

HERITAGE of ZIMBABWE

PUBLICATION NO. 30

2011



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THE HISTORY SOCIETY OF ZIMBABWE
Harare
Zimbabwe
May 2012



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Edited by

MICHAEL J. KIMBERLEY

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Foreword

This is the 30th annual issue of *Heritage of Zimbabwe* and its appearance follows No 29 which, though dated 2010, appeared in May 2011. To maintain the sequence of annual volumes this one is numbered 30 but is dated 2011 and No 31, intended to appear at the end of this year subject to sufficient material being submitted for inclusion, will be dated 2012.

This issue contains quite a broad range of articles for your reading pleasure. We have been fortunate to have received a more than adequate supply of suitable articles for inclusion in this issue and have had to hold over several for publication in volume 31 which we hope to publish at the end of 2012.

Articles in this issue include one on the Greites of Matabeleland by Ray Roberts, on Railways by Robin Taylor, part 2 of Jack Nesbitt's reminiscences edited by Fraser Edkins and the reminiscences of Dr D. M. Blair in the early 1930s. Rob Burrett contributes a paper on the Allan Wilson Memorial and Fraser Edkins and Diane Thram write about Hugh Tracey, famous for his collection of field recordings of African music. Jonathan Waters provides papers on the centenary of a united Zambia, on the recently chopped historic msasa tree in Josiah Tongagara avenue, the final resting places in Europe of significant personalities in our history (Beit, Mauch, Forbes, Darter), and an obituary of Peter Garlake (1934–2011). Finally, Mike McGeorge writes on the sport of gliding in this country.

We reproduce in this issue the text of talks given to the society on Marshal of the Royal Air Force, Sir Arthur Harris, by Bill Sykes, on transport routes and roads in Gazaland by Marie de Bruijn, on Muriel Rosin's political experiences in Rhodesia by U. Kufakurinani and E. Musiina, on personal recollections at St George's College by Brendan Tiernan, headmaster of the College, and on the Rhodesia Fairbridge Memorial College by a former pupil, Francis Webster.

As always the Society expresses its grateful appreciation to the sponsors all of whom are listed on page v. In particular, we greatly appreciate the sponsorship of TextPertise (Private Limited) and its Directors, Cheryl and Roger Stringer, who have done the formatting of this issue. I express my personal thanks to my wife Rosemary who assisted me with this issue prior to her death in April 2012.

An appeal is made to all readers to submit suitable articles for inclusion in Volume 31 and subsequent issues of this journal. Without a steady supply of material for publication this journal cannot possibly appear on a regular annual basis.

Michael J. Kimberley, Honorary Editor, *Heritage of Zimbabwe*

The Greites of Matabeleland

by R. S. Roberts

The well known list of early European travellers accompanying the Map of their routes and Tabler's Pioneers of Rhodesia usually provide, between them, an accurate and detailed account of those who came north of the Limpopo before 1890. The entries for the Greite family, however, have been the source of great confusion. The list accompanying the Map had an F. Greite as a trader 1875–80 (and his wife 1877–80), and an August Griete, a miner 1869–71.¹ Tabler, on the other hand, had an H. Greite, as a trader in Matabeleland c.1870–80, followed by an entry under the heading of the London and Limpopo Mining Company to August Griete, its miner and mineralogist in Matabeleland and then Tati c.1869–1870.² This multiplicity of initials/spellings appeared to be about to become even more complicated in 1968 when Guy in Rhodesiana referred to R. Greite, a trader in Gubuluwayo who sold his buildings to the Jesuit missionaries in 1880.³ But luckily later in the same issue appeared correspondence between Roger Summers and a Mrs Van Belkum, a granddaughter of August Greite, which by settling the spelling of the surname (as Greite) was the first step forward. She also implied that he might be the only man involved and said that his wife's name was Bertha⁴ —another small step towards clarification, which, however, was not to be straightforward, as this article now seeks to show before arriving at a final resolution of the confusions.

First there was more confusion when Tom Hepburn of the Historical Monuments Commission in Bulawayo wrote to the editor of *Rhodesiana* insisting that there were two different people involved, the second one (to August Greite, that is) being not H. Greite as Tabler had it, but F. Griete (the initial as in the Map's list but the surname spelt differently); and to confound confusion Hepburn went on to say that this man was not a trader as stated in the Map's list, but a miner for Sir John Swinburne as mentioned by Baines.⁵ Tabler then replied to say that Hepburn had raised a problem but had done nothing to solve it (too polite perhaps to add that Hepburn had in fact complicated it even more); and to make matters worse, for the careful reader at least, the editor in making a heading for Tabler's letter changed August to Auguste and the 'F. Griete' of Hepburn/Baines back to 'Greite' as in the Map's list.⁶ Hepburn, undaunted, raised the matter again in his Bulawayo lecture on the Pre-Pioneers in

¹ *Map Showing Routes of the Early European Travellers in the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland* (Salisbury, Federal Dep. of Trigonometrical and Topographical Surveys, 1964).

² E. C. Tabler, *Pioneers of Rhodesia* (Cape Town, Struik, 1966).

³ G. L. Guy, 'The trees of Old Bulawayo', *Rhodesiana* (1968), XVIII, 93.

⁴ *Ibid.*, E. Van Belkum, letter: 'August and Bertha Greite', 109–10. The editor threw in a new red herring by referring to Mrs Van Belkum as Greite's daughter instead of granddaughter, and the 'van' of her married surname may have been 'von'. It appears that Mrs Erna Van/von Belkum was born a Van Blommestein and therefore was a daughter of Erna Greite who became Mrs Van Blommestein. More on these descendants is to be found below and is summarised in the family tree (with photographs).

⁵ E. T. Hepburn, letter: 'August Greite and F. Griete', *ibid.* (Dec. 1972), XXVII, 79–80. In fact Baines had referred to him most often as Griet (with initial 'F' in the Index) and also as Greit (in the third volume), J. P. R. Wallis (ed.), *The Northern Goldfields Diaries of Thomas Baines* (London, Chatto & Windus, 3 vols, 1946).

⁶ Tabler, letter: 'Fred C. Deary, Auguste Greite and F. Greite', *ibid.* (July 1973), XXVIII, 94.



John Henry Augustus (anglice) Greite
(c.1833–86)

The Greite Family



Bertha Wulff
(c.1846–post 1886)

1872

Born in Matabeleland 1875–79/80



Erna Greite
(1875–?)

2nd daughter
?

Joseph Henry Greite
(c.1876/80–1900)

Maurice Greite
(c.1876/80–19??)

Van Blommestein

J. H. Greite Van Blommestein
a South African medical practitioner fl. 1940s

? Erna — Van Belkum

Bertha Margaret Greite
(c.1903/4–??)

a son — — — **Marguerite ? Gray** (either birth name,
or that of second marriage mid 1970s
when working at the National Archives)

a son

a son

*(Photographs from M. Gray,
in Rhodesiana (Mar. 1975), XXXII, 78)*

1973, adding a further complication by referring to Greita as a variant of Greite and again rejecting the implication of the correspondence between Summers and the granddaughter of August Greite that there was only one person involved, namely August Greite.⁷

Two years later another letter on the subject by another relative, Mrs Marguerite Gray, appeared in *Rhodesiana*; and, although not stated then, it now appears that she was the former wife of a son of Dr Jack Henry Greite Van Blommestein who was the son of Erna Van Blommestein née Greite, the eldest child of August and Bertha Greite (Dr Jack Van Blommestein was therefore the brother of the Erna Van Belkum who had written to *Rhodesiana* earlier).⁸ Certainly Mrs Gray provided more information than any before her, notably that August was born near Hanover in c.1833, that Bertha, his wife, was also German, née Wulff, and that Erna Greite, the eldest of the Greite's four children born in Matabeleland between 1875 and c.1880, had been baptised in London in 1892.

Tabler meanwhile was busy collecting all such information as it emerged and from 1966 to 1977 published corrections/additions to the original entries in *Pioneers of Rhodesia*—most users of that useful reference book seem not to know of these later amendments (not just on the Greites), and so they are listed in the footnote below for general information.⁹

Thus, with the help of these amendments by Tabler, the references above from *Rhodesiana* and some further research it is now possible to give a more satisfactory summary of the one and only man involved in Matabeleland, namely August Greite, whose initials have been given at least three erroneous variants, whose surname has been misspelled and whose identity and career has been split into two.

August Johan Heinrich was the son of a brewer, August Heinrich Friederich Christoph Greite, and was born in 1833 in the north German kingdom of Hanover,¹⁰ whose ruler was the British king (until Victoria's uncle succeeded instead of her in 1837 because of the Salic Law). References to Greite being a miner/mineralogist from Sweden probably indicate that it was there that the young August obtained his early practical experience before going to Australia, presumably in response to the gold rushes there that had begun in 1851. With the decline of Australian finds many miners there turned their attention to southern Africa following Carl Mauch's descriptions of gold in the Tati area and beyond on his return to the Transvaal after his second journey with the Hartleys in 1867.

Thus August Greite first appears in southern Africa in late 1868 as the miner and mineralogist to Sir John Swinburne's London and Limpopo Mining Company. In April 1869 this company's expedition reached the Tati where work then began, but Greite and an advance party went on to the Umfuli, south of Hartley Hills, where he began sinking shafts. The succession crisis after Mzilikazi's death, however, forced this party to abandon its work and leave first Mashona country and then Matabeleland itself. It was at this time

⁷ Hepburn, 'European Pre-Pioneers, 1500–1890', *ibid.* (Dec. 1973), XXIX, 41.

⁸ M. Gray, letter, 'August and Bertha Greite', *ibid.* (Mar. 1975), XXXII, 77–8. John McCarthy remembers her working at the National Archives in the 1970s and has kindly helped me with this identification of her and her relatives; she had two sons from her Van Blommestein marriage but no record of them in this country has been found.

⁹ These were all published in *Africana Notes and News*: 'Addenda and corrigenda to Pioneers of Rhodesia' (1966–7), XVII, 358–72; 'Addenda and corrigenda II . . .' (1970–1), XIX, 193–209; 'Addenda and corrigenda III . . .' (1972–3), XX, 84–102; 'Addenda and corrigenda IV . . .' (1976–7), XXII, 9–12. The progressive up-dates on Greite are in XIX, 198–9; XX, 89–90; and XXII, 10.

¹⁰ >www.familysearch.org/Eng/Search/frameset_search.asp?PAGE=igi/search_IGI.asp&clear_form=true<. It appears that his father had married in 1822 in Kirchrode, a village just to the south-east of the city of Hanover.



Early depiction of Greite's store and living quarters that became the Jesuits' residence in 1880 (from R. S. Roberts, *Journeys beyond Gubulawayo*)



The view in 2007 (from R. S. Roberts, *Journeys beyond Gubulawayo*)

that Thomas Baines of the rival South African Goldfields Company met Greite whose initial he got wrong and whose surname he spelled different ways—the conditions in the interior generally did not help spelling.¹¹

By early 1870 Greite was at work back in Tati, at the Blue Jacket Mine, and several travellers described his house and his mining operations there;¹² the last reference to him there found by Tabler was in October 1871, and two months later he was in the Transvaal, perhaps to buy the farm near the road to the north that we know he owned later. But he may have simply been *en route* to the coast and Europe; for that is where we next find him, when in November 1872 he got married in north London. He gave his name, somewhat anglicised, as John Heinrich A. Greite, son of Frederick, and described himself as a merchant. His wife was Bertha, a twenty-six-year old daughter of Moritz Wulff, also a merchant, and her sister Fanny was a witness;¹³ her family appears to have been German but family tradition was that she had lived in Brazil for some time and had also got to know Amelia, the future Queen of Portugal.¹⁴ What August and his bride did during the first two years of their marriage is not clear but by early 1875 they had decided to go to live and trade in Matabeleland; and they reached Gubuluwayo (Old Bulawayo) some five months before their first child, Erna, was born there at the end of October 1875.

As traders they appear to have done well there; they became fluent in Ndebele, and Lobengula was said to have looked upon them, and Bertha especially, with favour—so much so that a ‘son’ of his became their servant and accompanied them on one of their trips back to London. They built a stone house and other buildings where three more children were born to them over the next few years (all delivered by August himself). By mid-1879, however, it appears that they had decided to leave Matabeleland and they found a ready purchaser for their buildings in the Jesuit missionaries who arrived in September and often referred to the kindnesses of the Greites, especially Bertha.¹⁵ Lobengula did not object to the sale; the price was £500 which the unworldly Fr Depelchin agreed (colleagues later referred to it as exorbitant). The Jesuits camped on the site while Greite arranged his affairs and sold by auction the surplus goods and equipment that he wanted to turn into commodities more profitable for sale down south. By the end of February 1880 all was complete and the Greite family left with five wagons carrying 5 tons of ivory and 400lb of ostrich feathers; and the Jesuits took possession of their new property, to be known as the Residence of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the dilapidated remains of which still stand.¹⁶

The Greites’s destination was Zeerust, probably to the farm Kalkfontein/Vleischfontein near the Transvaal border (and the road to the northern interior just beyond) that August

¹¹ See also, for example, T. M. Thomas, *Eleven Years in Central South Africa* . . . (London, John Snow, 1873), 398, where Greite is referred as Kriet.

¹² See, for example, E. Mohr, *To the Victoria Falls of the Zambesi* transl. and abridged by N. D’Anvers (London, Sampson Low, 1876), 242; and *The Northern Goldfields Diaries of Thomas Baines*, (III), 647–9.

¹³ Marriage Certificate in author’s possession, from the General Register Office, Southport, Marriages, December 1872, Islington 1b 596.

¹⁴ Amélie d’Orleans (1865–1951): in 1886 she married Prince Carlos, the heir to the Portuguese throne; he became king in 1889, and it was thus in her honour that the new Portuguese post just established where Kariba town now is was called Vila Dona Amelia. She appears to have been brought up in England, and so it was probably there rather than in Brazil that Bertha would have got to know her.

¹⁵ See M. Gelfand (ed.), *Gubulawayo and beyond: Letters and Journals of the Early Jesuit Missionaries to Zambesia (1879–1887)* (London, Geoffrey Chapman, 1968), 114, 122, 163.

¹⁶ For fuller detail of these events see R. S. Roberts (ed.), *Journey to Gubuluwayo: Letters of Frs H. Depelchin and C. Croonenberghs, S.J. 1879, 1880, 1881* (Bulawayo, Books of Rhodesia, 1979), 175–6, 206–9, 221, 230, 247, 249–50, 273.

bought either before his marriage, as mentioned above, or now as a home for his family. Nevertheless August maintained his contacts in trade with the interior and he was in Matabeleland again by late 1880, again in 1882, and yet again in 1884–5. By 1883, indeed, he seems to have given up any idea of farming, for he offered to sell the farm for £800 to Fr Depelchin, the Superior of the Zambesi Mission, who was looking for a healthier base (than Tati and Pandamatenga) in an area where there was a native population that could be evangelised, now that hopes of the Ndebele, Gaza, Tonga and Lozi had failed. Consequently in 1884 Fr Depelchin's successor as head of the Mission bought Greite's farm as a first step towards a withdrawal from the north.¹⁷

Some time, between these trips to the north, August and Bertha took their children to London to stay with Bertha's sister and left them to be educated there (it may be that this was the occasion when a 'son' of Lobengula accompanied them¹⁸). It is said that the children never came back to southern Africa on holiday to see their parents, who had returned to the Zeerust area. It was there that August died on 7 September 1886.¹⁹ The widowed Bertha stayed on in Zeerust and later remarried, to Heinrich Diederick; she and Heinrich also both died in Zeerust where they are said to have been buried.

Erna, the eldest child of August and Bertha, was baptised in London in 1892; and some time before the Boer War she married a Van Blommestein, probably in South Africa. Certainly a son of this marriage, Jack Henry Greite Blommestein (D.S.O.), was a doctor in South Africa,²⁰ and a daughter, named Erna, after her mother, married a Van Belkum, descendants of whom also retain Greite as part of their name and still live in South Africa. Presumably Erna had gone back to southern Africa to claim her inheritance in Zeerust, for it seems that her two brothers were also in that area by the end of the 1890s. Maurice Greite, who is almost certainly one of her brothers,²¹ was in Zeerust when the Boer War broke out. He refused to fight against the British and so was imprisoned along with others, but escaped to meet up with Plumer's Rhodesian troops as they advanced from Lobatsi into the north-western part of the Transvaal in May 1900.²² Then a Joseph Henry Greite, probably the other brother, is recorded as dying in the Transvaal in 1900.²³ That leaves only the fourth child of the Greites, a girl, for whom no information has so far been found.

Many of the references to August Greite said that he was Jewish and this has been

¹⁷ For fuller detail of these events see R. S. Roberts (ed.), *Journeys beyond Gubulawayo to the Gaza, Tonga and Lozi: Letters of the Jesuits' Zambesi Mission, 1880–1883* (Harare, Weaver Press, 2009), xxvii, xxix, xxxiv, xxxv.

¹⁸ E. Van Belkum, letter: 'August and Bertha Greite', 109–10.

¹⁹ I am indebted to R. S. Burrett for this information from a photograph that he took of the grave. This photograph, which unfortunately is not suitable for reproduction, showed the Prince of Wales Feathers sculpted on the tombstone; neither Mr Burrett nor I have been able to explain the significance of this but it may refer to the British-Hanoverian connection. Tabler in one of his up-dates refers to August as still alive in 1887 (in 'Addenda and corrigenda III . . .', *Africana Notes and News* (1972–3), XX, 90), but this is a misreading of an entry in the diary of Fr Peter Prestage which in fact says that he took tea at the home of Mrs Greite, correctly implying that Mr Greite was no more; see Gelfand, *Gubulawayo and beyond*, 478.

²⁰ *South African Medical Journal* (1947), XXI, 716.

²¹ His maternal grandfather (Bertha's father) was so named, Moritz, as has been seen), and Maurice had a daughter named Bertha Margaret, born in 1903–4, probably in Southern Africa, Marriage Certificate of 21 July 1926 in author's possession, from the General Register Office, Southport, Marriages, September 1926, Billericay, 4a, 1590; this certificate described her father as an Army Captain.

²² See >paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/cgi-bin/paperspast?a=d&d . . . 2 . . . < (accessed 2 Nov. 2011) for the publication of this Mafeking press report of 30 May 1900 by several newspapers in New Zealand in July 1900; no doubt this report was also published in southern Africa but not apparently by the Rhodesian newspapers.

²³ >http://www.ancestor.co.za/<.

generally accepted;²⁴ and it may be so because Erna, at least, was not baptised after birth although there were L.M.S. missionaries nearby who would have been pleased to baptise this first non-missionary European child born in Matabeleland. Nevertheless August and Bertha perhaps lost their faith living among gentiles for so long, for when August died in Zeerust he was not buried in the Jewish section of the cemetery: *a fortiori* perhaps the children growing up in England became so anglicised that they lost touch with what little they had of the faith of their absent and non-professing parents. On the other hand many of the Greites in the Hanover area at the time of August's birth are known to have been baptised and/or married in church; so perhaps it was only Bertha that was Jewish, and August therefore taken to be Jewish—it was a prejudice of many West Europeans at that time that anyone with a Germanic or Slav accent and/or surname was Jewish.

Whatever the exact details of this, it would not be thought to be of great importance today; nor, admittedly, was Greite himself of enduring significance in our history. Indeed this rather complicated exposition of his life and his descendants is mainly to clear up confusions in the literature and to provide a case study of how misunderstandings in history can grow and—more importantly—how they can be settled. As such it also shows how useful the Notes and Correspondence section in our journal can be in that process of advancing knowledge; and to that we have recently added our email HSZ Information Network which we hope will encourage debate and research (it has already in fact supplied me with some crucial leads for the completion of this article).

There are scores of personalities and subjects in this country's history that will be lost if they are not recorded soon; a brief note or even a letter to the editor of *Heritage* can well retrieve the situation before it is too late.

²⁴ e.g. by R. S. Roberts (ed.), *Journey to Gubuluwayo: Letters of Frs H. Depelchin and C. Croonenberghs, S.J. 1879, 1880, 1881, 175*; and B. A. Kosmin, *Majuta: A History of the Jewish Community in Zimbabwe* (Gwelo, Mambo Press, 1980), 3.

Railway Schemes and Dreams

by R. D. Taylor

The first railway line into Rhodesia reached Bulawayo on 19 October 1897 and was officially opened on 4 November 1897. The line from Beira reached Umtali on 4 February 1898 and the first train into Salisbury arrived on 22 May 1899. Bulawayo and Salisbury were linked by rail in December 1902. A line from Bulawayo to Victoria Falls was completed in 1904. Branch lines were built prior to the outbreak of the First World War in 1914 to Gwanda, Selukwe, Fort Victoria, Shamva and Sinoia. These lines formed the basic structure of Rhodesia's railway system until the construction in 1955/56 of a main line to Lourenço Marques (Maputo) and, subsequently, a branch line into the Lowveld, which opened in 1964.

This paper records some of the proposals which have been made since 1897 to construct railways but which, in the event, were never implemented. A number of these railway proposals resulted in the expenditure of many man-hours of work and a considerable amount of money. It is also fair to say that the supporters of these schemes would have expended much passion in promoting their ideas.

References to light railways in the context of this country mean a narrow, two-foot gauge line constructed as cheaply as possible, as opposed to a standard gauge, three feet six inches line, built to the prevailing main-line specifications. In amplification, I quote the following from a 1909 BSA Company memorandum:

With a view to extending railway communication to agricultural and other districts which are not rich enough to pay a fair return upon the cost of constructing standard gauge lines, it is often found necessary to build light railways of a narrow gauge, which can be done at a much lower cost than the ordinary railway.

The gauge to be adopted for a light railway must largely depend upon the nature of the country to be traversed, but the saving effected in employing a narrow gauge is less than might be expected. The principal economy of a narrow gauge is in bridges, ballast and sleepers. Mr. Parkinson, in his work on light railway construction, states that a 2 ft. gauge line is hardly safe for passengers, but the experience of the Mashonaland Railway Company with the Ayrshire branch has been that, although derailments are frequent on that line, very few serious accidents have occurred.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENTS 1909/10

In 1909 the British South Africa Company administration contemplated the early adoption of a considerable programme of new railway construction. The objective was two fold: firstly, branch lines would generate increased traffic and consequently greater revenue for the main lines, and secondly, they would enhance the value of land in districts that were inaccessible for land settlement purposes. The Company had large stocks of land on hand and it was realized that agriculture would play a leading role in the future development of the country.

The Director of Land Settlement in Salisbury listed six areas that he thought might be well served by railways.

Route I. The Lomagundi district by a continuation of the present railway from the Eldorado up to the Angwa to the Kafue Bridge.

Route II. From Mazoe to the Lone Star Hill, thence to M'toko's and, if mining developments warrant it, to Lawley's Concession; from this point back to Macheke or Headlands Siding.

Route III. From Marandellas Station through the Settlement block of farms, through the Wiltshire Estate, through Enkeldoorn, and thence to Blinkwater.

Route IV. From Que Que or Battlefields, past the Bell and Theta Mine to N'gondomo district and possibly on to the coal areas in the Sebungwe and Mafungabusi districts.

Route V. From Umvuma Siding the terminus of the Blinkwater Railway, down the watershed to Victoria, from Victoria to the Umkondo copper mine, thence to Umtali.

Route VI. If a line is made from Blinkwater through Enkeldoorn to Marandellas, a branch from this to Umtali to give a short connection from Bulawayo to Beira.

ENKELDOORN (CHIVHU)

A glance at a map will show that Enkeldoorn is more or less in the geographical centre of the country. It is not surprising therefore that this district featured in a number of early railway schemes.

The Rhodesian Agricultural Union at its congress held in March 1913 passed the following resolution: "That a railway between Salisbury and Enkeldoorn is urgently needed and that the (Chartered) Company be asked to take in hand the construction of a line as soon as possible". In response, in June 1913, the Company asked the Agricultural Union to support its views with facts and figures "which will materially assist the Board in ascertaining whether such a line is justified from a railway point of view at the present time." The Union replied saying that for the past twelve years the only means of transport to Salisbury had been mules and donkeys. The Company itself had recognized the value of the land in the district, as the price was 15 shillings a morgen as against the five shillings of two years previously. (1 morgen = 0,856 hectares)

Mr. A. D. Malcolm, Resident Director of the BSA Company, wrote on 27 October 1913 to Mr. C. D. Wise, Director of Land Settlement, saying he had met at the Beatrice Mine with a large group of farmers from the Charter and Enkeldoorn districts. In November 1913, a petition was submitted by residents to the Administrator, saying the proposed railway from Umvuma to Odzi, as presently surveyed, would pass through the Charter District, approximately nine miles from the township of Enkeldoorn. They asked for the line to pass closer to the township.

Following the public meeting and petition, the Director of Land Settlement visited the Enkeldoorn area from 17–20 November 1913. He visited farms and met some 20 farmers in Enkeldoorn. He told them the Company was considering constructing a railway from Umvuma to Odzi and, while nothing had been decided, he said he would be glad to receive their views on the route it should take. Speakers urged that it should pass as far north as possible and said Enkeldoorn station should be on the commonage south of the school where there are two permanent springs of water. (Water supply for steam engines was an important factor in planning routes, sidings and stations.)

The Director was doubtful that it would pay to construct a railway from Salisbury to Enkeldoorn. However if a light railway could be constructed from Salisbury to Beatrice Mine it would be of enormous benefit to established farmers.

Matters rested for a while no doubt because the outbreak, in August 1914, of the First World War diverted attention from local issues.

Mr. I. H. Stewart a Land Inspector and Mr. A. Parker, Station Master Salisbury, visited all farms within a ten mile radius of the Salisbury–Enkeldoorn–Umvuma road over the period 18 October to 10 November 1915. A very detailed report was submitted and, in summary, it said that if a railway was not forthcoming in this district at an early date, or a guarantee given that a railway would be made as soon as possible, many of the farmers would have to relinquish the land they held, which would be an extremely bad advertisement for the Company. These people had spent all their capital and were now in a critical position. Mr. Parker said a line from Umvuma to Enkeldoorn offered the most attractive features from a railway point of view, as it would bring one hundred farms in the Enkeldoorn district to within fifteen miles of a railway. Ultimately it would form a link with a trunk line connecting the district with a port, if produce for export was grown in large quantities. He continued that no case had been made for a railway between Salisbury and the Enkeldoorn district and farmers had to look to their markets at Umvuma, Selukwe and to the west. The European population of the district was 170. With regard to Beatrice, Mr. Parker reported that the nearest point on the present railway to the Beatrice Mine was between the Hunyani River and Norton a straight line of about 30 miles, six miles shorter than Salisbury to Beatrice. It would be a cumbersome branch to work and mileage on export traffic and to Salisbury would be excessive.

Due to the difficulties being caused by restrictions on cattle movements, further investigations were conducted in March/April 1916. Cattle movement restrictions due to East Coast Fever greatly added to transport costs. In effect these restrictions meant that a wagon load of produce had to be hauled by three separate spans of oxen on a journey from Enkeldoorn to Salisbury i.e. one span from the farm to the Umfuli river, one span from Umfuli river to the Hunyani river and a final third span from the Hunyani river to Salisbury.

Mr. Parker concluded after the 1916 investigation that a railway would run at a heavy annual loss for the first three years. He suggested that instead of laying down a railway in the first instance, the Railway Company should consider fostering the district by providing, or subsidizing, a cheap road transport service from the Umfuli river and certain other fixed points to Salisbury.

A railway was never built to Enkeldoorn and the Railways road motor service only reached the district on 2 April 1927 when a twice-weekly return service commenced. A single journey was scheduled to take seven and three-quarter hours.

HAMMOND REPORT

This report was presented to the Legislative Assembly in 1926. The author Brigadier General F. D. Hammond examined in great detail all aspects of Rhodesia Railways operations.

In so far as this paper is concerned, in summary, the report contains the following remarks:

Railway schemes, which had been suggested, to Government were:

Bulawayo–West Nicholson–Messina
Fort Victoria–Messina
Selukwe–Messina via Shabani
Bulawayo–Gobabis for Walvis Bay in South West Africa
Sinoia–Kafue
Pungwe river mouth to Melsetter.

Brigadier Hammond said that before any definite recommendation could be made it was necessary to have proper engineering and traffic surveys. The engineering survey, in conjunction with the traffic survey, would determine which of the various routes was best to adopt. The standard of construction of a new line, its grades and curvature, should also be adjusted, in so far as physical conditions would permit, to the anticipated traffic. From the two surveys an estimate could be formed of probable workability.

For many of the proposed connections no engineering or traffic surveys were available. There was no case made to build cut-offs i.e. Umvuma–Odzi or Umvuma–Bromley or Salisbury so long as there was not more traffic on the main line than it could carry comfortably. The report also commented on the proposed Sinoia–Kafue line.

NORTHERN RHODESIA/ZAMBIA COPPER

The discovery of copper in Northern Rhodesia near the border of the Belgian Congo was to have profound effects on the development and operations of Rhodesia Railways and other railways in Southern and Central Africa.

In 1926, Mr. William Selkirk, a Consulting Engineer, declared that the copper deposit found at what was to become the Roan Antelope mine was a large and uniform one. Roan Antelope Copper Mines Ltd. was incorporated on 3 June 1927 and the first copper from Roan Antelope mine was cast at the smelter on 23 October 1931. This was the start of what became a vast mining industry consuming large quantities of coal, which came from the Wankie Colliery in Southern Rhodesia, and shipping copper by rail to ports, mainly Beira at that time. Copper was also being exploited in the Katanga Province of the Belgian Congo.

RHODESIA–WALVIS BAY RECONNAISSANCE SURVEY

Following a conference in Pretoria on 25–26 September 1930 between the Governments of the Union of South Africa, The Bechuanaland Protectorate, the Mandated Territory of South West Africa and Southern Rhodesia, Mr. J. L. S. Jeffares, BSc. MInst. C. E. of the Consulting Engineers, Messrs Jeffares and Green of Johannesburg, was instructed to carry out a reconnaissance survey of a route. This route was to start at a point between Matetsi and Dett in Southern Rhodesia and run south-west via a point on the Botletle river, near “Letter Tree”, thence through Ghanzi, or a point south of Ghanzi, to Gobabis. Gobabis is a railway terminus 142 miles (228 km) east of Windhoek in what was then South West Africa. This line reached Gobabis on 6 November 1930 and was operated by South African Railways. In addition, if funds permitted, routes were also to be examined eastwards to the main line from a point in the Bechuanaland Protectorate. The consultant was required to produce a plan of this route on a scale 1/500 000 showing the locality of the line, and estimate of cost of construction, an estimate of financial results based on information of probable traffic and receipts to be supplied to him by the various Governments.



Walvis Bay reconnaissance survey party 1931

(Photo: B. Schlachter)

There are, as a rule, three steps necessary before a railway is ready for construction.

- a. Reconnaissance survey.
- b. Preliminary survey.
- c. Final staked survey.

A reconnaissance survey is made to get a general idea of the topography of the country in the area to be served and to select the most favourable ground in the vicinity. Maps are generally used to facilitate this process but in the case of Bechuanaland none existed at that time.

The survey was well resourced. Transport was provided by the Southern Rhodesia Government Transport Department in the form of three, A3 3-ton, Thornycroft, rigid, six-wheel lorries. A number of alterations had to be made to the lorries before the survey commenced including the fitting of condensers for reducing the loss of water by boiling from the radiators. Transport personnel consisted of Assistant Mechanic Povall and Drivers Schlachter, Martin and Rudolph. Mr. Jeffares also provided his own Chevrolet vehicle. In all 14 796 lorry miles were traversed, including the preliminary trips, to establish petrol and other supply dumps, before the railway survey proper and the economic survey that followed the railway survey. Wireless communication was established and maintained with Walvis Bay Radio, Johannesburg, Salisbury and various South African and Rhodesian amateur stations. Mr. L. Madgwick, a Rhodesian Post Office official, was the wireless operator. Due to the lack of geographical data, the method of fixing the routes traversed was to fix each camp, when sufficiently far apart, by star observations and plot in the daily route of the lorries between them. This task required Mr. W. Edwards to stay up to all hours practically every night to make astronomical observations and to work out the survey team's position.

The preliminary expedition was to establish fuel and water supplies at point x (see map) some 290 miles (466 km) east of Gobabis. This was easily accomplished, the lorries



Walvis Bay reconnaissance survey party – Mr L. Madgwick in his radio tent
(Photo: Mr R. L. Madgwick)

averaging six or seven miles per hour. However when the main tour was commenced it was found that, owing mainly to the soil being damp, the lorries could only average one or two miles per hour. It was only by sending one lorry ahead at night or in the early morning that it was possible to make reasonable headway. The other lorries and car followed in the tracks of the first vehicle, thus making a firmer road.

A third party, the economic survey party, and consisting of Dr A. E. Romyn, Department of Agriculture, Mr. A. M. Macgregor, Geological Survey and Mr. S. P. J. Fry of Rhodesia Railways left Gobabis on 12 July 1931 and arrived at Matetsi on 1 August. Apart from minor diversions, they followed the route surveyed by Mr. Jeffares and the main party a few months earlier. The economic survey party submitted reports on the agricultural and geological possibilities of the country to be traversed by the new railway.

On 14 September 1931 Mr. Jeffares submitted his first report to the Minister of Mines and Public Works. This report dealt mainly with the engineering side as the information on probable traffic was not yet to hand. Mr. Jeffares initially estimated the costs of building the railway through each territory as follows:

Gobabis to Sandfontein (South West Africa)	
70 miles (113 km) at £3 500 per mile	245 000
Sandfontein to Rhodesian border (Bechuanaland)	
490 miles (789 km) at £3 905 per mile	1 913 450
Rhodesian border to Matetsi (Southern Rhodesia)	
34 miles (55 km) at £6 577 per mile	223 618
Total 594 miles (956 km) at £4 010 per mile.	£2 382 068



Walvis Bay reconnaissance survey party en route
(Photo: B. Schlachter)



Mr Martin (5ft 9ins) and bushman. Walvis Bay reconnaissance survey party 1931
(Photo: B. Schlachter)

This figure was later increased to £2 627 384 plus £250 000 for additional rolling stock required to give a total of £2 877 384.

With regard to a line from Plumtree to join the proposed Gobabis–Matetsi line, Mr. Jeffares estimated that a 210 mile (338 km) line would cost £4 481 per mile, or a total of £941 000. He couldn't recommend that this line be constructed as a truck line.

Mr. M. N. Varvill, Chief Engineer of the Beira and Mashonaland and Rhodesia Railways, when commenting on the initial report, in summary said that conditions were such that a relatively cheap line could be built in, say, three years over the route inspected by Mr. Jeffares. A lot more survey work should be done before the location and construction estimates were settled. He also said expenditure would be necessary to make the South West African connecting lines suitable for the work they presumably had to do.

Mr. Jeffares also commented on the political background, which could have been a factor in reaching a decision to build the line. He wrote:

The property of Rhodesia Railways in Portuguese East Africa must be a diminishing asset or vested interest, as it reverts to the Portuguese in the not very distant future. It seems questionable whether it is sound economic policy to continue spending money on the foreign port of Beira, which, with all its fixed and rolling material, automatically becomes the property of the Portuguese in 59 years (i.e. 1990).

The period of working the railways, referred to in Article 19 of the decree of 11 February, 1891, is regulated by Article 29 of the same decree and the line shall revert to the State with all its fixed and rolling material at the end of 99 years.

Included in the railway referred to were docks, quays etc. at Beira.

The recently promulgated Colonial Act of the Portuguese Republic has articles which bear on this subject and which show how really dangerous this menace is to the Rhodesia Railways and the Rhodesias.

In the event the railway system from the border near Machipanda to Beira and the Beira docks were handed over to the Portuguese authorities in phases during 1949.

Dr. Romyn's agricultural report included an analysis of the soil and grass samples collected en route. These were shown to be all of sands low in humus and very poorly supplied with the essential plant food elements. Dr. Romyn said that if extensive settlement was followed, annual production of a 75-mile strip either side of the projected railway was estimated at 170 000 head of cattle, 1 500 000 lbs of butterfat and 30 000 sheep. He considered twenty years would be necessary to reach this level of production.

The Geological report by Mr. Macgregor was very detailed and covered the geology and economic geology of the proposed route. The possibilities for the development of a mineral industry in the region were small. Water should be available by drilling but the quality of the water would be of greater moment for a railway. His report covered the Sua salt deposits and said the discovery of alluvial diamonds in the overlying Karoo beds was not impossible. Whatever it may be possible to do in fifty years time, by methods of scientific prospecting then in their infancy, there was no prospect of the discovery of mineral deposits other than of salts, by surface methods of prospecting. Very prophetic words from Mr. Macgregor as diamonds are now a major export earner for Botswana and in 1991/92 Botswana railways built a 175 km branch line from Francistown to the Sua Pan soda ash plant. It can be seen

from these two economic reports that the projected railway had little prospect of generating traffic en route in its early years.

Mr. Jeffares final report, containing maps and the economic reports, was presented to the Legislative Assembly in July 1932. By that time the country and the world was in the grip of a major economic depression. The railways, faced with a large decline in traffic, had laid off a lot of staff and sidelined rolling stock. The national mood was one of survival and funds were not available for development projects and this particular railway was never built.

