments of those countries; it was a scramble by trading companies, chartered by those governments. France was interested in the Niger region, Germany in East Africa, and thither they sent companies to carve out empires for them. Britain, wishing to ride off these rivals, but wishing to do it in the most economical way possible, chartered two companies — the Royal Niger Company in 1886 and the Imperial British East Africa Company in 1888.<sup>4</sup> In Southern Africa the British South Africa Company was chartered in 1889 to secure the British sphere of influence lying to the north of the South African Republic, and to prevent Portuguese expansion to the west of Mozambique.

Whatever advantages this method of colonization by Chartered Company might have had, it had one very important drawback; namely, that as a trading company it was interested primarily in profits and in satisfying shareholders. The well-being of the African tribes with which they came into contact was hardly of paramount interest. Because of this the chartered companies were not popular with the various humanitarian groups in Great Britain, which came to

look upon them as oppressors of the native populations. This was a valid objection, for the British Government, in sending out companies to do the work of colonization, and in arming these companies with mighty powers of government and control, did not have the power to ensure that there would be no ill-treatment of the native races.<sup>5</sup> Thus the Aborigines' Protection Society, and the missionary groups headed by the London Missionary Society, complained bitterly about this new aspect of Imperialism. They were joined by "Little Englanders", who, anxious to secure a diminution of colonial responsibility, sprang to their support.

With this in mind, we may return to Mashonaland, and to July 18th, 1893 — the date, as mentioned earlier, of the first clash between Europeans and Matabele outside Fort Victoria. When this occurred it was viewed with horror by humanitarians and others in England. Anti-Imperialists adopted the stand that the British South Africa Company was determined to take Matabeleland and the gold that was supposed to exist there. In order to do this it was, through its agent Dr. Jameson, the Administrator of Mashonaland, deliberately trying to force a war on the Matabele. The development of this view took the form of showing that Jameson invited Lobengula, the Matabele King, to invade Mashonaland. Certain Mashona people were accused of stealing stretches of the telegraph wire between Tuli and Victoria, and, so ran the argument, the Matabele were invited to punish these miscreants. Once the impis appeared in the Fort Victoria district, Jameson had the looked-for excuse: the warriors were accused of murdering Mashonas and of interfering with the whites. On this pretext Jameson declared war and finally secured the High Commissioner's permission to invade Matabeleland.

Such a belief gained ground; the story spread. No one of course, knew whether it was fact or fiction, but it came to be accepted as fact. Historians accepted that Lobengula was "invited" to invade Mashonaland, and that he was thereby "provoked" into war. Such an argument has been meat and drink to writers on the Matabele War up to recent years.<sup>6</sup>

Henry Labouchere seems to have been the founder of the "provocation school". He was a radical M.P., the editor of a magazine called *Truth*, and a staunch opponent of chartered companies. F. C. Selous, the famous hunter, referred to him as "the most unscrupulous, dishonest and virulent enemy of the colonists in Mashonaland".<sup>7</sup> The stand taken by Labouchere is illustrated by the following quotations from *Truth*:

"The Mashonaland 'bubble' having burst, a war was forced by the Company on Lobengula in order to get hold of Matabeleland."

To him it was brought about through a carefully laid plan:

"All the circumstances show that the coup had been carefully prepared long beforehand. When the train had been laid, a quarrel was picked with the Matabele, who had entered Mashonaland at the Company's request, and they were attacked and shot down by this same Jameson while doing their best to retire in obedience to his orders."

What, then, is the truth? Did this provocation take place? Was Jameson looking for a war? Was there any invitation to Lobengula to invade Mashonaland? The answer to the last three questions is an unequivocal NO. Investigation of the events that took place between the occupation of September, 1890, and

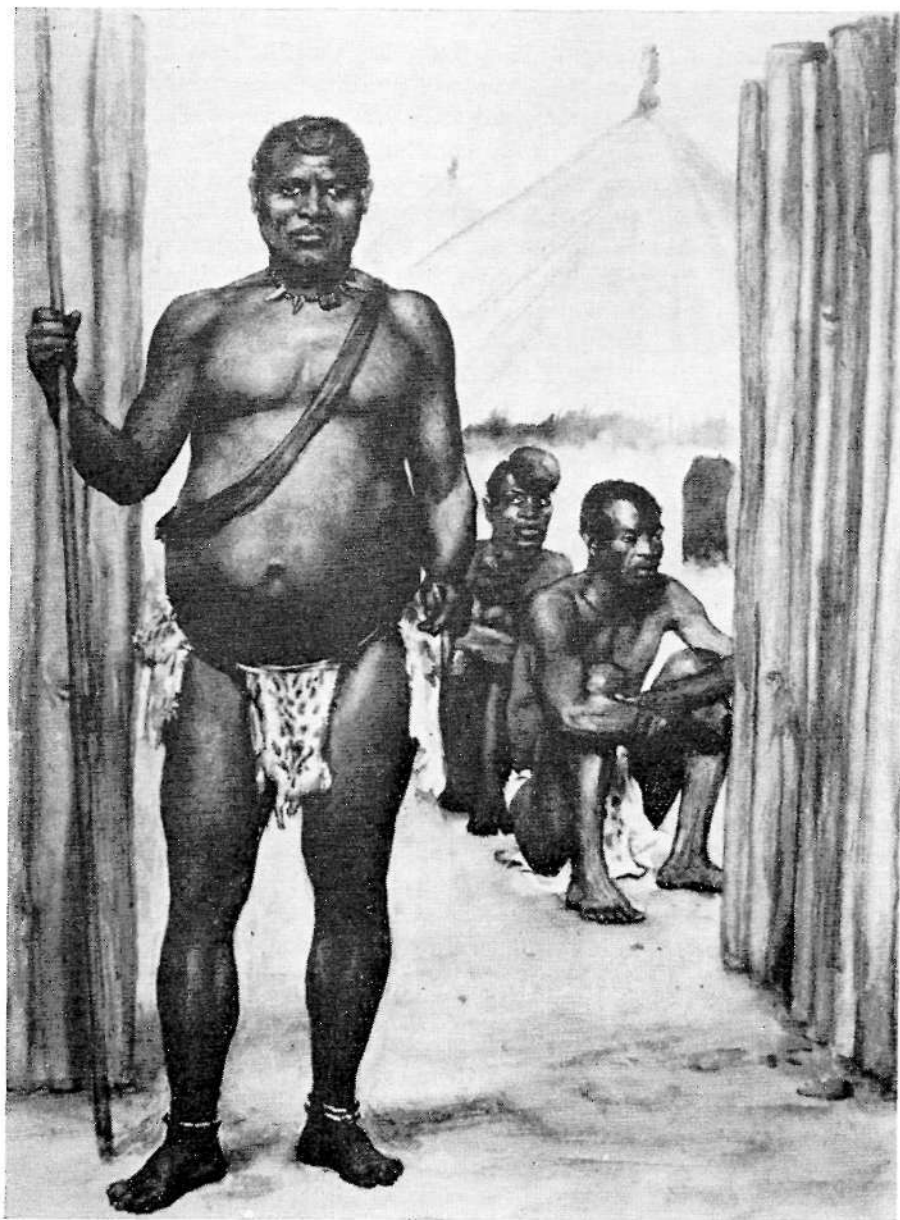
the Victoria incident of July, 1893, reveals that Jameson's policy had been aimed at peace. He based his policy towards the Matabele on the provision of a border between Matabeleland and Mashonaland, and although Lobengula later denied any knowledge of this border, we have extant several letters from the Administrator's Office, Salisbury, to Bulawayo, in which reference is made to the border in such a way as to imply that it had been accepted by both sides. Jameson refused to allow white men to cross this border, and did his best to persuade the Matabele from violating it. There was a line of argument that Jameson always took — that friendly Matabele who came to work would be welcome, while marauding bands should remain in Matabeleland. A specific instruction was to the effect that if the King wished to punish his Mashona people — they were regarded by the Matabele as their "slaves" — he must ask the white authorities to do it for him.<sup>8</sup>

The Matabele War was not premeditated. Jameson never sought a conflict with the Matabele — indeed, he dreaded the thought of one as it might, in his phrase, "bust the show". When the King sent the impi to Mashonaland at the end of June, 1893, he did so for reasons of his own. It had nothing to do with the white men. Jameson, up to the time that he arrived in Victoria on July 17th, remained convinced that the raid was nothing to worry about. He would get rid of the Matabele without trouble, and there would be an end of it. Events, however, did not turn out in this way: for once he had arrived in Victoria he saw and heard enough of the activities of this impi to change his mind. He had around him angry colonists, threatening to leave the country unless some action was taken against such invasions.

If he first began, on July 17th, to think in terms of war, then those thoughts crystallized the very next day. For at noon on July 18th he held an Indaba. The warriors were told to make a move towards the border within the hour. About two hours later a patrol was sent out under the charge of Captain F. C. Lendy; at dusk it returned and the Captain reported that he had found some 300 men still on the commonage. These had opened fire, which was returned.<sup>9</sup> Upon receiving this information Jameson determined on war. It was, indeed, a sudden decision, and one which he, true to character, reached impulsively.<sup>10</sup>

But Jameson was not only impulsive; he was obstinate, too. Once he had made up his mind to do a thing he never wavered from it. After July 18th he devoted himself to bringing about his war. Prior to his arrival in Victoria he had never thought about the matter. His policy towards the Matabele had, indeed, been a model one, and admirable from the point of view of the humanitarians. When Labouchere and others accused him of provoking Lobengula into sending the impi to Fort Victoria, they did him a grave injustice.

On the 5th of October, some eleven weeks after the fateful decision of July 18th, the war started. This intervening period, clearly an all-important one, has been ignored by historians. When I came to investigate it, I found that there were many questions requiring answers. What was the nature of the preparations for war? What was the attitude of the High Commissioner in Cape Town? Why did the peace mission sent by Lobengula fail? Were the Matabele impis indeed menacing the border, as Jameson claimed? What was the truth about the "border incidents" that were supposed to have precipitated the war? What were men



Lobengula, from a sketch by E. A. Maund, 1889.