It is of interest to note the distances involved, which would explain why the Governments of the day were so interested in a outlet to the sea on the west coast for both Southern and Northern Rhodesia. Most trade at the time was with the United Kingdom and Europe.

<i>Ocean Distances</i>	<i>Miles</i>	<i>Kilometres</i>
Cape Town to Southampton via Las Palmas	5955	9582
Walvis Bay to Southampton via Las Palmas	5350	8608
Beira to Southampton via Las Palmas	7450	11987
<i>Approximate Rail distances</i>		
Ndola to Beira (via Bulawayo)	1448	2330
Ndola to Beira (via Sinoia)	920	1480
Ndola to Walvis Bay (via Matetsi)	1524	2452
Ndola to Cape Town	2137	3438
Ndola to Durban	1931	3106
Ndola to Port Elizabeth	1975	3177
Salisbury to Walvis Bay (via Matetsi)	1500	2413

The writer wishes to point out that over the years other routes to West Coast ports including Lobito Bay, Tiger Bay, Kunene River mouth and Mossamedes have been investigated. However as the proposed routes joined the Rhodesia Railways system in the then Northern Rhodesia they fall outside the scope of this paper.

SINOIA-KAFUE CUT OFF

The question of building a railway from Sinoia to Kafue traversing the Zambezi Valley has been an ongoing issue for close on a century. On the face of it the benefits of building the line are obvious. It would save, depending on the final route chosen, some 824 km in the length of haul between Kafue and Harare or some 35% of the current distance between the port of Beira and Sakania on the Congo border. All traffic from the north to Beira has to travel via Livingstone, Hwange, Bulawayo, Gweru, Harare, Mutare and on down to Beira.

An early suggestion for the construction of a line was in the BSA Company 1909/10 investigations already recorded in this paper. Mr. J. Banks of Rhodesia Railways commencing in 1914 carried out the first survey of a possible route. Mr. Banks report is dated 8 January 1916.

Mr. Banks gave the length of line as Sinoia–Kariba 169 miles (272 km) and Kariba–Kafue 81 miles (130 km) a total of 250 miles (402 km) of new construction. The survey permanently located and pegged 57 miles from Sinoia and the remaining 193 miles was levelled and line located. Mr. Banks calculated that just less than four million cubic yards of earth and rock would have to be excavated and a similar amount of embankment would have to be filled. The route selected had the line crossing the Sanyati River by means of

a low-level girder bridge comprising nine 100-foot spans placed 24 feet above the highest flood level. The Zambezi would be crossed up stream of Kariba Gorge with a seven hundred foot bridge 20 feet above the highest flood level. One span would be 275 feet, four spans 100 feet each and one of 25 feet.

These proposed crossing points would today be under the waters of Lake Kariba. Mr. Banks observed that the lower down the gorge was crossed the greater the difficulty in getting away from it on the North Bank.

Estimated costs were:

Sinoia–Kariba (Zambezi river)	£893 105
Kariba–Kafue	£600 909
Total	£1 994 014 or £5 952 per mile.

No action was taken on the report due to preoccupation with fighting the First World War.

The decision taken in 1927 to commence mining copper at Roan Antelope was to reopen the issue of a Sinoia–Kafue link. On the 16 April 1928 the Governor of Northern Rhodesia, Sir James Maxwell, addressed the subject when he opened the Legislative Council. He referred to the 1925 Brigadier Hammond report in which Hammond estimated that the cost of construction would now be £2 600 000. In Hammond's view far from helping the railway to compete for Congo traffic it would impose a very severe handicap, with interest charges alone of £150 000 per annum. The Governor concluded that, in view of the considered opinion by a recognised expert, the Government of the Territory was not prepared to give any support to the proposal that construction of this line should be commenced at an early date while it recognised fully that this line should be constructed one day.

Matters were also stirring in Southern Rhodesia, as on 29 April 1929 the Prime Minister Mr. H. U. Moffat, wrote to the General Manager of Rhodesia Railways, Col. C. F. Birney, saying that Cabinet had discussed the recent finds in Northern Rhodesia and that this had changed the position tremendously and that the Government and Railways would be failing in their duty, if they did not watch closely the developments taking place and if the railways did not, by the provision of ample facilities, avoid a demand for a line from the Northern Rhodesian copper fields to connect to the West Coast port of Lobito Bay.

He asked the railways to take stock of what tonnages, import and export, were likely to be, the extent the present railway equipment could cope with the traffic and the extent present lines could carry the traffic five years from then. He concluded that Northern Rhodesia copper looked like bringing the Sinoia/Kafue line within the range of practical politics. It might also bring the Messina connection within the same range for chrome and asbestos traffic.

Col. Birney replied to the Prime Minister saying a senior traffic man, Mr. A. Parker had been detailed to make a traffic survey of the line in conjunction with the Southern Rhodesia Government. He also gave details of the route surveyed in 1914/15 by Mr. Banks.

On 20 July 1929, the Prime Minister wrote to Col. Birney saying agitation for the line seemed to be gathering force again. The only valid argument in favour of the line was the fact that it would open up a certain amount of fresh traffic namely for produce from Mashonaland, such things as potatoes, onions etc., then cattle, as within a few years this country would be supplying the N. R. mines with maize, a big item in workers' food.

The Herald reported on 10 September 1929 that, at a meeting in Sinoia, attended by 280 persons, the following resolution was passed:

That this meeting of Lomagundi citizens representative of all sections, views with the greatest indignation and alarm the antagonistic attitude of the Government towards the immediate construction of the Sinoia–Kafue railway and considers that the construction of the Sinoia–Kafue railway is a paramount and vital necessity to Southern Rhodesia and passes a vote of no confidence in the Government.

On the same day as *The Herald* report the Prime Minister met a delegation from the Sinoia–Kafue Joint Committee. This committee comprised representatives from Mashonaland Farmers Association, Salisbury Municipality, Chamber of Mines, Rhodesia Manufacturers Association, Automobile Association, Rhodesian Agricultural Union and the Salisbury Chamber of Commerce. The Government's response to all this was two fold. Mr. J. L. S. Jeffares the Consulting Engineer who worked on the Walvis Bay survey was asked to undertake a further Engineering Survey and a Commission of Enquiry was appointed.

In April 1930 Lord Selborne, British politician, wrote to the Prime Minister saying that the railway would assist in bringing about the union of the two Rhodesias. The Prime Minister in his reply on the 26 May 1930 said more information was required and he had arranged for a full and final survey to be made. This would take at least a year, possibly as much as twenty four months. Once this was received the whole position would be clearer and, with definite information of the cost of the line, cost of running it etc., the Government would be in a better position to come to a final decision. The Prime Minister's letter concluded with appreciation of Lord Selborne's desire that the two Rhodesias should be united, which was one of the main policies of his Government.

Finding a way up and down the Zambezi escarpment on both the Southern and Northern Rhodesia sides of the valley presented major engineering challenges. Mr. Jeffares, in a very detailed engineering report, investigated a number of alternative routes and crossing points of the Zambezi.

He concluded:

- a. Via Feira. Not a direct route and did not offer an easy way down.
- b. Kariba Gorge route. Already surveyed (by Mr. Banks) but the next problem was to try for a shorter route.
- c. Nyakasanga Valley. Was found feasible but with 8 chain radius curves (In Natal, with no money spared, the maximum curvature was 7,24 chain radius curves).
- d. Marongora, Chinchire–Norichi Valley. Route of government road but offered no improvement on the Nyakasanga Valley.
- e. The Rekomitjie Valley. No improvement and increased the distance.
- f. The Chitaki River. No improvement and increased the distance.

Mr. Jeffares fixed the route as Zongwe, Norman Farm, neighbourhood of Vuti Hill, Hambakwe Hill, Nyakasanga Valley, crossing the Zambezi near Chirundu Hill. The route would then have gone east crossing the Kafue at its junction with the Zambezi thence to the foot of the North Escarpment or Lesser Chongwe, following it and the Mufundesi and Nangombe rivers to the top of the North Escarpment on Leopards Hill ranch to a junction at 1266 miles (between Chikumbi and Karubwe sidings some 20 miles beyond Lusaka towards Broken Hill). The line from Sinoia to Lions Den and Zawi was opened on 1 August 1930.

The Railway Chief Engineer, commenting on Mr. Jeffares report in October 1932, said

that the Chirundu narrows form a very good site for the Zambezi crossing, unequalled to anything a long distance either side of it. It was unlikely, with cost of material and labour at their present level, that this line could be built to a desirable standard, having due regard to economy in operation and maintenance for much less than £3 350 000.

The Otto Beit road bridge across the Zambezi at Chirundu was built between 1937 and 1939. Prior to that all road traffic to the North had to cross the Zambezi at Victoria Falls.

The Commission of Enquiry comprised two members: Mr. P. E. Potter. (M. Inst. T.), and Mr. R. C. Wallace (M. Inst. C. E. and M. Inst. T.). The secretary was Mr. S. H. Coates-Palgrave of the Prime Minister's Department.

The Commission, in its report submitted in 1930, reviewed the previous work done on this project and the arguments in favour of construction. Mr. Wallace felt that by substituting a slightly steeper grade of 1 in 50 throughout, the heavy section of the earthworks could be sensibly reduced. His estimate of construction costs was £2 493 668. Trade figures for 1928 showed that very little produce was exported to Northern Rhodesia and the Congo. However, with the development of the mining industry there would undoubtedly be a large demand for foodstuffs. The Commission found that time was not an important factor in the transit of copper (Sakania to Beira equalled 11,8 days) but for general goods going north a saving of 2–3 days would be reasonable. The carrying capacity of the existing line Kafue–Salisbury was examined and, taking into account engine loads then allowed, it worked out at 5½ trains per day, which was well within the capacity of the line Wankie–Salisbury. After a detailed examination of costs, the Commission accepted as reasonable the figure of £131 638, being the net additional cost per annum to the railways, if the proposed line was constructed. They couldn't find that the line would generate new traffic. Representatives of the mining companies did not claim any advantage from the construction of the line but rather feared having, eventually, to bear through-rates charged, with an annual loss likely to be incurred.

The commission's report concluded.

The time is not yet ripe for incurring:

- a. The large capital expenditure necessary for building the line from Sinoia to Kafue and
- b. The resulting additional cost of working. Undoubtedly at a later stage financial and economic conditions apart it will be found desirable to build the line.

Matters rested at this point due to the economic turmoil of the early 1930s and subsequently the Second World War 1939–1945.

After the Second World War, in October 1947, the Economic Secretary to the Northern Rhodesia Government wrote to the Chief Secretary of the Central African Council requesting that an inter-territorial body be set up to examine the possibility of a Sinoia–Kafue rail link. This would be done as a parallel to the work being carried out by the Inter-Territorial Hydro Electric Power Commission. The argument behind such an investigation was, if the copper mines purchased electricity from either Kafue or Kariba, this would substantially reduce consumption of coal from Wankie and the rail rate on copper moving to Beira via Bulawayo would inevitably be increased. The only solution appeared to be to shorten the rail route to the port.

In the same month the General Manager of Rhodesia Railways produced figures showing

a loss to the railways, if the line was constructed, of £184 900 per annum. This calculation included potential revenue from the movement of 255 000 tons of groundnuts from Chisamba in Northern Rhodesia. This groundnut project never materialized.

The Central Africa Council agreed to set up a Committee, which would consider the economic possibilities of the cut-off, and alternative Branch line proposals. The committee consisted of two representatives from each territory plus a railways' representative. Mr. H. S. L. Grenfell of Northern Rhodesia was the Chairman. It was intended that the Committee would report in March 1948.

The Chairman obtained information for his committee from the Geological Survey, Irrigation Department, Industrial Development Corporation and the Department of Statistics.

The Committee held its first meeting on 1 March 1948 and noted that in May of that year the Royal Air Force was to carry out surveys of the Zambezi for the Hydro Electric Power Commission. It was decided that the R. A. F. be asked to map the whole area as soon as possible. The following month it was agreed that the Colonial Survey Unit should map a rectangular area between the Zambezi River and Miami. Due to the flat area between Sinoia and Miami no aerial survey was needed. However, following technical problems, the mapping was only received in 1950/51.

The General Manager of the Railways Sir Arthur Griffin said detailed traffic surveys took time and absorbed labour employed on other urgent work and consequently in August 1948 the Chief Secretary of the Central African Council informed member Governments that the traffic analysis would not be ready until year end and the aerial survey not until February 1949.

It was also recommended parallel investigations be made into what diversions of traffic would result from construction of rail outlets to ports on the West Coast, East coast in Tanganyika or Lourenço Marques via Beit Bridge. This was agreed to.

On the 6 January 1949 the General Manager of Rhodesia Railways submitted his analysis and concluded in all the circumstances he was of the definite opinion that the construction of the cut off could not be justified. Such a line would only be feasible if a large volume of local traffic, sufficient in itself to cover working and indirect expenses involved, offered along the route or if traffic on the existing line Kafue–Bulawayo–Salisbury reached such proportions as to render a diversion necessary.

The Central Africa Council agreed after discussing the railways report that the Committee should discontinue its investigations and submit all the information it had obtained to the member Governments.

The Governor of Northern Rhodesia, Sir Gilbert Rennie opened the debate again when he wrote on 10 January 1951 that the United States authorities had decided to revise the criteria for E.C.A. (Economic Co-ordination Administration of the United States Government) assistance. These would be more liberal than existing criteria. The Northern Rhodesia Government was of the opinion that the Sinoia–Kafue link would qualify for assistance under the revised criteria. He asked for a memorandum containing as much information as possible to establish that this project would be of real benefit and importance to the two Rhodesias from a strategic and economic point of view.

The High Commissioner in London on 3 March 1951 reported on talks he had held with representatives of E.C.A. in London. The E.C.A. representatives thought they could assist

with the Pafuri link (the line to Lourenço Marques, see *Heritage* 24). On the question of Sinoia–Kafue, the High Commissioner continued: “I gather there was little or no prospect of assistance, as proposed in this letter, becoming available for the cut off.”

On the 27 March 1951 Sir Godfrey Huggins, Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia, reported to his Cabinet on the interest being displayed by the E.C.A. in railway development especially with regard to the Pafuri–Lourenço Marques railway link. Cabinet agreed that it was necessary to consider the matter at an early date in order to consider priorities for the different projects now being examined.

Cabinet discussed the issue again on 3 April 1951 and agreed that:

- a. No commitments should be undertaken at present either for the Pafuri link or the Sinoia–Kafue link until these projects and their relation to the Kariba scheme had been further examined.
- b. A decision ought to be taken in June on the Kariba Hydro Electric scheme.
- c. All these projects should be fitted into one single programme.

The Consulting Engineer, Mr J. L. S. Jeffares, was again commissioned to report on:

- a. Modification of the 1932 location in order that developments that had taken place since that date could be served.
- b. Possible reduction in cost of undertaking.
- c. Investigation into the possibility of modifying the 1932 location to provide a rail connection to Kariba dam site.
- d. Examination of Northern Escarpment for an improved route to Lusaka or Kafue.
- e. Staking out of the finally selected line.

To carry out the commission, Mr. Jeffares, who was the supervising partner, deployed 12 engineers on field work, four women on traverse coordination and similar duties, plus up to eighty Africans. The main camp for the survey party was at Makuti. Mr. Jeffares reported that an inspection had shown that it would not be practicable to carry the line over the Kariba dam wall. The only alternative crossing would be half way between Kariba and Chirundu near the confluence of the Chikomba River and the Zambezi. He surveyed a 13-mile branch line to the point where the Zambezi exits the Kariba Gorge.

Revised costs estimates were as follows:

Salisbury–Lusaka via Chirundu 333 ½ miles (536 km) £19 919 519 or £83 695 per mile.

Salisbury–Lusaka via Chikomba 344 miles (553 km) £20 586 984 or £82 841 per mile.

Salisbury–Kafue via Chirundu 318 ½ miles (512 km) £18 266 846 or £81 914 per mile.

Salisbury–Kafue via Chikomba 319 miles (511 km) £18 179 123 or £81 704 per mile.

In addition to the new work, the existing branch line from Salisbury to Lions Den would need to be upgraded to main-line standards.

The E.C.A. withdrew its interest in funding railway projects and in December 1951 the Railways’ Higher Authority announced the decision to proceed with what became known as the South East connection, the line from Bannockburn to Lourenço Marques. (See *Heritage* 24). Interest in the Sinoia–Kafue link waned after this.

I believe that this was due to the results of the very considerable investments that had

been made, in the meantime, to improve the ability of the railways to move efficiently the greatly increased volumes of traffic on offer. For example, Coke and Coal traffic moved in July 1951 was 195 022 tons, this increased to 239 907 tons in July 1952 and 315 985 tons in July 1956. Copper carried in the year ended 31 March 1957 was 580 239 tons as against 269 824 tons in 1947. The improvements included upgraded main line, introduction of diesel traction and 20th Class steam locomotives plus the gradual installation of centralised train control. This last measure greatly increased the capacity of the existing track and the whole main-line system from Umtali to Ndola, a distance of 1215 miles (1955 km), had this type of signalling installed by 1964. At the time it was the longest CTC system in the world. With the benefit of hindsight, it's just as well the line wasn't built as the political events in the region from the mid 1960s and through the 1970s would have rendered the line somewhat useless and a financial burden to the authorities.

Since Zimbabwe's independence in April 1980, various politicians have again raised this issue. In the writer's opinion, any person promoting this scheme would be well advised to take the time to revisit the voluminous work that has already been done on this project. The numbers will have changed but the fundamentals remain the same. Far better returns would be obtained by spending any scarce and expensive funds that may become available on repairing the existing railway structure which, once restored, would be capable of moving much greater volumes of traffic than it does at present.

MELSETTER

Farmers in the Melsetter and Chipinga districts faced serious transport problems. The eastern border mountains, the drop into the Sabi/Odzi valley and finally the climb back up to Umtali or Fort Victoria, in addition to numerous river crossings, presented serious challenges.

The Umtali Chamber of Commerce, on 7 June 1910, adopted a resolution:

That this meeting of representatives of the Umtali Chamber of Commerce and the Manica Farmers' and Land Owners' Association, having heard and discussed the arguments in favour of a railway from Umtali to the Melsetter district and beyond, from the Melsetter Railway Committee, is of the opinion that the BSA Company and the Beira and Mashonaland Railway should give the matter their full consideration with a view to a line being constructed at the earliest possible opportunity.

The Rhodesian Agricultural Union, at its Congress in Bulawayo on 17–18 June 1910, passed a similar resolution and added they were strongly opposed to a route that would follow the Sabi and open the mining area only, without assisting the farming portions of the district. In reply to these resolutions, the Secretary of the BSA Company in London said the question of constructing further railways in Southern Rhodesia was receiving the most careful consideration of Directors.

The Surveyor-General, Mr. W. J. Atherstone, entered the debate by suggesting a line Umvuma–Felixburg–Victoria–Umkondo copper claims to Umtali. One route would be at the foot of the high country of about 268 miles (431 km) and the other via Melsetter village of about 321 miles (576 km). The costs of construction would be great. The Secretary for Mines and Works, Mr. E. W. S. Montagu commented that this route would open up unalienated land besides serving mining interests. Country in the Melsetter area was very hilly and physical features would have to be considered.

October 1911 produced another resolution from the Rhodesia Agricultural Union adding that the Melsetter district had farms lying dormant owing to inaccessibility. The response this time from the Chartered Company was that arrangements were being made for construction of railways to Mazoe–Abercorn (Shamva) and Victoria districts and for the moment it was not possible to undertake further construction. The Blinkwater Railway Company built these two railways. (See *Heritage* 21)

Further resolutions were submitted in January 1913 and March 1917 but drew fairly short responses. Melsetter/Chipinga never did get a railway line. A twice weekly, Road Motor Service started between Umtali and Chipinga on 2 November 1927 and Umtali to Melsetter on 1 April 1929.

In 1913, the London office of the Chartered Company followed up with Ropeways Ltd., a British firm, the idea of building a ropeway for transporting merchandise. Ropeways, were doing a survey in Kashmir in India. A very rough estimate was that a ropeway would cost about one thousand pounds per mile. Sir Charles Metcalfe, Chief Engineer of Rhodesia Railways was of the opinion that the cost of working and maintaining such a long length of line would be prohibitive.

HARARE/CHITUNGWIZA

In 1987 a proposal was made to build a twenty-kilometre-plus rail link between the satellite town of Chitungwiza and the centre of Harare. Various routes have been suggested, one of which would also serve the industrial and high-density residential areas to the west of the city.

In 1995 companies were invited to pre-qualify for a 22 km electrified link with a capacity of 60 000 passengers per hour. Several international companies expressed interest but potential investors requested certain guarantees from the Zimbabwe Government. The line was to be operated on the build, own, operate and transfer system.

The deregulation of the urban transport industry and the consequent mushrooming of private commercial passenger vehicle operators plus the economic turmoil that beset Zimbabwe after the late 1990s has meant that the line was never built.

FELIXBURG–ODZI

In the 1990s, the South African mining house JCI commissioned a leading firm of engineering consultants to carry out a study, which would involve building a railway line to move beneficiated iron ore from the Manese iron ore deposit in the Chivhu/Featherstone area to a site near Mutare. It was mooted that a direct reduction plant be built near Mutare to produce hot-briquetted iron using gas from Mozambique.

The consultants proposed that a railway line be built from Felixburg siding on the Gweru–Masvingo branch line across the Sabi valley to Odzi siding, on the main Harare–Mutare line. The project was to have been developed jointly between JCI and Buchwa Iron Mining Company. It was never proceeded with as the type of direct reduction plant envisaged was not capable of meeting the requirements of the project.

CONCLUSION

Other railway schemes have been suggested over the years. Lines such as Insiza–Fort Rixon and on to the mines near Belingwe and then to Fort Victoria; Bulawayo–Turk Mine; Lower

Sabi iron and coalfield to the Mozambique coast. All these schemes failed to attract any serious public or official interest.

The technological advances in motor vehicle design stimulated by the two World Wars in particular and the steady improvement in the road network meant that the building of branch line railways became more and more difficult to justify. The Railways themselves started a Road Motor Service in 1927 on the Sinoia–Miami route and by 1930 they were operating 21 services covering most of the populated areas. In 1957 the RMS fleet had grown to 139 diesel engine vehicles and route mileage to 4695 miles (7554 km). This service provided the transport needs of farmers and miners in the rural areas, thus obviating the need for new branch railways.

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as communications by post are no longer affordable.

Early Days (Part Two)

by Jack Nesbitt

(Edited by Fraser Edkins)

The first part of these memoirs (published in Heritage of Zimbabwe, No. 29) ended with Jack's journey by train to Bulawayo in 1926 to take up a job as a ranch hand with Lonrho on the Glass Block Ranch in the Balla Balla district. (The editor's notes appear in italics). Feedback from readers is earnestly requested (to Fraser Edkins at P.O. Box 53, Harare) concerning the names, places and events mentioned in Jack's memoirs, in particular the present whereabouts of Jack's descendants and of other characters mentioned in this article.

RANCHING WITH LONRHO

1926

On the Monday I caught the train to West Nicholson and eventually arrived at Balla Balla station which consisted of one small office, an hotel and a general dealer's store. The store and hotel were owned by Sandy Sanderson, with whom I became very friendly in the months to follow. At Balla Balla, I was met by my new boss, Mr Brent, Manager of Glass Block Ranch. On the 10 mile drive to the ranch, in his Model A Ford (the first I had driven in), he asked me whether I could ride and, on being told that I could, muttered: 'We'll see about that'. Upon arrival at the ranch, I was introduced to Mrs. Brent and shown a thatched hut near their house where I was to live, told that supper would be at 6.30 pm and taken to meet the Assistant Manager. This turned out to be John Haslam, whose older brother, Andrew, I knew in Umtali. John Haslam took me under his wing and to him I owe the fact that the Brent ménage did not completely overwhelm me. Trouble started immediately. John was told by Brent to take me out the next morning to teach me what was expected of me and when John asked which horse I was to ride, I saw him raise his eyebrows at the reply. Next morning before dawn, after a quick cup of coffee and a slice of bread and jam, the horses were saddled and led out by the stable boys. I noticed that the Africans were casting curious glances at me and muttering to each other, but they spoke in Sindebele which I did not understand at that time. Brent was there to see us off and John said in an undertone: 'If this bloody horse bolts with you, for God's sake don't panic. About a mile away is the Umzingwani River. Steer him onto the deep sand and keep him on it!'. The horse I had been allocated – I can't remember his name – was a very big and beautiful looking chestnut. I did my best not to show my fright. I was seventeen, my total riding experience was on donkeys and the occasional ride on Harry Norris' well-behaved horse. However, my father had taken great pains to teach me to ride and to handle my mount correctly and those dimly remembered instructions stood me in good stead. Sure enough, the horse bolted before I could get my other foot into the stirrup and it was all I could do to stay on him whilst I felt frantically for the iron. I had hardly succeeded when I saw a barbed-wire concertina gate which the brute cleared at full gallop. Approaching the river, I regained a little confidence and was suddenly filled with rage at Brent and the horse. I was riding with a snaffle and I now proceeded to saw his mouth with this as savagely as I could. He slackened his pace, I

think in amazement at my temerity, and I was able to do what John Haslam had suggested, turning him from the shallow drift and heading him upstream on the deep, dry sand which formed the larger part of the river bed in dry weather. Soon he slowed to a trot and then a walk and I turned him about and rode to meet John, who had galloped after me from the homestead. I had no more real trouble although I disliked the horse intensely. He shied at the slightest provocation, bit and kicked and was generally a nasty animal. There were several other horses on the ranch, well trained and a delight to ride but John told me that Brent thought it clever to put newcomers onto the rogue and had, in fact, caused several nasty falls and lost a couple of assistants because of this and other peculiarities.

I soon loved the work I had to do. Glass Block Ranch was an enormous piece of land; sometimes we rode 15 or 20 miles before we started to round up the cattle. The ranch was mostly fenced into paddocks varying in size from about 1000 to 3000 acres. In these paddocks, the cattle ran freely, generally about 200 to 300 to the paddock. They were rounded up, dipped and wounds attended to once a week in summer and once a fortnight in winter. About eight or ten Africans, spaced about 100 yards apart, would start at one end of the paddock, clapping whips and calling: 'Dip, dip, dip' at the tops of their voices, whistling shrilly and generally making as much noise as possible. Our job was to ride behind them, picking up any strays or groups of cattle hiding in thickets or long grass. At the end of the rectangular paddock would be a gate leading into the 'race' to the dip. This was a passage formed by the paddock fences on each side. At the stockyards at the dip, the cattle would be driven through a long, narrow race and sorted by remote controlled swing gates into various holding yards or allowed to run the length of the race and plunge into the deep concrete trench, known as a 'dip', filled with the correct strength arsenical mixture designed to kill off any ticks which might be infesting them. They would leap in, sinking head and all beneath the fluid, and then swim to the ramp at the other end, walk out into a concrete draining pen where the fluid would drain off their bodies and run back into the dip. In the meantime, those sorted into other pens for various reasons would be dealt with. The chief trouble generally was caused by wounds infected by maggots. The animal would be driven into what is known as a 'crush pen', held there by a specially made swinging side to the pen whilst the wound was doctored. Generally, the wound was cleansed of worms and blood by means of a wooden spatula, disinfected and then a large splash of Stockholm tar (*made from resinous pinewood and used in shipbuilding*) would be added to keep flies away. The whole operation took only a minute or two and then the beast would be set free and another would follow in its place. We averaged at least two paddocks per day.

In winter, when dipping was fortnightly and we had more time, the young stock would be dehorned and young bull calves castrated by means of Burdizzos, an instrument which severed the cord to the testicals without cutting the skin of the scrotum. Heifers were sometimes spayed to turn them into Queen cows. This meant severing the Fallopian tubes. Access was obtained by penetrating the body through a cut made four fingers below the backbone and four fingers from the last rib. The hand was inserted and the tubes severed by the fingers. I was shown how to do this but never had occasion to do it, fortunately.

The Umzingwani River ran through the ranch and a couple of Africans were permitted by Brent to net fish in the deep pools in return for supplying the homestead with all the fish needed. The balance they dried and sold to shopkeepers in the nearby mining village of Filabusi. I lived in my hut and had meals with the Brents. These consisted of a slice

of bread and jam and a cup of coffee before dawn, fried eggs, fish and tea prepared by a cook at about 9am, at whichever dip we happened to be using that day, and fish or venison (which I had shot), mealie meal porridge and vegetables at the evening meal taken with Mr. and Mrs. Brent.

Mrs. Brent, a woman of about 45, appeared to me to be subject to emotional storms occasionally, when she would grab a whip and drive her husband out of the house. He would then sleep in his office, a detached room which, I had noticed, contained a bed. On those occasions, I would disappear as quickly as I could and spend an hour or two with John Haslam who lived some distance from the homestead.

Periodically, usually on the first Saturday and Sunday of the month, most residents of the district went into Balla Balla, played tennis on the hotel courts, danced and slept at the hotel that evening, and played tennis again on the Sunday. In this way, everyone met everyone else and these weekends were the highlight of our life. Whilst I was on Glass Block Ranch, Derick Homan, the son of one of the Lonrho directors, arrived from England and taught us to Charleston. He was a sensation.

At Balla Balla, there was a family with three daughters and these girls, all extremely attractive, were very much in demand. John Haslam prevailed upon Mrs. Brent to invite them to Glass Block for a week and when they accepted we were thrilled. They duly arrived and were installed in the guest hut and we had a very gay evening, playing our gramophone and dancing and Mrs. Brent produced a very pleasant meal. Next morning, John Haslam and I went off to work before the girls were up and, to our great disappointment, when we arrived back in the evening we found they had gone, the youngest girl – the one I fancied! – saying she had suddenly become very ill. It was not until sometime later that we discovered that the reason for their sudden departure was that the guest hut was infested by bugs and they had not been able to sleep. John Haslam took this very much to heart and it was a long time before he got over it.

Manager Brent took a liking to me and, when another young man arrived as a second assistant, he frequently asked me to remain at the homestead and assist him with the various chores around headquarters. Much of this consisted of metalwork such as fabricating gate hinges and other metal parts for stockyards and buildings. I liked this work and, ever since then, I have preferred working with metal to carpentry, at which I am useless.

One of my jobs was to look after a beautiful Devon bull named Highfield Gem. He had been imported from England at a cost of £1000, a fantastic price in those days (*about US\$72 000 at today's values*). There were a number of pedigree Devon cows and Highfield Gem, who slept in a special stall and was groomed every day, had to be taken to these cows each day, an operation much more difficult than it sounds because he was extremely vicious and much preferred goring humans to making love. Soon after I left Glass Block, the assistant who took my place put Highfield Gem into a paddock abutting onto the Umzingwane River, although we had been warned not to do this, and the expensive bull fell over one of the high banks of the river and broke his neck.

After I had been at Glass Block Ranch for about six months, I was suddenly transferred to Blackwater Ranch at Insiza, on the main line from Bulawayo to Salisbury. Viljoen, the Section Manager at Blackwater Ranch, which was a section of Lockhard Ranch, had punched a hole into a four gallon tin of arsenical dipping fluid in the usual way, to pour out the fluid but, unfortunately, the tin had been standing in the hot midday sun and pressure

had built up within it. When he punctured it, the fluid squirted out into his face and both his eyes. He was rushed to Bulawayo hospital and then to Johannesburg, where the specialists managed to save one eye but he lost the other. It was when this accident happened that I was transferred to Blackwater Ranch to carry on for him in his absence. His wife and children, his mother-in-law and an European nurse girl remained on the ranch and I was given a room in the house. I spent most of my off time in the office and at White's Hotel which was a few hundred yards away at Insiza siding.

Mr. and Mrs. White, who owned the hotel, were extremely kind to me and encouraged me to visit them and have meals with them, for which they refused payment. It was at the hotel one day, when we related to a traveller the details of Viljoen's accident that this stranger said: 'If only he had immediately washed his eyes with milk, he would have saved them both!'. This advice was to stand me in good stead some months later.

I had not been long at Blackwater when a car load of young people pitched up and introduced themselves as neighbours from Shangani named Gouch, two girls and their brother. With them were friends from Bulawayo, the two young Capstick girls, later to become well known hockey players. They invited me to their home and, at the weekend, I rode over to their farm. From then on, I spent several very pleasant weekends with them. We sang and danced – several of the girls played the piano – and swam in 'Bland's' Dam; went to Sunday services at Stuart's Shangani Ranch, where I saw the first Aberdeen Angus cattle in the country.

Blackwater Ranch was connected to the Headquarters ranch, Lockhard, by private telephone and every day, at a given hour, I had to ring my Manager, Horace Taylor. Further north, on the Shangani River but about 20 miles downstream from Shangani Station was another section of the Lockhard complex named Ruby Ranch and this had, as Section Manager, a young bachelor named Stedall.

Lockhard Ranch ran breeding stock where Herefords were being crossed with Afrikanders; Blackwater Ranch was really the agricultural section where maize for the three ranches was grown and a few breeding stock were held; and Ruby Ranch, newly acquired, was to be the holding ground for young stock and Stedall was busy fencing the top end of it. When Viljoen eventually returned from Johannesburg, it was decided to send me to Ruby Ranch, to the bottom end of it about 40 miles downstream from Shangani Station. Our nearest siding and store was at Daisyfield, about 35 miles from my section and about 15 miles from Stedall's homestead. At my earnest request, I was allowed to take the two Blackwater Ranch horses with me and I trekked about 300 head of young stock, which had arrived from Lockhard, through to Ruby Ranch.

I must confess that I was a little taken aback upon arrival with Stedall at what was to be my home from then on. It consisted of a large thatched hut without a door and another hut with padlocked door in which maize, dip and other goods were stored. Nearby was a shelter, still being built and also thatched, for the horses. About 400 yards away, on the bank of a stream, was a newly built dipping tank and the beginning of some stockyards. The stream was my water supply from which my cook-boy would carry water in four gallon tins. No provision was made for cooking or hot water but Stedall said I could build another hut as a kitchen and he could let me have a small second-hand Dover stove. I might be able to buy a tin bath at Botha's store at Daisyfield next time we went there and in the meantime I could wash in the stream!

He gave me a plan of this section of the ranch, which was roughly rectangular, and on the plan he marked out 1000 acre paddocks and said my first job was to build these paddocks and complete the stockyards; at least two paddocks and the stockyards must be ready to receive 600 head of young stock by the end of the month. Then, after introducing me to the 50 or so African labourers who were to work for me, he invited me to spend the weekend with him and departed.

There I was, 20 miles from the nearest white man, Stedall, 35 miles from the nearest store, not much in the way of food and having been told that I would have nothing to fear from the lions which I would hear, as they normally kept to the southern bank of the Shangani.

Stedall had left me a .303 rifle and a few rounds of ammunition, instructing me that I must shoot one big buck, Kudu, Waterbuck or Sable each week for the labourers which, with salt and mealie meal, was their ration. Actually, on this ration, they were very much better fed than Africans in the neighbouring Tribal Reserves and we had no shortage of labour.

The morning after I arrived, I mounted Ginger and rode over the area to be fenced and I found the place teeming with game and, indeed, later they were a great nuisance, damaging fences frequently. On my way home I shot a steenbok and I found that my African servant was a really excellent cook, having been trained by a lady in Gwelo.

Now I felt really grateful to Mr. Brent, who had taught me how to fence and build stockyards, especially when, two days later, a wagon arrived piled high with barbed wire, tools and other necessities. One thing Brent had not taught me was how I was to make a straight line from point A to point B through two to three miles of thick bush and broken country. Not wishing to show my ignorance, I took my gang to the two points and said: 'Now which end shall we begin?'. 'Oh!', said their spokesman, 'we will leave four people here to make the fire and we will return to the other end.' I knew they had been fencing for months so I kept my mouth shut and returned with them. I understood the plan when I saw a column of smoke in the distance and my gang cut saplings for me to mark the line to the distant fire. That weekend, I was able to tell my section manager that everything was in order and I hoped to finish my task by the month end. I was obviously being tested because, from then on, I received far more assistance and encouragement and Stedall and I became extremely good friends, spending every weekend together.

About the second or third time that I rode the 20 miles to headquarters, I suddenly felt my horse become tense and nervous and, glancing back, I saw four or five wild dogs trailing us. As we crossed the next vlei, I saw that on either side of us numbers of the pack were keeping pace with me. It was an unnerving experience and I have never got over my feeling of abhorrence for these relentless killers. I had no experience of wild dogs and my instinct was to gallop madly away but I was afraid to do so in case they then closed in for the kill. I was an extremely relieved young boy when, about two miles from the homestead, they quietly disappeared.

Stedall decided that in future I should use our mule cart. This was a beautiful four-wheeler with two of the largest and most tireless mules I have ever seen. Every Friday evening, the car would arrive with supplies and on Saturday afternoon I would drive to headquarters in it, leaving the driver at my section. On the Sunday, very often Stedall and I would drive into Daisyfield and visit the Botha's, who ran the only local store at the siding. There were two Botha teenage girls and they, of course, were the attraction! On

the Sunday afternoon I would drive back to my section and the carriage would return to headquarters on Monday.

Whilst on Ruby Ranch, I shot every week for the labourers and it was understood that ammunition, supplied by the Company, was not to be wasted; in consequence, I got into the habit of making quite sure of my buck before firing. On one occasion, when I did not do this, I had an interesting experience.

I was riding along a fence on my way home with four Africans following me. As we came to a vlei, we saw a very large kudu bull crossing it about 200 yards away. The Africans begged me to shoot it and I refused but eventually, just as it was disappearing into the Mopani trees, I took a snap shot from my horse's back. We hastened to the edge of the vlei and there was my kudu, quite dead. The Africans turned him over a couple of times, exclaiming loudly, and we examined him carefully for the bullet hole but there was no sign of it. The mystery was solved when they commenced to skin him. The bullet had gone into his head through one ear cavity and out the other side, through the other ear, damaging neither ear.

One day I was riding along and suddenly I saw a pack of wild dogs near a small, rocky hill. I happened to have my rifle and I fired and killed one, expecting the others to disappear but, to my surprise, they moved a little way and then stopped and it was not until I had killed three that they moved off. I shouted to the African beaters who were fairly close and when they arrived we investigated the reason for the unusual behavior of the pack and, sure enough, in the kopje we found a large litter of pups. At that time, Government were paying a bounty of 10/- a head for wild dogs killed, as they were classed as vermin. I was very pleased with my day's haul. (*The Painted Dog is now very much a specially protected animal.*)

1927

Towards the end of 1927, I took two week's leave which I spent in Penhalonga and when it was time to return to the ranch, I persuaded my mother to let me have her car. This she was quite relieved to do because she couldn't drive and had to ask other people to drive her anywhere she wished to go and then found it difficult to refuse when those people asked to borrow the car. As is usual in these circumstances, repairs were frequently required at considerable cost. So I returned to Ruby Ranch by car and, from then on, Stedall and I visited the shop-keeper's daughters in great style!

One day, galloping after some wild young steers which had bolted back when being rounded up, my horse put its foot in an ant-bear hole and came down, pitching me onto my face. I lay unconscious for a considerable time. When I recovered, my horse, fortunately, was grazing a little distance away and I mounted and rode home feeling terrible, which feeling was not improved when I gazed at myself in the mirror. I must have slid along on my face because little skin was left on it, as I discovered when I had bathed the blood off it. I called my cook-boy and instructed him to get a couple of others to hold me down whilst he dabbed my face with cotton wool soaked in iodine. They took me at my word and, although I screamed at them to let me go, they held me until he completed the job. The pain was unbelievable.

Within a couple of days, my face was mostly scab but, fortunately, dry and clean. To my horror, before the scab had time to peel off, I was instructed by our Manager, Horace

Taylor, to report to Lockhard Ranch to help him rail 600 steers to the Congo and to assist in managing the ranch whilst he entertained a visiting delegation of farmers from Britain. The 600 steers, fat four year olds, going a minimum of 1000 lbs live weight, were sold to a well-known buyer, Bongola Smith, for railing to the Congo and the price was £6 each on rail! We thought this a good price!

To provide lunch for the visiting farmers and the various government officials and other hangers-on, I was delegated to shoot a couple of small buck, preferably impala or reedbuck and three pou (bustards) which I did and which Mrs Taylor cooked to perfection. All the Rhodesians discreetly referred to the pou as 'turkey', pou then being Royal Game!

At this time I was being paid the magnificent salary of £15 per month, (*about US\$1100 today*) with free quarters (hut), free servant, milk and mealie meal! I applied for an increase and, although this was recommended by Horace Taylor, Digby Burnett replied that I was the highest paid assistant on the Lonrho ranches and that my next step would be Section Manager at £25 per month, when such a vacancy occurred. Horace Taylor drew £35 per month and he was responsible for the three ranches, holding close on 20 000 head of cattle.

In the meantime, my mother, still hankering after security for her one and only, had approached the local M.P. Charles Eickhoff, an old friend, and he had spoken to Mr. Leggate, the then 'Colonial Secretary' later known as 'bob-a-day Leggate' because during the 1930 depression he publicly stated that a shilling a day was sufficient for the European out-of-works to live on.

1928

On the 19th March, 1928, the post bag arrived with two letters for me. One from Mr. A.C. Soffe, who had now become Managing Director of Meikles (Umtali) Ltd, and one from the Colonial Secretary's Office, with a covering note from Mr. Eickhoff. Mr. Soffe asked me whether I would like to come back to Meikles and the Government letter offered me a post as Interpreter in District Courts on a three months trial basis at £240 per annum. By this time, I could speak Sindebele fairly fluently, having worked with the Ndebele for over a year, so I filled in the Government application forms and was duly instructed to report to the Chief Magistrate, Salisbury, on 1st May, 1928.

A COURT INTERPRETER

1928

I travelled to Salisbury by car and a friend, Robert Palmer, obtained a room for me in the well-known private hotel, Jameson House, in Jameson Avenue, run by Mrs. Morgenrood. On the morning of the 1st May, 1928, aged 19 years and three months, I reported to the Chief Magistrate, J.P.L. ('Japie') de Smidt, and was duly handed over to Mr. Chris Maritz, the Chief Interpreter and Clerk of Court.

Chris Maritz, a fluent Sindebele linguist and with an excellent knowledge of Chishona and Chinyanja, tested me and although he was not impressed with my Sindebele, passed me on the strength of my Shona, never failing to be delighted by my Chimanyika dialect which, for some reason, amused him.

So I settled down to a completely different life, learning the procedure and niceties of Court work and having to type the proceedings of all preparatory examinations which Chris

Maritz felt were too crude to be typed by our lady typists. Chris Maritz took me under his wing and I grew to have a great affection for him. Apart from my Chimanyika dialect, another thing which never failed to cheer him up was my Charlestoning! When he felt depressed, he would say 'Do the Charleston, Jackie' and would go into peals of laughter at my antics. At that time the fashion was to have very, very wide trouser legs and tight 'bum-freezer' sports jackets and, to Maritz, the sight of my five feet six inches energetically Charlestoning in my flowing trousers and tight jacket was hilarious.

Japie de Smidt, a widower who had a suite at Meikles Hotel, (his youngest son, then at school, later became Director of State Lotteries), was a wonderful man and a marvellous magistrate, not learned in law but with a wealth of experience and understanding. He owned a Dodge Tourer car, very heavy and comfortable on the road, and this he insisted that I drive whenever I accompanied him to the Periodical Courts held at Beatrice and Darwendale twice each month. Meikles Hotel would pack a lunch basket for two, with beer for 'Japie' and stone ginger beer for me and, after court, we would find a suitable tree, have lunch and then snooze gently for an hour or so.

The Assistant Magistrate was, at that time, a middle-aged, quick tempered Scotsman called Archibald. He had a patriotic liking for his national drink and would nip across to the Posada Bar during the court tea break, for a reviver, coming back even redder faced than before. When Archibald was not on the bench, his tea break was a standing joke in the office. Practically every time the office messenger took his tea tray to him, he'd ring for the messenger and dress him down for serving such terrible tea. The trouble was, of course, that his taste buds were saturated with alcohol.

Archibald was unpopular with most of the attorneys; not because he was not an able magistrate, strangely enough he was very efficient, but because of his irascible manner. Soon after I arrived in Salisbury, I was in court one day when a well-known attorney, who shall be nameless, and Archibald had a frightful row. The attorney eventually said: 'I'll report you to the Attorney General, Your Worship', and Archibald, in his broad Scots accent said: 'Mr. So-and-so, I'll r-r-report ye to the La-r-r Society'.

When Archibald had had a couple at the Posada Bar, it seemed to affect his hearing and one had to raise one's voice. This did not endear him to the attorneys whose train of thought during an address would frequently be interrupted by Archie putting his hand to his ear and saying: 'Speak up, please'.

There were two pretty but very naughty coloured girls, Sarah Davis and Dorothy Goss, who were frequently being brought to court on charges of being drunk and disorderly or assault. At that time, the town Police Station was in Baker Avenue, in the building now occupied by Internal Affairs, with police single quarters upstairs and the lock-up cells across the courtyard behind.

One day Sarah Davis was in court, charged with being drunk in public. Several times during the trial, Archibald told her to speak up as he couldn't hear her. At last he turned to the prosecutor and said: 'Mr. Prosecutor, is the accused in her sound and sober senses?' the Prosecutor said: 'Oh yes, Your Worship'. 'Well,' said Archie, 'she doesn't look well to me.' Sarah then shouted at the top of her voice: 'Nor would you be, neither, My Worship, if you'd had the whole police force last night'.

Apparently, Sarah very drunk, shouted and screamed for hours in the cells after being locked up at about midnight. Then she started beating on the door with her bedboard until

at last one young policeman couldn't stand it any longer and went down to remonstrate with her. She was a very pretty, light-coloured girl and temptation was too great when he received an invitation. It seems that several others also visited the cell and Sarah was kept pretty busy until morning.

My job was Relieving Interpreter and when the Interpreter and Clerk of Court of any town took leave, I was sent to take his place. Each time, I would return to Salisbury until another official had to be relieved. Some years later, when I was in Salisbury and living in MacGilton's Mess, (more about which later), several of us were doing our usual window shopping one evening, when Sarah Davis and Dorothy Goss came strolling down First Street, obviously looking for custom. To my horror, they spotted me with my friends and, at the top of her voice, Sarah shouted: 'Hey Dorothy, look man, there's that little bugger what works in the Court, man,' and both of them went into peals of laughter. I didn't live that one down for a long time and was known in the Mess as 'that little bugger wot works in the Court'.

Whilst I was still at Jameson House, I became friendly with an elderly lady named Mrs. Hamlin whose daughter, Dee, had frequently spent holidays with Thelma Strickland on Inodzi Farm, Penhalonga. Also at Jameson House at that time, I think because his wife had gone to England, was Mr. H.G. Bell, the jeweller in First Street, with whom I struck up a friendship lasting until his death many years later.

My old friend, Hereward Cripps, now stationed in the Native Department at Salisbury, suggested that I share a room with him in a house in Rhodes Avenue owned by Mr. Will Cooper of Messrs Meikles (Sby) Ltd. Hereward and I and a young man named Green boarded with the Coopers and Mrs. Cooper, who was a most magnificent cook, fed us so well that we all gained weight in a very short time. Hereward, keen on amateur theatricals, was taking part in the Pirates of Penzance at the time and, as a result, whenever I hear this music I am reminded of those days.

Fife House, a large private hotel in Fife Avenue, was operated by a Mrs. Burnett who had two daughters, Isobel, still at school, and Janet, a lovely girl very much sought after by all the young men. Hereward invited Janet to go to the weekly Saturday night dance at the Grand Hotel in First Street. On the Saturday evening, Hereward presented himself at Fife House and, to her amazement, walked Janet to the Grand Hotel, a distance of about a mile. When he made her walk home after the dance, his prospects of ever again taking out the popular Janet were non-existent!

Whilst at Coopers, we met our neighbours across Rhodes Avenue, the MacGiltons. Mrs. MacGilton and her two sons, Horace and Harold, lived in a large house and Mrs. MacGilton took in other young men as boarders. When Will Cooper was offered a very good position in Meikles (Umtali) Ltd and accepted it, Green and I moved across the way to MacGiltons and Hereward decided to share a room elsewhere with a friend, Frank McCabe.

Harold MacGilton played the piano brilliantly, Green played a clarinet indifferently and I had a yukelele which I had bought and taught myself to play, also indifferently, when I was ranching. Another young man, whose name now escapes me but who worked in the Customs Department, played the violin rather well and so we proceeded to form ourselves into an amateur dance band and found ourselves in demand at such dubious spots as the Ardbennie Hotel, just outside Salisbury, where all the bar-maids, (much in vogue at the time), and their escorts congregated after the bars in town had closed.

1929

At the beginning of 1929 I was transferred to relieve George King, the Clerk of Court and Interpreter, Umtali. Whilst I was still in Salisbury, Leslie (Knockie) Ade, the Clerk of the Civil Court and Acting Assistant Magistrate, had persuaded me to study law and lent me all the necessary books. Incidentally at that time District Courts, Salisbury, was operated with only three magistrates, de Smidt, Archibald and Knockie Ade!

Soon after starting in Salisbury, in May 1938, I had damaged my mother's car very badly when I hit a cow on the road near Marandellas one night, when a party of us were returning from a weekend in Umtali. Repairs cost the staggering, (to me), amount of £60 and I returned the car to my mother and she very wisely sold it.

On arrival in Umtali, I had expected to live in Penhalonga and commute each day to Umtali in my mother's car. When I found that the car was no longer available, I bought a new two-stroke motor cycle from the Umtali Taxi Company for £45. This I soon found to be underpowered for the daily trip over Christmas Pass on the rough road and the salesman, Algie Langham, persuaded me to buy a 3½ h.p., twin-port, incline cylinder, BSA motor cycle, the first imported into Rhodesia. This was a magnificent machine and cost £105, a very high price for a motor cycle in those days. However, Algy traded in my two-stroke as the deposit and I signed a hire-purchase agreement, guaranteed by my mother, for the balance.

Algy Langham was a wonderful salesman and a great wag. At that time, he lived at the Umtali Club, the upstairs verandah of which overhung the Main Street pavement. A certain man named Kirk, an alcoholic who had driven his family into the 'black-stocking' religious sect by his perpetual carousals, tottered home up Main Street every night after the bars had closed. Algy, at great pains, made a life-like effigy and suspended it over the pavement from the Club balcony. Kirk's fright and horror when he bumped into this 'dead body' sobered him completely and, so it is said, put him on the water wagon for life.

On another occasion, at the same hotel, one evening at "Time, Gentlemen, please", Algy, O.T. Baker (his boss and Mayor of Umtali), Jackie Deere and one or two others left the bar and observed, parked on the pavement outside, a baby's pram. It was one of those magnificent jobs, suspended on large parallel springs. The temptation was great and soon our inebriated friends were giving each other rides in the pram. When they had O.T. Baker, the Mayor, in the pram, into which he could just fit his behind with legs and arms flapping over the sides, they quickly whipped the pram off the pavement, pointed it down steep Victory Avenue and gave it a hearty push. Off careered the Mayor, legs and arms waving frantically and shouting at the top of his voice: 'Stop the b.... thing, you silly bastards'. He ended up, tipped into the gutter, halfway down Victory Avenue.

1929

When I arrived in Umtali in 1929, there had just been committed Umtali's first European murder, known as the 'Park Murder', which had set the town agog. The facts are these: a travelling salesman, Job Winter, representing a British fountain pen firm, had persuaded a middle-aged spinster working at Messrs Meikles sweet counter to accompany him one evening, after dinner, for a stroll in the Park. In the park, completely unlighted in those days, the two sat on a bench and, some considerable time later, Job Winter staggered into town with a large wound on his head and reported that they had been attacked. The lady was

found in the Park, stabbed to death. No murder weapon was found, Job Winter was arrested and a Preliminary Examination on a charge of murder was opened. Insufficient evidence led to the Attorney General declining to prosecute but the preparatory examination, while it lasted, created tremendous excitement. The Solicitor General came down from Salisbury to prosecute and a local solicitor briefed a Salisbury barrister for the defence. The court was packed with all the local populace.

The Kings Arms Hotel, situated at the bottom end of Main Street and now demolished, was run by a man named O'Mahoney who had two very flashy and, it is said, accommodating daughters. One of these girls was in the park at the time of the murder with a man she had met that evening. She was called as a witness and, thoroughly enjoying the publicity, responded quite frankly to questions. When being cross-examined by the defence counsel she was asked: 'Are you in the habit of going into this dark park with men?' 'Oh, yes', she said. 'Men you have only just met?' 'Oh, yes'. 'Really', said counsel dubiously. "Can you tell me how often and when you last went into the park?" 'Oh', said the girl, 'frequently; whenever anyone asks me. Last time was with Mr. X and the week before with Mr. Z', naming two prominent married citizens of the town!

At a periodical court at Penhalonga, my old friend Sergeant Percy Hawden, M.M, the same policeman who had suggested that I leave Penhalonga some years previously, (*see page 85 of Heritage, 29*) and the best Police prosecutor I have ever known, was prosecuting a man with a really bad record on a charge of housebreaking and theft. A witness had made a statement but, when Percy led this evidence in court, the witness denied having made it. Percy then applied to the Court to treat the witness as a 'hostile witness' and proceeded with his examination. When asked why he was now changing his story, the witness said 'Because you put my hands in the iron and screwed it down'. I realized that Percy or one of his underlings had evidently resorted to the use of a letter-press to extract the truth from a witness. This, particularly by Magistrate Chataway, would be regarded as a heinous action and Percy visibly paled as he waited for the words which could possibly end his unblemished career. I turned to the Magistrate and said: 'Because you handcuffed me'. N.H. Chataway looked at me over the top of his glasses and said 'Mr. Interpreter, didn't the witness say something about 'simbi'? I said: 'Yes, Your Worship, he did say his hands were put in a simbi; simbi being the well-known word for handcuffs'. Chataway took a long look at me and then for some reason let the matter drop.

Years later, when I was given my first appointment as an Acting Assistant Magistrate at Concession, Percy Hawden was the prosecutor. For most young magistrates, the first time on the Bench is an unnerving experience, no matter how good his training, but when the time came for me to take my first case, Percy said to me: 'Jack, just relax. Record what I lead and I promise I'll not let you down by leading irrelevant or inadmissible evidence'. Knowing Percy and knowing that his many, many years of prosecuting had given him a wealth of experience, gave me just that little extra confidence which saw me through that first day and enabled me to enjoy my judicial work and perhaps accounts for the fact that, in 14 years on the Bench, I did not have one criminal case upset on review or appeal.

After six months in Umtali I was transferred back to Salisbury, again living in the MacGilton mess.

The African High Court Interpreter, Johnnie, when not employed in the High Court, interpreted in the Magistrates Courts, half his salary being paid from District Courts' votes.

Johnnie was a well-known character throughout Rhodesia, interpreting in the various towns where the High Court sat. His English was excellent but he said to me one day: 'Please teach me to understand idioms and colloquial speech'. Maritz and I would try to explain to him various expressions and Johnnie's essays into idiomatic speech created some hilarious situations in the solemn atmosphere of the High Court. On one such occasion in Gwelo, a witness was asked what means he had and replied to Johnnie that he was a poor man without any property or money. Johnnie turned to the Bench and said 'My Lord, the witness says he hasn't any beans'!

During my service in Salisbury I was required to interpret in the High Court in place of Johnnie when white women were involved in sexual cases and here I met all the judges and many of the Native Commissioners of those times, who were assessors in these cases; men like Howman, Morris, Wiri Edwards, Benzies and many others: great men, gentlemen and dedicated administrators.

1929

In 1929 I sat and, to my surprise, passed Part 1 of the Civil Service Law Examination and my friend Knockie Ade insisted that I should continue to study for the second and final part and again lent me most of the necessary books.

In October 1929, I found myself on the way to Gwanda to relieve the Clerk of Court and Interpreter there. Upon changing trains in Bulawayo to the twice weekly West Nicholson passenger train, I shared a compartment with Paul Romyn who was bound for Gwanda to take up his appointment as Acting Assistant Magistrate. Paul suggested that I share his house at Gwanda – the Assistant Magistrate's quarters, unfurnished except for two wardrobes, a dining room table and chairs and three beds. We bought a few odds and ends and camped in this house, eating at the Mount Cazelet Hotel. Paul, a pilot in the First World War, was an alcoholic but a really charming person. Nearly every night he would stay on at the hotel and come home only after the bar closed. I would hear him come in, start my gramophone and just leave it to run itself to a standstill. When all was quiet, I would get out of bed and go into his room to cover him up for invariably he would be quite naked except for his shoes. The extraordinary thing is that he would have taken off his shoes and socks and then put on his shoes again and tied the laces. The Magistrate and Civil Commissioner, Deanne-Simmonds, must have been extremely understanding and lenient because Paul was often in no condition to carry out his duties. When he had to take court, in the absence of Deanne-Simmonds, I stood back so that the prosecutor and any witnesses sitting in court couldn't see me and nodded if he should convict and shook my head if he should acquit!

Eventually, I found that I could not study under the conditions at Paul's house and I left and joined the Native Department mess, the other members of which were Dudley Jeffreys and Douglas Norval. Across the way from us was the Assistant Native Commissioner's house, Gwanda being at that time an ANC station. Here lived an ANC who was later to become Chief Native Commissioner, and we were kept extremely interested by the wife swappings which went on with his Dip Supervisor, who shall also be nameless!

The Mount Cazelet Hotel was run by the Shapiro family, assisted by Solly Aronowitz who later lived in Que-Que. Solly's expertise with dice was amazing: he could drop the dice, one at a time, from the box and pick them up again, one at a time. I tried for hours to emulate him, without success.

The Shapiros had an extremely attractive daughter, Gertie. One evening, at a dance at the hotel, Gertie and I sat out in a car and when I told her how I loved her passionate kisses, she replied: 'Well, I never do anything by halves'. I was too naïve to understand but I learned later Paul Romyn was not!

A couple of miles out of Gwanda, on the West Nicholson road lived a young couple, Otto Nilson and his wife, with whom we became very friendly. On Christmas Eve, we called for the Nilsons to go on to some party and Douglas Norval went to put out the petrol pressure lamp in their sitting room. It exploded, burning him very severely and we had to rush him to hospital.

1930

In January, 1930, I returned to Salisbury and found that Maritz, the Senior Interpreter, was proceeding on leave. As no replacement was available, for five months I had to do all the Clerk of Court and interpreting work, assisted in the latter by Johnnie when he was not required in the High Court. I found that on most days it was necessary to return after supper and work until nearly midnight and, on several occasions, I worked right through the night. Upon Maritz's return, I applied for an overtime or responsibility allowance, detailing the extra hours I had worked, but was told by the Public Services Board that, as Senior Interpreters were not included in the schedule of officers the relief of whom qualified one for a responsibility allowance, and as there was no provision for payment of overtime, it was regretted no payment could be made to me.

Upon Maritz's return, I felt that due to the hectic life in Gwanda and my long hours of overtime upon my return to Salisbury, my studying for my final law examination had been sadly neglected so I applied for six weeks leave and returned to Penhalonga to do some intensive swotting.

My old friend John Crawford had returned to Penhalonga, John Stokes was still there and a newcomer on the mine, John Gayer, turned out to be about as wild as we were. John Stokes had acquired a motorcycle and the four of us were soon known as 'the four Johns', spending most evenings pub-crawling and whooping it up. For the first time, I began drinking whiskey and found that I had an extraordinary ability to hold my drinks. It was probably fortunate for us that there was little traffic on the roads in those days because we roared about, two to a motorcycle, never ending our carousals until the bars closed. Most of our drinking was done at the Penhalonga hotel, or Pop's Pub, as we called it. Pop Marnie had married Doris Sharples and Doris' father had bought the Penhalonga Hotel and presented it to them. Here I learnt to hold my drinks. We had great fun at the various pubs in Umtali and were always welcomed warmly by the barmaids because, in spite of our high spirits and hilarity, we created no trouble nor were we rude to anyone, and never failed to make love to the barmaid!

My law studies were conducted during the day but I found myself falling asleep most days after an hour or two. Finally the dreaded day arrived and I sat the examination in the Umtali Drill Hall with several others, among whom was Tommy Goddard, at that time clerk in the Veterinary Department. After each paper, Tommy would compare notes with me and each time would convince me that I had flunked badly. When the results were announced some time later, I had passed and Tommy had failed!

On return to Salisbury, I bought a side-car for my motorcycle and at Rhodes and

Founders holiday weekend Harold McGilton and I decided to travel to Penhalonga, taking with us my current girlfriend. The side-car proved to be a liability and we limped as far as Marandellas, where we shed my girlfriend who decided to continue the journey by train. Late that evening, in pouring rain, we arrived at Inyazura Hotel, then run by Capt. R.T.G. Perkins, known throughout Rhodesia as 'Perky'. Although the hotel was full, characteristically Perky dosed us down in the lounge with a couple of blankets each and pillows and cushions for mattresses. The next morning we struggled on to Penhalonga where I discarded the side-car which, by this time, I disliked intensely.

Back in Salisbury, one Sunday we were at Mermaids Pool, (where the three of us frequently spent the day, all travelling on my motorcycle, the girl on the petrol tank in front of me and Harold on the pillion seat), when Sybil Thorndike, her daughter and a large party spent the day there. She was at that time appearing in a series of Shakespearian plays in Salisbury. I remember how attractive we thought her daughter, then about 17 years of age and, most of all, how beautiful Sybil Thorndike's voice sounded across the pool as she talked to her companions.

1930

Late in 1930, I was transferred to Gatooma. I travelled by rail with my motorcycle in the Guards van, as I was uncertain of the road from Salisbury to Gatooma, and on the station in Salisbury Rubidge Stumbles, a solicitor I knew quite well and later Speaker of the House, introduced me to his brother, Charles Washington, who was proceeding to Gatooma as Acting Assistant Magistrate. Rubidge asked me to keep an eye on Charles as he had had a long and serious illness.

At Gatooma I met W.A. Brooks, the Resident Magistrate, whose son, Gordon had taught me rugby at Umtali High School and for whom I developed a very great regard. Also in



Jack and Harold McGilton in swimming costumes at Mermaids' Pool

the office, doing the Civil Commissioners clerical work was A.M. Bruce-Brand, whose friendship I still enjoy, and a young man named Harwood-Nash.

My office was separated from the main Civil Commissioner and Magistrate building and attached to the Native Affairs Department Offices. The day after I started my duties, I returned to my office from Court to find a very tall and distinguished looking man calmly reading the contents of my 'in' basket. Furious, I asked him what the hell he thought he was doing. He said calmly: 'I'm Yardley, how do you do'. I replied: 'I don't care if you're King George, you have no right to read my correspondence, so get out of my office!'. He laughed and explained that he was the Assistant Native Commissioner, (Gatooma was an ANC station) and that his office was next to mine. We later became very friendly and I found him charming, except that he would say: 'Here's to old Campbell' every time he poured a drink at his house. Campbell was the local general dealer and Yardley was well in his debt. This never failed to embarrass me, especially as I knew that Yardley knew that I handled the various demands and summonses issued against him!

Under Yardley in the Native Affairs Department were Tickie Baggott, who later served during the war in Rhodesia House, London and became well known to many Rhodesians, and Louis Beck who, years later, married Ina Bibra and, upon retirement as D.C. Melsester, was ordained into the Church of England.

All of us, except Tickie Baggott who lived at the Grand Hotel, lived at Specks Hotel and this led to a considerable amount of drinking because invariably at about 5.30 pm one of us would feel thirsty and suggest just one drink and after that all our good resolutions would go by the board.

Agnes (the barmaid at the Grand Hotel) was quite a character; fairly pretty except for an enormous chin and with a beautiful figure and very popular with the lads but surprisingly celibate, considering the life she led. One evening some months later, a crowd of us, including Joe Burke the local newspaper owner and editor, a very shy and modest individual of about 30 years of age and still single, were in the Grand bar where there were two large barrels containing sad looking palm trees and someone asked Agnes why she didn't water them more frequently. 'Oh,' she said, 'they only live on virgin's pee; go on Joe, piss on them. You're a cock virgin'.

Occasionally, the very charming and friendly owner of a dress shop in Gatooma, an elderly lady named Mrs. Fitt, would invite some of the young people to drive with her the 97 miles over the rough dirt road to attend any special cinema or other entertainment in Salisbury and to return to Gatooma after the show. This was usually on a Saturday afternoon and evening and we thoroughly enjoyed these trips in spite of invariably having one or two punctures on the road and arriving home just before dawn.

Solly Aronowitz, who I had first met in Gwanda where he assisted at the Mount Cazalet Hotel, now lived in Gatooma and ran a boxing club for school boys. He organized a tournament against a Hartley school team trained by Norman Bibra. This was held in the Grand Hotel, where a ring was erected and I very foolishly agreed to fight Solly in an exhibition three-round bout to liven up the evening. This we certainly did, being full of whiskey and going at it hammer and tongs. In the newspaper account the next day, the comment on our bout was 'What they lacked in science, they certainly made up for in energy'!

Shortly after I arrived in Gatooma, the Johannesburg Sunday Times bore banner headlines

‘Gatooma, The Most Immoral Town in Rhodesia’. A week or so later, my mother wrote saying ‘I do hope that you had nothing to do with this!’ Actually, what had happened was that a local councillor, having an affair with the barmaid at Specks Hotel, finally set her up in a small house to facilitate their meetings and his wife stormed into a Council meeting asking for the woman to be run out of town and shouting, ‘Do you want Gatooma to be known as the most immoral town in Rhodesia?’

Willie Brooks, the Magistrate and Civil Commissioner, was transferred to Umtali and was replaced by Al Boyton and it was whilst returning with him from periodical court at Makwiro that we witnessed a most unusual incident. As we approached a wide vlei, a pack of wild dogs chasing a duiker crossed the road a couple of hundred yards in front of the car and pulled the buck down just off the road. A few seconds later they scattered as we passed the spot and, to our amazement, hardly a piece of the carcass remained.

From Gatooma I was transferred to Gwelo to relieve A.S. (Frosty) Haslam, the younger brother of my friend John Haslam, of my ranching days. T.C. Fynn was Magistrate and Civil Commissioner, Jack Reynolds Assistant Magistrate and Taffy Evans (now Sir Athol Evans) was the A.A.M and clerk. The surname of our typist, Cath, escapes me but she married Lieut. Garlake of the Police, who later became General Garlake, Commander of Defence Forces.

During the first day I was in Gwelo, I received a note from a girl named Dot Dobson who invited me to join the young people of Gwelo at a party to be held on the balcony of the Midlands Hotel that evening. I was to bring 5/- which each person contributed for drinks (soft) and eats. The party turned out to be much fun and by midnight my partner and I and another couple were the only people dancing. All the others had disappeared into the numerous vacant rooms conveniently left open by the manager, a single man also at the party! At that time the Midlands Hotel, the second largest hotel in Rhodesia and owned by Messrs Meikles, was a complete ‘white elephant’.

There were many interesting characters in Gwelo in those days, including Peter Fleming, the Messenger of the Court, Sonnenberg, a solicitor, the proprietor of the Royal Hotel who wore a wig, and French Marie a famous lady of the pioneer days.

Sonnenberg the solicitor was addicted to the bottle and would stand in Court, gently swaying, shake his finger at the Magistrate and say: ‘It doesn’t shay may, Your Worship, it shays will; its peremsherry, Your Worship’. I liked him and he was hospitable, sometimes inviting several of us to his large house, magnificently sited on a kopje and surrounded by a remarkable collection of aloes, where he lived with a paramour.

I obtained a room in the house of old Mrs. Danziger, a dear old lady and the mother of Max Danziger, a solicitor, later Minister of Finance in the Huggins government.

Next to the Midlands Hotel were some offices with furnished rooms behind and there lived Harry Stevens of the Mines Office, Jack Brereton of the Native Department and Edgar Kenny who, when he qualified, became a partner in the firm of Danziger and Kenny. We all had our meals at a café adjacent to Meikles store. These lads had an African servant they called Jeeves, who served them faithfully and gladly despite the many pranks which were played upon him, particularly by Harry Stevens, one of the most persistent practical jokers I have ever known. I enjoyed Gwelo, associating with these good friends; we hardly ever drank much, except occasionally at the Drill Hall canteen, and our lives were filled with laughter.

Jack Brereton had a very attractive sister with a lovely figure and one night we all went to a dance at Selukwe and she was dressed in a gorgeous white lace dress. During the course of the evening, the shoulder strap of the slip under her dress gave way and, as she didn't need to wear a bra, the nipple of her beautiful firm little bosom poked through the lace dress. When her attention was drawn to it, she wasn't all embarrassed but said: 'Well, it doesn't look too bad, does it?'

1931

My mother, now not very well, had given up the Rezende Mine boarding house and was living with her sister, Emily Blatch, in Umtali. Early in 1931, I received an urgent message to hasten to her bedside at Umtali and through the good offices of our friend Robert Palmer who held a senior position in the Rhodesia Railways head office, a goods train was held back at Salisbury for an hour or so to enable me to catch it on my arrival on another goods train from Gwelo. When I arrived in Umtali, I found that Dr Alexander of Penhalonga had obtained a bed for my mother in the nursing home at the top end of Main Street where she was being tenderly nursed by an old friend and great character, Sister du Plessis. I was grateful that I had been able to hasten to her because she died quite peacefully the next day, pleased to have me by her side. She died as she had lived, a great lady, sincerely loved by everyone who knew her. It was only after I had lost her that I really appreciated what a wonderful person and mother she had been and I deeply regretted having always taken her so much for granted, having imposed upon her and having given her less affection than she deserved.

1931

Back in Gwelo, I decided that as I had applied for a transfer to clerical grade in the Native Affairs Department and although I had been turned down, it might help if I passed the Native Language examination, one of the necessary qualifications for promotion in that Department. I entered my name for the examination to be held in Salisbury, didn't bother to swot, considering myself sufficient of a linguist to pass the examination easily, got myself thoroughly tight at the Drill Hall while waiting for the midnight train, had to be poured into the compartment by my inebriated friends and arrived at Salisbury station at six a.m. with the granddaddy of all hangovers.

A girlfriend from Gatooma was now a probationer nurse in Salisbury General Hospital, so I took a taxi to the Nurse's Home to lay my aching head on her shoulder. She doctored me and by 10 a.m. I presented myself at the examination hall having booked in at a hotel, bathed, shaved and breakfasted, but still feeling extremely fragile.

The first paper was the grammar paper and the first question was: 'Give the plu-perfect of the verb 'to take' in Shona'. My answer to that was: 'I don't know the plu-perfect of the verb 'to take' in English!' I struggled through the paper somehow, hardly knowing what the examiners were talking about and not really caring, I felt so bad. The translation paper that afternoon I managed fairly satisfactorily and then had to wait until the next morning for the oral examination.

A few weeks later the Gazette printed the names of the successful candidates and mine was last on the list. Some years later, at Gutu where he farmed upon retirement, I met Mr. Morris and he told me that my grammar paper was the worst that he had ever seen;

not passed but seen! I asked him why they had passed me and he said: ‘Jack, Wiri and I would have looked a couple of fools if we had failed you after Maritz had passed you as an interpreter’.

When Frosty Haslam returned from leave I was moved again to Salisbury and I now began a campaign to get the transfer I wanted to clerical grade. Every Wednesday morning I pitched up at the office of the Secretary, Law Department, Mr. W.A. Deane, and then went on to the Public Services Board where Mr. Yates was Chairman. He was an old family friend and eventually on Wednesdays he had a second cup put on his tea tray! I intended to make myself such a nuisance that in desperation they would grant my application to get rid of me!

This campaign was interrupted by another transfer to Umtali to relieve George King again. I lived with the Blatch family, Auntie Emmie and Elsie and Ted, my cousins. It was now that I swapped my trusty BSA motor cycle for a Baby Austin ‘7’. This reminds me of a true story about the first Austin ‘7’ to arrive in Umtali. Algie Langham, the wag I have mentioned before, inveigled Bill Bazely, the Native Commissioner and about 6 ft 6 ins of rangy body, and D’Urban Barry, a local farmer of enormous girth, to wedge themselves into the Baby Austin outside the Umtali Club. Barry was behind the wheel which was so jammed into his belly that it couldn’t be moved and Algy, who had previously turned the wheel full lock, started the engine in gear and set the hand throttle at slow. Off went the car, turning in tight circles in Main Street between the Club and Granny Love’s house across the street with both Bill Bazely and D’Urban Barry, too flustered to know how to stop it and unable to turn the steering wheel, shouting and swearing, to the merriment of fellow club members and to the astonishment of a disapproving Granny Love, until they were eventually rescued by Algy.

After my stint at Umtali I was sent back to Salisbury; District Courts now having moved from Forbes Avenue into the old Post Office building in Manica Road whilst the Forbes Avenue building was improved and enlarged, the Civil Commissioner’s Office left the old ‘stables’ in Jameson Avenue, Third Street and came under the Magistrate as was the case in every town but Salisbury. I now recommenced my campaign for a transfer and one day decided to call also on Col. Carbutt, the Chief Native Commissioner. He kindly consented to interview me, sent me to see Capt. Bowker of the staffing section and, within a month, I was notified that I had been successful and was to report to the Native Department, Gutu, in two weeks time!

In Salisbury I swapped my Baby Austin for a six cylinder Erskine – a car about which the story is told that Ford and Erskine decided to combine and produced a car called the ‘Foreskin’. Be that as it may, this car, an open tourer, gave me wonderful service, was most comfortable and did about 28 miles to the gallon of petrol, which was excellent in those days.

THE NATIVE DEPARTMENT AT LAST

To get to Gutu from Chatsworth in those days one had to cross, by drift, two rivers, the Popotekwe and Mtilikwe, both in flood when I reached them. Forewarned, I had brought with me a length of rubber hose which I attached to the exhaust pipe and tied up high onto my bed which was carried lashed to the side of my car and I wrapped the carburettor and distributor in canvas and put another piece of canvas over the radiator to push the water

away in front and so, in effect, cut a furrow through the torrent. The Popotekwe behaved itself but the Mtilikwe refused to be pushed around and flooded back, wetting the ignition and stalling my car, fortunately after I had passed the deepest part.