*(National Archives)*

like Johann Colenbrander and John Smith Moffat doing at this time? It was on these eleven weeks that I concentrated in part of my second thesis, and it was to such questions that I endeavoured to find answers.

An investigation of these weeks of preparation must take into consideration the three protagonists concerned: Jameson, Loch and Lobengula. The war was brought about by the first, who worked with dogged determination to get his forces ready and under way before the rains of November set in. But he could not make a war in, shall I say, a vacuum. The other two were vitally concerned. Loch was the link between the Colonial Secretary, then Lord Ripon, and Jameson. No permission for an attack on the Matabele would be forthcoming unless Loch could convince Ripon that the white settlements were in danger from warlike impis. Lobengula who stood to lose everything through a war with the whites, was in communication with Loch through John Smith Moffat at Palapye. Had both Loch and Lobengula made staunch effort in the cause of peace there could never have been a war. But they failed to do this. The blame for the war cannot rest on Jameson's shoulders alone. All three men must take their share of responsibility for the Matabele War of 1893.

The greatest share of the blame lies with Jameson. No longer the diplomat, but the aggressor, he lost no time in gathering his forces for what might be called the first Jameson Raid. In Salisbury, Forbes, and in Victoria, Lendy and Captain Allan Wilson, had little difficulty in raising volunteers and equipping them.<sup>11</sup> Well before the end of July, Raaff was in Johannesburg, recruiting soldiers and purchasing horses. Late in August, with preparation well advanced, Jameson began despatching to the south reports of vast impis moving near the Mashonaland border.<sup>12</sup> It is indeed clear that Lobengula never made any preparations for war. It was not until the 15th of October, ten days after the march on Bulawayo had commenced, that the King received Loch's letter of October 6th, a letter which contained the nearest that the High Commissioner ever came to a declaration of war.<sup>13</sup> Three days before this, on October 12th, Lobengula had heard from his own people that the whites were in his country, "apparently wishing to fight", as he put it. He thereupon called his headmen together to discuss the emergency.<sup>14</sup>

The absence of Matabele impis on the frontier would appear to be confirmed by Jameson's own actions once the Victoria column was on its way. He and his military adviser, Sir John Willoughby, left Victoria on their own on October 8th, and set out to join the column, then some 50 miles on its way, On October 14th, when well into Matabeleland, the two men again set out on their own to make contact with Forbes's column, then waiting for the Victoria men at Iron Mine Hill. One wonders whether they would have been so intrepid had there been any truth in the hair-raising reports with which Loch had been assailed.

Jameson, in his determination to bring about his war, was not particular about the means he employed. One of the strangest chapters in the story of the Matabele War is the extraordinary mission that Johann Colenbrander was called upon to undertake. This man, who left Bulawayo for Palapye late in August, became the Company's principal warmonger. On September 16th he set out on a "tour" in the direction of Tati and beyond. On this tour he told every black man whom he saw that a white army was on its way into Matabeleland. He



returned to Palapye on September 21st and reported to Jameson that two impi were on the move — one towards Victoria, the other towards Tati. The purpose of this mission is clear. All was quiet at Bulawayo, so he set out to raise a war scare. However, Lobengula soon discovered that there was no truth in Colenbrander's statements, and ignored them.<sup>16</sup>

That Lobengula had failed to take the bait dangled before him by Colenbrander must have been of some disappointment to Jameson. But, nothing daunted, he continued to represent the border areas as swarming with savages. He fell back on that time-honoured excuse for war: a border incident. It was reported to Cape Town that a patrol under Captain C. J. White had been fired upon by Matabele on September 30th. History has always elevated this incident to a position of prominence, and made it out to be one that caused Loch to give Jameson permission to advance.

The truth, however, is that he was little impressed by the report. When he heard about the incident on October 2nd, he ignored it. In his reply to Jameson he did not even refer to it. It was only after Jameson's telegram of October 4th, insisting that 7,000 to 8,000 Matabele were in the area of Victoria, that Loch gave him permission to advance.<sup>17</sup>

History has not apportioned any of the blame for the outbreak of the war to Sir Henry Loch. He has always been represented as a shadowy figure, hovering in the background, making futile efforts at peace, and finally playing no more important a part than to create a diversionary movement in the south. Such an interpretation is one that needs revision. Sir Henry was an Imperialist of the old school, a man who was not enamoured of this modern tendency to extend the empire through the agency of chartered companies. Outright annexation to the Crown was more to his liking. From the time of his arrival at the Cape late in 1889 he revealed his determination to extend the authority of the High Commissioner to the north. Between 1890 and 1892 he was able to wring from a reluctant Government some extensions of his power in the vast area, between the Zambezi and the Limpopo, that was accepted as the Company's sphere of operations. Loch's aim was to remove political power from the Company, and in May, 1891, he penned a despatch in which he urged that control should be vested in the hands of some high Officer of State and a board appointed by the Government with the approval of the Company. The Colonial Secretary assured him that the British Government was determined fully to abide by the chartered company principle.<sup>18</sup>

It was a sulky Loch who kept his peace until the events of July, 1893, gave him his chance. He became determined to take part in the coming war, to win it with his own regiments, and to take charge of the negotiations at its end. From July 18th onwards Loch prepared, not for defence, but for war. The Bechuanaland Border Police was strengthened, a process over which he watched carefully, attending even to the most petty details himself. He held up Jameson, refusing to give him permission to advance until he was sure of the readiness of his own troops. Finally, as we have seen, he allowed Jameson to proceed with his plans on October 5th.

Strangely enough, on the same day, and after he had given Jameson authority, a second border incident occurred, this time not far from Macloutsie.

Although Loch had set little store by the earlier border incident, he seized avidly on this one. It was his excuse to send the Bechuanaland Border Police off to war.<sup>19</sup>

Thus Loch cannot be regarded as a disinterested figure. He had his war aim, and he saw that only through the coming struggle would he be able to further his wish to remove political power from the hands of the Company.

Lobengula was a tragic figure, caught up between the aims and ambitions of these two men, Loch and Jameson. His defeat was as vital to the one as to the other. To Lobengula peace was essential, for he knew the danger to himself and his people from the military power of the Europeans. Yet he played into the hands of both these men, and in his attitude gave them some justification for attacking him. Lobengula was fast on the horns of a dilemma; caught between his genuine desire not to disturb the whites, and his need to fulfil the traditions and customs of his tribe, he sought to accommodate both, and failed. Unfortunately for the Matabele, one tradition was that the young men of the regiments should be kept busy. Their spears must be dipped in blood. On his right to attack the Mashona among whom the whites were settled Lobengula insisted to the last. In addition to this, Lobengula was also insistent that he would never consider a border between Matabeleland and Mashonaland. Thus the Induna, Ums hete, on his peace mission to Cape Town — he was in the capital between September 23rd and October 5th — made it clear that the Mashona were the King's slaves and that he would not discuss the question of a border.<sup>20</sup>

So long as Lobengula persisted in these claims there could be no base on which peace negotiations could rest, and Loch, even had he wanted to, could not possibly call upon Jameson to put a stop to his preparation for war. The result was that the whites could claim that the war was necessary to destroy such barbarism. When Loch told Lord Ripon that he had given Jameson permission to advance, he said that the "strongest reason" that led him to believe that peace was impossible was the demand of Lobengula to have dominion over the lives and property of the Mashona.<sup>21</sup> So Lobengula, because of his intransigent attitude, must also shoulder some portion of the blame for the war.

Thus came the war. It was Jameson's war, and the victory, too, was his. Loch, let down by Goold Adams, tried, but failed, to take control of negotiations at its end. Southern Rhodesia was born under the aegis of the Company, and the chartered company principle was maintained in the country until 1923.

*A paper delivered to the Pietermaritzburg Branch of the Historical Association in May, 1965).*

#### NOTES

1. *The Background of the Matabele War* (M.A., Natal University, 1959) and *Sir Henry Loch and the Matabele War* (Ph.D., Natal University, 1964). Copies of both dissertations will be found in the library of the University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, in the National Archives, Salisbury, and in the library of Rhodes House, Oxford. In the following footnotes I shall refer to these two works as *Background* and *Loch* respectively.
  2. *Loch*, pp. 85-88, for a brief account of Raaff's activities in the Transvaal.
  3. *Loch*, pp. 149-154; 170-180.
  4. See M. W. Swanson, "Chartered Companies in the scramble for Africa, 1880-1900", in the *Proceedings of the John Bird historical society*, v.1, no. 7. (University of Natal, Durban, 1962).
- This is a useful account of the formation and work of these two companies.

5. *Cambridge history of the British Empire*, v.3, p.175.
6. S. G. Millin, *Rhodes*, ch.20, pp. 180 ff. She seems to believe that Lobengula was provoked. Her handling of such sources as she employs, however, does not bear analysis — see *Background*, pp. 137-140. Felix Gross, *Rhodes of Africa*, p. 233, where he says that Jameson "engineered the required incident". More recent writers have adopted a fairer approach and do not accept the provocation theory. See P. Mason, *The Birth of a dilemma*, pp. 163-169; and J. G. Lockhart and C. M. Woodhouse, *Rhodes*, pp. 251-256.
7. W. A. Wills and L. T. Collingridge, *The Downfall of Lobengula*, p. 3. This work was compiled in 1894, and while it has much material on the war and the personalities involved, it has also a pronounced pro-settler, pro-Company bias.
8. *Background*, pp. 1-8.
9. *Background*, p. 110.
10. *Background*, especially, ch.9, pp. 93-108. The main burden of this thesis was that war was never premeditated, and that Jameson's decision on July 18th was not the result of any planning or plotting.
11. *Loch*, pp. 81-84.
12. *Loch*, pp. 102-109.
13. *Loch*, pp. 133-134.
14. *Loch*, p. 137.
15. *Loch*, p. 144-145.
16. *Loch*, pp. 110-117,
17. *Loch*, pp. 118-124; 129-132.
18. *Loch*, pp. 20-34.
19. *Loch*, pp. 124-128; see also pp. 134-135.
20. *Loch*, pp. 85-101.
21. *Loch*, p. 132.

# The Second Visitor to the Victoria Falls

Extracts from W. C. Baldwin - *African hunting and adventure  
from Natal to the Zambesi, 1852 - 1860.*

(London, Bentley, 1862)

W. C. Baldwin (1826-1903) was the second to describe the Victoria Falls. When Livingstone discovered the Falls in 1855 it was in the course of his great journey from Angola to the east coast of Africa. Baldwin was the first European known to have reached them by travelling by what was later to become the customary route from the south. He arrived there on August 2nd, 1860, finding his way via the Chobe River. Curiously he was one week ahead of the next visitors, David Livingstone, for a second time, with his brother Charles, and Dr John Kirk, who had come up-river from Tete in the course of detailed exploration of the Zambezi and the Shire financed by the British government.

W. C. Baldwin landed in Natal in 1851 and very soon joined a hunting party into Zululand. Of this party of nine seven died of malaria but this indoctrination left him undefeated. From 1851 to 1856 he hunted each year, for elephant, into Zululand, and as the game was shot out he continued after it in Bechuana-land from 1857 to 1861. The journey to the Victoria Falls was his last in Africa and thereafter he retired to the life of a gentleman farmer, and a hunter of the fox, in Cheshire. There is a memorial to him in the parish church of Leyland, Lancashire, which mentions, as the thing to be remembered by, that he was the second visitor to the Falls.

These extracts are from his very readable book *African hunting and adventure from Natal to the Zambesi* which was first published in 1862 and ran to a second edition within the year.

E.E.B.

[July] 19th [1860]. *Mateste*. — I have but little idea of my whereabouts, as I hear such contradictory statements from the Kaffirs. None of us can properly understand the language, which is a great drawback; but I have come to the conclusion the Kaffirs themselves do not know, or at any rate will not tell the way to the Zambesi, or give us any idea of the distance. One man positively affirms that it is only four days, the next that it is a month, the next never heard the name of the river; and they are one and all so stupid and utterly indifferent, that I have given up enquiry, and hold always due north. I have only treked four days since last logging up, two very hard ones without water, and then we came to an entirely different country, bare and thinly wooded, with plenty of small hills in every direction, lots of fountains and running water. I have crossed two rivers, and fancy one must be the Guaka.



*W. C. Baldwin from the frontispiece to African Hunting and Adventure.*  
(National Archives)

My party is now all dispersed. I have left behind one wagon and twenty-three oxen, in charge of two Kaffirs. Adonis and Isaac are gone into the fly (tsetse) to shoot on foot three or four days, due east from where I now write, where elephants are said to be plenty.

I fell in with an Englishman, Poison by name, who came in by Walvish Bay, about fourteen or fifteen months ago, and has not yet got one load — a sorry prospect for me. We passed three or four evenings together very pleasantly, and assisted one another in the way of exchange. I got a gun and powder for ivory and beads; it was a most agreeable break, and we were very jolly together, and sorry to part; at least I speak for myself.

I wished to leave a heavy lot of flesh for my Kaffirs during my absence, as they have no means of providing for themselves, but game was so scarce that I had two long blank days. On the third, however, I got four quaggas, one eland, and a black rhinoceros, despatched a wagon and pack oxen, and left them with abundance until my return. Somehow or other, I cannot come across any elephants. Though I see lots of spoor, and have had some weary days in search, they have managed always to elude me as yet. This morning, very early, I actually heard one scream, and, though we sallied out at once, and had the benefit of January's spooring, we could never find him, and we were obliged to rest contented with two fat elands.

24th — My plans are at present quite undecided. I think I have got nearly as far as it is possible to get. The Country now in every direction is rugged, rocky, and very broken, with great hills and numerous rivers, and altogether an effectual barrier to any further attempts with a wagon; added to which, the tsetse abound in all directions, and I cannot at all make out my whereabouts. The sun is intensely hot, and the nights and mornings bitterly cold. I think the thermometer must vary at least forty degrees in the twenty-four hours, and the country is decidedly most unhealthy at this season. Where on earth the elephants have got to, I cannot imagine.

In my rambles yesterday, I came across another nation, calling themselves Batokas. They are horrid frights: it is their custom to knock out their four front teeth, and to file a small space between each of the under ones, and a more hideous lot of grinning wretches I never saw. I heard, as a reason for their thus disfiguring themselves, that they were anxious to resemble an ox as much as possible, that being, in their estimation, the noblest of animals. All the natives are immensely fond of cattle, but this is carrying their veneration rather far. I have also heard that they have a horror of looking like a quagga or zebra. Remarking on one of my fellows, they said he would be good-looking only for his front teeth. The teeth of a Kaffir are splendid, snow-white, sound and even, and set off the rest of his face to great advantage.

I gleaned from the Batokas that an Englishman, whom from their description I guess to be Dr. Holden, whom I met on my return from the Lake last year, has knocked up a shanty close to their State, but he has no wagons or horses, and they volunteer to take me to him in three days on foot. They tell me he is on the banks of a large river, which must be the Chobe, and I am doubtful whether to look him up or not; if he should have gone, I shall have some tremendously hard work for nothing. My gun, bandolier, and ammunition,

without which I never stir, weigh 18 lbs., and trudging under a broiling sun, even without this slight burden, is no easy matter, especially when you consider the bill of fare, which is flesh of some sort or other, salt, and water; I wish I could add bread, but I have no one to carry more than my blanket, as my people are all dispersed.

29. — After long arguments and reasoning with myself, I at last decided to go on foot to the Chobe, and learn from Dr. Holden my exact whereabouts, and when and where I was likely to reach the great Falls of the Zambesi, as I can gain no intelligence whatever from the natives, and I now believe firmly that none of them know themselves anything about it. I appointed to meet the Batokas on the third day, after in vain trying by bribery to induce them to come with me to the wagon, for I had great doubts in my own mind as to my finding the way back some twenty miles, without a guide, over so rough and broken a country. I reached the wagon in safety, and set off again to meet the Batokas, at break of day, accompanied by January carrying my blanket and a little spare ammunition, and got on well for a long distance, recognising many objects I had before noticed. At less than half the distance I got wrong. Eventually, by great perseverance, I got right again, and kept the direction for miles through thick bush, heaps of tsetse, and heavy sand, and at length reached the Batoka encampment — to find it deserted. Weary and jaded, we made some faint efforts to hit off their spoor, but lost all heart, as they had set the grass on fire in a hundred places, and the whole country looked as dreary and wretched as you can imagine. We retraced our weary steps till dark, when we made a fire and slept, and got back again last night, not a little proud of finding our way.

My hopes of reaching the Zambesi, even on foot, are fled. The only consolation I have had is that I have shot another variety of antelope new to me, the gryse steinbuck. I had often heard of him, but had never seen him before; and now I know of but one single antelope that I have not myself shot, but must content myself with a bought specimen — I mean the nakong.

31st. — I am all alone. Boccas started yesterday into the fly country, and my other driver has been long there. I am off to-day to the Chobe river, two and a half days ahead, and shall endeavour to get through the fly in the night, the moon being now at the full; at all events, I will chance a pair of horses. After being in the saddle all day, and seeing nothing, just as the sun went down, a giraffe bull stalked out of the bush half a mile from the wagon. I got Batwing saddled forthwith, and had a break-neck chevy after him over regular boulder stones by moonlight for some three miles, as hard as ever I could prevail on my nag to go, but he galloped in fear and trembling. At last, the stones, or rather rocks, became almost impassable even for the giraffe, and he had to slacken his enormous stride, and I, putting on a spurt, was alongside before he could get under weigh again, and rolled him over to my great glee, as I am most anxious to be off, and I could not leave my wagon without a supply of flesh.

August 4th. — ZAMBESI FALLS at last. I set off resolutely on the 1st, being determined to find the Falls, walked all day and all night, and towards morning I heard the roar of them. I never rested till I threw myself down, just before daybreak, within three hundred yards of the river, and I spent yesterday

at the Falls, which far exceeded all I have been led to expect. Rougher travelling I never encountered, but I had the benefit of the full moon.

I struck the river first about two miles above the Falls, and there it is not less than two miles wide, covered with islands of all sizes, one at least ten or twelve miles round, wooded to the water's edge — mowana trees, palmyra and palms, and plenty of wild dates, some of the former measuring twenty yards round the bole. The river is the finest and most beautiful I ever saw. It is rocky and rather shallow, and, just above the Falls, about one mile wide. And now for the Falls. I heard the roar full ten miles off, and you can see the immense volumes of spray ascending like a great white cloud, over which shines an eternal rainbow. The whole volume of water pours over a huge rock into an enormous chasm below, of immense depth. I counted from sixteen to eighteen, while a heavy stone of about twenty pounds weight was falling. I could not see it to the bottom, but only saw the splash in the water. I stood opposite to the Falls at nearly the same elevation, and could almost throw a stone across. The gorge cannot be more than a hundred yards wide, and at the bottom the river rolls turbulently boiling.