At Gutu, where I was relieving for three weeks only before going on to Bikita, I met Cyril Meredith, son of my father's old friend of the early days in Melsetter, and A.P. Jackson. Cyril had had a couple of unsuccessful tries at the Civil Service Law Examination and his wife decided, whether there were visitors or not, to lock him every evening in a room devoid of any reading matter but law books. Her method succeeded and Cyril passed his examination. Lemon was acting Native Commissioner and kindly boarded me in his house during the three weeks I was at Gutu. I was not very impressed by my first Native Department station.

When I moved to Bikita, H.N. Walters was the Native Commissioner. He had no A.N.C. but Phil Braybrooke was the senior clerk and did the A.N.C. work except for judicial duties and I was the junior clerk. There were three houses, one for the N.C., one for the A.N.C. and one for the married Dip Supervisor. Nearby there was a native store owned and operated by a charming Irishman named Paddy Powell. The Dip Supervisor was George Style who, many years later, started game ranching in the Triangle area and is today a man of great substance. My quarters consisted of a large, square pole and dagga hut, the eaves of the roof of which on one side had been plastered up to form a bathroom with a tin bath. There was no furniture, no stove, no hot water, no kitchen and I paid 4/- per month rent!

The Braybrookes very kindly put me up for a few days until I could settle in. I had brought a bed and mattress tied to my car. I went to Paddy Powell's store and bought pots, pans, kettle, crockery, cutlery etc and cadged a few petrol boxes to use as chairs and cupboards. How different it is today, when young men are called Cadets, not clerks, and are pampered unbelievably with furniture, fridges, deep freezes, electricity, moving in allowances, curtain allowances and a hundred other things such as clubs, swimming pools etc., etc.

The office messengers found me a young cook named Sonny who looked after me marvelously, cooked well on an open fire outside, washed and ironed with a charcoal iron, and mended my clothes. Shortly after I arrived at Bikita, I paid a local African 30/- to build a thatched hut for a kitchen, all the materials for which he cut within a few hundred yards and, on my first visit to Fort Victoria, 65 miles away, I bought a second-hand small Dover stove. Sonny really felt proud when we set this up in my kitchen, with the metal chimney plastered with mud where it passed through the thatched roof.

My predecessor at Bikita was Humpy Mackenzie, son of Dr Mackenzie of Gatooma. Humpy, a Cambridge graduate, had been transferred to Gwanda and on Boat Race Day he drafted a telegram to Phil Braybrooke, who had attended Oxford University, crowing about Cambridge winning the race and in this telegram he described the Oxford crew as a crapulent bunch of weaklings. The Postmaster at Gwanda refused to accept the telegram on the grounds that it contained objectionable words! Humpy led him on until he had really committed himself and then suggested that he look up the word 'crapulent' in a dictionary.

My friend, John Crawford, visited me to buy cattle for his father's butchery in Penhalonga. Believe it or not, the top price he had to pay for fat young bullocks or queen cows was £3. Mostly they cost about 30/- (*about US\$108 today*). He then trekked the cattle through to Penhalonga in lots of about 100. On one of his visits, Mr. Walters, to give me a break,

told me to take a week and do a grass-fire patrol down the Mkwasini River to its junction with the Sabi.

Louis Beck, my friend of Gatooma days, now stationed at Zaka, joined us for our first night's camp on the banks of the Turgwi River. We had a very pleasant evening, with much drinking of whiskey out of pannikins. Finally, we all lay down in a row in our blankets, with our African messengers and Sonny also sleeping in a row beyond the fire, which we built up with enormous logs. A few yards below was a large, deep pool inhabited by a hippo family which had been protesting at our presence all evening. Sometime during the night, a large fruit fell off a tree, rolled down the bank and plopped into the pool with a large splash. Our three bodies and those of all the Africans all sat up at once, as if obeying a command! We thought it was a hippo coming to pay us an unwelcome visit!

Next morning, after breakfast, Louis Beck returned to Zaka and John and I proceeded to the end of the rough road and then headed for the Mkwasini along Native footpaths and sleigh tracks. We did about 15 miles that first day and that was about average from then on as frequently we had to stop to make drifts through dongas and then very often call upon a neighbouring kraal to bring a team of oxen to help poor old Lizzie Erskine negotiate the sand. It was a wonderful trip through country teeming with game of all kinds and where most of the Africans, certainly below teenage, had never seen a motor car and some had never seen a white man.

One morning, early, we were looking for a big buck for meat for the local Chief when suddenly I had my first sight of an eland, the largest antelope. It stood on an anthill about 200 yards away, a large bull looking like a house. I aimed and fired. The eland looked at me calmly, walked off and disappeared in the thick Mopani bush. I couldn't believe that I had made a clean miss. It must have been the excitement. Talking of which, a borrowed rifle with a hair trigger which John was using, suddenly went off, the bullet passing within inches of my head!

The Mkwasini as a river was a disappointment, being at that time of the year merely a dry river bed with an occasional pool. We followed it to its confluence with the Sabi and then turned to retrace our tracks, a much easier trip as we used the tracks and drifts we had made coming down. On our way back, practically every evening, the young people of the neighbouring kraals, having lost some of their shyness and fed on our good venison, brought beer and put on a dance. These went on until after midnight, with the firelight gleaming on sweating bodies for all participants, both men and women, wore absolutely no clothes except a very small skin apron hanging from the waist fore and aft. The young Shangaan men who had been to the mines in Johannesburg soon discarded their European type of clothing and converted to the skin aprons. This was Shangaan country.

On John Crawford's next trip to Bikita he decided to buy Lizzie Erskine and I was left without a car but Mr. Walters insisted that at least once a month I should take his car and go to visit Louis Beck at Zaka. The Walters family were wonderful to me, treating me like a son. Henry Nash Walters was a kind but quick-tempered Irishman with several large warts on his face and false teeth that tended to flop down when he shouted. One day, taking an African civil case, he shouted at a woman complainant and his teeth dropped down. She covered her face and fled from the court!

Mr. Walters was very proud of the fact that although the Africans might quite easily have called him 'Wart-face', they called him 'Maponese' (the Saviour) because in Mtetengwe

District, where he established a new station, he fed them with government famine relief grain during a starvation year.

Nearby on the Turgwi River lived a trader named S.G. Hughes and he and his wife came to Bikita every Thursday evening to play bridge with the Walters. Round about midnight, having all been drinking whiskey all evening, one of them would lose his temper and a hell-fire row would start. Invariably, I was awakened by shouts of 'I'll never come back again', 'Bloody good riddance' and so on. S.G. would get into his car, rev up his cold engine and tear off home. They always made it up before the next Thursday!

Mrs. Walters was a dear and she did much work, unpaid, at the local African clinic, which she had inaugurated. There were three children, Paddy and Terence and a girl, Betty. They had an open tourer Dodge car and when they went camping it was a sight to see. The car had large boxes built along each running board into which utensils and food were packed. On top of these boxes, on each side, sat two large Ridgeback dogs. Mrs. Walters sat in front with him, surrounded by an assortment of blankets and pillows, and the family and usually a servant crammed into the back, also wedged in by blankets and pillows. The old man would wear his glasses, which were for close up sight, and throw back his head so that he could see under the glasses to drive the car. Once, while driving in Chief Gudo's country on the lower Sabi, a large bird flew over the car and dropped its load neatly on the old man's glasses. The family roared with laughter and Mrs. Walters said: 'That's what they think of you down here'.

One day I was chatting to George Style on his back verandah whilst he tested some dip samples when his very small son bumped into his legs, causing George to spill sulphuric acid onto the child's face. Fortunately, it was the day the Government Medical Officer from Ndanga paid his weekly visit to Bikita Clinic and we rushed the child to the clinic where Dr?? treated him. His eyes were saved but his face was badly scarred.

The Superintendent of Natives (now called Provincial Commissioners) in Fort Victoria was E.G. Howman, whose three sons have distinguished themselves in service to Rhodesia. Howman remembered me from my High Court interpreting days and every now and then, when he came across an obscure African word or expression, he would ring me up and say: 'Now, you young whippersnapper, you think you're a linguist; what does so-and-so mean?'. He'd be tickled pink if I didn't know and I'm sure it made his day for him.

Eventually, Phil Braybrooke was transferred and replaced by 'Chummy' Swanson who was qualified and was appointed Assistant Native Commissioner. Chummy was a grand chap with an unending fund of stories and was a dedicated fisherman. He was a bachelor at that time and so soon we spent many weekends camping, hunting and fishing together and became good friends.

I remember one weekend, particularly, when we camped next to a large pool in the Turgwi River. We had an empty four gallon paraffin tin which we had sealed to make it watertight; to this we attached a rope with a large hook embedded in a rotting guinea-fowl and we threw this into the pool; the idea being to tempt a crocodile to take the guinea-fowl, get himself hooked and then try to dive, pulling with him four gallons of air, a feat taking considerable effort and almost certainly leading to drowning. On this particular occasion either there were no crocs in the pool or they were too wise to take the bait.

On the Sunday morning, I went off to shoot a couple of buck for road gangs working in the vicinity and Chummy got busy with his fishing tackle. When I returned at about 9.30

am, having shot two waterbuck, Chummy was pulling out 1 to 2 lb bream and, handing over his rod to me, he proceeded to fillet and fry the fish forthwith. I have never, before or since, tasted such delicious fish.

In the police at Bikita, at that time, was a young trooper named Jefferies. He bought himself a Plymouth car and in this we would occasionally travel the 65 miles to Fort Victoria to attend the cinema. On one such occasion, having spent the early evening in the hotel bar, we arrived at the cinema in an advanced state of intoxication. Jefferies, incidentally, had not notified his headquarters that he would be absent from his station, a very strict requirement in the B.S.A.P. Sitting up in the best seats with a large party all in full evening clothes was Capt. Hamilton, the District Superintendent of Police, known to his underlings through the Force as 'Shitty Mick'. Jefferies, now thoroughly sozzled, I had to restrain by force from marching up the aisle and accosting Hamilton with 'Wotcher, Shitty!'. It would have been the end of his career in the police!

Mr Howman at Fort Victoria was moved to Salisbury, I think to become Assistant Chief Native Commissioner, and H.N. Walters was moved from Bikita to Victoria, to take his place as Superintendent of Natives and Lemon, from Gutu came to Bikita to act as Native Commissioner. Within a few months of his arrival I clashed with him and eventually I rang up Mr Walters and told him I wanted a transfer. He immediately arranged my transfer to his own office in Ft Victoria and within a week I was established there, taking over from Felix Posselt, who later headed the National Building and Housing Board after the war. Dan Koch was A.N.C. and he was later replaced by Odendaal.

In Victoria, I was lucky enough to get a room in the house of a Mrs. Mackenzie, a sweet widow with one teenage daughter. Also living there was a young clerk in the Veterinary Department, Ronald Christie, later to become Secretary for Mines, and my old friend of Gwelo days, Harry Stevens, now married. We were all very happy with Mrs. Mackenzie, who fed us well.

Ronald Christie was a very modest, shy young man and Steve could not resist pulling his leg. One day Steve rang up the typist in the Magistrates Office, Connie Levett, an attractive girl but some years older than Ronald. Steve imitated Ronald's voice and invited Connie to have tea with him at the local café. He then got his wife, Cath, to ring Ronnie and invite him to tea at the same time, pretending to be Connie. Ronald, far too shy to refuse, pitched up and a very embarrassing situation developed, only saved by the fact that Connie was a very good sport and soon realized that Steve was responsible.

Marshall Campbell, the Assistant Native Commissioner, Zaka, had a beautiful Chrysler six cylinder two seater car which I had always admired and upon hearing that he wanted to buy a new car I negotiated with him and bought his car on terms made available by Girdlestone of Map Garage.

Whilst I was at Bikita, I decided to sit for the Customs and Administration Examination and, having been so lucky with my Law examinations, I did not take the administration part of the examination very seriously as this required a knowledge of Statute Law which I thought I knew. So I concentrated on customs. Louis Beck also decided to sit this examination and it was arranged that we should sit it together at Bikita. To my disbelief, Louis passed and I failed the administration papers. I was so astonished that I wrote to the Department of Education stating that I was sure a mistake had been made!! I was given short shrift and it was such a salutary experience that I swotted so hard for the same examination the next

year that I tied for first place with Rowan Cashel, an old school friend. Louis Beck took and passed language the same year, so once again he and I were level pegging.

One weekend, Steve, Cath and I decided to go to Salisbury. Running short of money, I cashed a cheque at the Lounge Tearoom owned by 'Buzz' Robinson and situated in First Street, on the site now occupied by Messrs Woolworths. The cheque was for £2 only, drawn on my account with the Umtali Branch of the Standard Bank. I was horribly embarrassed to have a note from Buzz a week or so later, telling me that the cheque had been dishonoured. On enquiries, I found that ledger fees had been debited to my account, making me 6/8 overdrawn and the bank had dishonoured my cheque in spite of the fact that I had had an account with them for years, had never before overdrawn and my pay was due to be deposited by Government, as usual, the day after the cheque was presented. I was furious and, a month or so later when I was in Umtali, I received an apology from the Manager, Curley Wright, when I threatened to withdraw my account.

1933

Towards the end of 1933 I took six months leave and spent a very pleasant six weeks with my friend John Crawford in Penhalonga, renewing old acquaintances and it was now that I really got to know his father, J.L. 'Johnnie' Crawford and learnt to appreciate his entrancing dry humour, his wisdom and his great knowledge of the early days in Rhodesia. How I wish now that I had recorded the many anecdotes he related about those times.

During this six weeks John and I spent many evenings drinking at Pop Marnie's Penhalonga Pub and at other times organized moonlight picnics at the Odzani Falls and the Dora River, six miles out on the Melsetter road.

Four months of my holiday I intended to spend on the south Coast of Natal and I wrote to several advertisers for accommodation in resorts on the South Coast. I was told that the best place for a bachelor was Scottburgh, at that time particularly popular with teachers and nurses and although I had by then almost decided to go to Amanzimtoti, I kept open an option on a Scottburgh guest-house.

Before leaving for Natal, I had my Chrysler car serviced and tuned by an old school friend, Frank Gammon, now launching out on his own in wood and iron premises previously occupied by Harrison's Plumbing Works, next to the Royal Hotel where now stands the Vaudeville Cinema. Here Frank had a hole in the ground, just off Main Street pavement, which he used as his 'pit', kept his tools in a bare room and had his bed and a gramophone in another room in the same building. At that time, 'Stormy Weather' had just become popular and Frank played the record ceaselessly and every time I hear that tune I recall my feeling of excitement at the prospect of the first holiday I had had out of Rhodesia, except for the trip to Kokstad when I was a small child.

(Jack goes on to describe his holiday in Scottburgh where he met Inez Hazel Walsh, his future wife, then still a schoolgirl at Durban Girls High)

RETURN TO PENHALONGA

1934

Back in Rhodesia I found that my request to be sent as Clerk-in-Charge, Penhalonga, had been granted but upon arrival in Umtali, Bill Bazeley, the Native Commissioner, asked me



Jack Nesbitt c.1975

to forego Penhalonga for a time as he wished to send another official there to recover from a near nervous breakdown.

One evening, after a particularly hectic party at the Customs Officials' Mess, we decided to visit the Native Department Clerk-in-Charge in Penhalonga, where he had an office within the B.S.A.P. Camp and messed with the single policemen. Whilst there, we raided the Mess pantry and then on our way back to Umtali, noticing some red paraffin lamps marking a deviation on Christmas Pass, we foolishly decided to decorate my car with two of these lamps. One lamp we dumped in Main Street, after passing a policeman cycling down the street, and the other lamp was taken into the Customs' Mess by one of the party. A few days later at my office, I was visited by a member of the police who said we would all be charged with theft of government property, the removal of the lamps having been traced to us. What seemed quite a serious matter was resolved, fortunately, when I telephoned my friend the District Roads Engineer, Donald Hood, who agreed to withdraw the charge against us on condition that on our next binge he would be invited to join us.

Eventually I was transferred to Penhalonga, where I lived in quarters attached to the office and messed with the Police. The Mess was so badly run that I offered to take over the catering and I sent to Bikita for my ex-cook, Sonny. Our messing averaged about £4.10.0 each per month (*about US\$324 today*) which was not bad considering that the three of us had three large meals a day. Noticing that our bread and butter bill seemed to grow unduly, I taxed Sonny with helping himself and he then revealed to me that one of the police lads at mid-morning every day demanded an enormous plate of meat sandwiches to have with his morning tea! I paid £4 a month for my quarters, which consisted of a bed-sitting room,

gauzed-in verandah and bathroom and toilet. Electricity was supplied gratis by Rezende Mine and water was paid for by Government. As I made well over £4 a month from vaccinating African immigrants at 1d per head, my finances were fairly buoyant, except that the camp was right next to Pop Marnies hotel and, although I was doing my best to save up to marry my schoolgirl, the flesh was sometimes weak!

1934

In December, 1934, Hazel came up from Natal and stayed at Pop's hotel for a month and we became officially engaged.

POSTSCRIPT

Jack Nesbitt died in November, 1984, before completing these memoirs. He is buried in Margate, Natal, where he and Hazel had retired some years before.

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Recollections of a Government Medical Officer in Rhodesia in the Early 1930s

by Dyson Milroy Blair

[Dyson Milroy Blair (1907–1978) came to Rhodesia as a young doctor in December 1931 by a happy accident of fate. He had been visiting his parents in Uganda (where his father was Director of Surveys) and found himself stranded in Cape Town during the economic crisis, when he was on his way back home to Scotland. He heard about the prospects of employment in Rhodesia, was interviewed by Dr Askins (who happened to be in Cape Town at the time), and within a short while was on the train to Bulawayo and thence to Shamva as Assistant and Relieving Government Medical Officer. He stated that he found the scope of medical work was practically limitless in those days, so he ended up making Rhodesia his home, and spent his entire working life as a doctor in the Civil Service. As a young bachelor doctor he was sent around the country doing locums, and had 14 moves in the first three years: Bulawayo, Shamva, Enkeldoorn, Sinoia (his main posting till 1936), Gatooma, Gwelo and Plumtree. During this time he also took part in a rodent plague survey in the southern half of the country, and two sleeping sickness surveys in the west Hartley and Sebungwe districts and along the Zambezi River. In 1937 he was appointed Field Research Officer, and after the Second World War (he served in the Middle East, and was Commandant of the Middle East School of Hygiene) he was assigned to Medical Headquarters as Director Preventive Services. In 1953 he was appointed Director Medical Services, Southern Rhodesia, and in 1958 became Federal Secretary for Health. On the break up of Federation he retired from public office. The rest of his life was spent as Honorary Research Officer (unpaid) at the Blair Research Laboratory (named in his honour) furthering his research on the parasitology of tropical medicine, his lifelong passion, the seeds of which were planted quite by chance at his first posting in Shamva, and nurtured through his experiences as an “Itinerant GMO” (particularly in Sinoia, the Sebungwe and along the Zambezi) in the 1930s. Mary Blair.]

I came to Rhodesia on 1st December, 1931. I had been in Cape Town for some months before coming to Rhodesia, and had written to enquire whether there was any employment in Rhodesia, as I felt it would be a cheap way of seeing the Victoria Falls before I returned to Britain. I was told to meet Dr Askins, the Medical Director, at that time in Cape Town, and he interviewed me and offered me temporary employment for 3 months. On arrival at the Bulawayo Railway Station from Cape Town I was met by Dr James Montgomery and Minto Stover, two young medical officers who had entered the service two months and six weeks respectively prior to my arrival. We three constituted the Junior Medical staff of the Service in Bulawayo.

The Medical Superintendent of the Bulawayo Memorial Hospital at that time was Dr Maitland, a Medical Officer in the old tradition who was always immaculately turned out.

He used to come to the hospital carrying a cane, wearing gloves and always dressed perfectly – even when he came out at night to see a patient or was coming to view an emergency operation, he was always immaculately dressed. The three younger members of the staff had to carry out all the Government medical duties in the hospital and in the schools, the prisons and so on. We undertook the post mortems and visited schools, the prisons and any Government places – for example, the Police Camp – that fell into our province.

After a short stint in Bulawayo, I was transferred to Shamva and, for this purpose, left Bulawayo by train for Salisbury. I arrived in Salisbury early one Sunday morning, feeling a bit lost and was greeted at the station by a very Scotch voice – a young, red-haired man called out: “Grand Hotel, Grand Hotel”. I picked up my suitcase, climbed out and asked him where the Grand Hotel was and, as I was the only passenger he had got from the train, we walked up together to the Grand Hotel at the corner of Speke Avenue and 1st Street. My reception at the hotel was so friendly, both from Ginger, the porter, and from Miss MacGrowder who was the receptionist, that I always stayed at the Grand Hotel on my visits to Salisbury thereafter.

On Monday morning I presented myself at the Medical Director’s office, which was then in a rather tumbled-down looking building on the corner of 3rd Street and Jameson Avenue, opposite where Chaplin Building now stands and on the site of where Vincent Building is now built. There I met Mr Guy Taylor, the Chief Clerk, who delivered the first bombshell. I was told that the salary offered me as an Assistant Government Medical Officer at the rate of £600 per annum no longer held, because in the interval Parliament had met and decided on a 10% cut in all Civil Service salaries, so that the salary I would receive would be £540 per annum. It is interesting to record that this incident of the 10% cut in Civil Service salaries resulted in the start of the political career of Mr Godfrey Huggins – now of course Lord Malvern. The well known surgeon of Salisbury at that time, and also a Member of Parliament for Salisbury North, disagreed with the cut in salaries, but he voted for the Government and enabled them to pass this measure, then resigned from the Rhodesia Party and joined the Opposition Reform Party. This is because as a Member of Parliament for Salisbury North he was more surgeon than politician, but after this episode of the cut in the Civil Service salaries he became equally an enthusiastic politician.

I was told that I should get myself to Shamva as soon as possible and take over the hospital there. It was explained to me that the previous medical officer had left about a month before but the Matron would see that I was fixed up. I asked how I was to get there and was told to go and buy myself a second-hand car at Duly’s and the Government would give me an advance of £120 towards the purchase of this car. I went to Duly’s and took delivery of a second-hand A model Ford 2-seater with a canvas hood and dicky seat at the back. That done, I was advised to drive up to the Salisbury hospital and introduce myself there. At the hospital I was directed to where the doctors were having their tea outside the operating theatre, and there I met a surgeon who had just come out of the theatre, wearing his mask and gown – a Mr Rosin – a Salisbury boy who had made good as a surgeon overseas. He asked me where I’d been and who I had worked with in Edinburgh and when I told him that I had worked most of my undergraduate time on the surgical side in Professor Wilkie’s wards he said “Oh well, you have obviously seen gall bladder operations”. So I said, “Oh yes, lots of them”. And he told me he had done three that very morning, which I thought was an extraordinary record in a small centre like Salisbury.

The next day I set off for Shamva, having been given vague directions at the hotel how to get out on the Mtoko Road and to take the Mermaid's Pool turn-off. I asked what I would do if I thought I was lost and was told just to say "Shamva" and somebody would indicate what way I should go. I went along the road (which of course was then a gravel road), and down the Coral Spruit section, which was quite hair-raising to me at the time, and on to Shamva via Ceres Farm. I arrived at the hospital where the Matron was very glad to see me and showed me the Government Medical Officer's house which was adjacent to the hospital. There was no furniture in the house but the Matron had put a bed in one room and given me a little cupboard in which to hang my clothes. She suggested that as I was only going to be there for three months I should "mess" with the nursing staff. The Government Medical Officer's house was built up on piles, and was the typical "meat-safe" type of house then very common in Rhodesia, with mosquito wired gauze all round the verandah enclosing the house.

I settled in and then went down to the hospital. The hospital was staffed by Matron – Miss Johns – and three sisters. The main hospital for European patients was, I thought, very spacious and remarkably big for the size of population of the area. And adjacent to it was a rather strange thatched roofed building, with Kimberley brick walls and a little low verandah all round, which was the African Hospital. In the front garden were a number of rondavels, which were where the African VD patients stayed. The nursing staff and the Matron lived in a little bungalow at the back of the hospital and they dined in a room at the rear of the hospital.

After the first blow of discovering that I was not getting £600 but £540 a year for my three months' work in this place, I learnt that, soon after my arrival, the Women's Institute of Shamva had protested most strongly to the Medical Director at the youth of the new GMO and made the peremptory request that I be removed forthwith. Fortunately for me the Medical Director said that if they did not like me they would get nobody else, but it did result in the President of the Women's Institute at that time, Mrs Trochland, a very well known lady in the district, telling everybody that they should boycott my services at the hospital. And this they did most effectively, so that I had practically no private European patients coming to see me at all. This may have had quite an effect on my medical interests at a very early stage in Rhodesia.

I had come to Rhodesia having spent as much of my undergraduate time as possible on the surgical wards at the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary, and as little time as possible in the medical wards. Even when I was working as a junior clerk in the medical wards I used to spend my evenings in Sir David Wilkie's surgical wards doing work there. The fact that I had a small and not very busy hospital to run, and had no one calling for my services to go to their homes on farms outside the hospital, meant that I had more time on my hands than I had expected. I discovered to my surprise that in the Dispensary there was a sink and a few stains and a microscope, and I began to take an interest in parasitology. I found that I had plenty of time to take blood films from the patients in the African Hospital, and stool and urine specimens, and prepare them and spend hours examining them. This may well have given me what has always been my great interest, the study of parasitology in Rhodesia.

The African Hospital, of course, was full of interest, and I found that some predecessor at Shamva, perhaps Dr Oswald Jackson, who had been there till 1929, had left behind an old edition of Manson's Tropical Diseases, and I was so impressed with what I read there,

especially the help in doing parasitology, that I ordered straight away from Lewis' in London the latest edition of this book. I also took steps, as soon as I had enough money, to buy a new instrument, and bought myself, through Tauber and Cawson in Salisbury, one of the new Zeiss swan-necked microscopes. This was my joy and delight at the time, and I have used this microscope all the time since 1932 up to the present day and it is still in very good and excellent working order.

There was quite a lot of police work to do at Shamva and I was called out to the rather grisly business of post mortems on bodies which had been exhumed. This meant accompanying a trooper of the police in an old Ford truck and a couple of African constables ("Black Watch", as they were called) with spades and shovels to some village to dig up a grave, and I would then proceed to do a post mortem. I had to discover whether death was due to poisoning or some violent cause. I got to know the young men in the BSAP at Shamva at the time quite well, and one of them, Trooper Eric Thompson, became a great friend of mine and remained so for years in Rhodesia.

The visits on post mortems gave me a good chance of travelling to the Native Reserves nearby and some of the farms and mines of the district which I would, otherwise, probably never have seen. There were two notable exceptions to the air of hostility to the young GMO of Shamva, Mr and Mrs Mowbray of Chipoli, and Mr and Mrs Stevenson of Glendalough, both north of Shamva. Just to the north of Shamva there is a long low level bridge over the Mazoe River and this formed my favourite walk in the evening, a stroll down to the bridge to watch the flow of the water going by, listen to the bird calls and the birds nesting for the night in the tall trees on the bank of the river, then the walk back in the dark for supper. This I did for some weeks, until a casual remark from one of the members of the Police that a lion had been seen crossing the road just this side of the bridge. I was careful, thereafter, to go to the bridge and be well on my way back before dark set in.

The Mowbrays at Chipoli very kindly asked me to come any time I would like to see them, and I developed a very nice arrangement whereby occasionally on Sunday afternoon I would walk from Shamva cross country to the foot bridge over the Mazoe River opposite Chipoli, have a nice cup of tea and cakes with Mr and Mrs Mowbray, and they would get one of their neighbours also coming to tea to drop me at the Mazoe bridge and I would walk back to Shamva again. This gave me exercise and very pleasant company. Mr and Mrs Stevenson who also lived north of the Mazoe were always very kind to me, but it was a strange thing to spend three months in Shamva, and I think those were the only two houses I ever visited socially in the whole area.

The District Commissioner or Native Commissioner, as he then was, Mr Dorehill, was rather dour, uncompromising and completely unhelpful to me about what I should do about official duties and the treatment of patients and so on. His attitude was, "It's nothing to do with me – you had better find out from your own people". The Police, as always, were very helpful and co-operative. There was very little social life in Shamva at the time except for the little clubhouse where we met to play tennis on courts over on Shamva hill, which had previously been the sports club of the Shamva mine. The rotting houses of the Shamva mine employees (by the way the mine had closed down in 1929) were on the hillside beyond the club.

We used to play tennis there on Sundays and Saturday afternoons. I well remember my first meeting with the then Bishop of Mashonaland (Bishop Paget) at the Shamva club. We

had gone over, the nursing staff and myself, to a service in the tennis club clubhouse. This meant that we sat around under the trees while the Bishop in his robes stood in the little club shelter delivering the service. I was amazed to see below his robes, his cassock, was the occasional peep of a white trousered leg. I realised what the arrangement was, and the moment the service was completed he whipped off his cassock and there he was arrayed in his long white trousers and tennis shirt ready to play tennis, and he played a very good game indeed. To a Scots Presbyterian this was a rather surprising change of occupation.

At the tennis club one met a lot of the families of the district, the ladies who had small boys (as it was the Christmas holidays by this time), and the Mowbrays and others. A lot of the young boys wearing Plumtree and Prince Edward blazers I got to know very well later on in Rhodesia. The Mowbray boys wore little pads on the back of their khaki shirts – these were of red flannel with a button just below the collar and a button out on each shoulder, like a fish-shaped piece of cloth down their spine. None of the other boys wore them, and I am sure the young Mowbrays must have been very embarrassed at their Mother's insistence on their wearing these red flannel spine pads.

I had a very interesting 3 months at Shamva, mostly with African work, which was all new and strange with its great emphasis on urgent and rather massive surgery (spear wounds of the chest, spear wounds of the abdomen), really severe pneumonias, very complicated maternity cases who had been in labour for days, and the interest in European patients did not arise until about the end of January, when the malaria season was then getting into full swing, and black-water fever started coming in. It was a rather terrifying experience for a medical officer with no tropical experience whatsoever (who had never even seen a malaria parasite except once or twice on a specially guarded blood film in Edinburgh) having patients coming in suffering from malaria. But by this time I had got myself familiar with the technique of taking blood films, staining them all very quickly, and, as I had plenty of time to do it, I was able to establish my diagnosis parasitologically straight away. This gave me a great advantage over many of the other doctors who were so busy going out to see patients that they had no time to do blood film work of their own, and the laboratory technicians or assistants were then an unknown quantity in the smaller hospitals in Rhodesia.

I had, before I left Shamva, the rather terrifying task of looking after 15 cases of black-water fever, of whom 5 died. I was rather depressed at this 33% death rate, but learned many years later that I was in fact only experiencing what was the normal death rate from black-water fever. It was a disease which made one feel very helpless – filling patients with fluid in an effort to get their kidneys working again and then just sitting and watching. It was one disease in which good nursing had a remarkably good effect on the patient, and I am sure that the lives of those who were saved rested more on the efforts of the nursing staff than they did on myself. In the small hospital with only a staff of three nurses, with the burden of European cases (the black-water fevers) everybody buckled-to, to give a hand with the nursing. The Matron would take her turn doing night duty – sort of sleeping night duty up until midnight – and, on occasions, the medical officer would too. This consisted of lying on a bed on the verandah in his dressing gown so that he could be called or go round every ten minutes and take a look at the patients.

Towards the end of my time at Shamva, when I was thinking that any moment now I would be told to get on my bicycle and disappear, I received a message from Salisbury to say that Dr Ford Tredre (later to become Assistant Director and then Deputy Director, of

the Ross Institute of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine from 1945 to c.1957) had just resigned from the Service to accept the post of Medical Officer of Health of Salisbury Municipality, and would I like to stay on as a Medical Officer in the Service. It was pointed out to me that I could give one day's notice (as I would be on probation for 2 years) at any time, and it did not really change my status at all. Having thought about this for some time, and though still feeling a little grief that I had been offered one salary and been given one ten per cent less, I decided to accept.

So, one day, I set off in my two-seater Ford to return to Salisbury and go to Enkeldoorn to do a locum there. This time instead of taking the short cut to Salisbury I decided to go via Bindura, Glendale and past the Mazoe Citrus Estate, and was thoroughly interested in the beautiful valley at whose lower end I had been sitting for three months, knowing little of what was around me. In Salisbury I was told that I should get on the next day to Enkeldoorn where I might, or might not, find the Medical Officer to hand over to me. I drove out on the road to Enkeldoorn which, of course, was through very different country from the road from Salisbury to Shamva, arrived at Enkeldoorn and found, what I had got to expect, that the Medical Officer had already left. I learnt to my surprise that this was Dr William Murray, who I had known rather distantly in Edinburgh, where he was two or three years my senior. I learnt that he had left to go and get married in South Africa and that I was doing his honeymoon leave in Enkeldoorn. The GMO's house in Enkeldoorn was then at the end of the world – up at the far east of the town just near the hospital. On the side verandah one could stand looking east and look to the horizon, and I realised what an exposed and cold place Enkeldoorn could be when the wind would come piercing through the house, through all the cracks in the french doors, and I admit I had to ask the Matron if she could lend me a hot water bottle to sleep at night.

The people in Enkeldoorn (where I had expected that I would not be able to fit in because I could not speak Afrikaans) were most friendly. The old farmers called you out, and of course in those days it was easy, practically everybody was a free case. By free case I mean that the Government considered these people unable to pay their medical expenses, and so you just went out, saw the people, and charged your mileage to the Government, and if your patient required any treatment or was brought to hospital, they were treated as free patients. By this means I visited very many of the large farms in the district and got to rather like the simple way in which these people lived and their hospitality when you arrived as a doctor. There was no walking into a house and seeing a patient and then being shown out to your car to drive away. It was very difficult to get away without having drunk coffee and eaten cakes or, if it was near lunch, having a whacking lunch, although one realised often that these people had not very much money to buy food with, and in fact lived as far as possible on what they could have on their farms. Dr Murray's predecessor at Enkeldoorn had been Dr Sam Liptz, also later a very famous and well known Rhodesian doctor. Dr Liptz had run his private practice on what one would consider a rather unusual basis. He would go to a farm, tend the patient, and then say to the people, "That's a nice calf you've got there", or "Those are two nice sheep, now I will just take those in payment of the bill". He kept at his house in Enkeldoorn a few piccaninnies as herd boys, who he would take out with him in the car, and he would bring back the sheep or occasionally some article of furniture from the house as payment for his services. Being a resident in Enkeldoorn he was allowed to run his cattle and sheep on the commonage, and so he had

no up-keep. Then he was able to sell these animals to the butcher for slaughter when he wished and collect a packet.

One of my regular chores while I was at Enkeldoorn was a fortnightly visit to Umvuma, 30 odd miles away, and Driefontein Mission, a bit further in the direction of Fort Victoria. I had to leave very early in the morning, and travel along what was a newly opened up district road, the Moffat Road, which runs some distance to the south of the present main road from Enkeldoorn to Umvuma. At Umvuma I had to see any patients that required my attention in a room at the hotel, and the Magistrate would inform me about any free patients or Government patients that I should see. It was here that I became familiar with the problem which was then affecting Rhodesia at the time of the 1931/2 financial crisis. Lots of people were unable to get work, and the Government had instituted schemes for the employment of Europeans on such work as Roads and Forests. At that time, one saw European youths delivering telegrams in town and men working on the roads, and, near Umvuma in the Forest reserve, quite a number of rather elderly European people were given accommodation and food to work in the eucalyptus and pine forest in that area.

Near Umvuma was a little settlement near a dam on the river and it was here that I realised how abject poverty could be for Europeans. Some of these houses were in a ruinous state with European families, generally with large numbers of children, who did not look as if they had had a decent meal for weeks. Many of these people were ill from disorders which one could describe generally as nutritional disorders – rashes, scurvy conditions of the face, pot bellies, pellagra-like illness, and so on. And I realised that the Magistrate at Umvuma had quite a lot of the people in his district living on rations which the Government supplied for them.

Part of the journey was a visit to the Driefontein Mission, some miles south of Umvuma, and this was then run by English Jesuits. The general idea was for the Medical Officer to arrive at Driefontein in time for lunch with the Fathers, and then leave to go back to other work in Umvuma and return to Enkeldoorn, usually about half past eight at night. It was a long day but a very interesting one indeed.

An interesting event I was able to see at Enkeldoorn, an occasion which is now probably not often seen, was *Nachtmaal*. This was when all the farmers and their wives and families came in from their farms in their wagons and these wagons were laagered in the big square in front of the Dutch Reformed Church in Enkeldoorn. I was invited by the Reverend Liebenberg, who was then the Dutch Reformed Parson at Enkeldoorn, to come and join in some of the goings on. The service itself, of course, was in Afrikaans, with which I was not familiar, but it was great fun in the evenings to go round the big collection of wagons and see them having great chats, singing songs and eating their meals – *braaivleis* – round the camp fires. I cannot remember how long this went on for but I think it went on right over the Easter weekend. This probably explains why in the olden days in South Africa the Dutch Reformed Church of a town or village had a large square in front, where these wagons could outspan and the people could have their services, get their children christened, weddings took place and the farmers met the other farmers of the district and the families got to know one another.