You cannot see the largest falls for more than a few yards down, on account of the spray, and you are drenched with rain for a hundred yards round from the falling mist. It is one perpendicular fall of many hundred feet, and I should think there are no less than thirty or forty different cascades, of all widths. The gorge cannot be less than 2,000 yards long, and the outlet is not certainly more than forty yards wide. This outlet is not at the end of the gorge, though how far off I cannot say; the streams meet, form a wild mad whirlpool, and then rush helter-skelter through the pass. Looking up the gorge from that point is the most magnificent sight I ever beheld. It is as if streams of brimstone fires were ascending high into the clouds. There was a never-ceasing rain for fifty, and in some places a hundred yards, on the high land opposite, and the rocks are very slippery, and the ground where there are no rocks is a regular swamp, where the hippopotamus, buffalo, and elephant come to graze on the green grass. There is one grand fall at the head of the gorge which you can see to the bottom, about eighty yards wide, but not so deep, as the river forms a rapid before it shoots perpendicularly over the rock.

Below the Falls, the river winds about in a deep, narrow, inaccessible gorge — a strong, swift, rocky stream. I followed its windings for some distance and after all, was not more than two miles, as the crow flies, from the Falls. It is one succession of kloofs, valleys, mountains, and the worst walking I ever encountered.

The river through this fearful gorge seems not wider than a swollen Highland torrent. The greatest drawback to the otherwise magnificent scene, is that the dense clouds rising from below render the main Falls invisible, and it is only the smaller cascades you can see to the bottom. There are some thirty or forty of these, spreading over a space of at least 1,500 yards. The Makololo are very jealous, and very much alarmed at my having found my way hither, and cannot account for it. I show them the compass, and say that is my guide, and they are sorely perplexed. The baboons here are out of all number.

8th. — I saw the Falls from the opposite side yesterday, and also from



above. No words can express their grandeur. The view from above is, to my mind, the most magnificent; the water looks like a shower of crystal, and it is one perpendicular fall of immense height. There is only one outlet, and it is marvellous how such an immense body of water squeezes itself through so small an opening.

I have punted for three days in all directions in the Makololo canoes, and could spend half my life on the waters. Dr. Livingstone is expected here to-day, and I am waiting to see him.

9th. — I had the honour, yesterday, of cutting my initials on a tree on the island above the Falls, just below Dr. Livingstone's, as being the second European who has reached the Falls, and the first from the East Coast.

Charles Livingstone says they far exceed Niagara in every respect, and the Doctor tells me that it is the only place, from the West Coast to the East, where he had the vanity to cut his initials.

Masipootana, the captain (under Sekeletu) of the Makololo nation, was exceedingly savage that I had seen the Falls without any assistance from him or his people, and sent several messengers to say that I must pay him handsomely. On the third day I went to see him, and made him a small present, but he was quite on the high horse, and said, that now I had come across he would take care I did not go back again; I must stay there till I had paid him for the water I drank and washed in, the wood that I burned, the grass that my horses ate; and it was a great offence that I had taken a plunge into the river on coming, out of one of his punts; if I had been drowned, or devoured by a crocodile or sea-cow, Sekeletu would have blamed him, and had I lost my footing and fallen down the Falls, my nation would have said the Makololos had killed me; and, altogether, I had given him great uneasiness. As he put the matter in this light, I paid him about 6 lbs. of beads and was released. These beads were sent by Masipootana to Sekeletu, who afterwards returned them to me.

I had some misgivings, at one time, as to our treatment — we were entirely in their power, and January was in such a taking that he could only just manage to drive back floods of tears. He thought it a very hard case indeed that he should be killed as well as I, as it was entirely my doing that he came at all, and very much indeed against his own will; and Masipootana endeavoured, I think, to frighten him, as he told me, when we were left alone at night, that they were going to take us out into the river and throw us overboard, and, in case we swam, pelt us on the heads with stones.

The tsetse, too, spoiled much of my pleasure; and, to crown all, just as I was ready to start back to the wagon, I found both horses in pit-falls, the one coffin-shaped and the other round, narrowing towards the bottom, and about seven feet deep; the ground was clay, baked by the sun till it turned the edge of an American axe, and smoke flew from the blows as if you were striking stones. Towards midnight, with the aid of rheims and a large body of Kaffirs I extricated them both, very badly bruised, and with horrid, unsightly scars and eyesores on them, but, fortunately, not seriously injured for actual work. Poor Snowdon suffered the most, as he had to sit up like a dog begging for many hours; the hole narrowed at the bottom and was some six inches deep in water, and with the clay he was regularly stuck there as if with plaster and mortar;

the only wonder is that we did not pull both head and legs off him. I had buffalo rheims round all his fetlocks, fore and hind, also round his neck, and some eight Kaffirs attached to the ends of each, and so we hauled him bodily out, after we had cut a sort of inclined plane down towards him. We heard several skirmishes with rhinoceros and buffaloes at night, in the thick bush, both going and returning, but ensconced ourselves behind the trees till the fray was over.

I have crossed three rivers between this and the Zambesi — the Manyati, Setabangumpe, and Massouey.

I consider myself very fortunate in meeting Dr. Livingstone and his party. I spent the evening with him, and gained great information about his recent discoveries. He has gone to Sesheke.

12th. — I returned to the wagon to-day, and found all right.

[December] 4th.—Waddington lent me Dr. Livingstone's work at Letloche, and I have just now for the first time read his description of the Falls of the Zambesi, and compared notes with my own; they differ materially, but on carefully reperusing mine I cannot alter a word. He has much underrated their magnitude. I saw them every successive day for a week from every accessible point, from opposite, from both sides, and above. Distance is most deceiving in this country, and still more so on the water; when I stepped it off opposite I was myself surprised to find it so far, and am confident I have not overrated the river at 2,000 yards wide. I may perhaps have rather overrated the depth, but the Umgani Falls in Natal are 100 yards deep, and the Zambesi, as far as the eye can judge, look as deep; as to the width, I can throw a stone ninety yards, and though I had some good ones to choose from, and threw with force and confidence from within twenty feet of the edge, having a very good head and never getting dizzy, yet I never succeeded in many attempts in throwing one across. It is probably, therefore, as many yards as the Doctor says feet; otherwise his description is very good, and exceedingly well expressed. He has erred on the right side, being too careful not to exaggerate; he allows that he has a bad eye and is not a good judge of distances, as he says himself that he judged a distance to be 400, which proved to be 900, yards. The discovery of the Falls was made in 1855, and from that time to this (1860), with the exception of Livingstone's party, no European but myself has found his way thither.

To give myself a good idea in rifle-shooting at game, I have been for years constantly judging and stepping off distances — for instances, from one ant-heap to another — and have hardly ever shot any game on the flat that I have not previously in my own mind first judged the distance, sighted accordingly, and, if successful, afterwards stepped it off, so that I can now form a very good idea. It is astonishing what wide shots others make who have not been in the habit of so doing; objects look very much nearer than they really are, owing to the clearness of the atmosphere.

# "The Rise and Fall of the Matabele Nation" (1893)

by  
D. DOYLE

Denis Doyle, of Irish descent, came into contact with Dr. Jameson in 1882 in connection with an alleged outbreak of smallpox in Kimberley where Jameson was practising and Doyle was sanitary inspector. Seven years later, in the service of Rhodes, Doyle accompanied Jameson and Major T. Maxwell, on their visit to Lobengula on Rhodes's behalf, to act as their interpreter for he was fluent in African languages. He remained in Bulawayo until the occupation of Mashonaland in 1890 was imminent.

He was described by Major A. G. Leonard as "about the most useful man the Company has and his services to them have been invaluable" and further that "a frame of iron and a splendid constitution doubtless account for an excellent temper, seldom ruffled he is always cheery and genial"\*. Leonard's observations were made in 1890. In the next year Doyle accompanied Jameson and D. G. B. Moodie on an epic journey through Manicaland and Gazaland to Gungunyana who was anxious to repudiate Portuguese influence and claims. Doyle contracted blackwater and his health never recovered; after a visit to England he retired to Grahamstown and later to Durban where he died in 1913.

In England he gave a paper to the Royal Geographical Society on the Gazaland journey and in 1893 he spoke in Port Elizabeth on the Matabele. This latter talk was printed in a pamphlet which is now extremely scarce — the only copy of which I know is in the library of the Royal Commonwealth Society in London. The pamphlet is *The rise and fall of the Matabele Nation: a paper read before the E[astern]P[rovince]Lit. and Scientific Soc.* (Grahamstown, Gregory and Sherry, 1893), and it is re-published here as complementary to the article in this issue by Mr. S. Glass. It has a special value as source material for as the author says in the preface: "During my residence in Matabeleland I had, of necessity, during many months, to see the King daily, and frequently had occasion to spend many hours with him, and it was during that time that many of the facts narrated were told to me by him."

E.E.B.

Mr. Doyle said: Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen:—

About 100 years ago there dwelt in the valley of the Buffalo, in Zululand, a chief of the name of Matshohana, who was king of one of the many tribes that at that time peopled Zululand. He claimed by reason of his descent from Kumalo, one of the sons of Zulu, to be Paramount King of the Zulus, and in

\* In Leonard, A. G. *How we made Rhodesia*. Kegan Paul, 1896

an attempt to force his Paramountcy on other tribes, he (Matshohana) was killed in the hour of victory by Uzwete people, who were also claimants to the throne of Zulu. Matshohana died, leaving as his successor a boy called Umzilegazi, so named by his mother on account of the manner in which his father was killed. The name seemed prophetic of the boy's future, the meaning of it being Umzela, a track, *ogazie*, of blood, for whenever he went in after loot he left a track of blood behind him.

It is said that immediately on the death of Matchohana, the people were called together, and selected as regents Mahla-Zulu and the queen's mother, who appeared to live peacefully with the neighbouring tribes, instilling into the boy's mind as he grew up the fact that he was of the house of Kumalo, and that at the proper time he would take his place as Inkosi of the whole nation. Showing the fidelity with which the induna who has been appointed regent discharged his trust, it is stated by some of the ancients of the tribe, that a Council of indunas was called, and the chieftainship offered to the regent by the assembled counsellors. He replied "I cannot be your king; the king is the child of Matshohana, I am holding him till he can walk. When he can do so, he will lead you men of our nation. A king is a king because he is born one. I was not born a king and therefore cannot be one. Let us salute the son of Matshohana who is our king." This shows how strongly it was believed in Zululand at this time, that a king was a king by divine right. Shortly after there arose Tshaka, who, a few years previously, had held a menial position in the household of one of the petty chiefs of Zululand. He declared that no king was a king unless he won his throne by his assegai, and proceeded to put his theory into practice by destroying all who opposed his march to power. And when Umzilegazi had reached manhood's year, he soon saw that it would be madness then to attempt to assert his right to the paramountcy of Zululand in the face of the enormous armies under the control of Tshaka; and making the best of a bad position he, with his tribe, paid homage to the Napoleon of South Africa. Tshaka, no doubt, pleased to have homage paid to him by the blue blood of the country about the year 1824, appointed Umzilegazi as officer of his body-guard and commander of the home division; and leaving him in charge went on a raiding, or rather slaughtering, expedition to Natal and Pondoland.

This was the opportunity for which Umzilegazi had waited; he at once collected all the cattle he could and, informing his tribe of his intention, trekked away north, followed by about 10,000 or 12,000 picked warriors, and all the women and children of the nation. Passing through one corner of Swazieland, he settled in the district of Magaliesberg, and at once proceeded to assert his independence by destroying, or taking prisoner, all, or most, of the unwarlike Sesuto tribes settled in the neighbourhood. He was not, however, allowed to remain long unmolested, for Tshaka, after about a year's absence, returning to Zululand and savage with what he deemed to be the treachery of his induna, determined on following up and punishing his runaway subject, and for that purpose started with the pick of the Zulu army. Fortunately for Umzilegazi he was warned in time by the friendly Swazies of the intention of his terrible foe, and knowing he would have no chance in battle against the Zulu army, determined on flight for the second time, and getting about a fortnight's start again moved with his

nation in a westerly direction across the Transvaal, followed by the forces of Tshaka, who, however, had to abandon pursuit, owing to short food supply, and returned without overtaking the flying Mandebele. Umzilegazi then settled in one of the most fertile portions of the Marico district; and it was here that his people became known for the first time as the Amandebele, being called so by the conquered tribes, for the reason that they were the "naked people with shields"; Umzilegazi having adopted Tshaka's method of fighting with the short or stabbing assegai and shield. The Amandebele king deeming himself safe from pursuit, sent his armies to the north-east and west, subjecting all the native tribes: those who refused tribute were allowed but a short time for repentance, and it was here that he first departed from the usual Zulu custom of killing women and children, taking them prisoners instead, allotting them as slaves to his people, and as the boys grew up incorporating them in regiments, which system continued until his death and was carried on by his successor. This accounts for the fact that the Matabele, or pure Zulu, form but a small portion of the nation today, and the majority of the people are of mixed descent, the only two regiments of nearly pure blood being the Umbezo and Ingubo, who made such a good stand in the late fight on the Imbembeza.

Previous to leaving Zululand, Umzilegazi had taken as his first royal wife a woman of the tribe of Large, and during his short stay at Magaliesberg took, as his second royal wife, a daughter of the chief of the Swazies. This it will be necessary to remember in order to explain the position of the royal house at the time of Umzilegazi's death. A son, named Kuruman, by the first royal wife, was born before his flight from Zululand, and at Marico in about 1831 or 1832, was born the present king of the Mandebele, Lobengula, which means, "driven by the wind" on account of the unsettled state of the nation at this time.

It was during his residence in the Marico district that he sent two of his Indunas travelling in the direction of Kuruman. Then came up the great pioneer missionary of South Africa, the elder Moffat, who was induced at the instance of the King to visit Umzilegazi, who received him kindly and became much attached to him. Moffat could have remained with the Matabele king; I have little doubt that his strong influence would have been used for the good of the Matabele nation and the cause of civilization. For a few years things went on smoothly with the people of Umzilegazi, and it was evident that he had not abandoned the hope that some day he would return and claim his inheritance in Zululand. But a power was approaching from which Umzilegazi would have to flee, as he had had to flee from Tshaka. The voortrekkers, in search of a country in which they would be free to establish themselves, and for which they had dared the Desert and the Savage, came across the Matabele, who, not knowing the power of the white man, or the determination of the Africander, attacked small parties in laarger, composed mostly of women and children, the men being absent on a hunting expedition. The camp was looted and destroyed. To this there could only be one sequel; the Matabele had now a foe far more dangerous than Tshaka and his hordes. The few hundred voortrekkers were more terrible to deal with in fight than as many thousand savages, and Umzilegazi to his loss, soon discovered this. The Boers organised a commando, and in 1837, after a

few months in the field, defeated Umzilegazi, taking a large number of cattle and would, if he had remained, completely have subdued him.

In addition to the attack of the Boers on the Matabele, Dingaan, who, in the meantime had succeeded Tshaka in Zululand, determined to attack him of the house of Kumalo (i.e. Umzilegazi) and recover the royal cattle, and falling on the Matabele shortly after their defeat by the Boers, so disheartened them that Umzilegazi for a third time took to flight to save his people and what remained of his cattle. The state of mind of the people is shown by the names bestowed upon the children born about that time. One, now an old man, is named "Death in Sleep", another "Saved from an Assegai", another "Risen from the Dead", and so on. These men have often told me in graphic language of the hair-breadth escapes of their mothers or friends, and described how they were beaten by the Boers, but how they suffered most from Dingaan's soldiers when they met them at close quarters with the short stabbing assegais; and it was evidently with a feeling of relief that the Matabele heard the king say, "We are going to the great river", meaning, no doubt the Zambesi. That there was a great river somewhere in the north known to the Zulus, is shown by the fact that some 40 or 50 years before, a large number of Zulus had trekked northwards under a chief named Umpezene, and was followed shortly afterwards by the Zulu Queen with a large following, and rumours of Umpezene's conquest of the Mashona tribes as he passed through the country (probably nearly along the route taken by the pioneer force of the British South Africa Company) and his passage across the Zambesi no doubt induced Umzilegazi to endeavour to join him or establish himself in his neighbourhood, depending on what he could forage from the tribes he came across on his march. The terror of his name induced all the tribes he came in contact with either to pay him homage and tribute, or to flee on his approach, abandoning their crops and houses. Umzilegazi went along the north bank of the Limpopo and then striking directly north, established himself for a time near where the Tati goldfields are now, until his spies returned reporting that a fertile country, well watered and wooded and healthy, was within easy distance. This country he decided to occupy, and moving in that direction with his people saw in the distance a flat-topped mountain, to which he directed the old men and some of his indunas to proceed and establish themselves, taking charge of all the women and the young children. Then selecting his best regiments he, himself, proceeded to the northwest, hoping to gain some intelligence of Umpezene and capture cattle, which were daily diminishing in number.

Very little is known of what Umzilegazi did in the north-west, and for a time we will leave him and follow the fortunes of the portion of his tribe which he had left behind. Going as directed, the latter found the country everything to be desired. Game was so plentiful that it could be killed in quantities more than enough for the wants of the people. Water in abundance, and when tilled the ground yielded more than enough food. It will perhaps be necessary here to remark how it was that this beautiful fertile country was uninhabited and desolate. There had been from Zululand during the previous 100 years a continuous stream of Zulu tribes passing through the country, on their way to the fertile plains north of the Zambesi — the first of which there is any distinct trace,



The Royal Horse Guards at Lobengula's Kraal, bearers of a message from Queen Victoria, 1890. L. to R. standing, Surgeon-Major H. I. Melladew, Corporal-Major White; sitting, Capt. V. Ferguson, J. S. Moffat, .....; lying, .....  
*(National Archives)*



Outside "Royal Charter House", Bulawayo, L. to R. sitting, Major T. Maxwell, J. S. Moffat and D. Doyle.  
*(National Archives)*

passed along the route subsequently followed by Umzilegazi; the second, under Umpezeni, as far as can be traced, went farther, to the east, probably by the route now known as the Pioneers' Road; the third, under Inyamanazi, the Zulu Queen, passed through the centre of Matabeleland, near where Bulawayo now is. On the onward progress of these armies they destroyed everything before them. And as old Makalaka said, they killed the men, speared the women, burnt the houses and tossed the children to the flames.

So at the time of Umzilegazi's entry into the country the few dispersed and disheartened Natives were only too glad to pay homage to a people from which they had such terrible experience, and Umzilegazi having once received the homage of the tribe, behaved loyally to them, and beyond exacting heavy tributes interfered with them no more. This will account for the easy manner in which the country was occupied.

Now to return to the Matabele tribe which had taken up its station near the flat-topped mountain. Having established themselves they proceeded to build kraals and to choose sites for the military kraals, anticipating the early return of the king. A year passed but no news was heard of him. A second year went by but still no Umzilegazi was heard of. They sent out messages but no traces of him could be found. About the yearly feast of the First Fruits in the third year, the indunas assembled with two regiments, the Induba and Zwangendaba and declared Kuruman, a lad of 15, son of the first royal wife, to be king. They had nearly completed their festivities — cattle killing and beer drinking — when to their horror it was rumoured that Umzilegazi was approaching with large herds of captured cattle and a great number of slaves. A few of the indunas did not wait his arrival but fled southwards; the others, thirteen in number, remained, hoping to be able to explain to Umzilegazi the reason for electing Kuruman. Little time, however, was allowed for explanation and terrible was the sentence. An old induna says Umzilegazi sat under a tree at the foot of a hill, dreadful to look at, and ordered the indunas to be brought to him. The trial was short. Looking at the chiefs he said "You wanted another king; I will give you one." Turning to his generals he said, "Take them away and let them be food for dogs." As soon as the order was given they were seized by the soldiers, dragged a few hundred yards to the west slope of the hill and killed. Umzilegazi sat unmoved and ordered Kuruman and Lobengula, with their mothers, to be brought to him. It may be said that both the women had acquiesced in the selection of Kuruman. The king sat still while they explained how they thought he was dead and the people wished someone of royal blood to rule them, and who was more fitted in the king's absence than his son? He listened calmly till they had finished, and turning to Umcumbate, the son of the chief who had been regent on the death of Matshobane, he said "Let them follow the indunas." The two women were handed over to the soldiers and killed in sight of Umzilegazi. The boy Kuruman was strangled according to the custom not to spill royal blood and Umcumbate took charge of Lobengula for the purpose of killing him, relying on his influence with the king and actuated by some feeling of kindness, the boy being the nephew of his head wife. Instead, however, of killing him he hid him away in one of the large beer pots used for making beer and covered him over with a shield. Some nights after he removed him secretly to his wife's



house. Umzilegazi, immediately after this slaughter, proceeded to eat, drink and make merry, and he ordered, as a warning to all people, that the flat-topped hill should be known as "Intaba Induna", meaning "The Hill of Indunas", by which it is still known to the present day.