A further interesting character at Enkeldoorn was the Matron, Josephine Brock, who had secured quite a reputation for herself just before I arrived of having walked with her personal servant from Enkeldoorn to Beit Bridge to go on holiday in South Africa. She

insisted on doing this on her own, much to the perturbation of the Magistrates on the road. But she set off in a pair of stout shoes with her African servant carrying her suitcase, and they walked from Enkeldoorn through Fort Victoria and straight on to Beit Bridge.

In the area was another well known character, Father Cripps. Father Cripps was an Anglican priest who had rather cut himself off from all normal contacts and gone to live on a farm some distance from Enkeldoorn, which he had called “Marondo Mashaha”, “Five Wounds”, and there he had established a mission of his own. I do not think the Anglican Church was very pleased with his activities and did not give him any official support. Father Cripps attempted to devote himself to living a life of poverty and serving the African people of the area. He took this so literally that his garments were usually filthy, in rags, he did not shave, and he looked rather as one imagined an Old Testament patriarch would look. The matron of the hospital had a scheme whereby Father Cripps was brought into hospital in the car of some well-wisher in the village. He was then put into the private ward, all his clothes were taken away and were washed and mended. He himself was put in a bath with plenty of lysol and given a good real soaking bath, his hair was cut, face shaved, and he was then put into bed in the private ward and given beef tea, egg flips and in general his health restored. He usually came in on a Friday and spent Friday night and Saturday night restoring his energy. On Sunday he usually conducted a service for the Anglican residents of the village, and then Monday or Tuesday, depending on Father Cripps’ condition, he would be returned to his mission again. This general sort of clean up and feeding occurred about every six weeks. I never quite understood how the Matron managed to work his admission to hospital. Because in those days priests and ministers were treated free in hospital there was no difficulty about that, but the whole operation would cause the strict administrator many qualms. However, there is no doubt about it that the nursing staff, by their kindness, did keep this old man going when probably he would not have survived the rigours of the life he had chosen for himself. He was worshipped by the Africans in the area, who called him “Baba Cripps”.

Before Dr Murray could return from his honeymoon I received an urgent message from Salisbury that I should come back to Salisbury and proceed to Sinoia, to take over from the doctor who was leaving. I returned to Salisbury and then went on out to Sinoia, where I found on the afternoon of my arrival that the doctor and his wife were waiting to leave the next morning. Dr Carmondy was leaving Rhodesia, having previously been a GMO in Bindura, not far from Shamva where I had once been. I arrived about 5.00 o’clock at night at Sinoia. I went to the hospital and was told that Dr Carmondy was at the hotel. I went to the hotel and booked in, and introduced myself to Dr Carmondy. I said “Should we go to the hospital and take over?” “Oh”, he said, “that’s not necessary, you just tell Matron in the morning that you are the new doctor, the patients are there, and she will hand them over to you”. This I thought was my first chance since coming to Rhodesia of going to a hospital and finding the Medical Officer had not gone away before I had arrived. However, Dr Carmondy was obviously much more senior in the ways of Rhodesia than I was, and I accepted the position. I went there expecting this would be another temporary assignment, as Sinoia was considered to be quite a lucrative and important station for a GMO to have, and I thought that as I was the youngest in the line-up, I would only be there for a month or two until some more senior person was appointed to the place. [Dr Blair was actually based at Sinoia from 1932 to 1936: see *Heritage of Zimbabwe* (26) 2007, p.139]

The hospital there is on the site where it is at the moment, but of course was a very much smaller building. It was a nice hospital, well equipped with a broad verandah on the front, and in fact eminently well built for the rather hot climate of Sinoia. The grounds had some big shady trees, which made it very pleasant. The African Hospital at the back of the European Hospital was simply two wards (one ward for males and at the end one small room which would hold three beds for females) with the most primitive lavatory and washing facilities, and a small kitchen for the cooking of the food for the patients. A number of huts a little further down the slope were where some of the African orderlies and their wives lived, and also the traditional round hut in which the African VD patients were kept while they had their six weeks of intravenous arsenic, intramuscular bismuth, with potassium iodide by mouth, which was then the standard treatment for syphilis in Rhodesia. These VD patients, in respect of their food and drugs, worked for their keep, and were very useful to Matron, especially as she was very keen on gardening and keeping the grounds in good order. They did this, as well as the menial tasks round the hospital.

The staff consisted of a Matron and I think, at the time, three nurses. They lived in a large “meat-safe” type of bungalow next to the hospital. This was replaced, soon after I arrived in Sinoia, by what was then considered to be the new type Nurses’ Home for a small hospital. Instead of the nurses having a bungalow with a wide verandah all round the outside with their dark rooms inside, and usually keeping their beds outside on the verandah where they slept, Dr Askins felt that this was not a very modish thing for nursing staff to do, and he had decided that we should follow the Spanish principle and have the rooms round an open courtyard. This might have been quite a successful move if the Public Works Department had not had their say and cut down the size of the patio or open space in the



**Miss Lily Tipping, Mrs Suzie Aust, Dr Blair, Miss Wilson, Miss Neethling (Mrs Haworth),
Sinoia 1935**



New Nurses Home, Sinoia Hospital

middle to such small dimensions that the air could not get in, and the Nurses' Home was never a very satisfactory place – there was only one door in and one door out from the Matron's little flat, and everything else opened into this interior courtyard which, because of its rather small size, was airless.

The Sinoia district was much more demanding of its Medical Officer. I was the only doctor in the whole of Lomagundi at the time – in other words from Darwendale to the Zambezi was my province, and it also included, strange to say, the little district of Sipolilo in the Mazoe Magisterial District, which came under me medically because the road to Sipolilo was more easily reached from the Lomagundi side. It was here I saw one of the last vestiges of tropical Africa, that was the “mail man” leaving Sinoia to take the mail from Sinoia to Sipolilo. This old man used to walk – well jog at a half trot – to Sinoia with a bag containing the letters and a small bag containing some food, and he would just commute between Sinoia and Sipolilo and back again with the mail. He was a comparatively old man at that time, I would say that he was about 50, with thin wiry legs, well equipped for this job of finding his way along a primitive bush road to Sipolilo and back again, and I was told that he had been doing it for ten years without giving it any thought or alarm if he got lost.

Sinoia was one up for me in that it was the first station I had been at in which there was a pharmaceutical chemist practising in the town. This was a Mr Charles Dixon, who I discovered had married a sister of one of the physicians at the Royal Hospital for Sick Children in Edinburgh, where I had been a houseman before coming to Rhodesia. He and his wife were very kind to me and I treated their house as my second home. The shop was right on the corner of the square, opposite the hotel, and the Dixons lived in rooms behind the shop – big airy rooms opening onto a nice garden, and it was a very pleasant cool house to go to when one felt rather fagged out. I had almost a regular once a week engagement to have supper with them, and I went every night without being asked, and if I did not come they would realise that I had probably been called out. An easy and happy

arrangement was this. Dixon suffered rather badly from asthma, and when he was ill I took it upon myself to go down and do the dispensing and the fixing up of any of the orders that were needed for his customers.

The people in the district were much more sociable than any I had experienced so far. The Women's Institute seemed to have decided that, as I had managed a period in Shamva and Enkeldoorn, they were prepared to tolerate me in Sinoia. I travelled quite a lot in the district, and occasionally the police at Sipolilo wanted me for post mortems, as did the police at Miami (which was to be "the" place 10 years later when it became inflated by Karoi), so that I had a lot of travelling to do, and I soon found that I needed another car – a Dodge two-seater. I realised then that in Rhodesia as a doctor with a biggish practice you were lucky if your car lasted two years, and you had to get another one. Although the transport allowance was a shilling a mile, and if you carried Government patients (which included Africans) 2d for each patient you carried in your vehicle to the hospital, even at this rate one could not make any money on running your own car on Government business. [Dr Blair's records confirm the heavy toll on vehicles: on Dec 16 1933 he traded in a V-8 Roadster for £150 and paid £245 for a Ford V-8 Coupe, and on 13 Feb 1935, just 14 months later, the Ford was traded in for £185 and a Terroplane Coupe purchased for £330. In addition, his garage bills show a fair expenditure for replacement of springs and shock absorbers. He called his cars *Locust I*, *Locust II* and so on, perhaps because of their ferocious appetite for his salary.]

[In 1933, on one of his many breaks away from Sinoia, Dr Blair was sent to Gwelo]. At Gwelo I had to work for 5 months as a locum for Dr Vickers, who was then Senior Medical



**Pamela Palmer, Eric Thompson, W. Morris and Dr Blair with *Locust I*,
Mtoroshanga Pass, 1934.**

Officer there. He was also the Medical Officer to the Rhodesia Railways. The hospital [*was located in*] what I now believe is the school hostel near the Railway, a very old building in those days. The house itself was on the corner of a street and remarkably cold. It was one of the coldest winters they had had at Gwelo and it was so cold that frequently, having had my supper at night, I would climb into bed with hot water bottles and read in bed rather than sit in a chair reading.

As Railway Medical Officer I had to pay occasional trips up and down the railway line in the extraordinary way the Rhodesia Railways worked. A medical officer from Bulawayo came all the way to the outskirts of Gwelo, while I did from Gwelo, station included, to Que Que inclusive, and the whole length of the Fort Victoria branch line. The trip to Que Que I quite enjoyed because, while I was at Gwelo, a friend of mine, who is now Professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology in Manchester, Professor Morris, was the locum for the mine doctor in Que Que, Dr Davies. So this provided me with a good opportunity when I went to Que Que to go up to see my friend at the Davies' house. Although Dr Davies was away his wife was there, and Mrs Davies used to give us terrific teas, and we would have a yarn about our patients and generally chat about things.

Dr Vickers was a doctor in the old tradition: he was a very sound clinician, not very adventurous, and he wasn't very interested in doing surgery. Most of the surgery in Gwelo at this time was done by a young doctor who had originally been a Seventh Day Adventist missionary at a mission in lower Gwelo and had given up the mission field and come to work in private practice in Gwelo. [He was] a very competent surgeon. I was very glad of this because I was a very incompetent surgeon and I was quite glad when he was there to do some of the trickier things.



The very young Dr Blair, Kwe Kwe River, 1933

One of the lines of treatment that Dr Vickers used at Gwelo was to me quite novel, and I had never heard of it before. It was in the winter, and we had a lot of cases of pneumonia in the African wards. These were all treated by having 20 ccs of a diluted solution of potassium permanganate given intravenously. A tray was prepared with a whole row of 20 cc syringes filled with potpermag solution and you had to go along the pneumonia patients and give them by slow injections 20 ccs of potpermag. I must say I was amazed at the very good reaction of the patients to this treatment. I have never seen or heard of it since, and I must admit I have never used it since, but I am sure that Dr Vickers' patients who suffered from pneumonia had as good if not better survival rates than did pneumonias treated by other methods at the time. This was, of course, long before prontosil, sulfonamide or penicillin.

He was also a great protagonist of sodium gluconate and he used to give patients sodium gluconate intramuscularly on the turn – it was almost universal that every patient that went into the African Hospital got sodium gluconate. I never quite understood why, but being a locum you soon learnt that you didn't rush around countermanding all the standing instructions given by your predecessor. This was most unwise, the staff looked upon you as an upstart, an impudent young man, so you were much better to let things carry on unless your conscience felt that this was quite wrong and it shouldn't go on.

Gwelo I didn't like, it was too big a place to make many friends, and I was too busy to have any spare time to travel around very much. The Matron at the time, Miss Pettigrew, was very kind and good to me. We used to go for picnics in the Selukwe district, which is still to this day one of the most beautiful parts of Rhodesia. We had picnics in some of the rocky glens near the streams round about Selukwe, especially when the Masasa was in full leaf. Selukwe, of course, had its own doctor, Dr Sonny Saunders, who even at that date was very well established in Selukwe. In Gwelo there was only the surgeon (whose name



Miss Jarvis, Miss Pettigrew (Matron at Gwelo) and Dr Blair, Kwe Kwe River, 1933

I cannot recollect) and Dr Millner, who was the wife of a clerk in the Native Department at the time. We were the three doctors in Gwelo. There was not the build-up of doctors there now is in that centre, and in fact Gwelo was not considered a medical centre at all between Salisbury and Bulawayo.

Not long after I went [back] to Sinoia I found a case of sleeping sickness coming into the African Hospital. [Mpambike was admitted on 27 Dec 1933, and the diagnosis was confirmed by blood examination on 3 January 1934.] To find the trypanosomes in the blood was a great thrill, as I had never seen them before, and here I was actually seeing a patient with the blood infection! The patient was treated with the current treatment, Bayer 205 and tryparsamide. When I started investigating his movements, he appeared to come from Portelet Estate, which was tsetse fly free, 15 miles south of Sinoia. A little later another patient from this area came in [Sitale] and this raised the scare that Africans with their donkeys carrying bags of maize slung over their backs were perhaps infiltrating tsetse fly out of the Magondi “fly” belt onto farms [a path from the “fly” area on the Umfuli



Dr Blair studying slides from the 1934 Trypanosomiasis Survey

River ran through Myinga and Portelet Estate to Sinoia], and some of the labourers were contracting the disease. Just about this time the case of a European getting infected with sleeping sickness from the Umniati River south of Sinoia came to the fore – the famous case, one of the Lamb brothers of Salisbury, who had been out shooting [on a buffalo hunt to the Hartley “fly” area near Gowe] and developed sleeping sickness and died [in October 1933] eight weeks after visiting the area. [A second European, Mr F. Arnold, also picked up the disease while in the Umniati area around Robb’s Drift and Gowe, and actually met Lamb there. He survived.]

As a result of this I was asked to do a sleeping sickness survey in the west Hartley district and Sebungwe, and to undertake this I was permitted to choose somebody who would go as my technician guide. I was able to ask for Trooper Thompson of the Police whom I had first met at Shamva, and who was now working in Lomagundi, and we were given a truck. I gave him a little simple instruction in microscopy and the two of us set off to go to Gatooma, where I met for the first time Dr Alexander Mackenzie, who had been the Senior Government Medical Officer in the Hartley area for very many years. He had his headquarters in Gatooma and he and his wife were very kind to the pair of us.

We set off with our stores and a native messenger guide and I had with me my personal servant Chris Chinyani [Dr Blair remarks in his photograph album that “My man Chris” was called “Chris to rhyme with grease”], who had joined me first at Shamva some months before. We made our base camp at Robb’s Drift on the Umniati [east of Gokwe, near the confluence of the Umniati and its tributary, the Chemvuri], and from there did surveys of the African population up and down the Umniati River looking for people with sleeping sickness. We had a very interesting time and I was able to describe the healthy carrier type of sickness which we discovered at Gowe about 20 miles north from Robb’s Drift. This trip was also memorable in that it was my first meeting with Mr J. K. Chorley, who was then



**Examining patients at base camp at Robb’s Drift (Umniati River),
1934 Trypanosomiasis Survey**



Chris Chinyani in full uniform, 1934 Trypanosomiasis Survey

the entomologist in charge of tsetse operations. From him of course we learnt lots about the natural habitats of the tsetse fly and how the disease had waxed and waned in this part of Rhodesia. He was a marvellous man himself, and was able to make any dull journey a joy with his descriptions of trees, birds, insects etc. Although we kept our base camp at Robb's Drift we spent much time visiting the villages up and down stream, looking for cases of sleeping sickness. In addition to the cases of healthy carriers which had been described from this area, there were a lot of interesting parasitological facts found out. For example, we found that a very large number of the people living in the area suffered from filarial infection, a blood worm infection which appeared to cause no illness to the patients concerned. At a very much later date, after I had spent some time in London [at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine], I realised that some of the malaria parasites which I had seen and remarked on their strange appearance were, in fact, the parasites of Plasmodium



Jim Chorley, 1934

ovale – one of the malaria parasites not previously described in this part of Africa. So, all in all, the first venture into this field proved very interesting indeed. While my companion Thompson drove the truck via Gatooma to Gokwe, I walked with our carriers and others cross country from Robb's Drift to Gokwe. We there set out on our next journey, which was to contact another medical survey party which was operating north of the Umniati River under Dr J. L. M. Jeffares. The truck took us as far as Cameron's store [Eden Store run by Mr Cameron, on the Sessami River near its confluence with the Bumi River] and from there Thompson, myself and six carriers walked down the river to the Zambezi and along to the Kariba Gorge.

We did this journey, which was just over one hundred miles, in three days, so we were fairly well pushed to be there on time. We met Dr Jeffares and his party, which included Mr Ling – who later became a very senior Native Commissioner – and we spent a weekend at Kariba camped on a ledge just overlooking the Zambezi. On one of our early mornings we had a great sighting of a small herd of elephants accompanied by young ones coming down to water at the Zambezi in a pool away from the main flow of water, and there the adults and the young played, throwing sand over one another. It was a wonderful sight to see this going on not more than 50 yards from us across the river.

I imagine, from a visit to Kariba since the construction of the dam, that our camp site is now well under water, just on the top side of the dam. At the place where we were camped,



**Carriers approaching base camp at Robb's Drift (Umniati River),
1934 Trypanosomiasis Survey**

on the south bank where the Umniati River comes into the Zambezi, the Umniati/Zambezi water is compressed into a very narrow fissure, not more than 18 feet across. Story has it that a District Commissioner's clerk in the Army in fact jumped the gorge from the Southern Rhodesian bank to the Northern Rhodesian bank where the rocks on the Northern Rhodesian bank were at a lower level, but was unable to come back, and had to walk eighteen miles upstream to find a village with a canoe to ferry him back across to the south bank.

[On returning from the Zambezi, Dr Blair's party was joined at Cameron's store by Assistant Native Commissioner H. A. K. Simpkins (their administrative officer), for the remainder of the survey of the Sebungwe and the Zambezi valley. An account of Dr Blair's life, the continuation of the 1934 Trypanosomiasis Survey (May–September 1934), a Veld Rodent Plague Survey (May–June 1935), the 1935 Trypanosomiasis Survey (July–September 1935), and further recollections of life as a GMO may be found in *Heritage of Zimbabwe* No. 26, 2007, p132–150. Eric Thompson's articles on the Surveys may also be found in the 1995, 1996 and 1997 editions of *Heritage of Zimbabwe*.]

Hugh Tracey (1903–1977): The Cecil Sharp of Africa

Compiled by Fraser Edkins and Diane Thram

None of us can ever adequately thank Hugh Tracey for his contribution to the preservation of African heritage through his outstanding effort in amassing one of the most significant collections of field recordings of African music in existence.¹

Warming our fronts round a log fire under the sparkling dome of a Rhodesian night is the setting in which I heard and joined in the chorus of the songs of the Shona minstrels, laughed till I ached at their jokes and stories, talked gossip and discussed hut tax, cattle, religion or what the world was coming to. For hours on end I have watched their dances and been nearly deafened yet enthralled by the drums. I have played drums with them till my hands were numb with beating and I knew what the elevation of rhythm really meant to one who participates and not only looks on. Whilst they were absorbed with the music I would slip round and observe each player or singer and, with the recording gear all set out on the trailer, make a gramophone record.²

In 1932 Bessie Nevada Dobbs, a single woman aged 32, sailed on the *Winchester Castle* to Cape Town and boarded a train for Salisbury in the then colony of Southern Rhodesia. She hailed from Peterborough and was a volunteer lay teacher on a four-year stint assigned to St. David's Mission, Bonda, by the United Kingdom based Transvaal and Southern Rhodesian Mission. She was present at one of those log-fires “under the sparkling dome of a Rhodesian night” described by Tracey. Her letter home of 21st November 1932 reads as follows:

Monday, Nov 21st 1932

My dearest Mother, Dad and All

My birthday celebrations were such that none of us are likely to forget. I had thought that we would have a picnic or tea-party to celebrate the occasion, but everything like that was knocked on the head by the arrival on Friday afternoon of Mr. Hugh Tracey – the Hugh Tracey who is doing for Rhodesia what Cecil Sharpe (sic) did for England.³ He arrived about 4.30pm with his boy and his kit; his banjo, records, gramophone recording machine and whatnot else. At the time I was having a teachers meeting, and our thoughts being still rather full of Inspectors, we surmised he must be another of the same species, even though he had lustrous dark eyes and a lovely smile. However,

¹ All quotations in this article are taken from Diane Thram (ed.), *For Future Generations: Hugh Tracey and the International Library of African Music* (Grahamstown: International Library of African Music, 2010). Professor Thram is Director of the International Library of African Music (ILAM) and editor of its academic journal, *African Music*.

² Hugh Tracey, quoted in Thram (ed.) *For Future Generations*, 76.

³ Cecil James Sharp (1859–1924) was a Cambridge-educated lawyer who turned to music and the collection and publication of British and American folk songs and dances, also founding the Folk Dance Society in 1911.

when we learned who he was, we were anxious to hear him sing and play. Mayi invited us to coffee and dinner, and then Mr. Tracey, reclining in an easy chair, his banjo across his knee, sang to us song after song (native tunes and words) that he had collected from the people during his journeys up and down Rhodesia. Some of the songs were quite delightful, and the sentiment very pleasing. I was very surprised, for I was inclined to think that all Native music was just monotonous repetition. As a matter of fact there is usually a good story, but when one's ear is unaccustomed, one often only hears the chorus. I will give you an example – a lament which is sung at the death of a child:

Why does the lonely one weep?

She weeps for the child

Who is it digging the grave?

'Tis the father who weeps as he digs the grave for his child

Why does the mother cry?

She cries for her child

Who is dead

Who made the child to die?

It is God.

When he had sung us many songs, we started talking about music, Art, Psychology and the African, Christianity and Native Spirit worship. Mr Tracey's conversation was exceedingly interesting and we lost all count of time – It was after 10pm when Miss B. and I left for home, and another full hour before Mr. Tracey and the Lawrences went to bed. We arranged that on the following night we would have a campfire and get some people from nearby villages to come and sing, for we knew we should get nothing from them in the daytime. Penney wanted to ask Mr. Tracey to dinner, so Baba and Mayi came to dinner with us as previously arranged, then we all met about 8pm round the huge-est camp-fire I have ever seen – whole tree trunks were thrown on to the fire, and I am sure it was big enough to roast an ox. A good crowd of people turned up, and when we arrived, were already sitting around the fire singing. (We had delayed our arrival purposely). Stanley was M.C. and Mr Tracey, book in hand, was taking down words of songs he did not know. At first they sang common Threshing and Hunting songs, but gradually got to better stuff. Some women sang a cradle song, then a song about going to fetch firewood from the forest. After this, the men did a war song with actions which were really funny. But the best of all was the ballad sung by our teachers – Herbert, who has a lovely voice, taking the solos, and the others joining in the choruses. Mr Tracey was so taken with this, that he decided to record it. Everyone waited in tense excitement while the recording machine was put into action, and with bated breath, whilst the teachers sang into “the thing”. Imagine the awe and wonderment of our people, when he put the newly-made record (an aluminum plate) on to the gramophone and played it back!!! Talk about black magic!! After this he recorded the Mothers song about firewood. The dear old things

were as proud as punch when they heard their own voices on a Record. I wish you could have seen their faces – they glowed. I think they will never forget the night they sang into the “machine” for the gramophone man.⁴

When I, Fraser Edkins, was shown a transcript of this letter I was alarmed by my ignorance of Hugh Tracey, and of Cecil Sharp for that matter; and, suspecting it might be widespread, I undertook modest research under the guidance of Professor Diane Thram and this article is the result of our joint input. The contents are drawn from the International Library of African Music (ILAM) website, <www.ilam.ru.ac.za> (ILAM history-Hugh Tracey’s portrait) and articles by Diane Thram and Noel Lobley published in *For Future Generations – Hugh Tracey and the International Library of African Music* (2010), the exhibit catalogue that accompanies the ILAM travelling museum exhibit of the same title. This catalogue includes a CD with twenty selected songs from Hugh Tracey’s field recordings, one for each of the twenty African instruments displayed in the exhibit, including mbira, drums, pipes, lyres, musical bows, harps, xylophones, lutes, horns and flutes. Song lyrics printed at the end of this article are taken from Hugh Tracey’s publications, *Lalela Zulu 100 Zulu Lyrics* (1948) and *African Dances of the Witwatersrand Gold Mines* (1952).

Hugh Tracey was the younger brother of Leonard Tracey, a tobacco farmer who was the late C.G. Tracey’s father. Leonard Tracey (from Devonshire), as a serviceman wounded in World War I, had been allotted farm land in Southern Rhodesia. He was joined in the Colony in 1921 by his 18-year-old brother Hugh, armed with briefcase, £100 and the “well-founded misgivings” of his Devonshire family, the idea being that he would assist Leonard in tobacco farming. Hugh Tracey learned the Karanga dialect of the Shona language through working with the farm labourers in the fields. He developed a love for their music and was convinced of the enormous value of music in their lives. He had a good voice himself and learned the labourers’ songs by singing along and in this way filled notebooks with the words of the songs he heard in the tobacco fields. He recognized that the attitude of many in the colonial community that Africans had no worthwhile music was mistaken, and this gave rise to his life’s work. Prominent Ghanaian ethnomusicologist, Kwabena Nketia, described Hugh Tracey as “foremost among scholars of the colonial period who viewed African music as an artistic heritage to be shared, preserved and promoted”.⁵

The map reproduced below shows the extent of Tracey’s nineteen field excursions, during which he recorded 952 field tapes, documenting local indigenous and popular music of much of southern, central, and eastern Africa, from South Africa as far north as the Congolese border with Sudan and Uganda and Rwanda. His passion took him, often with insufficient financial backing, lugging bulky recording equipment, to cover almost a third of the continent. Tracey, noted for his two LP series, *Sound of Africa* (210 LPs) and *Music of Africa* (25 LPs) published and distributed internationally in the 1960s, always intended to publish more. But, by his own estimate, his final sample was but one hundredth part of the repertory of the region at the time.

Thanks largely to the efforts of ILAM’s current Director, Diane Thram, and a grant from the Rand Merchant Bank Expressions Fund in 2008 and the Mellon Foundation in 2009, support was obtained to digitize, catalogue and create Internet access to Tracey’s original

⁴ “Baba” and “Mayi” were the Reverend Harold and Mrs Augusta Lawrence, the school head and his wife. “Penney” and “Ms B” were also teachers at the mission school, as were Herbert and Stanley, locally recruited.

⁵ H. K. Nketia, quoted in Thram (ed.) *For Future Generations*, 12.



Tracey's map from Volume 1 of the Catalogue for his 210 LP *Sound of Africa* series (1973) showing the locations where the 3100 recordings in the series were made. (ILAM image)



Hugh Tracey as a young man in 1932. (ILAM image)

field tapes (some being in the early stages of decomposition and none curated). An additional grant from the National Heritage Council provided funds to catalogue, digitize and create internet access to the approximately 8,000 images, primarily from Hugh Tracey's field excursions, archived at ILAM. This heritage, which might otherwise have lain on a shelf, or on an obscure server, dead to the world, has been allowed to live again in the form of "The Hugh Tracey Collection" accessible via the ILAM website 'audio archive' and 'photo archive' search capability.

The first pieces of indigenous Southern Rhodesian music to be recorded and published were a number of discs made in 1929 with the help of the Columbia recording company (CBS), who had representatives visiting South Africa. Piling into a lorry, Tracey took fourteen young Karanga men with him to record in South Africa and several of those recordings were used by John Hammond of CBS at Carnegie Hall in New York as preliminary music to the first ever appearance on stage in that city of a number of Negro bands from the southern states.

In 1931, Hugh Tracey was awarded a small Carnegie Fellowship grant to study the music of Southern Rhodesia. His first recording equipment "ploughed a furrow in soft aluminium" (discs). That fieldwork was done between June 1932 and July 1933 (including the performance witnessed by Bessie Dobbs at Bonda) when he recorded over 600 songs and tunes on plain aluminium discs with a very early model of a portable recording machine. Harold Jowitt, Director of Native Development in the Southern Rhodesian government, was

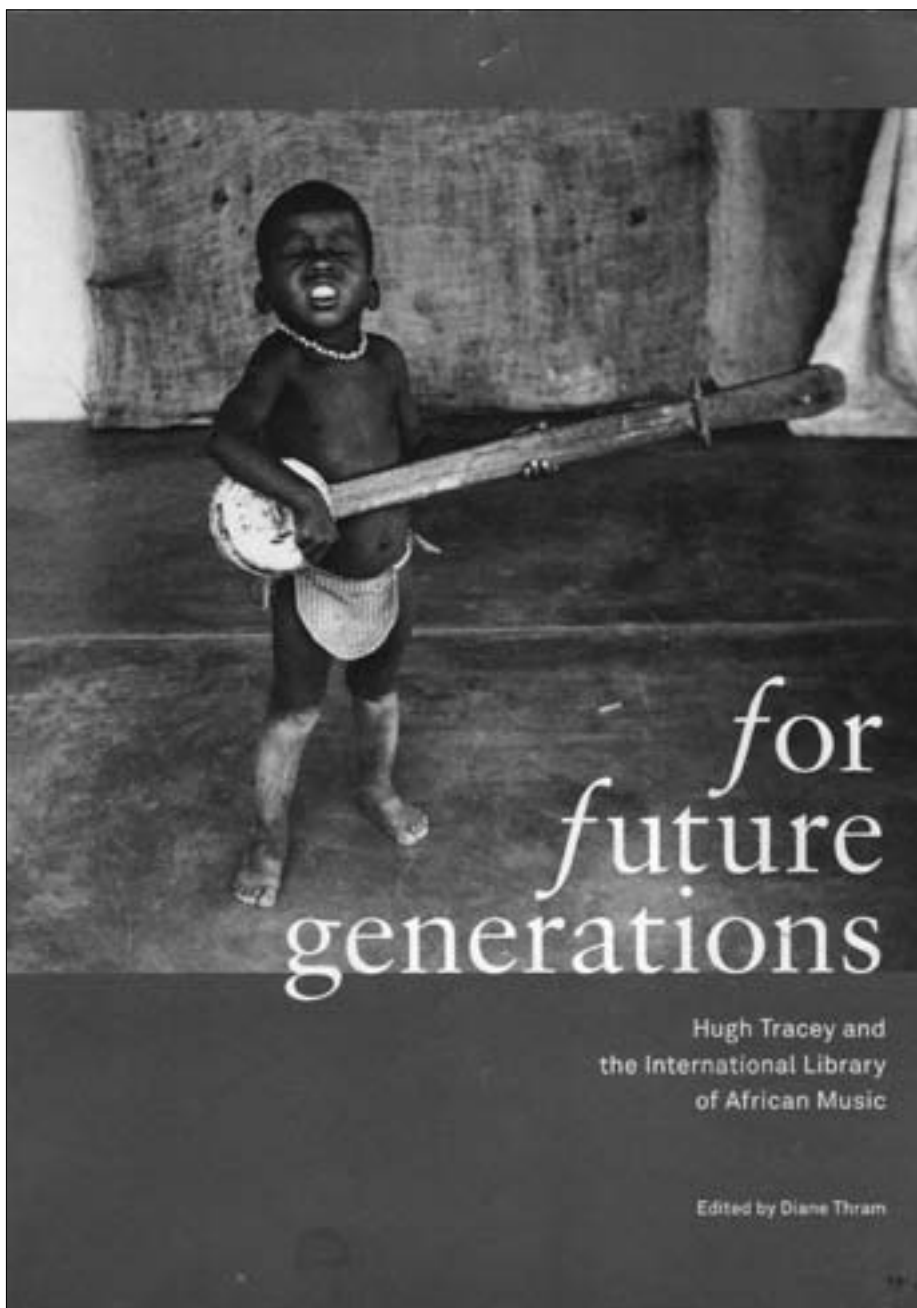


Hugh Tracey in Cape Town studio with Karanga musicians, March 1933. (ILAM image)

instrumental in Tracey obtaining the Fellowship. But Jowitt, offended by Tracey's comments in his subsequent report to Carnegie to the effect that the missionary churches were causing irreparable damage to African culture wherever they set foot, failed to forward Tracey's report to the Carnegie Foundation and, as a result, it was never published. However, thanks to ILAM's current Director, Diane Thram, a sizeable portion of Hugh Tracey's Carnegie Report, beautifully reproduced from the original manuscript, appears on pages 22–73 of the ILAM exhibit catalogue, *For Future Generations*.

In 1933, Tracey repeated the 1929 studio recording exercise in South Africa and the resulting 78 rpm discs (together with those compiled by the Reverend A. M. Jones in Northern Rhodesia and a few contemporary commercial recordings of “township music”) ushered in a new era in the study of folk music in Southern Rhodesia. Tracey had held discussions in 1931 at the Royal College of Music in London with renowned composers Ralph Vaughan Williams and Gustav Holst, who encouraged him to concentrate on discovering and recording the range and extent of African music, to ignore for the time being any attempt to score the music, and rather to record as much material as funds would allow. Analysis of the music could then follow on a sounder foundation based on the evidence collected on discs and not upon hearsay or romantic imagination. Writing in the Catalogue (1973) to his monumental 210 LP *Sound of Africa* series Tracey said:

However, at the time, the public showed little interest, nor appreciated the social and artistic value of the music for future generations of Africans. Recordings of tribal music, however good, were not considered to have commercial value, appealing only to those familiar with the dialect, (few of whom in any case would have the necessary apparatus on which to play them).



ILAM *For Future Generations* museum exhibit catalogue cover (2010).

Consequently, no further research funds were made available and for the next twelve years I took up broadcasting as a profession, taking every opportunity of introducing the music to South African and other radio audiences.

By 1946 the challenge was for someone to devote more time and energy to assessing the social value of authentic African music. With minor exceptions the schools and universities of Central and Southern Africa had failed to give the study of the major oral art of their countries any permanent place in their disciplines. The challenge had to be met, funded and equipped and techniques developed to ensure that the unwritten compositions of genuine African musicians would not be thrust aside by the artificially stimulated demands of commerce and radio and the intrusion of “non-African” popular music on films and records.

It was Eric Gallo of Johannesburg who made the next part of Tracey’s research possible, giving him headquarters from which to work and financial support for his preliminary expeditions into the more remote areas. Gallo also undertook to publish a proportion of Tracey’s recordings, admittedly mostly those which might become “hits” for Gallo Records from its growing African clientele, (largely industrial workers in towns who were the only section of the African community who could afford spring-wound gramophones).

By 1953 it was clear that an independent organization would have to be set up to relieve Gallo of the financial responsibility. A lecture tour by Hugh Tracey of several British universities in 1953 and an appearance for the Royal African Society in London produced a Nuffield Foundation grant with which to establish a non-profit research organization under the title of the International Library of African Music (ILAM).



Mbuti pygmies listening to the playbacks of their music: DRC 1952. (ILAM image)

Upon Tracey's return to South Africa various Southern Rhodesian, South African and Congolese mining companies generously doubled the Nuffield grant allowing him to establish the International Library of African Music in 1954 as an independent archive and research institute devoted to documentation, preservation and research of African music. Always aware of the need to disseminate his recordings and the findings of research, Tracey established ILAM's journal, *African Music*, and continually made efforts to bring attention to the cultural importance of African music and the genius of African musicians in their own right. By 1960, after the publication of the first 100 records in ILAM's *Sound of Africa* series, funds were low. Hugh Tracey was invited by the U.S. State Department to lecture at over twenty universities in America which had African Studies Departments. This made it possible for him to approach the Ford Foundation for a grant which enabled the publication of an additional 100 discs from material previously collected on tape in the field.

All items on the 210 discs of the *Sound of Africa* series were recorded personally by Tracey in their districts of origin, many in remote bush areas. Recording in the field throughout sub-Saharan Africa, wherever the music was being performed, was not a simple task. He had to construct a specially customized roof raised high enough so his sound engineer could stand in the sound truck and it had to have an engine strong enough to pull a generator weighing half a ton to provide the electricity required for recording. The noisy generator had to be set up out of earshot requiring a long cable to be run from the generator to the truck where the sound engineer controlled the recording equipment. Microphone in right hand and stopwatch in left, Tracey moved around among the musicians following the sounds to capture the essence of each performance with a good sound balance. Purpose-designed field cards for each recording produced detailed documentation from which he compiled catalogues of the music style recorded and of the indigenous musical instruments he studied. With a set of 54 self-designed tempered-steel tuning forks he took thousands of measurements of African instrument tunings.