Umcumbate, on the first suitable opportunity, informed Umzilegazi of having spared Lobengula's life, who without exhibiting pleasure or anger, ordered the lad to be brought to him. What his first intention was on hearing that the boy was alive, is difficult to imagine. However, as soon as Lobengula entered the royal enclosure, the indunas present, told by Umcumbate, raised a cry, "The child is the son of Matshobane, see how like the king he is." This pleased the savage potentate so much, that he made the boy sit by his side, and from that time, as far as his father was concerned, Lobengula's life was safe. And in fact a few days after this, in private council with three of his chief indunas, he declared that Loben was to be his successor, and it is told that on one occasion in conversation with Robert Moffat, Lobengula passed, and he pointed him out saying, "That is my son, do you see him?" meaning that he would succeed him.

For some years after his flight from the Marico nothing had been heard of Umzilegazi by the outward world, and his very existence was doubted, until it was discovered where he had located, and then a party of Boers, assisted by some Knob-nose Kaffirs, entered his country from the south, attacked some outlying kraals, and took a large number of cattle. Umzilegazi collected a force, and went in pursuit, overtook the raiding party about 40 miles north of Tati, and attacked the Kaffirs, who were camping below a kopje, utterly destroyed them, not one escaping alive, and recaptured all the cattle. The Boers escaped by a desperate and determined rush through the Matabele soldiers, who were surrounding them. This was about 1848. The next few years Umzilegazi was engaged in raiding the north, and subduing all the tribes as far as the Zambesi. He established a subject tribe on the banks of the Zambesi River, who kept many canoes always to be held at the King's disposal. From this it was evident that he had not abandoned the idea of crossing the Zambesi, and settling farther north.

In 1879 or 1880, Lobengula sent out messengers in search of the lost tribe of Umpezeni and after nearly a year's absence, they returned and reported that they had found a tribe located about 300 miles north of the Zambesi, and that, whilst the people retained many of the Zulu customs and dress, with the exception of the older men, the Zulu language was rarely spoken, and few of the young men could understand it. Friendly messages were interchanged between the chiefs, and visits were occasionally paid by members of the tribe, but, as far as I know, nothing more came of it.

It has been said that protection had been promised by Umzilegazi to the tribes living to the east, on condition that they paid annual tribute. And on his death those chiefs came in and paid homage to Lobengula, and for a few years he continued the protection, and relying on that promise they cultivated in the open and collected a few cattle and goats. This, however, was not allowed to continue long. On some pretext or another, each tribe was attacked in turn, the men killed, and the women and children enslaved, until the whole of Mashonaland was a desolate wilderness, given over to the wild beasts. The remains of

these villages are still to be traced when travelling along the main road to Salisbury.

The influx of whites had continued to increase, and various concessions to dig for gold had been applied for. Some were favourably received, and negotiations continued for some time. In 1888, Messrs. Rudd, Maguire and Thompson obtained a concession of the whole mining rights of the country. The granting of this concession was looked upon with disfavour by the whites who had been seeking mining rights, and much ill-feeling was raised in consequence. Lobengula, desirous of being sure that it was to Englishmen he had given the concession, in this year sent a Mission of two of his indunas to England in charge of Mr. Maund, the object of the Mission being to ascertain if there were a Queen and to enquire what he (Lobengula) was to do with the whites who were seeking to dig gold in the country. The concession obtained by Mr. Rudd had been published throughout the country. It was well known here and in England that the sole mineral right to the country had been obtained on behalf of, and in connection with, Mr. Rhodes, and that a Royal Charter was to be applied for. In the face of this the indunas returned from England carrying a number of presents for the king and the following message: "It was not good to give the whole herd of cattle to one man lest, perhaps, when the stranger comes, you have none to feed him upon." Only one construction could be placed on this, that was that the Queen disapproved of the concession, and the message was the cause of much distrust and mischief.

In the beginning of 1890 a special Mission consisting of two officers and men of the Horse Guards, was sent out to Lobengula to announce the granting of the Charter to trusted subjects of the Queen. He received the envoys at one of the kraals south of Bulawayo, and it was a sight never to be forgotten on the occasion of the delivery of the despatch by Capt. Ferguson, through Mr. Moffat, the Imperial Commissioner. In the centre of the enclosure, suffering from gout, in a bath-chair, sat Lobengula; on his right sat all the indunas of the nation; on his left sat the officers and men of the Horse Guards, in all the glory of their uniform, plumes, helmets, cuirasses, jack-boots, swords, all bright and shining without a speck, as if mounted as Queen's Guard in London. The hospitality usual on such an occasion had to be shown to the messengers of the Queen and after the document had been read by Mr. Moffat, and interpreted to the king by myself, large pots of beer were produced and handed round, first one, then the other, taking a drink out of the same pot; the king's best cook had been told off to prepare the meal and a dish, or rather a huge platter, of well cooked meat was placed before the Guards. Seeing them hesitate, Lobengula asked me to cut it up for them. Forks we had none, and with knife and fingers I managed to cut the meat in thin slices, which was handed round, each guest taking a piece in his fingers and cutting it as best he could. On seeing it cut into thin slices, Lobengula laughingly turned to the cook and said: "See how the white men like their meat cut." And after some more conversation told the Guards that he would answer the Queen's letter in a few days. Cattle were sent for them to kill, and after witnessing the Great Dance, the envoys returned to England with a message, the words of which I do not remember, but it was evident that they could not reconcile the first message of the Queen with the second.

In June of that year the march of the Pioneers into Mashonaland was commenced, with the expressed consent of the king. Suspicious still, he was assured that Mr. Rhodes' men, as he called the Charter forces, desired only the peaceful occupation of the country he had given them. He evidently feared an attack, and it was only when the forces had entered and settled down in Mashonaland that he was satisfied that we did not mean to attack him unless forced to do so. In fact this was told him, not once, but many times.

The character of the Matabele has altered considerably during the last 20 years. The stern rule exercised by Umzilegazi over his people was relaxed by his successor; offences once punishable by death were now openly committed; theft from the man was of daily occurrence and young warriors composed now mostly of the descendants of the subject tribes waxed insolent, and clamoured to be led against the white man. Accustomed to hunt the Mashona, like rabbits, they imagined that they were all powerful. In vain they were all told that they could not fight the white man. I have spent hours and days endeavouring to convince the men of the Umbezo and other regiments that any conflict with us would mean certain defeat to the Matabele. They would listen with an amused smile and remark: "Well before we pay tribute we will fight and then we will see who is best." It was thus early evident that sooner or later the forces of civilization and the forces of the savage would come into collision. The Chartered Company were willing to postpone the day as long as the Matabele would allow, but they had hardly settled in the country when Lobengula sent out his impis to destroy the tribes that had been friendly with the whites or assisted them with food supplies in the march into the country. He now evidently thought that not having attacked him they were afraid of him. Messages were sent to him, warning him that if he persisted in the course he was adopting, it would lead to trouble. Protesting peace he again sent his men raiding and killing in close vicinity to the whites; until at last, a few months ago, occurred in one of the principal European stations of Mashonaland, the slaughter of the natives employed by the Europeans, and the destruction of the crops and kraals of the natives living close to Victoria, and under the immediate protection of the Chartered Company. "Are they still going to hold their hand? Are the Chartered Company going to allow natives to whom they had promised protection to be ruthlessly slaughtered and take no steps to punish the perpetrators and prevent a recurrence of such? No, surely not"! was the cry throughout South Africa. And when it was decided that Lobengula should be made to feel the power of the white man that he and his people had derided and insulted so long, there was a feeling of satisfaction throughout the land, and the sympathy of every heart in the country was with the Chartered Forces and our Colonial brethren in the fray in this country.

The savages of Lobengula understand but one law — that of force. When that is impressed on them and not before, they will acknowledge our supremacy, and the black deeds that have darkened the history of Matabeleland and Mashonaland will be of the past. The success of the Chartered Forces and the defeat of the best regiments of the Matabele are now matters of history. In a few days we shall probably hear of the complete submission of the whole nation, and gaining knowledge of past experience it is to be hoped that the Chartered Com-

pany will allow of no settlement that will continue, in any shape or form, the horrible government that has existed since the advent of the Matabele. I would ask you to look back on their history since their flight from Zululand. At Magaliesberg the country was depopulated by them. At Marico they found the natives populating large towns and extensively cultivating. They left it a desert. The whole career of the people is marked by deeds of carnage, blood and robbery. Little by little they have sunk in the scale of humanity until today, I know of no natives so utterly lost to all sense of right and virtue as the men and women of Matabeleland. The destiny of the white man is to be the law-giver to the black of this country and on fulfilment of that destiny, he has a right to say that the country so long given over to barbarism, shall be open to civilization; that the spot that has been one of the black places of the earth, shall be so no more. That instead of desolation the vast fertile and beautiful land shall be open to the peaceful and industrious people, and the country, which for the last century, has been the home of the wild beast and the savage, shall be a centre from which shall spread to the dark lands around and beyond, Christianity, Peace and Prosperity.