In 1969, Hugh Tracey was joined in his research by his son Andrew, now Professor Emeritus at Rhodes University, who was Director of ILAM from 1977–2005. An accomplished musician and musical director of the long-running hit stage show "Wait a Minim", Andrew Tracey brought Caribbean steel band music to South Africa after falling in love with it while touring with "Wait a Minim". Andrew Tracey remembers his father as a dynamic confident figure moving easily in the company of other leading men in their fields. Whilst away on recording tours Tracey would keep his family in touch with his favourite discoveries on 12-inch acetate discs with his drawings on the covers, for example of Tutsi dancers from Rwanda or a Congolese chief's knife or a Nyoro horn band from Uganda. After a 13-year separation, whilst Andrew was schooled, completed his military service in Kenya, and undertook an Oxford degree in anthropology, he was eventually able to join forces with his father in his work. Andrew says his father was practical, musical, artistic, spiritual, charming with people, intensely proud of his sons Andrew and Paul and utterly dedicated to the music and people of Africa. He felt a deep sense of gratitude to the thousands of African folk musicians who performed for him, most without monetary reward, but with genuine satisfaction at being able to hear themselves for the first time through the medium of electrical recording.

Tracey organized his recordings according to song types determined by their function in social life; hence marriage songs, circumcision songs, funeral songs, healing songs, curses,



Hugh Tracey with some instruments in his collection. (ILAM image)

child songs, lullabies, fighting songs, drinking songs, cattle herding songs, love songs, humorous songs, songs for marital troubles and for ancestral spirits, songs of rain and poverty, even mouse hunting songs, songs for pulling canoes, songs warning of European beer and venereal disease, fishing songs, a song about the sound of unseen aeroplanes, story songs of the mosquito which overturned a lorry, of the donkey wanting wages instead of maize, of the baboon which died somersaulting for joy at hearing the sound of drums and so on, a clear testimony to the way music is part of the fabric of life in African societies.

Tracey preferred musical styles that he judged to be “truly indigenous” (those owing little or nothing to Western musical influences) but he recognized the need to present African music as a dynamic and evolving art form and not merely to salvage and preserve a receding tradition. He did this by documenting examples of emerging modern guitar styles, including township jive and adaptations of Christian masses and local church music. Some music was chosen for the “European ear” for financial reasons, but corporate grants always remained essential to carry out his work.



Congolese guitarist Jean Bosco Mwenda, recorded by Tracey in 1952, achieved international fame with his hit, *Masanga*, a Hugh Tracey field recording. (ILAM image)

A current vision of ILAM is to undertake a re-study of selected Hugh Tracey's field recordings by re-visiting the places where he taped to record what is being performed there now and at the same time give copies of the original field recordings to their communities of origin. Although the breadth and quality of Tracey's recorded archives are well-known internationally in academic circles, he hoped one of the principal audiences for his recordings would be future generations of urban African musicians, people moving from rural villages in search of work, people he feared were becoming divorced from their indigenous morals, songs and sounds so vibrantly expressed in their rural music. He was not concerned that his recordings be "popular", but he wanted them to provide contact with the balanced social outlook of their rural heritage to the many living away from their homes in industrial townships. He saw indigenous musicians as potential moral guardians of rural life.

The chronicler Anthony Trowbridge felt Hugh Tracey deserved special recognition as "a conservationist" and "one of the world's leading art collectors and historians", one whose pivotal role in the development of the professional and scientific study of African music was yet to be fully recognized.⁶ At Tracey's memorial service on 26th October 1977, mining magnate Denis Etheredge predicted that "those who do not understand now the value of keeping this African music will certainly in fifty years time".⁷

Recent initiatives such as the 'ILAM Music Heritage Project, SA', which has developed

⁶ A. Trowbridge, quoted in Thram (ed.) *For Future Generations*, 78.

⁷ D. Etheredge, quoted in Thram (ed.) *For Future Generations*, 76.

music education textbooks for schools based on Tracey’s field recordings and archived images, and the creation of internet access to ILAM’s holdings via its website provide circulation to global audiences as diverse as rock bands and hip-hop artists and is evidence of how the recordings are continuing to fulfil Tracey’s wish for them to inspire future generations. More than 50 years on, new and creative responses to his recordings are still emerging, responses which will hopefully extend the continuity and perpetuate the musical genius that flows from the ancestors of the musicians recorded by Tracey.

A FEW ZULU LANGUAGE SONGS RECORDED BY HUGH TRACEY

The subject matter of these songs reflect amusing and enlightening elements of social and military history, including the death of the Prince Imperial Louis Napoleon, the service of black soldiers in World War I, the Pass Laws, the impact of churches and of town life on rural dwellers, Shaka’s ways, and the charming reference to girlfriends as “Studebakers”.

Umagazini

<i>Kwadubula umbayimbayi</i>	The cannon was fired.
<i>Inkosi emhlophe sayibamba thina</i>	We caught the white prince ourselves.

(This song refers to the death of the Prince Imperial Louis Napoleon in the Zulu War of 1879.)

Uhulumeni

<i>Kulukhuni kungabile</i>	It is very hard and difficult
<i>Ukubekana naJalimani</i>	To face the Germans without arms
<i>singaphethe lutho,</i>	The Government says we must go to France
<i>Uhulumeni uthi asihlome siye</i>	No man is bold enough to face the Germans
<i>eFransi</i>	Without arms
<i>Akukhondoda enesibindi</i>	
<i>sokubekana neJalimani</i>	
<i>Ingaphethe lutho</i>	

(A song about the refusal of the Government to allow the Zulu labour contingent in France in the First World War to carry firearms.)

Nyikithi

<i>Oz’ uphelele!</i>	All together now!
<i>Hiya sesimphethe!</i>	Hiya! Hold together!
<i>Sikhuluma nobani?</i>	Whom do we address?
<i>Sikhuluma nephoyisa</i>	We address the policeman
<i>Elesab’ insimbi</i>	The one who fears the hand-cuffs
<i>O sigubu mbambe!</i>	O’ heave hold!
<i>Simthi : Nyikithi!</i>	Lift, up together!
<i>Ayivumi yithele amanzi!</i>	If it sticks, try water!

(A well-known Zulu work chant heard any day where Zulus are employed on lifting heavy weights. They have no illusions about the police who are only human like them and fear the very hand-cuffs they use on others.)

Bayete*Bayete! Bayete! UyiZulu!**Bayete zinyane lesilo**Nkonyane yendlovu**Uyimbube!**Bayete zinyane lesilo!**Nkonyane yendlovu**Uyimbube!*

(A Zulu praise song, particularly for the Paramount Chief.)

Hail! Hail! You Zulu!

Hail, Leopard's Cub

Offspring of the Elephant!

You Lion!

Hail, Leopard's Cub

Offspring of the Elephant!

You Lion!

Guga Mazimba*Guga mazimba sala nhliziyo**Guga sithebe kade wawudlela**Akukho sibonda siguga**Namagxolo aso,**Akukho soka lahlala kahle imbangi ikhala*

The body perishes, the heart

stays young,

The platter wears away with

serving food

No log retains its bark when old,

No lover peaceful while the rival weeps

(A famous Zulu poem sung by those who have passed their prime, said to have been sung even before the time of Shaka.)

Ohamba Njengami*Ohamba njengami**Mabel' ejongosi**Ohamba njengami**Mabel' ejongosi*

Walk as I walk

Young maid

Walk as I walk

Young maid

(A country girl's song, the words an injunction to young girls to behave circumspectly like their elder sisters.)

Wena Okhala Uyogana*Wena okhala uyogana**Sibuhlungu isidwaba*

You, you cry as you go to your wedding

The leather skirt is painful to wear

(A song referring to the stiff and chafing leather skirt which is worn by women when they get married, the significance being the adjustments to married life which a girl must make, including leaving home.)

Inkomidi Isesikoleni*Inkomidi isesikoleni**Sihlushwa amakholwa*

The Committee is at the school

We are plagued by Christians

(Referring to the church committees which met in the local school buildings to plan campaigns against the "heathen" in the district.)

Yethul' Isigqoko*Yethul' isigqoko sakho,**Igama lakho lasekhaya ungubani?**Uyihlo ubani?*

Take off your hat

What is your home name?

Who is your father?

Inkosi yakho ubani?

Who is your chief?

Uthelaphi wena?

Where do you pay your tax?

Uphuzwa maphi amanzi?

What river do you drink?

Sikhalela izwe lakithi

We mourn for our country.

(A song about the Pass Office where attendance may take hours or days – perhaps Zimbabweans trying to renew their passports etcetera should sing it?)

Isitayila

Gijima mfana uyodlala “isitayila”

Hurry boys and play a “style”

Kubo kantombi yakho

At your girl’s home

Nanka amaphoyisa, fihlani utshwala!

Here are the police! Hide the beer!

(A song by Matabele composer Lot Dube. An imitation of a European tune was a “style” isitayila.)

Vuma Sigonane

Woza lapha sithandwa sami

Come here my beloved

Woza, ngithathe uKiss.

Come, give me a kiss

Kwafika umhetho omusha,

There is a new law

Othi masigonane

Which says we must embrace each other

(Kissing was a custom unknown to the early Zulus. The song indicates an acknowledgment of this manner of fond embrace by the time of Shaka’s heirs.)

Ngeke Ngipinde

Ngeke ngipinde ngiyithathe

I will never again marry a girl who falls

eyeqale yangenza ishende.

in love with me deceitfully

Zithi “Mzala ongiphathela amaswidi,”

They say “Cousin, buy me some sweets”

Kanti zisho emasokeni azo

When they really mean “lover”

(The man complains that his wife calls all her friends “cousin” when they are not her relatives but her other lovers.)

Nganona Izinsizwa

Ngabona izinsizwa nezintombi

I saw young men and girls in Durban

eThekwini,

Who wanted to go into the “hotels”

Zifuna ukungena emahotela

Where there were educated people

Lakukhona izicwicwivi

They come in and say,

Zingena zithi,

“Come waiter give us a cup of tea to warm us”

“Woza weta

Travelling gets me bothered

siphe ikhaphathi efudumalisayo

It has brought me to these “hotels”

Ukuhamba kuyakhathaza

Smart places Durban “hotels”

Kusiletha emahotela,”

Ezindaweni eziphambili, emahotela aseThekwini

(A song from the point of view of a countryman confused by the moderns. The “hotels” are tea rooms where educated Africans gathered to take their “cup of tea” – “ikhaphathi”. Degrees of erudition in Zulu slang included the “izicwicwivi” who pronounced their words like the twittering of birds which speak in English and imitate foreigners. The intelligentsia or “the

taught ones” were called “izifundiswa”. Students still at school were “izitshudeni” followed by the rabble, the mere “abafundi”).

Ezinsukwini Zawo Shaka

Ezinsukwini sawo Shaka

sasihlezi kahle.

Ezinsukwini zawo Shaka

sasingahlushwa yilutho,

Ngoba sasibuswa yindoda

endala uShaka

Eyayihamba iqholosha

Yayingasali emabuthweni

Uma kuyiwa empini

Wayengumholi wamaZulu

Kwaku uKing obusa abanye

oKing uShaka

Wayeyiqhawe lamaghawe

Wabulawa abanewabo ngenxa

Yomhawu

Wathi mhla efayo, “Ngeke

nalibusa maZulu!”

Noma sebefile sobakhumbula okhokho bethu

(The Zulus are loyal to the memory of Shaka, who died at the hands of his brothers. The prophetic words “Never will you rule Zulus” foretold the ascendancy of the Europeans over the Zulu race after his death.)

In Shaka’s days we lived well.

In Shaka’s days nothing worried us,
Because we were ruled by that old man,
Shaka.

He walked erect.

He never stayed behind

When his regiments went out to fight.

He was the leader of the Zulus,

He was the king that ruled over kings.

Shaka.

He was a hero of heroes

He was killed by his brothers through
jealousy.

He said when he died :”Never will you rule
Zulus”

Though our ancestors are dead we still
remember them.

Paulina Wase Turffontein

Kukhona intombi eTurffontein

Isithanda sibabili, sibathathu

Igama layo uPaulina

Ithanda amadoda onke

(A township shanty – the mining towns are full of “Paulinas”).

There is a maid in Turffontein

She loves two or three of us

Her name is Paulina

She loves all men.

Imali Yami

Imali yami O, imali yami, yek’

imali yami

Ngamshintsha upondo, ngamenza osheleni

Ngaqond’ eThwathwa, ngaphuza kancane

Tshelani ubaba O, tshelani umama

Ngasuk’ ekhaya ngesimilo

Ngafika eGoli ngadliwa izindunduma

Akenithule zingane zawobaba

Nginitshela indaba zokuhamba

Ngasuk’ ekhaya ngiqond’ omsebenzi

My money! Oh, my money!

My money, I am afraid!

I changed a pound to shillings

I came to the canteen and ate bit by bit

I changed a pound to shillings

I came to the canteen and drank bit by bit

Tell my father, tell my mother

I am afraid

I left my home with a good reputation

I came to Johannesburg and disappeared in the mine
dumps

*Ngafika eGoli ngadliwa ezindunduma
Ngangimthanda udali umaGumede
Esitudubeka ududu themba lami
Ngangimthanda noma ngilambile
Emafehlefehle ududu themba lami
Ngangimbanga nempandla engangobaba
Estiudubeka, ududu themba lami
Akesihambe siye eThekwini,
Somthola khona umfazi ongcono*

I loved my dear Magumede,
My darling “Studebaker,” my hope
I loved her even when I was hungry
My darling big fat girl, my hope
My rival was a bald-headed man like my father
My darling “Studebaker,” my hope
Let us go then to Durban
Where we shall get a better woman.

(A music hall song sung by the comedian Mavimbela. The theme is all too well known, that once you “disappear in the mine dumps” of Johannesburg you quickly go to the dogs and are lost to your family. The reference to the girlfriend as a “Studebaker” comes from the equally curvaceous shape of the 1950’s motor vehicles.)

The secret heart of an African is in his dances. It is so long since we (Westerners) used dancing for general outdoor recreation or religious ritual that we are frankly surprised to find a folk altogether absorbed in this ancient human activity. It is perhaps because we have relegated dancing to the past, to the ballroom or the stage, that we are inclined to demand a superficial romantic explanation for the continuance of an elementary social pleasure in our modern world.

(Hugh Tracey 1952: *African Dances of the Witwatersrand Gold Mines*. p. 1).

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If you are a member of the History Society of Zimbabwe,
please ensure that the Society headquarters
– <denjostephens@gmail.com> – has your email address,
as communications by post are no longer affordable.

The Allan Wilson Memorial, Matobo Hills

by Rob S. Burrett

This talk was originally presented, albeit summarised, to the Matabeleland Branch of the BSAP Regimental Association on 4 December 2010.

The events leading up to the death of Allan Wilson and 33 men are well-known and are not the subject of this talk. Suffice to say that the patrol was annihilated by the Ndebele near the northern banks of the Shangani River near Lupane on the 4 December 1893 in one of the last events of the Anglo-Matabele War (O'Reilly 1970). The War saw the absorption of King Lobengula Khumalo's realm into the territory then controlled by the British South Africa Company. The Wilson Patrol was a tragedy that could have been avoided, but the action of these men in the face of certain death became an integral component of an emerging White national identity in Rhodesia.

It is not my intention to discuss the pros and cons of this conflict and the personalities involved. Instead I wish to discuss the Shangani Memorial, that edifice built at the bequest of Cecil John Rhodes in the very heart of the Matopo Hills near the remains of this, one of the greatest of the late Victorian Empire builders. It is a structure well known to many of us but there are many misconceptions about its design and early history. Drawing on a useful compilation of facts on the Shangani Memorials by Langham-Carter (1982) I wish to consider this story while adding several early photographs of it.

After their victory over Wilson's men the Ndebele left the remains of the 34 white soldiers untouched, although they would have been subject to scavenging animals. This probably accounts for some of the bones, reportedly including one skull, not being recovered. The Ndebele respected their opponents while they buried their own nearby in a mass grave (Chief Mina Sivalo Mahlangu 1918, cited in Alexander *et al* 2000:20). The battle site, known locally as PuPu, is still revered and it is no coincidence that it was nearby that the political elite of post-independent Zimbabwe chose to develop the Matabeleland North Provincial Heroes Acre, exploiting for the purposes of contemporary power-play the memories of 1893. It is import to stress the existence of this hitherto unmarked grave of the "others". Is it not time that there now is an effort to marked the battlefield more suitably, commemorating all of those who fell more than a hundred years ago?

SHANGANI FEBRUARY – JULY 1894

After the return to Bulawayo of the Shangani Patrol there was uncertainty for some weeks as to the fate of the Wilson Patrol. Yes, gunfire had been heard from across the Shangani River but was every man dead? For this reason the then Administrator of Mashonaland, Dr Leander Starr Jameson, dispatched two men known to the Ndebele to try and establish the facts. James Dawson and James Reilly made contact with Induna Manondwane who had lead a section of the Ndebele forces in the fight. He guided the two Europeans to the battlefield on 23 February 1894 and assisted in collecting the remains. These were buried in a mass grave at the base of a large mopane tree on which Dawson carved the words "to brave



Fig. 1a & 1b. James Dawson's Shangani River Memorial and its remains today in the Natural History Museum, Bulawayo

men”, Fig. 1. Arriving back in Bulawayo on 7 March Dawson made a full report to Rhodes. It is said by one author that Rhodes visited the site soon after, but this is unlikely.

The location was and is still rather remote. From a practical point of view in the development the myth of Wilson and his ill-fated patrol any memorialisation on the actual site would have been difficult and without significant public impact. Rhodes, while recognizing the bravery of the dead men was quick to sense the possibilities. He was acutely aware of his need to build a legacy as Empire maker, financier and leader. Possibly this reflects his failing health and modest background in an England still riddled by class distinction. Cecil John Rhodes needed to create physical memorials to himself and his plans and I would argue that the Allan Wilson Memorial should be seen in this light. It was for his ego that he ordered the building of this structure adjacent to his own final resting place, basking in their reflected glory. This is no different to any leader of men throughout history I guess!

At a much later date the Rhodesian authorities raised a small granite obelisk at PuPu along side the site of a termite mound, supposedly the position of the last stand. The memorial listed Wilson’s men and still stands although much damaged, most especially by ZIPRA forces in the late 1970s and parties unknown during the so-called Dissident or Gukurahundi

period of the 1980s. Recently several community meetings in the area have called for the entire battlefield to be declared a national monument and for a suitable commemorative policy to be put in place. This has still to happen.

At some point Dawson's inscription was recovered and the tree trunk can be seen in the Zimbabwe Natural History Museum, Bulawayo. This must have been after sometime as the tree was clearly recovering and new bark had already formed smoothing over the harsh lines that had been cut into it in early 1894.

BURIAL SITE 2 – GREAT ZIMBABWE 1894–1904

Many of the men, including Allan Wilson, came from the neighbourhood of Fort Victoria (Masvingo). It was thus deemed suitable to reinter their remains close to home and family. Rhodes was also fascinated by the nearby Great Zimbabwe ruins. He believed, wrongly, that they were traces of some ancient civilization, possibly the Egyptians over 4000 years ago. Wishing to associate himself and his exploits with this “long-lost” empire, Rhodes initially envisaged transforming the Great Zimbabwe ruins into the country's “Westminster Abbey” by having himself, the Wilson patrol and other Rhodesian heroes buried in its grounds.

Accordingly Rhodes ordered that the remains be recovered from the Shangani River and reburied in a specially built stone enclosure in the heart of the complex (Cooke 1974). On a low but central hilltop just outside of what is today the museum at Great Zimbabwe, the members of the Wilson Patrol were reburied on 14 August 1894 in a raised rectangular grave with four pseudo-towers on each corner, Fig. 2. Marked with a stone cross the grave



Fig. 2. The Wilson Patrol grave, Great Zimbabwe

was surrounded by a low stonewall built in the same style as some of the better quality stonewalls of the precolonial era. A commemorative stone memorial was planned for inside the enclosure, we believe of an Egyptian theme. For this memorial Rhodes commissioned four bronze panels in October 1894 from the London-based sculptor John Tweed (Cary 1975). Tweed was paid £50 a month to design the panels and oversee their production. Originally a bronze statuette of Allan Wilson was to grace the apex of the memorial, although by early 1896 this had been changed to a figure of a lion on the recommendations of Arthur Leslie Collie, an London-based antique dealer whom Rhodes had employed to furnish his newly rebuilt Groote Schuur home near Cape Town. Although it did not come about, the casting of the much disliked “poodle lion” for the Matabele Rebellion Memorial that once graced Main Street in Bulawayo may not be mere fortuitous.

Tweed was instructed to produce four panels with relief figures of the actual dead men, portraits and photographs of which the BSACo had, on Rhodes’ bequest, started acquiring as early as August 1894. The panels were a source of considerable conflict between Rhodes and his favourite artist for the next five years. Tweed was also instructed to recommend a suitable architect to build the edifice to hold his panels after his own suggestion of a massive stone cairn (Egyptian pyramid?) was rejected by Rhodes. Likewise the elaborately sculptured design of English sculptor Alfred Gilbert was turned down as being too “delicate”.

The remains of Allan Wilson and his men were not however left to lie in peace. Fort Victoria quickly waned in importance as the main political and economic forces of the country shifted westward to Bulawayo. Rhodes also changed his burial plans. Despite considerable resistance on the part of local people the remains were removed from Great Zimbabwe in 1904. The grave site was left marked by a brass plaque fixed to a massive granite slab, Fig. 3. Later this spot was chosen as the site of the museum for Great Zimbabwe and the Rhodesian wall of 1894 was dismantled and the granite marker was lowered to the ground. A cast bronze plaque subsequently put up by the Historical Monuments Commission was removed not long after Independence in 1980. The unmarked the granite slab is still there, built upon to create a low, rather enigmatic bench outside of the museum.

BURIAL SITE 3 – THE “MATOPOS”

Through his personal intervention in bringing about the end of the Matabele Uprising of 1896, Rhodes came to know and admire the “chaotic grandeur” of the Matopo Hills. It was now his desire to be buried here on a prominent hill *Malindzumu*, abode of the spirits. ‘The remains of Alan (sic) Wilson and his men must be brought here also and put inside the memorial I shall put up in their memory’. Rhodes tried to persuade the local Fort Victoria residents of his plan but their reception was hostile. The residents held a protest meeting, forwarding the minutes to the British government, while Wilson’s brother George wrote from England to object. But Rhodes would, as always, have his way and he instructed his friend J.G. MacDonald to carryout his instructions. The bodies were eventually exhumed in dead of night in March 1904 and rushed to Bulawayo. The *fait accompli* had to be accepted.

Rhodes had selected this new site for his Rhodesian Valhalla in August 1896, although his plans were only finalized some years later. Several leading architects were asked to submit designs for the Shangani Memorial. In 1898 Sir Herbert Baker, who designed some of the classic buildings of South Africa and New Delhi, put forward plans for a classical Greek mausoleum. Based on a marble monument erected to the Roman consul to Athens – the



Fig. 3. Brass plaque fixed the Great Zimbabwe Grave site, 1904

“Pedestal of Agrippa” that had been built alongside the Acropolis, Baker’s design was in keeping with the British Imperial revisionism of the period. Initially rejected by Rhodes several other architects proposed alternatives but none found favour. Only after several major revisions were Baker’s modified designs finally approved just before Rhodes’ death in 1902, although this design was narrower at the top and not the squat structure that we know today, Fig. 4. It is thought that Tweed may be responsible for these final revisions.

Construction began in September 1901, six months before Rhodes’ death. At the first meeting of the Rhodes Trustees on 5 May 1902 it was resolved to complete the project in accordance to the late Rhodes’ designs and wishes. Dr Jameson and Lewis Mitchell were tasked with promoting the project while MacDonald organized on the ground. Although designed for the crest of the hill just outside of the natural circle of boulders inside of which



Fig. 4. The final modified version of Sir Herbert Baker's design, 1912

Rhodes himself was buried, the Wilson memorial was built further down slope. It is not clear who made the decision, possibly MacDonald. This distressed the architect Baker who insisted that its flat, unadorned roof was not to be looked down upon. He argued that in this new position the memorial lost the intended impact of heightened grandeur and power associated with the otherwise simple adjacent grave of Rhodes. He was supported by Tweed who finally visited the site in 1928 declaring its setting meager and incomplete.

Constructed of granite taken from a quarry on the east side of the hill, the blocks weigh between three to ten tons a piece. Can you imagine the challenges of getting these blocks up the hill with nothing but oxen! The remains of the Wilson Patrol were placed in a lead casket vault in the centre of the mausoleum and a large granite block was cemented in placed sealing the entrance. A platform was added inscribed “To brave men”; Dawson’s earlier inscription.

Adorning the granite structure were Tweed’s four massive bronze panels. They caused considerable friction between the artist and Rhodes, the latter in his own words was obsessed by the panels. At one stage in 1897 Rhodes withheld payment from Tweed and the latter’s solicitor sent a threatening cable to Rhodes then in Cape Town. The final changes, to the horses, were finally agreed upon in 1899 and Rhodes saw and approved the final plaster casts on his last visit to London in December 1901. The panels were cast by the firm J.W. Singer & Sons, Somerset. Each panel consists of three sections riveted together. There is some confusion as to the date they were completed and shipped to site – 1902 or 1903.

After tireless efforts on the part of MacDonald the Shangani Memorial was ready for inauguration on 5 July 1904, the fifty-first anniversary of Rhodes’ birth, Fig. 5. It had cost



Fig. 5. Inauguration of Allan Wilson Memorial, 5 July 1904

Rhodes and later his estate £46 050.00. On that day several thousand visitors arrived from Bulawayo, many had camped overnight at the Lower Outspan. The recently opened Matopos railway line was a popular means but others arrived by cart, coach, wagon, bicycle or foot. Sir William Milton, Administrator of Southern Rhodesia made a speech followed by a service by Rev. F.H. Beaven, Archdeacon of the Anglican community of Bulawayo. West Jones, Archbishop of Cape Town, blessed the memorial and Lady Eveline Milton unveiled it.

Later to the side of the platform were added two plaques that commemorate the patrol and give the names of the dead men, indicating their position in Tweed's panels. These were paid for by Bulawayo public subscription. A lightning conductor was installed after several strikes but sadly the lower section of copper strip was recently stolen. It is important that it is replaced if the monument is to endure.

CONCLUSION

The Shangani Memorial was a pet project of Rhodes. Designed and funded by him it is both his tribute to the dead men as well as a memorial to his own Imperial project. It was controversial from the onset. One of his greatest supporters, Lord Curzon criticized it in 1909 citing its "obtrusive artificiality", while Tweed when he visited the site in 1928 demanded modification according to his original design. This did not happen as the Public Works Department couldn't find the original plans. In artistic huff Tweed let the matter stand.

Time has had hardly any impact. Yes its once harsh white finish has started to weather to a more subtle shade, but the characteristic lichens of the Matobo Hills are unlikely to take hold on its smooth surface. The bronze has weathered and the panels have been cleaned at least three times to my knowledge. It is not so much the threat to the figures as the green stains where the patina washes down onto the granite blocks. Recently I noticed several bird and insect nests embraced by the figures; nature claiming its foothold.

In the post-Independence period there have been periodic calls to have the Shangani Memorial and nearby graves of the "evil imperialists" removed. Usually at times of perceived threat to the Black Nationalist triumph these calls have gone unheeded; rhetoric for the masses but nothing really of substance. The site is now an integral part of the Matobo landscape; a landscape actively shaped by a multitude of human memories rather than a wilderness consisting of mere rocks and trees.

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The Centenary of a United Zambia

by Jonathan Waters

Wednesday 17 August 2011 passed like any other day in Zambia, yet it marked 100 years of the modern state following the unification of North Western and North Eastern Rhodesia. Few today will even know that Zambia is the amalgamation of these two territories, which had their genesis in two very different dynamics. The media today make out colonisation was simply a process of carving up Africa among the European powers, but mostly it was achieved by companies acting in the spheres of influence recognised by the Berlin Treaty of 1885. European powers had little appetite for spending money on gaining more subjects and colonisation was undertaken by imperial agents who were required to gain concessions or treaties from local chiefs before any commercial operations or settlement could take place. Imperial governments could then choose to endorse treaties brought to them through the issue of a charter.

In the case of the Rhodesias, this happened in October 1889 with the issue to the British South Africa Company (BSA Co.) of a “Royal Charter”, which was valid for 25 years. As was the case in Zimbabwe, the BSA Co. ran the affairs of Zambia for most of the early colonial period until Northern Rhodesia became a British Protectorate in April 1924, six months after Southern Rhodesia had become a self-governing colony. During the BSA Co. rule, the British government officially kept its distance, but it monitored the activities of settlers through the British High Commissioner operating from Cape Town. However, Zambia’s future could have gone very differently several times up to this point in 1924: North Eastern Rhodesia could have become part of Malawi since it was colonised from the east, while, if the BSA Co. had had its way, the Rhodesias would have been amalgamated in 1917. As it turned out, the “One Nation” that Zambia is today, celebrated its centenary in August 2011.

First, a quick note on how the two territories came about. North Western Rhodesia was the product of a treaty with King Lewanika, who granted the company mineral and commercial rights over Barotseland. (It should be remembered the BSA Co. continued to get revenue from Zambian mineral royalties right up to Independence in 1964.) The rights, initially secured by Frank Elliot Lochner in June 1890, were further extended in October 1900 after Lewanika was persuaded to sign a treaty extending the company’s jurisdiction, “within his dominions”, as the potential mineral riches in the north became more apparent to the BSA Co. As King Lobengula had done in the south, the Bemba territories in today’s Copperbelt paid Lewanika no tribute so should not have been included. But for the British Foreign Office, a friendly identifiable chief claiming to rule over an area was sufficient. After years of wrangling, the western border with Angola was finally decided in May 1905 when the arbitrator, King Emmanuel of Italy, drew the border down the line of longitude twenty two degrees east of Greenwich.

In the east, the African Lakes Company under Sir Harry Johnston had annexed, on behalf of the British Government in 1891, the “Nyasaland District”. This included what was to become North Eastern Rhodesia. The ALC’s concessions and treaties were transferred to the BSA Co. in 1893 and North Eastern Rhodesia was initially administered from Blantyre until Fort Jameson, now Chipata, was established as the capital in 1899. Kalomo remained as the



Kalomo in 1901

(Picture courtesy Rob Burrett)

capital of North Western Rhodesia until 1907 when the Administrator Robert Codrington transferred it to Livingstone due to health considerations. The old border between the two territories ran from the bottom of The Pedicle to the top of the modern border at Luangwa Bridge. It initially followed the Mulembo River to its confluence with the Lukusashi, which itself meets the Lusemfwa, joining the Luangwa shortly before it flows under the stately bridge built with funds from Sir Alfred Beit's estate (which was opened in May 1934). As such, Mkushi would have been in North Western Rhodesia, while Serenje would have been administered from Fort Jameson.

The unification announcement of the two territories was promulgated through an Order in Council on May 4, 1911. The historian Lewis Gann sums up the basics:

In 1911 the judicial and administrative system of these two provinces was unified. By that time the dispute with Portugal had been settled and communication between the two regions had become significantly good enough for them to be administered as a single unit. There was also an urgent need for the economy which unification was expected to achieve. Thus a new Order in Council was promulgated which was in all essentials based on the old North-Eastern Order in Council with similar safeguards for natives. It left the principal judicial and administrative powers in the hands of the BSA Co.mpany. The Imperial Government retained certain supervisory powers and exercised these through the High Commissioner of South Africa.

While the western territory, with a larger white population due to the railway (which the BSA Co. owned until 1949) and mining activities, remained the most important economically,



The 1911 borderline between NE and NW Rhodesia

(Graphic by Rhona Sargeant)

the North East legal order saw British, and not Cape Dutch, law enacted. This unification process was driven by Codrington, who had started his career in the east, having been Administrator since July 1898. For its part, the BSA Co. no doubt figured it would save on administration costs. For example, up until March 1911, the Nyasaland Government was remunerated for the military defence of the BSA Co.'s territory.

When the official amalgamation took place on 17 August 1911, Lawrence Aubrey Wallace (later Sir) was made the first Administrator of Northern Rhodesia, a position he was to hold for 10 years. Wallace, who was Administrator of North Eastern Rhodesia, had replaced Codrington following the latter's death in April 1908. Wallace, a civil engineer who had previously built railways in Argentina, had got to know both territories in detail, having walked most of North Eastern Rhodesia during his five years as Chief Surveyor. For the settlers, Wallace was quite possibly the best person they could have had in the top job. Born in Natal, he was used to self-government and had none of the imperial attitude of his predecessor, the publicly-schooled Codrington, who was a stern disciplinarian with little time for the rough pioneering class.

It was during Wallace's tenure that the first moves away from BSA Co. administration

to democratic, albeit it white, representation took place. Initially he established town management boards in Livingstone (1911), Lusaka (1913) and Broken Hill (1915), and it was on his watch that the Advisory Council, the forerunner to the Legislative Council, was instituted in 1918. However, the start of World War I in 1914 and the numbers of men tied up in the East African Campaign stalled most debate on the representation subject. In Southern Rhodesia where the settlers had a vote, the BSA Co. moved a formal motion in the Legislative Council session of April 1917 for amalgamation. Three of the elected members voted with the BSA Co.'s official members to carry it by a small majority, but in view of the opposition of most of the people's representatives, the scheme was not advanced. The rest, they say, is history.



Robert Codrington

Final Resting Places in Europe of Significant Personalities in our History (Part I)

by Jonathan Waters

During the age of adventure and exploration in Africa, few people could manage their final resting place as did Cecil John Rhodes in the splendour of the Matopos. I often think how it must have felt for a British mother receiving news that her dear son had died of fever or was killed in a battle and now lay in a forlorn grave in a part of Africa she would never see. I'm thinking of those killed near Umgululu in the Matopos during the 1896 Uprising, or in Mangwe, near John Lee's old house. There are also many graves, now unmarked, along the old Pioneer road, where mailmen, outriders, hopeful settlers and hunters succumbed to fever or wild animals. Some European adventurers were just passing through, but many I think anticipated seeing out their final days in Africa. That said, colonial-era graveyards in far-flung places around Africa are usually dreary, and given what has happened to many graves in the Pioneer Cemetery or Warren Hills in Harare, perhaps it was not such a bad thing to be buried in Europe.

Many of those involved in the colonisation of this country went to their graves in a period when most travel was undertaken by sea and coach. Arranging a burial elsewhere was not generally an option. Leander Starr Jameson, who died in 1917, was only interred in the Matopos in 1920, largely as a result of World War I. The Victorian and Edwardian periods were clearly an age when a great deal of effort went into the gravestone. On my travels in Europe, I have been able to visit the graves of several prominent personalities in this country's history. Rather than a biography of these folk, I intend this to be more of a pictorial series with possibly a few vignettes of additional information picked up from the site during the visit. These characters have differing degrees of importance. I intend to visit more graves when I am next in Europe and for this reason this is Part I.

In addition to the four men in this article – Alfred Beit, Karl Mauch, Patrick Forbes and Adrian Darter – other prominent personalities buried in the UK include the hunter William Baldwin, the antiquarian Theodore Bent, the first administrator Archibald Colquhoun, the leader of the Pioneer Column Frank Johnson, the BSA Co's Rochfort Maguire, the missionary Robert Moffat, the BSA Co's doctor Frank Rand, Charles Rudd of the famous concession, and Edward Tyndale-Biscoe, who hoisted the BSA Co's flag at Fort Salisbury on September 13, 1890. William Milton and Dr Hans Sauer are buried in France, while Edmund Lippert died in 1925 in Germany.