In conclusion let me say, that the success of the Chartered Company's forces has been a satisfaction to all civilized nationalities in South Africa; to Cape Colonists especially so. Declining all Imperial aid, relying on the ability of Dr. Jameson, the Administrator, and the officers under him, Mr. Rhodes elected to meet the Matabele in fight, assisted only by the burgher forces of the country. An object lesson in native wars has been set the Imperial Government, and when the history of Mashonaland is written, I am sure that posterity will say that one of the greatest works in the last decade of the 19th century and in the cause of progress, was performed when the Chartered forces wiped out for ever, the Matabele power.

8th December, 1893.

# A Letter to the Editor

## A Trip to Kariba in 1928

Sir,

In the 1920's there was much talk of what was called the "Sinoia-Kafue cut-off", i.e. a projected railway line directly connecting these two places and designed to shorten by some 600 miles the long haul from Northern Rhodesia to the coast at Beira *via* Livingstone and Bulawayo. Two alternative routes were surveyed by Mr. J. L. Jeffares, a railway engineer, to cross the Zambezi River, one near the site of the present Kariba Dam, the other at Chirundu, and the broken character of the country traversed was going to make the building of such a line a very expensive business. Consequently it was necessary to find out if any valuable minerals were likely to exist along the route, which might partly pay for the line. At very short notice the Geological Survey Department, of which I was a young and very "green" member, was called upon to carry out a reconnaissance survey of the country concerned and submit a report on it. There were at that time six geologists on the staff, of whom only three could be described as experienced men. Although obviously it was desirable to have such a man for this important task, none of these three could be spared, and so it fell to my lot to undertake it. When the Director, Mr. H. B. Maufe, gave me my instructions, I understood him to say at one stage: "The Lands Department is going to lend you boys." This sounded decidedly odd. Why should they do that? However, later in the conversation the mystery was cleared up. For "boys" I was to read "Boyes", the name of a Land Inspector known to his intimates as "Ching" Boyes. He proved to be an ideal companion for a greenhorn such as I was, his job being to appraise the agricultural potential of the terrain.

We met on a farm named Pendennis, located some 75 miles north-west of Sinoia and beyond which no motorable road yet existed. There were about 20 carriers waiting for us, who had been collected by the Native Commissioner of the district. This motley bunch was headed by a stalwart Messenger, a fine specimen of a man. Our trucks were left at the homestead, where dwelt a hospitable and very tough farmer and elephant hunter named Whitby, who later cut the road down to the Zambezi River at Chirundu, and we started on our 200-mile march.

For the first few days the going was easy, over fairly flat country, but as soon as the long descent to the Zambezi valley began it was a different story, though the very broken terrain was more interesting and the geological formations and structure relatively well displayed. It forms part of the Lomagundi mica fields and glistening scales of mica are conspicuous all around. The problem of supplying meat for the carriers was somewhat acute at first, as any game which may have existed on our route was singularly self-effacing, but after four days Boyes managed to kill a kudu and everyone was happy. Boyes, by the way, was blessed with an exceptionally keen sense of humour and his hearty laughter was a frequent and exhilarating sound, often elicited by very trivial incidents.

Although he had spent many years on his job, nearly all the time in the field, his "Kitchen Kaffir" remained execrable. On one occasion the stalwart messenger came to him saying, as he thought, that some "tendere" (guinea-fowl) had just been seen nearby. He seized his shotgun and charged off in the direction indicated. Not long afterwards I heard his laughter ringing out in the distance, getting nearer and nearer, and finally he arrived back with the information that what the messenger had said was not "tendere" but "chipembere" (rhino). The idea of chasing a rhino with a shot-gun struck him as being as good a joke as any. As I remember, he had seen nothing at all of interest.

After about five days marching we emerged from the broken gneiss country into the valley of the Charara river, which leads into the wide Naodsa valley, having descended some 2,000 feet from the plateau, and the climate became hot and enervating. Furthermore we had to walk on the sand of the river much of the time, no water being visible — a decidedly exhausting proceeding. The nights had always to be spent close to kraals, because (a) the only water supplies were obtainable there, and (b) the carriers could have a good "natter" with the villagers. This often meant that we did not get much sleep on account of the tomtoms and vocal exercises accompanying prolonged beer-drinking and processions.

In this low-lying valley any kind of rock is very rarely seen, but it was clear that we had left the micaceous gneisses and were now in a jungle underlain by sandstone, appearing occasionally in the river banks. Finally we arrived in the vicinity of the Sanyati River near its confluence with the Zambezi, and were glad to find a large shallow pool of water, in which we forthwith immersed ourselves for a much-needed bath, the water being very warm. After that we very soon arrived at the upper end of the Kariba Gorge and the sight of the large, swiftly flowing river was very welcome after many days in dry country. Little did I dream that a large lake and township would be there in thirty-two years' time. The only thing that concerned me was the steamy heat, robbing me of all semblance of energy. Boyes, on the other hand, seemed as vigorous as ever.

We spent only two nights at this place, the intervening day being occupied in an effort to learn something of the geology of the local jungle, an unrewarding proceeding. It was then necessary to march twenty miles back the way we had come before striking north to the northern end of the gorge and Chirundu, to which an alternative route had been surveyed by Jeffares. This involved a steady climb from about 1,500 feet to perhaps 3,000 feet at the edge of the great escarpment bounding the southern margin of the Zambezi valley. The view from this high point, across the wide valley to the hills of Northern Rhodesia beyond, was a memorable one and it was with reluctance, at any rate as far as I was concerned, that we scrambled down the precipitous path to the steamy valley and tramped northward to Chirundu. On the way we learned of the existence of a Greek farmer living on the north bank of the Zambezi, and procured a dugout canoe in which we crossed to his property. He was very hospitable and sat us down to a sumptuous lunch of chicken soused in deep fat, after the manner of his country. As the temperature was about 100°F. in the shade, my appetite was poor, but nevertheless I felt bound to attempt to do justice to the repast. It lay heavily on my stomach for some hours afterwards. The Greek farmer

seemed to be doing well in this solitary place, where two crops of maize can be grown in the year.

At Chirundu there was little of interest apart from a warm spring, and after a night spent there we set off south-eastward on the homeward trek. The march to the foot of the escarpment was something of a nightmare on account of the intense heat and abundance of tsetse flies and mopani bees. At about 9 o'clock in the morning we stopped to have breakfast in the shade of a baobab tree, the only shade available, but the insects seemed determined to prevent us nourishing ourselves, and that breakfast was not a success. We arrived at the foot of the escarpment at about sundown and as we were all extremely weary, and there was a kraal there, we had perforce to spend the night in that oven-like atmosphere. For once there was very little chatter, let alone singing, amongst the carriers.

Next morning, with much joy on my own part, we followed a small valley up through the escarpment into a less oppressive climate some 1,500 feet higher than the place where we had passed the night, passing on the way a road survey party heading for Chirundu. It was now well into October and I did not envy that survey party. However, no doubt they were a lot tougher than I and thought nothing of it.

In two or three days we were back where we started, the trip having taken about 23 days. On arrival at Pendennis farm Boyes happened to observe a very small carrier who had borne 50 lb. of mealie meal on his head for the entire journey, nothing having been taken from it. This set him off on his final laughing bout. I was indeed sorry to say good-bye to "Ching" Boyes, whose patience must have frequently been sorely tried by my "greenness" and constant moaning about the heat. He was then about 43 but looked and behaved ten years younger, and a man I'd have said would live to a ripe old age. But he died of a thrombosis while on holiday at the Cape seven years later; one who could be ill spared by his country. His widow, now Mrs. S. M. Smit, lives in Salisbury.

Although this trip was a mere rapid reconnaissance, I could not, from the nature of the terrain, hold out much hope of the existence of substantial mineral deposits along the route, and since that time only a little mica, beryl and graphite have been found in those parts with, recently, a deposit of diatomite at the foot of the escarpment near the present road to Chirundu. Low-grade coal deposits exist some miles to the south-west of Kariba, and a little gypsum has been found near the confluence of the Sanyati and Zambezi rivers, now buried by the waters of Lake Kariba.

Yours faithfully,  
R. Tyndale-Biscoe.

Salisbury,  
May, 1966.

# Notes

## "THE ARCTURUS EXPRESS"

Since completion of his article in *Rhodesiana No. 13* (December, 1965), writes Mr. A. H. Croxton, further information has reached him about the light railway from Ruwa, on the main line between Salisbury and Marandellas, to the Planet Arcturus gold mines. There were three mines in the area, the Planet, the Arcturus and the Slate, all owned by the Goldfields Rhodesian Development Co., Ltd. and although surveys were made by the Mashonaland Railway Co. for a branch line in the 1913-14 period this line did not eventuate. In 1919 development at the mines, especially at Arcturus, recommenced and the mining company decided to have their own light 2 ft. gauge railway constructed to carry material and supplies to the mine site from the railhead at Ruwa.

Mr. George Milburn, now of Arcturus 'A' Farm, was at Arcturus at the time of the coming of the light railway and his brother was Postmaster when the line was opened. This was in September, 1919, and two old photographs — too faded to reproduce — survive. One shows "the first engine on the line to Arcturus" taken on September 12th, 1919, and this locomotive is clearly one of the Falcon-built 4-4-0 type with a four-wheeled tender, previously owned by the original Beira Railway of 1892-1900. The other photograph was taken from the Post Office steps and shows a train running across the veld with about six open trucks behind the engine.

Very few employees then had started on the mine and the railway was busy bringing up the construction material. By 1920 there were 150 Europeans and several hundred Africans engaged on development and construction and the mine light railway was kept very busy.