ALFRED BEIT

I think that had Alfred Beit died after Jameson, there is a good chance he, too, would have been buried in the Matopos. In 1906, when he died, it was not a consideration and he was buried in St Peter's Churchyard near his Georgian estate in Tewin Water, Hertfordshire. For a man who gave so much to the country's infrastructure and education, there can be few epitaphs more apt than his: "Write Me As One That Loved His Fellow Men". Alfred's



Alfred Beit
(Picture courtesy Beit Trust)



Beit's gravestone at St Peter's, Tewin Water. Otto lies to his left and Theodore to his right



A close up of Beit's epitaph on his Tewin Water grave



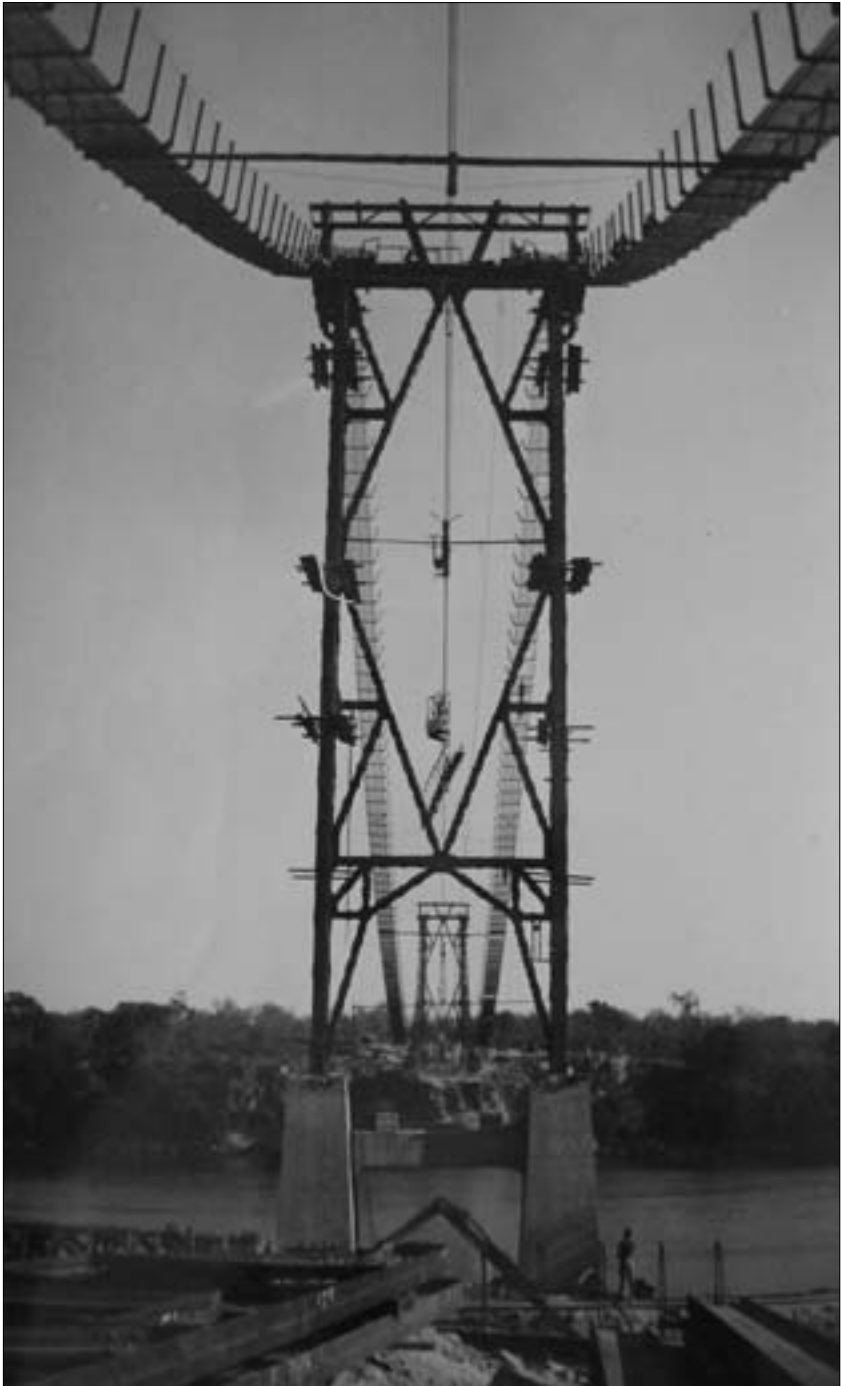
The church of St Peter's, Tewin Water



Alfred Beit's infrastructure legacy: Beitbridge during construction
(Picture courtesy Beit Trust)



Beitbridge completed: Beit bequeathed £1.2 mln to the Cape to Cairo Railway Trust



The Otto Beit Bridge at Chirundu during construction
(Picture courtesy Beit Trust)

grave is flanked on the right by that of his younger brother, Theodore, a second lieutenant in the Royal Dragoons, who died in 1917, aged 18, and to his left lies his brother Otto, after whom the bridge over the Zambezi at Chirundu is named. He was interred in 1930.

Born on February 15, 1853 (the same year as Rhodes, Jameson and Henry Birchenough), Beit died on July 16, 1906, with his mother Laura at his bedside. Hundreds attended his funeral. A special train was laid on from King's Cross, which carried 300 mourners. His brother Otto led as principal mourner and Seymour Fort, who wrote his biography, *Alfred Beit – A Study of the Man and His Work*, was a pall bearer. His business partner in the diamond fields, Sir Julius Wernher, could not attend due to ill health but sent his son Derek. Dr Merry, the Vice Chancellor of Oxford University, which benefitted greatly from Beit's philanthropy, attended along with a host of other academics.

The south aisle altar in St Peter's Church was given in memory of Alfred. Otto donated the present altar and oak panelling in the sanctuary to the church in 1928, and the family crest is in situ. It is worth noting that John and Geoffrey de Havilland, the aviation pioneers, are also buried in the churchyard.

KARL MAUCH

The man who brought Great Zimbabwe to the world's attention probably had every intention of returning to Africa but in 1875, aged 37, he fell from his third-floor bedroom window and died 5 days later on April 4. Karl Mauch was born on 7 May 1837 at the family home in Stetten Im Remstal, a 17th Century house, which has now been turned into a museum to honour the explorer and also doubles as stamp museum. Stetten is twinned with Masvingo, which donated a wooden bust of Mauch.

Having found no information on him in the Linden Museum (my original lead from Bernhard's book), enquiries led us initially to Stetten, where we gleaned more information and the curator promised to call my German hosts with exact details on Mauch's grave in



A commemorative note from 2009 celebrating the life of Karl Mauch



The family home in Stetten, which is now a museum



Mauch's new grave unveiled in 1977. Afrikaforscher translates to African explorer



The Khmer-style crematorium in Prag Friedhof, Stuttgart

Prag Friedhof in Stuttgart. The original grave was destroyed by a bomb in World War II, but the residents of Stetten funded a new gravestone, which was unveiled in 1977. He is buried in Grave 18, Row 3 in Section 13 in this beautifully preserved cemetery.

MAJOR PATRICK FORBES

John McCarthy covered the life of Major Patrick Forbes in this journal in 2008, noting that he left Rhodesia after the Boer War in 1902 to return to England. The following year he married Beatrice, the daughter of Robert Grey, who was the Treasurer of the Foundling Hospital in London, and lived in Whitchurch House, not far from where Forbes would be laid to rest in 1923. Peter Hawley, a local historian, has written a paper on the Forbes family, with special mention about Patrick's life. Forbes became a Governor of the Hospital in 1904 and is honoured in the heraldry of its windows. The married couple moved in with her parents at Whitchurch House and then moved to the Rectory before taking up residence as tenants of Duchess Close in about 1906. It seems that Forbes and his wife moved back to Whitchurch House before 1914 when he volunteered to be commandant of German prisoners of war on Salisbury Plain. The Forbes' stayed at their residence "The Hollies" in Salisbury, Wiltshire, where Patrick became churchwarden at the local St Martin's church. "The Hollies" has since become a housing estate.

Forbes died in Salisbury but was buried at St John's Church Whitchurch. The church register of graves records Patrick's death in 1923 and that of Beatrice in 1944. It would appear he was buried next to another military man, Sir John Smiley. However, according to the churchwarden Pat Turner, the grave at the end of the row now lies under a tree that



St Martin's, Salisbury, Wiltshire where Forbes was churchwarden



The commemorative plaque in St Martin's, Salisbury, Wiltshire

99			
100			
107	Forbes Patrick W ^m	May 27 1923	613
	Forbes Beatrice	12 May 1944	929
106	Wright George [#]	14 Dec 1889	223
108	Grey Ellen	6 Jan 1909	482
109	Grey Robert	19 May 1914	534
105			
101			

The entries of Patrick Forbes and his wife Beatrice in the death register at St John's, Whitchurch



St John's, Whitchurch where Patrick Forbes was buried in 1923



Forbes in his late 40s on a garden bench at Duchess Close in Whitchurch

Picture courtesy Peter Hawley

came down in a storm in November 2010. St Mary's church in Whitechurch carries a similar plaque to that on the wall of St Martin's. It reads:

In loving memory of Patrick William Forbes, Major, 3rd son of Alexander Clark Forbes of this parish born 31 August 1861. Fell asleep at Salisbury Wilts 27 May 1923. He served with his regiment 6th Inniskilling Dragoons in South Africa 1881-1889. Marched with the Pioneers into Mashonaland 1890. Led the BSA Company's forces into Matabeleland 1893 and was Administrator of Northern Zambesia.

It was during this period (1895–1897) in British Central Africa (Malawi) that two comments on his character and demeanour appear in correspondence. Edward Alston, who was the acting Postmaster-General and Collector in Blantyre at the time, described Forbes as a “tiny little man with a short stumpy beard”, while Wordsworth Poole, the medical officer for the Zomba District, said: “He is a short, bourgeois-looking man, unpretentious and silent. He does not look like a soldier at all.”

ADRIAN DARTER

One of the last pioneers to die, Adrian Darter kept a “log” (somewhat unreliable) on the whereabouts of others on the column. This was published in his book *The Pioneers of Mashonaland* – more a polemic against the BSA Co than a novel. Born on June 15, 1867 in Cape Town, he excelled on the rugby field playing for Western Province. Darter had



The inscription on Darter's grave at Ramalley Cemetery, Chandlers Ford, Hampshire



Darter's grave in Ramalley Cemetery, Chandlers Ford, Hampshire

just turned 23 when the settler force left Fort Tuli on their trek northwards. Unsuccessful at gold prospecting, he moved back to South Africa, but later joined Col Plumer's Relief Force in 1896. In early 1900, he was a member of the Rhodesia Regiment present at the Relief of Mafikeng. Darter moved to England in 1902 and it would be safe to assume that the rest of his life was not nearly as interesting. He died on March 28, 1955 and is buried in Ramalley Cemetery, Chandlers Ford, Hampshire.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to the following for information and helping me locate graves:

Rosalind Incedon-Webber, Peter and Corrina Hoehnie, Robert Hayes, Pat Turner and Peter Hawley.

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If you are about to make a new will,
or to amend your existing will,
please think of the History Society of Zimbabwe.

OBITUARY

Peter Garlake 1934–2011*

by Jonathan Waters

At least to the academic world, Peter Garlake put to rest the “Mystery of Great Zimbabwe” with his 1973 publication on the greatest historical site in sub-Saharan Africa. Great Zimbabwe, the ruined stone settlement was brought to the attention of Western world by Karl Mauch in the late 19th Century. It was the capital of a local Shona state, having reached its zenith in the 14th Century AD. The white settlers had found that keeping the “mystery” alive by suggesting Rhodesia was the Ophir of the Ancients not only helped drive tourism, but satisfied their own racist ideals in that the blacks were not sophisticated enough to build this great stone structure on their own. For the myth to thrive, the Rhodesians had claimed that the ruins were built by the Queen of Sheba, with King Solomon’s Mines in close proximity. Garlake, who has died aged 77, resigned his post as Inspector of Monuments in 1970 when it was demanded – in the Rhodesian Parliament no less – that he give an “equal” platform to the “theory” that Great Zimbabwe was built by “light skinned people”. According to the member for Fort Victoria District, Colonel George Hartley OBE, the “theory” that Great Zimbabwe was erected by indigenous people was “nothing but pure conjecture”.



For the myth to thrive, the Rhodesians had it that Great Zimbabwe was built by the Queen of Sheba, with King Solomon’s Mines in close proximity

** Peter Storr Garlake, archaeologist and architect. Born January 11, 1934. Died December 2, 2011*



Views from the Acropolis



Where previous archaeologists hid to some degree behind scientific obscurity to make their case for the construction by the local African people, Garlake was unequivocal in his findings in what was to be his *magnum opus*: “Great Zimbabwe must be recognised for what it is – a building of peculiar size and imposing grandeur, the product of two or three centuries of development of an indigenous stone-building technique, itself rooted in long traditions of using stone for field walls, building platforms and terraces. The structure reflects the economic dominance and prestige of a small oligarchy that had arisen within an Iron Age subsistence economy.”

Peter Storr Garlake was born in Cape Town on 11 January 1934, the son of a soldier, Storr ‘Dooley’ Garlake, later Major-General, Commander of the forces in the Federation of Rhodesia & Nyasaland. His mother Catherine, a South African of Scottish extraction, had a passion for animals and was instrumental in setting up the SPCA in Rhodesia. After completing senior school at St Georges College in Harare, Garlake went on to read architecture at the University of Cape Town from 1952–1957. After college, he left for England, finding a job as an architect in London within two days of arriving. Joining the Catholic Order was also a consideration, and he was drawn to a Carmelite monastery at Aylesford in Kent, where he participated in processions with relics of the revered local saint Simon Stock.

Enrolling at UCL’s Institute of Archaeology in London in 1961 for a post graduate diploma, he met his future wife Margaret, who was studying archaeological conservation. They married in 1962, the year he was awarded a Nuffield Research Studentship, which took him to the British Institute in Eastern Africa in Dar es Salaam. Here Garlake studied the architecture and archaeology of medieval Swahili coast towns after which he published *The Early Islamic Architecture of the East African Coast* (1966). It was the first of many varied phases in his life that would also cover early Portuguese settlements in Africa, the ruined stone settlements spread throughout modern day Zimbabwe, west African kingdoms, rock art and even commercial rose growing.

A year before UDI in Rhodesia in 1965, Garlake was appointed Inspector of Monuments. In this position, he visited many of the ruined settlements or *dzimbabwes* (“houses of stone”) that cover much of modern Zimbabwe, excavating two of the smaller centres. He also excavated three ancient Portuguese settlements in modern Zimbabwe – Dambarare, Maramuca and Luanze – which had been occupied by the Portuguese until they were overrun by Changamire in the late 17th Century. However, finding his intellectual integrity increasingly compromised as the racist politics of the settler regime impinged on his domain, he resigned and left the country in 1970.

Having been offered a post at the University of Ife in Nigeria, Garlake led two major excavations of sites with lifelike terracotta heads. During this time he also completed his *Great Zimbabwe* manuscript. “The major question posed over the years – was Great Zimbabwe the unaided work of indigenous Africans – has created lasting controversy, and probably no other prehistoric site has aroused such strong, widespread and often bizarre emotional responses.” Garlake’s book brought together the work of early antiquarians and archaeologists such as Randall McIver, Elizabeth Caton-Thompson, Roger Summers and Keith Robinson. Being free of the imaginative theories of later archaeological symbolic, Garlake’s remains the definitive work on the facts of the subject.

From 1976 to 1981, Garlake held an appointment as Lecturer in the Department of



Garlake while excavating Dambarare, a Portuguese gold-trading settlement (*feira*) about 40 km north of Harare near Jumbo mine. The settlement, the largest of all Portuguese towns in Mashonaland, was overrun by Changamire Dombo in November 1693. Eric Axelson in *Portuguese in South East Africa 1600–1700* tells us what happened: “Changamire and his men attained complete surprise. The residents of the fair and the many visiting traders were unable to gain the security of the fort (which was without garrison at this time). Some collected at the house of the most powerful resident. But all were killed, Portuguese and Indian alike. The tribesmen then went to the church, and broke all the ornaments and images. The disinterred the bones of the dead, and produced a powerful medicine, guaranteed to make them invincible against the Portuguese. They killed two Dominican friars and flayed them, and other Portuguese, and displayed their skins at the head of the army as proof of Changamire’s power, and to further terrorize the followers of the Portuguese.”

Anthropology at University College London during which time he carried out excavations at Manekweni, a stone-walled settlement in Mozambique. Garlake returned to Zimbabwe after Independence and was reportedly disappointed at not being offered the top post in the National Museums & Monuments. However, he went on to lecture at the History Department at the University of Zimbabwe in 1984, a year before a full archaeology programme was set up. While regarded as highly amusing in his private life, professionals found him mercurial and prickly, especially when it came to criticism from amateur and racist quarters, and loony nationalists after 1980. He received his doctorate in art history from SOAS in 1992.

After losing a complete manuscript on Zimbabwean Archaeology to a fire at his Borrowdale homestead in the late 1980s, Garlake shifted his focus again: this time to Zimbabwe’s diverse rock art. Building on his earlier work *The Painted Caves* (1987), it



The conical tower

was to culminate in his 1995 treatise *The Hunter's Vision*. This he regarded as his favourite work and it established Zimbabwean rock art in a field of its own. Drawing on many of the symbolic interpretations of Prof David Lewis-Williams and the trance experience, Garlake went further to draw his own conclusions. He said there was more to the shamanism of the San people as there was something deeper in the art when it came to the wider religious experience. He hypothesized that “formlings” – oval-shaped images unique to Zimbabwe rock art – were an abstract representation of the physical manifestation of “potency”, which he argued guides the worldview of San people.

Following publication of *The Hunter's Vision*, Garlake concentrated on rose growing, delivering his produce to florists around Harare. Increasingly he started to divide his time between Harare and London, and published his final book, *Early Art and Architecture of Africa*, in 2002. An avid theatre goer, Garlake enjoyed visiting cities in Europe and the Middle East, where he fed his love of Islamic architecture. Believing “what you write is your memorial”, Garlake opted for “green burial” and no ceremony. He is survived by sister Carole, his wife Margaret, and three children.

An edited version of this obituary appeared in the *Sunday Times* (SA) on December 18, 2011

A Note on the Josiah Tongogara Msasa

by Jonathan Waters

Harare lost one of its best known natural landmarks on 7 December 2011, as a vehicle involved in the re-tarring of Josiah Tongogara Ave (formerly North Ave) brought down the msasa in the middle of the road between Sam Nujoma Street and Third Street, known to many as the “Hanging Tree”. This myth was popularised by a set of stamps in the late 1990s, suggesting Mbuya Nehanda was hanged on this tree, but, as Lyn Mullin says in *Historic Trees of Zimbabwe*, “There is not a shred of evidence that it was ever put to such use”. Nehanda was hanged in the gaol on Victoria St., the road which now carries her name.

The Jesuit Father Richardz, who visited the condemned prisoners at the gaol, said in his account in the *Zambezi Mission Record* 1899:

I left Neanda (sic) and went to Kakubi (sic) who received me in good disposition. Whilst I was conversing with him, Neanda was taken out to the scaffold. Her cries and resistance when she was taken up the ladder, the screaming and yelling on the scaffold disturbed my conversation with Kakubi very much, till the noisy opening of the trap door upon which she



The msasa during the jacaranda season of 2010



The msasa shortly after it is knocked over by a municipal truck on 7 December, 2011

stood, followed by the heavy thud of her body as it fell, made an end to the interruption.

Of the msasa, Mullin said:

A more plausible anecdote that relates to its function is that of the old-timer who lived nearby and would drive to Meikles Hotel, in his donkey cart, for his daily sundowner. Frequently somewhat *hors de combat* by the end of the evening, his friends would accompany him to his cart, load him aboard, and slap the donkey on its rump. Off the donkey would trot to this familiar tree, where the gentleman's servant waited to see him safely home!

Another tale post its felling has emerged from Patricia Broderick:

We knew the Johnson family who lived opposite the tree. They were the descendants of Colonel Frank Johnson, who led the Pioneer Column. When North Avenue was being tarred, we were told that when the road builders threatened to chop the tree down, one of the female members of the family climbed it and declared that if the road men chopped the tree, they would have to chop her down as well! Obliging, they made the road around the tree.

Given what we know about the growth of msasas, it would be safe to assume that since it missed both the settler and Shona axe, the tree must have been of an inconsequential size in 1890 when the Pioneer Column arrived on a largely treeless plain. This is pure conjecture, but given there was strong demand for building materials after the arrival of the settlers, it had to have been small enough not to have been included in a pole and dagga hut. Possibly it had its genesis in 1885.

Storms in Harare brought down a slew of jacarandas in November 2011, including another tree covered in Mullin's 2003 book, *The Great Jacaranda of Ridge Road*.

Gliders, Thermals And Diamonds

by Mike McGeorge

To put you in the picture, gliding has always been a popular sport for the air minded in this country. Going back to before World War II, embryo gliding activity had its beginnings at the top end of 2nd Street, Salisbury, where getting airborne in a most rudimentary glider was by means of an auto tow.

There was a lull in gliding because of the War but, soon after, interested pilots who had returned from that conflict got together to rekindle a cheaper way of flying, by motorless flight. This then was the start of the Salisbury Gliding Club, which began operations out of an airfield at Mount Hampden, using a winch to do the launching. The club purchased a Tiger Moth for £50 from airforce surplus aircraft, which brought in the most satisfactory mode of getting airborne.

In the early 1950s the club moved to Thorn Park on the Mazoe Road, not far from the present polo grounds. Facilities were made for a hangar, club house and grass strip, and, being only 6 miles or so from the city, it was very convenient. The club grew, importing gliders from the UK, Germany and Sweden, the mainstay being a Slingsby T31 tandem two-seater, which was used for training.

I joined the club with my twin brother, John, in July 1956, and we both went solo a year later. Our circuit included finals over the main Mazoe Road, where there were always quite a few spectators.

All aircraft were made of wood and fabric. A share in a glider with six members cost £30 (about a month's salary!) which, along with a tow to 1500' cost 12/6 and made for cheap flying!



Sir Godfrey Huggins speaking to club pilot Jerry Walls with Jimmy Harrold of Marendellas in the cockpit at a gliding meet in Salisbury early fifties



**Douglas Bader with Johnny Battersal both legless pilots,
Johnny was an instructor at the club, 1964**

Once one had gone solo, the idea was to gain proficiency badges. This would entail leaving the safety of the airfield, flying cross-country to designated points and returning. The further the distance, the greater the reward. The basic requirement for each badge was that one had to be airborne for a continuous period of 5 hours. Distances from 100 km to 500 km earned a glider pilot silver to gold, then the coveted diamond. The last entailed a flight of 500 km, either an out-and-return journey or a triangle journey, with the pilot having to take a photo of the turn point, and also having to supply a barograph trace, which would prove one hadn't landed and taken off again!

A pilot would use thermals of warm air to increase the lift of the glider. Thermals are stronger than a glider's sink rate, so the stronger the lift the quicker the glider went up. A good thermal could lift the glider well over 5 metres per second – similar to storks and vultures and other soaring birds.

In early 1960 the club moved to the Warren Hills strip on the Bulawayo Road, about



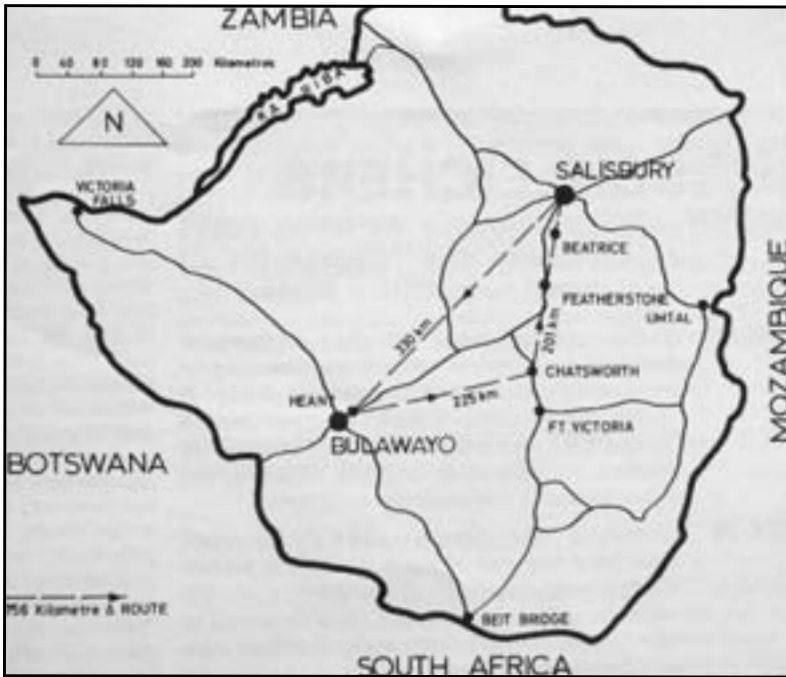
The Club's T31 two seater trainer at Warren Hills



Club weekend away at Perrems strip in Umtali showing super cub tow-planes and gliders getting ready for take-off 1974



Nimbus flown by Tim Biggs of South Africa in which he broke the world speed record for a 750 kilometre Original Messatriangular flight in October 1976



Map of route to Ft Victoria. Dotted lines show the route for the world speed record for a 750 km triangle set by Tim Biggs of S. Africa; my task was a straight out and return to Ft Victoria. Done on the same day

6 miles from town. As the club grew and attracted more people to the sport, competitive gliding became the driving force, where one could extend oneself and gain valuable experience in reading the weather and finding the best thermals to optimize the full potential of the glider.

Eventually competitive gliding became an annual event, attracting pilots from the region, mainly from South Africa. The “comps” took place in early October, when the weather is hottest prior to the rains. Twenty-five or so gliders would compete in three classes. The Limited Class was usually made up of the older gliders, with glide angles of less than 1–28. The Standard Class was made up of gliders with a wingspan of no more than 15 metres, and they were usually of glassfibre construction. Glide angles averaged 1–35. Then the Open Class consisted of gliders with an up-to-22-metre wing span, glide angles of 1–40+, and with the ability to carry a water ballast.

I was with the Limited Class, so a cross country flight took longer to complete but with shorter tasks. Standard and Open Classes were given the same tasks.

During the competition of 1974, I gained my diamond distance of 500 km on a triangular course of Warren Hills to Featherstone to Umniati Power Station and back to Warren Hills. I took 7 hours 20 minutes to complete the course.

The following year, 1975, my story was a bit different! The distance of 500 km to Fort Victoria and back was not new to me. The glider itself, a Schleicher-KA6, was a rebuild from an accident some years before. The cockpit was quite cramped with basic instruments including oxygen and radio. There was an instamatic camera to record turn points, and behind my head was the barograph. I wore a parachute, and the cockpit canopy release took only a couple of seconds in case of emergency. The glider had a high wing configuration, so I had the feeling of being a bird with wings coming out of my shoulders! Air brakes



Glider Ka6 in which I flew To Ft Victoria and return for my 500 kilometre Diamond



Surrounded by members shortly after landing in the dark from trip to Ft Victoria.
L-R: John Colban, Harvey Quaille, Nigel Bridges(DCA Controller), Tim Biggs (S.Africa),
Jimmy Bannantyne, Audrey McGeorge, John Ridout



Cirrus piloted by Ted Pearson coming over the finishing line after task,
dumping water prior to landing

were built into the wings which, when extended, gave me good control of rate of descent when landing on one wheel.

The morning of the task was quite cool, with a clear sky and a northerly wind of a few knots. Ground haze was evident, which affected visibility as one got higher. The Limited Class were the first batch of gliders to be launched at about 10 a.m. Thermal activity had already begun, but the thermals were narrow and rough, with plenty of sink in between. I had difficulty in centring these and it took me over half an hour to gain enough height to start my journey. If I stood any chance of success in the competition, the consensus for a Limited Class glider to get back to base from Fort Victoria meant that I had to be at the turn point by 2 p.m.

As the day progressed thermals became wider and stronger and were invariably marked by cumulus cloud, which, if they had a sharp edge, meant good lift. The cloud base was now reaching 10,000 feet above ground. My biggest problem was to fix my position through the haze, and I also risked the possibility of drifting off course whilst thermalling. Being over cautious, I wasted time, arriving at Fort Victoria at 3 p.m. – an hour late!

Afternoon thermals tended to be larger and smoother, and so I could then increase my speed without losing too much height. I came across other gliders in the vicinity of the turn point area, which was comforting. An Open Class glider overtook me at Featherstone. I found out later that he landed 20 km short of base!

I arrived over Beatrice at 5.15 p.m. at 6000 feet, with 50 km to go and a sky full of disintegrating clouds. I needed another 1000 feet to get home, and thankfully I found a weak thermal which gave me another 700 feet but cost me time, so I decided to make my final glide. By this time the sun was setting and the ground below became darker and darker, but I could just make out the strip in the gloom. Vehicles were parked on each side of the runway with their lights on to guide me in. I did not have enough height for a circuit, but managed to line up with the runway and land safely.

I wasn't the last to land though! A South African pilot in the Open Class had to be talked down by radar coming in after dark, and helped by all available cars on site with maximum lights on to help him to a safe landing.

I released my canopy and was surrounded by club members who promptly put a cold beer in my hand, when what I really needed was a hot cup of tea as I was frozen, having only shorts and a light shirt between me and the colder air upstairs!

Although my nearest rival won the day, I had enough points in hand to win the Limited Class. My twin brother, John, came second, only 63 points behind me. On the same day, 16 October 1975, Tim Biggs from South Africa broke the world gliding speed record for a 750 km triangle going to Bulawayo, Chatsworth and finally back to Salisbury. He averaged 124.98 km per hour! This was done in a Nimbus 2 of 22-metre wing span, complete with water ballast.

To my mind perhaps a greater achievement was that of Ivor McCormick's flight in 1960 in an early type of glider of German design, a Grunau Baby, glide angle 1–18, made of wood and fabric. Ivor flew 300 km from Salisbury to Insiza, earning a gold and a diamond. Ivor was an ex World War II fighter pilot who flew hurricanes in North Africa. He was the first pilot to take me on my initial ride in 1956, which got me hooked on gliding. Ivor died some years ago, but his wife Sue recently sent me his story of that flight in 1960, which I have copied verbatim. Enjoy!

AN IVOR MCCORMICK STORY AS TOLD BY SUE

I cannot remember when, but I think early 1960, Ivor's project was to do a nominated distance flight in a small old glider.

He nominated Insiza, which is a small roadside village between Gwelo and Bulawayo, and the glider would be a Grunau Baby.

I came from town (Harare) at lunchtime to find Ivor's mother looking after my children, Erica and Tamsin, with a request that I was to retrieve Ivor by starting off at 2 p.m. and that Angus Tattersall was to brief me.

Ivor planned to fly to Insiza near Gwelo (now Gweru) and I had to go to the police station in every town I reached to see if the police station had any information from Ivor, and when I reached Gatooma I was to go to the hotel and wait for information.

Angus attached the trailer to my vehicle, turned it around, and I was off on my own not knowing what to expect because there was literally no traffic on the roads.

All went well. No calls came into any stations, and when I reached Hartley the policeman said it was getting late, and if nothing was heard soon a search would have to start, but, being positive, I told him that Ivor was alright.

I reached Gatooma at 6 p.m. and nothing had come in from Ivor. I was brought coffee and just as I sat down a call came from Ivor to say that he had landed in Insiza and that I was to get there before dark for the return journey. It was already dusk and I had no idea of the distance ahead, and it had started to drizzle.

I set off on my journey and driving through Que Que I passed a man walking. It was still drizzling and I thought for a second that I should offer a lift. I changed my mind immediately feeling a bit guilty, but I was alone and needed to press on.

Once through Que Que, where I got petrol and asked my way to Insiza, a thought came to me, what would I do if there was a puncture! I quickly put the thought out of my mind and pressed on. Up until then I hadn't met a single vehicle on the road. Not until way beyond, the only vehicle in sight was a lorry coming from the opposite direction – a large lorry surrounded by the darkness and no lights anywhere except the stars for both of us.

Time was getting on, when suddenly I got to a garage at some remote place along the road. It was lonely and dark. I filled up with petrol and asked how far it was to Insiza.

“Aha madam it is doozie\doozie!” Feeling encouraged I drove on and on. I came to another lonely garage where I checked again with the same question and received the same encouraging remark.

“How far is doozie doozie?” I asked.

“Oh very doozie now madam!”

These petrol stations along the lonely roads were a tremendous comfort, and the attendants were probably as glad to see a traveller as I was to see them. The time I spent learning some Shona proved to be appreciated always as people responded.

As I started up again I wondered how much longer, when suddenly I came across the lights of the the small town of Insiza. As I approached the hotel, Ivor and Robert Mitchell and Robert's assistant came to meet me. The time was 8.30 p.m.

The men had had their meal and I was allowed enough time for a cup of coffee and a sandwich while the men were hitching the trailer and glider to the car. Robert and his companion stayed the night at the hotel so that they could help Ivor with the loading of the glider, and I am sure he was as excited as Ivor as he knew of the project.

In between the activity, Robert told me that he and a young fellow were on their way to Gwelo when he suddenly realized that he was seeing things, and yes he did indeed see a glider coming down to land, so they stopped and went over to greet and help Ivor. It was really good of Robert to stop over and help.

We started on our return journey as soon as we had packed. Some distance from Salisbury. at 1 o'clock in the morning, the trailer parted from the tow vehicle, but Ivor soon got on the way home again, arriving at 4 a.m.

Thus Ivor achieved his goal to pick his distance and set off to gain his goal – the diamond distance. One of the few in the gliding world, especially with such a small old glider!

If you are a member of the History Society of Zimbabwe,
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Bomber Harris – the Rhodesian

by Bill Sykes

This is the text of a talk given to members of the History Society of Zimbabwe in Harare in November 2009.

Obergruppenfuhrer Richard Darre of the dreaded SS, was one of the Nazi ideologists whose infamous speech detailed the fate of the British people:

As soon as we beat England we shall make an end of you Englishmen once and for all. Able-bodied men and women between the ages of 16 and 45 will be exported as slaves to the Continent. The old and weak will be exterminated. . . . All men remaining in Britain as slaves will be sterilised, a million or two of the young women of the Nordic type will be segregated in a number of stud farms where, with the assistance of picked German sires, during a period of 10 or 12 years, they will produce annually a series of Nordic infants to be brought up in every way as Germans. . . . These infants will form the future population of Britain. They will be partially educated in Germany and only those who fully satisfy the Nazi's requirements will be allowed to return to Britain and take up permanent residence. The rest will be sterilised and sent to join slave gangs in Germany.

Thus, in a generation or two, the British will disappear.

The whole question of the strategic bomber offensive against Nazi Germany continues to arouse strong controversy. In particular – the raid on Dresden on 13 February 1945 has come to symbolise what critics believe to have been an immoral strategy, of deliberately targeting German civilians.

And Harris, himself, as Commander-in-Chief of RAF Bomber Command from 1942 to 1945, has been vilified as the man responsible.

The contemporary official records show that in regard to the Dresden raid, and in fact the entire strategic bombing offensive, Bert Harris was only carrying out orders and directives drawn up by superiors, both military and political.

Largely unknown to allied intelligence, Dresden had a far greater military significance than was realised at the time of the bombing. Harris was closer to the truth than he ever imagined when describing Dresden as 'a mass of munition works.'

Today the morality of bombing cities is a favourite media subject. Over the past 50 years the role of Bomber Command has been repeatedly analysed and questioned on moral grounds. One veteran said, "At the end of the War, I was a hero; today I am a mass murderer." This is because the opinions of fresh generations are moulded by commentators who were not born until after 1945, and who, by accident or design, have overlooked most of the relevant factors. Elements of today's media appear to prefer sensational stories of disaster, or issues which can be presented as highly contentious.

It is easy to argue that the daylight raid by 12 Lancasters on the MAN factory at Augsburg was a costly error, or that the famous raid on the Great Dams achieved little, or even that the entire campaign of Bomber Command consumed resources that might have

been better applied elsewhere. Even if one sticks to the facts, today's media have shown how easily 'the facts' can be manipulated and distorted.

By 1941 cities throughout Europe had been bombed by the Luftwaffe, and helpless refugees had been machine-gunned from the air. In 1941/42 the Luftwaffe devastated London, Plymouth, Sheffield, Liverpool, Cardiff, Glasgow and many other British cities. From April 1942 its raids on Britain were specifically redirected against cities distinguished by three stars in the Baedeker book as being "of outstanding historical or artistic interest."

By 1941 the United Kingdom was isolated as the only part of Europe still holding out against Hitler. Ringed by U-boats and suffering heavy air attack, it had no means of hitting back except by Bomber Command.

Bomber Command's targets were selected by the War Cabinet, who were themselves influenced by the suggestions of the Ministry of Economic Warfare. The Commander-in-Chief, who from 22 February 1942 was Sir Arthur Harris, could not dictate policy (although he could offer advice). His duty was to *assign* targets, and for the units to *carry out orders given to him*.

Without the sustained attack on Hitler's war machine, D-Day could not have taken place in 1944.

In the United States it is still fashionable to show respect to The Flag, and honour America's heroes. In Britain it seems more fashionable to pick on people, previously loved and venerated and, by subtle propaganda, show that they were evil schemers and incompetent fools, unworthy of respect, for the sole reason that the media are competitive, and headlines are made by scandal, failure and controversy. What is less easy to explain is why the debate has centred exclusively upon RAF Bomber Command, and in particular "Bomber" Harris.

The media have forgotten the flattening by the Luftwaffe of Guernica in Spain, Warsaw, Rotterdam, Belgrade or the cities of Great Britain. The totally random assault by Hitler's flying bombs and rockets have faded into history. The fire raids by the US Air Force on Tokyo, killing far more people than any other air attacks in history, are likewise forgotten, except of course by the Japanese. Yet millions of people around the world know that, in February 1945, Bomber Command made a devastating attack on the city of Dresden. This has been portrayed as a wicked act, ordered entirely by Harris.

What actually happened was quite different. . .

At the Yalta Conference in late 1945, Churchill asked about cities that might be strategic to bomb. He was told that Dresden, Leipzig and Chemnitz were suitable targets, as they were administrative and communication centres.

On the 27th of January, Harris received formal instructions to attack the three cities. Harris argued against this, pointing out the great distances involved, and the small advantage to be gained for what he thought would be severe casualties. He was overruled.

Against his will, he sent 804 bombers to Dresden on the night of the 13th of February. Next morning the US Eighth Army Air Force also attacked Dresden. The following morning, 15 February, the Eighth AAF attacked Dresden again. The US Eighth AAF made further heavy attacks on Dresden on the 2nd of March and the 7th of April.

But, the belief implanted in the mind of today's population is that Dresden was wantonly destroyed by the RAF alone, to satisfy Harris's lust for victims.

Harris was the last man to attempt to offer excuses or justifications. The anger aroused

in Britain today by this attack, would have seemed utterly incomprehensible to the British population 65, even 25, years ago.

Let's go back to the beginning . . .