Mr. Milburn had come to Arcturus by Kimpton's mail coach which ran from Salisbury on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, but when he returned on a visit in 1922 the "Arcturus Express", as it then had been dubbed, was running three times a day as a rule. Mr. Charlie Cleaver was the driver for the whole duration of the line's existence and in the 1923-24 rainy season his locomotive was derailed not infrequently by slacks in the track caused by that season's record rainfall of 69 inches.

Very few passengers were carried on the railway as only trucks were available, but Mr. Milburn recalls one journey he made sitting on top of a truckload of coal covered by a bucksail. It was quite "a joyride" he relates, and one travelled entirely at one's own risk. Once construction had been completed the railway was used mainly for coal needed by the boilers of the power station.

It is on record that Kerr, Stuart and Co., noted English locomotive builders, supplied one 0-6-2 side tank engine to Goldfields Rhodesian Development Co., Arcturus, via Ruwa siding and that this was shipped from their Leeds works in June, 1921. This locomotive, though fitted with side tanks, was supplied with a tender for fuel and water. It evidently replaced the old Beira Railway engine



and when the Arcturus Mine closed down in 1925 the Kerr Stuart locomotive became "spare" and was later sold to the Star zinc mine near Ngwerrere in Zambia.

So ended another of Rhodesia's light railways.

A.H.C.

## TWO CORRECTIONS

Mr. A. H. Croxton has asked that it be pointed out that the photograph of the engine 'Hans Sauer' on p.58 of *Rhodesiana*, No. 13, should correctly be credited to the National Archives, and that the one of the bridge over the Umsweswe River on the Cam and Motor line on p.62 was supplied by Mr. H. W. Collins.

E.E.B.

## THE RHODESIANA SOCIETY

On June 17th Mr. E. E. Burke gave a talk to a meeting of the Mashonaland Branch of the Library Association of Central Africa to which members of the Society were invited. The subject was "Rhodesia in books", a review of the literature concerning what was to become Rhodesia, from early Arab accounts, and a first printed reference in 1550, up to the accounts of the hunters and explorers of the 1880's.

## THE LETTERS AND DIARIES OF VICTOR MORIER

Mr. P. R. Warhurst wishes to inform readers that owing to a misunderstanding which arose when he handed the manuscript to Mr. R. W. S. Turner, certain portions of his *Introduction* to the *Extracts from the South African Letters and Diaries of Victor Morier, 1890-1891*, which appeared in the last issue of *Rhodesiana* were deleted, and he feels that this has somewhat altered the balance of the *Introduction*.

R.W.S.T. and P.R.W.

## "RHODESIANA NO. 6"

*Rhodesiana*, No. 6, issued in 1961, was devoted to one contribution, an article by Fr. W. F. Rea, S.J., on *Rhodesia's first martyr*, i.e. Silveira, who was murdered in the Sipolilo district in 1561. It was issued jointly with the Jesuit Salisbury Mission and although *Rhodesiana*, No. 6, is out of print the Mission has a few copies, bound in different covers, which are available. They may be had at 6/- each, from the Reverend Fr. W. F. Rea, S.J., St. George's College, PB 189 H, Salisbury.

## REVIEW

G. H. Tanser. *A Scantling of Time*. Stuart Manning (Pvt.) Ltd., P.O. Box 1736, Salisbury. 276 pages, illus., index. 37/6.

My only criticism of this book is its title. Although in fact taken from a most appropriate passage by Locke, it sounds as if it covered one of those rather intense historical romances written by a lady novelist. I mention this as the title might well discourage the casual purchaser, which would be a great pity because all else in Mr. Tanser's history of the first ten years of Salisbury is admirable.

The word-pictures are excellent so that the reader has a vivid impression throughout in his mind's eye of the physical development of Salisbury from a marsh below a hill to a busy township. Mr. Tanser keeps a tight grip on his theme so that the progress of the settlement in all its variegated aspects is seen coherently.

It is much more than a mere chronicle of "firsts" although they are all here . . . from the first crime to the first cricket, from the first theatre to the first poetry, incidentally written by a barber, whose other distinction was to produce a proprietary dandruff cure . . . probably, although Mr. Tanser does not make this claim, the first Rhodesian industry.

Mr. Tanser does much more. He brings out the character of the community, which developed a very clear identity of its own as it overcame the problems of its environment, and the story of the gradual satisfaction of sociological needs, which grew as fast as they were satisfied, is told with a wealth of vivid detail.

Personalities, in a land and at a time when individualism flourished, play a great part in the book. Mr. Tanser leaves his characters to speak for themselves and to reveal themselves through their actions. Graphic portraits emerge, of the frustrated, efficient and pompous Colquhoun, the breezy but evasive "slim" Jameson, the friendly, approachable but on occasions severe, paternal and always dominating Rhodes, the no-nonsense, adaptable and man of his world Archdeacon Upcher, and literally a score of others.

The masses of fact — every page is full of detailed information — are presented in an easy style and with such a strong sense of narrative that Mr. Tanser's account often reads like a well-constructed novel and is enlivened by hundreds of well-told anecdotes.

Mr. Tanser has in fact produced an essential source-book, which unlike so many such is also capable of being thoroughly enjoyed by the popular reader. The research which went into its production must have been immense, but his ability to select from the mass of basic information studied removes all the heaviness from what is also an original work of scholarship.

*A Scantling of Time* is, of course, a must for even the slenderest collection of Rhodesiana and at the same time a rattling good yarn.

F. CLEMENTS

## Notes on Contributors

*Brigadier M. O. Collins*, C.B.E., C.St.J., F.R.I.C.S., served with the Royal Engineers in the Regular Army from 1925 to 1956, latterly as Director of Map Publication, Ordnance Survey of the United Kingdom. In 1956 he was appointed Director of the Federal Department of Surveys, a post which he held until the dissolution of the Federation in 1963. Since then he has been engaged in the publishing of books.

*Mr. P. S. Garlake* was educated at St. George's College, Salisbury, the University of Cape Town and the University of London Institute of Archaeology. He is the author of *The Early Islamic Architecture of the East African Coast*, the result of two years as a Nuffield Research Student with the British Institute of History and Archaeology in East Africa. He is now Senior Inspector of the Historical Monuments Commission, Rhodesia.

*Dr. S. Glass* was born in Pietermaritzburg and studied at Rhodes University and the University of Natal. He was in Rhodesia during the years 1958 and 1959, devoting most of his time to the history of the country, a field of research which Prof. A. Keppel-Jones introduced to him. He obtained his M.A. degree in 1959 and his Ph.D. in 1964 and is now a lecturer in the Department of History and Political Science, University of Natal.

*Mr. R. Isaacson* was born in South-West Africa in 1908 and educated at the South African College School in Cape Town. He came to Rhodesia in 1925 and later developed a keen interest in Rhodesian history. He is a member of the Committee of the Rhodesiana Society.

# New Members of the Rhodesiana Society

From August 1st, 1965, to June 30th, 1966

- Abraham, D. P., Salisbury  
Abrahams, B. G., Salisbury  
Adams, E. M. A., Bulawayo  
Adams, P. C. G., Palapye,  
    Bechuanaland  
Airey, N. M., Mtoroshanga  
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Rhind, D. M., Bulawayo  
Rhodes House Library,  
Oxford, England  
Rhodesian Woman and Home  
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White, K., Salisbury

Young, R. F., Salisbury

The total membership at July 1st, 1966, was 607.

# Publications of the Rhodesiana Society

The contents of recent issues have included:

## **Rhodesiana No. 9, 1963**

- J. A. EDWARDS. Colquhoun in Mashonaland: a portrait of failure.  
A. S. HICKMAN. The siege of the Abercorn Store.  
B. M. E. and K. E. O'MAHONEY. The southern column's fight at Singuesi,  
2nd November, 1893.  
R. C. HOWLAND. The Market Hall — Salisbury's oldest building.  
"Shifts and expedients": extracts from the book by W. B. Lord and T.  
Baines.  
MRS. M. CRIPPS. Umtali during the Rebellion, 1896.

## **Rhodesiana No. 10, July 1964**

- The British South Africa Company's Central Settlement Farm, Marandellas,  
1907-1910; from the papers of H. K. Scorrer, edited by R. Reynolds.  
C. T. C. TAYLOR. Lomagundi.  
R. W. DICKINSON. Sofala.  
H. A. CRIPWELL. Operations round Mpepo, German East Africa, 1917.

## **Rhodesiana No. 11, December 1964**

- J. ELLENBERGER. The Bechuanaland Protectorate and the Boer War.  
F. O. BERNHARD. Notes on the Pre-Ruin Ziwa culture of Inyanga.  
L. S. GLOVER. Memories of the Mashonaland Mounted Police, 1896-1897.  
R. C. HOWLAND. Salisbury, old and new, contrasted in photographs.

## **Rhodesiana No. 12, September 1965**

- H. F. HOSTE. Rhodesia in 1890.  
R. W. S. TURNER. Henry Hartley, 1815-1876.  
P. S. GARLAKE. Pioneer forts in Rhodesia, 1890-1897.  
K. MAUCH. The Makalaka; translated from the German by F. O. Bernhard.  
H. D. RAWSON. Diary of a journey from Southampton to Salisbury, 1895.  
A. S. HICKMAN. The death of Charles Annesty.  
J. MCADAM. An early enthusiast for Rhodesian aviation: Mr. C. F. Webb,  
in 1912.

## **Rhodesiana No. 13, December 1965**

- EXTRACTS from the South African letters and diaries of Victor Morier,  
1890-1891.  
J. MCADAM. Early birds in Central Africa.  
P. BERLYN. . . . Of women who left their mark.  
A. H. CROXTON. Rhodesia's light railways.

Nos. 1, 4 and 6 of *Rhodesiana* are out of print. Other back numbers are available from the Honorary Secretary at P.O. Box 8268, Causeway, Salisbury, to whom enquiries should be sent.

# RHODESIANA

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