Arthur Travis Harris was born in 1892, while his parents were on leave from India, where his father followed the family tradition of making a career in the Indian Army. At the age of five, Harris was sent to school in England, because the English schools in the Hill Stations in India were thought 'not to be suitable' for the British official classes. So, thanks to what Harris called the 'damned snobbery' of those days, he spent 12 of his most formative years separated from his mother and father, who hardly ever came to England, and were strangers to him.

His elder brothers had gone to Eton and Sherborne, so there was not much money left for Harris. He finished up at Allhallows Grammar School which had a 'Stalky and Co.' atmosphere. He made something of a mark on the sports fields, although two memorable losses were against the Royal Naval College, Dartmouth – Hockey 11-0, and Rugby 156-0, neither of which inclined Harris to the Navy. In the Cadet Corp he excelled and, fortunately, as it turned out, he had become 'pretty hot' on the bugle.

One Allhallows' old boy, then running the Comedy Theatre, used to provide free tickets for the boys. Harris went to see one of these plays during his summer holidays – it featured a Rhodesian tobacco planter who returned to England to marry his snobbish fiancée, fell out with her, and married the housemaid instead, a girl far better suited to be a farmer's wife. And he took her back to Rhodesia.

The vision of a new country, where it mattered not who one was, but what one did, fired the imagination and spirit of a young man who had no solid roots at home, and no clear idea of what he wanted to do in life. He told his father, who had just returned from India on retirement, that he was making enquiries about Rhodesia. His father, bitterly disappointed that his son was not going into the army, relented, and purchased a second class ticket for him to Beira, aboard the *SS Inanda*. Realising that his son was not going to change his mind, he did the right thing, and just before the boat sailed, he upgraded the ticket to First class.

The voyage occasioned his first love affair – the recipient of his affections being one Dorothy Blood, the niece of the shipping line's owner. On the five-week trip, one of the qualities that impressed Dorothy was his sense of humour – he used to make up the most droll rhymes about the elderly, and very odd, females on board, though always polite when meeting them.

And he was kind and considerate – on the overnight rail journey from Beira to Umtali, Dorothy found herself sharing a compartment with someone she intensely disliked, whereupon he set out to find her an empty one. The next day, after he had left the train, she found out that the compartment he had fixed for her, had been his own – he had slept in the guard's van. Harris waved 'goodbye' to her as she continued on her way to Durban. It seemed like the end of the world . . . He never saw her again.

But at eighteen one is resilient, and Rhodesia beckoned – warm sun, cool nights, seasonal rains, and a wonderfully healthy place to live – provided one took precautions against malaria, yellow fever, bilharzia, hookworm and so on . . . The indigenous population was 750,000 with 35,000 'settlers'. Rapid expansion was in progress – in 1904 there had been 300 European farms; ten years' later it was 2000 – maize, cattle, tobacco.

To help the new arrivals accustom themselves, the BSA Company had established

a special 'Rhodes Estate' near Umtali, where one was accommodated, learnt the native language, and received instruction on the local farming conditions. Harris spent three months there before moving onto various farms and gaining experience. Pole and daga was giving way to bricks, with mosquito gauze, corrugated iron roofs and broad verandas – all do-it-yourself.

Harris also became involved in the transport business and was quick to realise that horses and mules were soon to be replaced by mechanical transport in the form of the Model T. His lasting love of driving horse-drawn carriages and large motor cars stemmed from those early days, battling his way around the rough roads of Rhodesia.

Harris was persuaded that tobacco was a good prospect, but the purchase of a farm was a distant dream. He mentioned in a letter to Dorothy Blood in Ireland that he was looking for another job, and she responded by suggesting he call on friends of hers who had a big farm at Mazoe. It was in November 1913 that he found his way to 'Lowdale' – a magnificent place as he called it, and met Mr Crofton Townsend, who had emigrated from Cork ten years previously. He and his family took Harris on, made him farm manager, and then left for England four months later for a year's leave.

Here at last was responsibility – tobacco, maize and a substantial labour force. One of his jobs was to deliver a steam-driven maize-sheller by ox-cart to another farm, Ballineety, 30 miles away, and bring it back after two days. Mr Townsend was horrified to hear that he had charged the owner, Mr Glanfield, for the shelling – something that was 'just not done' in those days when everyone shared machinery. Harris was equally horrified to learn that Glanfield gave his labourers buns and coffee first thing in the morning – something that, in his view, was 'just not done'.

On Christmas morning Mr Townsend knocked on Harris's door to find him still in bed, assuming he would be allowed a short lie-in. 'Get out, get to work, there are fences to be mended.'

When the Townsends returned from England, Harris decided to take an option on 2000 acres and get started on his own as he had learnt all the necessary skills.

However, circumstances beyond his control were about to take a hand in shaping his future, and before long Rhodesia would be little more than a memory. He was to return briefly in 1936, and then again in 1945, when, on revisiting Lowdale, he was delighted to find the rusted remains of his old maize-sheller in the far corner of a field, his initials still there in the concrete base.

[I was asked to visit Lowdale by the author of the latest Harris book, to establish certain facts and take relevant photographs. I met members of the Townsend family, and also Patsy Brooks, who had been given a Teddy Bear by Harris when she was three. I was shown the Teddy Bear, but unfortunately the photograph is still with the publishers. Patsy married into the Townsend family and in 1997 she donated her teddy to the Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood.]

Such was the impact of Harris's few years in this wonderful country, that, for the rest of his life he would think of himself primarily as a Rhodesian.

On the 4th of August 1914, when the UK declared war on Germany, Harris knew nothing about it – he was away in the bush, and only when he returned at the end of the month did he find out. He now found himself in a war zone, and like all young men in the Empire, had to do his bit. It certainly put an end to his career as a tobacco planter.

South West Africa, at that time, was strategic, in that it could offer the Kaiser's Navy port and communication facilities in operations against Empire supply routes round the Cape. So the new Union of South Africa seized the German harbour and wireless station at Luderitz Bay, destroyed the facilities at Swakopmund by naval bombardment, and deployed forces to the German border.

When Harris tried to join the Rhodesia Regiment he discovered it was fully subscribed. Determined not to take 'No' for an answer, he found out there were two 'specialist' vacancies remaining – one for a machine-gunner, the other for a Bugler. Knowing nothing about machine guns, he opted for the only thing he had learnt in the Cadet corps – a Bugler.

He and 500 others were given a most rudimentary course in warfare and drill and were allowed to fire five rounds apiece from a .303. Now, ready for war, the unit left Salisbury for Cape Town, where they camped on the foreshore. They sailed, and landed in Walvis Bay on Christmas Day.

General Botha arrived to take command and the eastward advance began. The Germans in retreat, removed the railway track, and it was necessary to replace it. Harris's regiment was there to protect the engineers. The pursuit of the Germans continued till they surrendered, on the 9th July 1915. Such was the shortage of clothing that Harris had to wear a German frau's blouse. His abiding recollection of his six months as an infantryman was the marching, the exhaustion, the hallucinations and the starvation – the liquid bully beef due to the intense heat, and the biscuits which you had to break with your rifle butt. It is said that he buried his bugle in the desert, having little use for the thing. It must be there still.

In total, they marched 500 miles, and in one 16-day advance they covered 230 miles. He wrote in 1946 “. . . to this day I never walk a step if I can get any sort of vehicle to convey me.” [Now there's a true Rhodesian for you, in every way.]

One particular event – a single German aircraft dropped artillery shells on them – no harm done, but Harris remembered this first experience of aerial bombing.

With the South West Africa campaign over, the 1st Rhodesia Regiment was disbanded in Cape Town, and Harris went back to Rhodesia and tried to resume work at Lowdale. Immediately, he knew this was not the place for him, and, along with many of his mates, wanted to get to the real war which was going from bad to worse. Three hundred of them managed to embark at Beira on the *Cluny Castle* which had been fitted with temporary accommodation in the hold. They landed at Plymouth.

It had been 5½ years, and it was a very different England, a nation engaged in a war, the like of which nobody alive had ever experienced. No leisurely homecoming for him. He had returned to play his part in the war – but on one condition: having marched his way through SWA he was 'determined to find a way of going to war in a sitting posture.'

No vacancies in the cavalry; the Royal Artillery was full up – the only choice was the Infantry! But he saw an advertisement for the Royal Naval Air Service and the Royal Flying Corps . . . Not wishing to become a sailor, he opted for the RFC, but found himself at the end of a very long queue. So – to the 'old boy net' . . . Armed with a letter from his father, whose brother was in the war office, he was ushered in to the doctor who passed him as fit for flying. That same evening he was at Brooklands, flying a Maurice Farman Longhorn – airborne for the first time. With a few hours' dual instruction, and 1½ hours' solo, he qualified as a pilot and became a 2nd Lieutenant in the RFC. With ten more hours, he was passed out as a fully qualified RFC pilot in January 1916. [When I, the writer, was

training in 1967 we had to do 300 hours to qualify.] He was posted to Northolt where he was required to intercept the German Zeppelins in their night bombing of SE England – the first strategic bombing campaign in history.

Harris learnt quickly about both bombing and night flying, something to which Bomber Command in WWII was to owe a great deal of its success. Although only having been in the RFC for ten months, Harris was appointed to command a newly-formed Squadron – No 38.

Then he met Barbara Money. *He* was practical, without an academic education; *she* was into the London scene, and was devoted to opera and the ballet. They were totally dissimilar people, but there was a war on, and Harris knew what his chances of survival were . . . They were madly in love, so they got married.

In the Battle of the Somme, Harris crash-landed, was wounded, and was sent back to England. He recovered, returned to France, and found himself above the ghastly battlefields of Passchendaele. His CO was Pierre van Ryneveld of Silver Queen fame. When Van Ryneveld was wounded, Harris took over the squadron. He ended up an ‘ace’ with five victories in the air. Having been overhead the trenches, and having witnessed the carnage, he was convinced, that if ever there was to be another war, there surely must be a better way to fight it.

Towards the end of 1918 Harris was posted to No 44 Squadron, flying Sopwith Camels, where he met up with Major Quintin Brand, also of Silver Queen fame, who was commanding a night fighter squadron. They discussed tactics together, and off duty they discussed another common interest – Southern Africa. Brand was born and bred there, and Harris wanted to return to Southern Rhodesia after the war. 44 Squadron, as you all know, became No 44 (Rhodesia) Squadron and was the first to be supplied with the new Lancasters. Harris always wore his ‘Rhodesia’ flashes on his uniform.

After the Armistice, Harris took over No 50 Squadron, where he found himself trying to quell in-house mutinies of personnel who had suddenly been demobbed – a policy not thought out very well by government. The squadron’s main task was to receive great numbers of surplus aircraft, tip them up on their noses and burn them! They were all brand new, because government, in their infinite wisdom, had kept the aircraft production lines open until there was other work to be found.

Harris was then awarded the AFC, and this, and the fact that his wife would not find life easy on a Rhodesian farm, made him decide that a flying career in the RAF was best. But, being thoroughly bored in the aftermath of the war, he applied to go to India, where, in January 1921, he took control of No 31 Squadron. His family stayed behind. Then on to Iraq where he got to work manufacturing bomb racks for 20, 50 and 100lb bombs, and also cutting a totally unauthorised hole in the nose of the aircraft for the prone bomb aimer, and successfully bombing the Turks. Then, on to night bombing and even formation bombing.

In August 1932, Harris was home again, and went to Calshot to attend the Flying Boat Pilot’s Course, and to fly the beautiful *Supermarine Southampton*. In 1933 he took over No 210 squadron, where he met a New Zealander who was to make his mark in WWII – Donald Bennett. On 11th August, the word came for Harris to report to Air Ministry. This meant immediate promotion – it meant Harris could now influence RAF policy in the critical years of Adolf Hitler’s rise to power – it meant that his flying career was now over, and he would be condemned to Air Ministry staff work.



Arthur Travis Harris

It also meant the end of his 18-year marriage.

Harris would arrive home in the evenings in one of his moods, full of the day's troubles, and his wife found these moods increasingly difficult to deal with. Over the months, the marriage steadily fell apart, until Barbara walked out, taking the children with her. Divorce proceedings sited misconduct with one Miss Daphne Leys, a woman Harris had met in Egypt. After much legal correspondence, Miss Leys admitted her misconduct and a decree nisi was issued. There had never been the 'meeting of minds', or 'sharing of interests' for the marriage to endure. Barbara went on to marry a naval officer whom she had met in Egypt. In her old age, she admitted that she would never have divorced Harris over the 'other woman' – it was the very rude way in which he spoke to her that finished it.

In Harris's view, based on his experiences of fighting the Boche, there was still 'unfinished business' to be done, and from his recollections of the horrors of trench warfare, he was convinced that the bomber offered a better way of doing it. In 1933, however, not too many people shared his opinion . . . In 1935, Hitler announced the construction of the German Air Force, and Mussolini invaded Abyssinia three months' later.

There was also a new spring in Harris's step as he had acquired a girlfriend – one

Therese Hearne, suitably introduced by an old school friend of hers. After drinks, he took the two of them to dinner, but his offer to escort Therese home was firmly refused. Aged only 20, and young enough to be his daughter, she had a strict and sheltered upbringing. She described herself later as ‘very young and innocent.’ The mere thought of getting into a taxi with a strange man was quite unthinkable . . . Yet, when Harris rang her up a few days’ later, to invite her to lunch, she accepted. And this time he did take her home in a taxi. They courted for a few years – she called him ‘Bud’ and he called her ‘Jill’, for no other reason than he thought that Therese was far too pretentious a name.

The defence of Central Africa had been under discussion since 1934, and Harris was the obvious choice to travel to Rhodesia. He came here in 1936 and was quickly on good terms with Huggins, and Lewis, the Minister of Defence. He recommended a self-contained airforce, *ab initio* flying training by de Havillands, technical training at Halton, airfields, repair facilities, personnel, and new aircraft similar to the South Africans. This all went through with long-term consequences – establishment of the Air Wing, (which was to become the Royal Rhodesian Air Force), and later, Rhodesia’s contribution to the Empire Air Training Scheme.

Also, Harris was loaned a Hornet Moth which he used to inspect possible targets such as bridges, dams and power supplies. On one of these trips he was accompanied by Polly Brooks, younger sister of Patsy, of Teddy Bear fame, and who was one of the most sought after single ladies of the day. Suddenly, during one flight, Arthur said to her,

“I think it would be very nice if you married me – will you?”

She replied: “It’s very nice of you to ask me, but I think you are too old!”

To get back to business, Harris recommended that the Victoria Falls Bridge should have anti-aircraft defences, anti-sabotage methods, and to ensure rolling stock was distributed on both sides.

When Harris returned to England things had got much worse internationally. He was selected to return to the bomber force, he was promoted, and given five front-line stations with ten squadrons. This was the real world – a growing force of modern aircraft, and crews to be prepared for war. One Friday he was travelling on the Flying Scotsman to London when he spotted a Whitley bomber forming at low level on the train. He noted its number, and duly signalled 7 Squadron ordering the pilot to report to him immediately. The pilot was interviewed, and just given an informal warning. He commented afterwards, “Anyone who can fly like that is worth keeping.” Harris was a real pilot’s man who dealt with them with both firmness and understanding. They in turn, all knew that he had done his full share of operational flying in his early days.

Harris persevered in his efforts to persuade Jill to marry him, and his friends reassured her about his suitability as a husband. In 1935 his attentions were rewarded, and they became engaged. He was then posted to AOC Palestine, where his new wife could accompany him – the gods were smiling . . .

Then out of the blue, before setting off for the Middle East, he was told he was needed for a secret mission to North America, to order aircraft for the RAF. This resulted in the delivery of 200 Hudson light bomber aircraft, and later, 400 of the eventual 5,000 Harvards. Harris’s report on the trip was not only thorough, perceptive and critical, but also laced with the dry humour and turn of phrase, that made many of his missives considerable fun to read.

Of their War Office building, he wrote:

The American war office lacks the grandiose entrance of Berlin's air ministry. A strictly utilitarian, and obviously efficient hotdog stand occupies most of the front hall. At lunch hour, Colonels and messengers, with hamburgers in hand, elbow for counter space, and access to the communal mustard pot. I would hate to eat the victuals from this counter!

And, on the new air-conditioning system:

By an ingenious, complicated and very expensive mechanism, a pallid populace achieves wholesale asphyxiation and a damp, tropical and fume-laden atmosphere, during even the balmiest of temperate spring days. They conclude it is an astonishing achievement of engineering. So do I!

And his forthright comments of what he thought of the American Air Force: "An elaborate piece of window dressing."

These remarks did him no harm. General Hap Arnold recognised his honest, no-nonsense approach, based on expertise, and here started a friendship that was invaluable in a war.

Then back home . . . Harris married Jill in June 1938, and their honeymoon was spent on a ship to his posting in Palestine. Jill adjusted well to her new life, and their 21 years' age difference mattered not – they were remarkably well matched.

F/O Pelly-Fry became Harris's PA and was welcomed into the Harris household as a permanent guest. 'Pelly', as Harris called him, was more than pleased, and found Harris to be stimulating and articulate – a breath of fresh air. It was Pelly who later went behind Harris's back, to report to the C-in-C Palestine that his AOC was not well – Harris had refused to see an RAF doctor. He was given a medical board, and ordered back to England, where he was diagnosed with a duodenal ulcer. He was sent on one month's sick leave, thus missing the initial stage of the war.

On 3 September, whilst convalescing, he listened to Chamberlain's fateful statement. He could rest no longer, and phoned his friend, Chief of Air Staff, Peter Portal and, invoking the 'old boy' net once again, he asked him for a job. Portal came back to him a few days' later and told him that Ludlow-Hewitt wanted a new AOC for 5 Group. Harris packed his bags, borrowed an old Austin and marched into Air Commodore Callaway's office with the greeting, "I've come to relieve you." Callaway hadn't yet been told. Embarrassed apologies were accepted, and Harris assumed command. Peter Tomlinson was his new PA, and he too was treated as family. He became Godfather to one of their children.

In 1940, Churchill and the War Cabinet took the basic decision to build up a great bomber force to strike directly at Nazi Germany. (In fact, when the USA entered the war in December 1941, Churchill and Roosevelt, together with their military and economic advisers, decided then to mount a massive joint air offensive to wreck the German industrial economy).

Harris though, passionately believed that the bomber could win the war without the need for an invasion of Hitler's Europe, and that the wholesale destruction of the German industrial centres would eventually cause Germany to collapse, even though, initially, the bomber was disappointing, and the navigation aids were almost non-existent, whereby they couldn't even hit a small town.

On Sunday evening, 29 December 1940, Harris was still at work when the Luftwaffe launched its first incendiary attack on the City of London. Climbing to the Air ministry roof to see what was happening he saw the dome of St Paul's Cathedral standing out amid a sea of flame and called Portal to witness 'a sight that shouldn't be missed'. As they turned

away from the scene Harris spoke quietly, 'They are sowing the wind'. That was the only occasion, he wrote after the war, that he ever felt vengeful.

Then, Harris went back to America to lead a delegation to negotiate the allocation of aircraft to the RAF – part of the Lend-Lease Act . . .

Harris's letter to Freeman, the Air member for Research and Development, bears repeating:

. . . their promises peter out to nothing – the arrogant American assumption of superiority and infallibility, makes it hard to accept our ideas – we have been living in a fool's paradise, where expectations of quality and quantity in American production is concerned. They are convinced of their own superiority and super-efficiency, and of our mental, physical and moral decrepitude. The best of them, however, now appreciate that we are not getting anywhere near enough production for our minimum requirements, and not even our money's worth. Meanwhile, the most oppressive factor is our wishful thinking about a probability of the US entering the war. They will come in when they think we have won it, but if they come in in any other circumstances, short of being kicked in, I'll stand you to a dinner, and eat, as my share, a pink elephant, trunk, tail and toenails, and raw at that!

Freeman was actually on sides . . .

This document was not widely distributed . . . surprisingly!

Here is a sample of what Harris had to contend with: At a Service Chiefs' meeting, chaired by Roosevelt's son, he criticised the RAF for its failure at Dunkirk, Greece, Crete and so on . . . Harris interrupted him . . . "It is possible that the RAF is the worst trained, worst organised, worst disciplined force in the world, as Colonel Roosevelt appears to suggest, but it is still good enough to kick the hell out of the combined air forces of both Germany and Italy!"

"Good morning," he concluded, and walked out.

The reaction was understandable, but it did Harris no harm.

The President himself was totally different, and once or twice he was on the verge of being impeached for helping the British. On one occasion Harris asked the President if he could supply civilian ferry pilots. The President rang up General Hap Arnold, and as a result, a blonde bombshell named Jacqueline Cochran arrived in Harris's office. She, the holder of many flying records, asked Harris how many more women pilots he wanted – Anglo-American cooperation at its best . . .

Socially too, he and the Americans got on well, ably supported by Jill, whose acceptance was marked when she was featured as 'Beauty of the Week' in the *Times Herald*, in which it stated "Her beauty contributes to the Washington scene – she is typically English, her skin like a garden rose, and shining dark hair."

Harris was in Washington on Sunday the 7th December 1941 – the date of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour. Their war department was panic-stricken, and people were running around like chickens with their heads cut off – they had heard that New York was in ruins, and that Los Angeles had been bombed. McArthur topped it all by sending a telegram to the heroic survivors of LA saying, "Hold out for thirty six hours – relief coming!"

The Assistant Secretary for Air told Harris in horrified terms how the whole Pacific Fleet had been destroyed. Harris replied, "So what!"

Harris was obviously now needed back in Britain, so they sailed for home aboard the armed merchant cruiser the *Alcantara*, leaving behind them a great fund of goodwill, and not just among the high and the mighty. Ian Elliot, who saw them off from the station at Washington, walked back along the platform with Ennals, Harris's driver, who was obviously devoted to Harris:

'Mr Elliot' said Ennals, "I hate like hell to see him go.'

'So do I,' replied Elliot, 'but he's going to a far more important job. What are you going to do now Ennals – go back to your job at the FBI?'

Ennals's face fell. 'Do you think Harris knew?' he said.

'Of course he did,' said Elliot, 'He wasn't born yesterday.'

In January 1942, Portal and Churchill made Harris Commander-in-Chief Bomber Command. Harris now had the opportunity to deal with his 'unfinished business'. He had been told to do a job – a horrible one – and was determined to spare no effort in doing what he had been entrusted with, in an unprecedented war of national survival. From that time he dedicated himself to striking at Germany in their Homeland, where it would really hurt.

Harris arrived at High Wycombe, and he and Jill moved into their allocated accommodation. General Ira Eaker moved in at the same time, their first living-in guest.

Harris gripped his new command immediately. Strategic bombing, it was discovered, was far less effective than the claims – only one bomber in three got within five miles of the target, and over the Ruhr, where targets were difficult to find, only one in ten. Unless night navigation was to improve, bomber command was wasting its time.

Harris had inherited 44 squadrons of aircraft, only fifteen of which had heavy bombers. Less than 400 aircraft were serviceable. Only two of these squadrons had the new Lancasters, but they were not yet operational. And no American aircraft as yet . . .

So, a change of tactic – concentrate on area targets such as towns and cities which were producing war materials. Moreover, this would hit at the morale of the civilian population, and especially the morale of the industrial workers.

The concept and policy of area bombing was not conceived by Harris, as the critics allege – it was determined by the Air Ministry, under Portal's direction with the support of the Chiefs of Staff and the War Cabinet. Certainly Harris espoused it, and it needed a man of his convictions to carry it out. Churchill reinforced it by saying ". . . there is one thing that will bring Hitler down, and that is the devastating, exterminating attack by very heavy bombers upon the Nazi homeland." This policy was challenged by public opinion, and even by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Harris's visits to Chequers now became frequent, sometimes returning home at three or four in the morning.

On April 17, 1942, a raid that deserves special mention, was Augsburg, where Nettleton led a daylight raid of 12 Lancasters to destroy the MAN U-Boat engine production plant. Eight aircraft reached the target, only five of which got home – a prohibitive loss rate of highly trained crews. However it caught the public imagination and earned Nettleton a VC, and was a big 'shot in the arm' for the crews.

There was a sequel: Air Vice-Marshal Freeman wanted to continue daylight raids with specially armed Lancasters. Harris considered he would be sacrificing the best of his night striking force in the interest of an 'experiment' which would be highly expensive and totally ineffective. And said so.

“I thought that, over 1½ years,” wrote Freeman, “I had got accustomed to your truculent style, your loose expression and your flamboyant hyperbole. I am not used to being told that I am risking human lives to test an idea of mine which you think is wrong. I should be glad if you would carry out the order given to you.”

Harris took great delight in telling Freeman that nearly all the offending letter had been worded by his staff, and thus reflected their views as well.

Harris wrote back: “If your proposals are to stand, I must ask you for an official directive, to which I can register an official protest.”

The scheme never materialised.

But what Bomber Command needed to do at this stage, was something big – in other words – put together his 400 aircraft, with the Operational Training Units, along with coastal command, and devise something outrageous . . . He put the scheme to Portal and Churchill. Admiralty backed out and refused to take part, but scouring through all the units Harris and his staff managed to amass a force of 1046 aircraft, many flown by trainees and instructors.

So, on the night of the 30th May 1942, Cologne was attacked under the codename Operation Millennium. Heavy damage was caused, Bomber Command had a boost, and the nation’s morale was raised. The loss rate was only 4%. The first 1000 bomber raid had been a resounding success. Further raids on the 1st of June on Essen and its Krupp factories, and again on the 25th of June on Bremen, put Bomber Command on the map. But these huge raids could not be sustained . . .

Harris then came under the accusation that the bombing offensive was tailing off. In answer to this criticism, Harris wrote to Churchill:

The army fights half a dozen battles a year.

The Navy fights half a dozen battles a war.

But poor Bomber Command! Every night that the weather gives us a breather, even though our monthly sortie number is attained, every night we fail to stage and win a major battle, the critics rise in wrath and accuse of doing nothing yet again!

But Harris didn’t win every battle of words: He was once put in his place by the Navy, when he refused to allow his bomber force aircraft to be used to patrol the seas. They told him in no uncertain terms, that unless they got their air cover over the sea, there would be no petrol for his bombers! Harris relented . . .

In 1942 Bomber Command was not receiving good press – during the Battle of Britain, Churchill’s immortal words had done more for RAF morale than anything else. In contrast, Harris’s airmen were being told that what they were doing they were doing badly, and to no avail.

“Belittling of bombing efforts has a terrible impact on the morale of the crews,” said Harris. “There is only one person who should discount the bombing policy, and that is Adolf Hitler. Those who serve that purpose serve the enemy.”

HARRIS AND THE MEDIA

The newspapers had given Harris the conventional welcome accorded to a newly appointed commander-in-chief, but he was not best pleased to find himself referred to as ‘Ginger’. Fortunately this nickname did not stick. His audience with the king was reported on the

18th March 1942, and the message he sent to the munitions workers, urging them to help keep up the export trade to Germany appeared on 8 April. Not until May did the verbal portrait painting begin – ‘a shrewd dynamo of air strategy, a man of decisiveness, a first class commander . . .’ and so on . . .

He was reported as saying “If I could send 1,000 bombers to Germany every night, it would end the war by autumn. We are going to bomb Germany with such force that the Germans will scream for mercy.” It was what the public wanted to hear.

The attack on Cologne had the press looking for headlines – The World’s Biggest Air Raid – One Bomber every Six Seconds . . .

His personal message to the crews was printed in full: (here it is in part)

The force which you are part of tonight is twice the size of the largest air force ever before concentrated on one target . . . press home your attack with the utmost determination . . . the most shattering and devastating blow will have been delivered against the enemy . . . (and so on)

This was all heady stuff, but its sentiments were widely applauded, as was the Knighthood awarded to him on the 11th of June.

The BBC too had been covering the mounting offensive, and bomber command now had its own correspondent – Richard Dimbleby, who flew with the bomber force on ops, and found himself reporting on the greatest ‘spectacular’ of all – the breaching of the Mohne and Eder dams. Harris was at Scampton that night.

“Your skill and determination,” he said, “in pressing home the attack will forever be an inspiration to the RAF. You have won a major victory in the battle of the Ruhr, the effects of which will last until the Bosch is swept away in the flood of final disaster.”

A sense of thrill swept across the nation.

Articles about Harris in the press became more perceptive and accurate, and one of his former 5 Group squadron commanders was quoted as saying, “We all love him – he’s so bloody inhuman.”

The editor of *Aeroplane* magazine, Colston Shepherd said of him:

He was not a brilliant mind, but an uncommonly lively one . . . he was not a popular commander . . . his was a long term job, that it could only be a success over a long period if it never got stale. So far it never has. And therein lies his true greatness.

The German press also had their say:

Brutality, cold cynicism and an undiluted lust for murder are his chief characteristics. You have only to look into his eyes to see the icy blue of a born murderer. (*Goebbels*)

The British commented that Harris could hardly be a popular hero with the Huns in the heavily bombed areas of Germany! Such personal assaults only served merely to indicate that he was well on his way to his objectives.

PROPAGANDA

Harris arranged to run an exhibition of photographs of bomb damage. Held in the House of Commons, it was very successful, so much so that they took it to Washington and Ottawa. He also arranged for a film to be made of a night attack from a Mosquito, and had it shown in the nation’s cinemas.

He was not blind either to the occasional stunt – in January 1943 he sent several Mosquitos over the Reichstag in Berlin just as Goering was about to speak.

On the 16th January 1943, Harris sent 200 aircraft to Berlin – his first raid on the big city. Encouraged by the loss of only one aircraft he repeated the raid the following night and lost 22 (11,8%). Totally unacceptable . . . On the next raid he lost 5,6% and after two more raids, he stayed away from Berlin, until August.

Then on the 4th of February 1943, came a Directive that reiterated the wording agreed by Churchill, Roosevelt and the Combined Chiefs of Staff.

The primary aim of the British and American bomber forces in the United Kingdom would be the progressive destruction and dislocation of the German military, industrial and economic system, and the undermining of the morale of the German people to a point where their capacity for armed resistance is fatally weakened.

THE PATHFINDERS

We must now turn to one of Harris's greatest challenges – enabling bombers to find their way to the targets, to identify them and hit them, usually at night.

There was GEE – a radio beam that allowed aircraft to fix their positions regardless of weather, though its range was limited to 350 miles. Also useful for finding their way home! It was okay for navigation but not accurate enough for target location.

There arose from this, Lord Portal's suggestion that one of the bomber groups should be selected for the sole purpose of target marking. Harris, in 5 Group had adopted the practice anyway, of sending picked crews in first, to illuminate the target for the 'rabbits' as he called them, and all groups had followed this idea. To transfer these crews to a single squadron would have the most appalling effect on the morale of the remainder. The arguments raged on, Harris being opposed to any corps d'élite. Harris was eventually overruled, but accepted with reluctance, and suggested that the squadron and personnel be called the "Pathfinders".

Now, a commander was required – Basil Embry was mooted, but Harris's preference was for Donald Bennett, whose operational and technical skills had impressed Harris as far back as 1933. Bennett was immediately promoted to Group Captain. Harris gave him unstinting support till the end of the war and Bennett did not disappoint.

Other navigation aids to appear at the time were Oboe and H2S, the latter really proving its worth for target marking for the Pathfinders.

Then came the fabulous Mosquito bomber, which had no armament because it was fast enough to outrun even the enemy fighters, except perhaps the Me 262, but the 262 ran out jet fuel more often than not, before it could catch them. The Mossies were used extensively and very effectively for target marking.

Meanwhile the initial American Eighth Air Force started arriving in Britain with its B17 bombers. Harris was only too pleased to have them, and did all he could to help them in any way, from WAAF clerks to airfields. There was a divide on how to use the B17s – some wanted them for the Atlantic war, but Harris wanted them to bomb Germany. At Casablanca the decision was made for a combined bomber offensive.

Harris stated, "Between us we can, and will, bust Germany wide open."

DAM BUSTERS

By May, the Ruhr offensive was going well and Harris was confident enough to state guardedly, "I really think we are getting somewhere."

The most spectacular event in the four-month assault was a 'one-off', in which Harris played a key role. He had previously pooh-poohed Barnes Wallis's bouncing bomb theory to breach the Ruhr dams, as a crazy idea, which also had the scepticism of his staff. Harris, with his frenetic mistrust of inventors was persuaded to see Wallis.

"My boys' lives are too precious to be wasted on your crazy notions," Harris said, but he listened to Wallis and watched the films, admitting afterwards that he had not been fully informed of the details.

Harris and Wallis had much in common: both mistrusted politicians, disliked senior civil servants, and despised obstructionists; they both possessed determination and originality far beyond most of their contemporaries, and between them had as much diplomacy as a circus prize-fighter.

On the 15th March he briefed Cochrane on the formation of a special squadron, No 617, authorised by Portal. You all know the outcome, and how they were given the name Dambusters. After the 'Dams' raid, Mr Henry How, a Londoner, wrote to Harris protesting about the way people's sleep was constantly being interrupted by German aircraft, and urged him to attack their airfields.

Mr How may not have enjoyed Harris's reply:

Over 13% of the very few aircraft that reach our coasts are brought down. The results achieved by the remainder are ludicrous in extent, even if occasionally tragic to a few individuals. My bomber crews seldom get 'reasonable rest' at night. I am delighted therefore to hear that yours is also occasionally disturbed. We have more important things to do than to ensure 100% safe snoring for the infinitesimal few with views and ideas like yours. Your personal chances of getting hurt by the present scale of German attack are one in ten million. If that fearful risk keeps you awake at night, ask a friend, if you have one, to explain why. Probably your best friend wouldn't tell you.

Let's leave the war there. And a nice story to end this session . . .

At the end of the war there was still plenty of work to be done. Before Harris could take leave he had to see to Operation Manna, the dropping of food to the starving people of Holland, and the flying home of 75,000 PoWs, one of whom was Peter Tomlinson.

On passing through High Wycombe on the train to London, Tomlinson got off and phoned Harris.

"Sir, this is Peter."

"Peter who?"

"Peter Tomlinson."

"Where are you?"

"At the station."

"Stay there – don't move."

Harris jumped in his car, roared off down to the station and screeched to a halt – his daughter's godfather was back. Harris's current PA was keen to retire, so arrangements were made for Peter to take his place.

PART 2

So what is the final verdict on Harris's bomber offensive? It failed in itself to bring about Germany's collapse, as Harris had believed it would. But equally, it did inflict enormous damage on industrial Germany, certainly curtailing their armament production. But above all the bomber offensive created a second front, forcing the enemy to deploy nearly one million servicemen, 55,000 guns and much of the Luftwaffe in defence of the skies over the Third Reich – forces which should have been deployed against the Red Army and the Anglo-American invasion.

The verdict on Bomber Command's contribution to the allied victory has been many and varied. The fiercer critics are echoed by Max Hastings: "The cost of life, treasure and moral superiority over the enemy, tragically outstripped the results achieved." He strongly criticised Harris's fixation on continued area bombing in the final period of the war.

The official historians on the other hand, in their thorough and balanced appraisal of the whole strategic offensive, concluded that the contribution that the strategic bombers made to victory was decisive, without which the war could not have been won.

Even Albert Speer, who had much time to reflect on the matter said:

The real importance of the air war was that it opened a second front over the skies of Germany. This required thousands of guns, tons of ammunition and hundreds of thousands of soldiers to stand by their guns, inactive for months. This was the greatest lost battle on the German side.

Harris himself posed the question: "Were the results worth the lives of the 55,000 aircrew and others who died in Bomber Command?"

Compared with the 1914–18 war, his campaign had saved countless lives in all three services and also among British civilians. Though incapable of proof, this statement has to be a fair judgement of the whole campaign.

The destruction of the German cities reduced their war production and prevented the development of many new weapons, and it also required an army of two million men to engage in repair work. Hitler insisted that key industries must go underground which involved half of Germany's work force. Finally, there was great value to the war at sea, firstly of mine-laying and then the destruction of surface forces, including the Tirpitz and several of the enemy's heaviest ships.

The great debate centred on just one aspect – that of city bombing – but only 45% of the Command's effort was devoted to this. Harris always claimed that, along with the US daylight-bombing offensive, they could have ended the war by 1944 given the resources. This would have rendered the invasion unnecessary. Long afterwards, though, he was glad that the invasion did take place, because, had Germany collapsed due to the bombing, the Russians would have come right through Europe. It was in fact the destruction of the vital German oil production and the dislocation of her communications system for which Bomber Command were given the main credit as its contribution to the war.

Concerning morale, especially civilian morale: Did the bombing offensive break the morale of the enemy. "We shall see whether the morale, courage and endurance of the German people are equal to the fortitude of the people of London and Coventry," Harris said.

The civilian population remained apathetic, while the Gestapo saw to it that they were docile. Morale never reached breaking point; the Nazi party's hold over the civilian

population was never destroyed. In fact, however much the civilians hated the Nazi regime, they became increasingly reliant upon it to enable them to survive. Their desire was, that soon this dreadful experience would be over. The offensive designed to wreck the civilian morale clearly failed – even in the final stages of the war.

LEADERSHIP

Few critics have ever judged Harris as anything but a great leader. Yet most have always been puzzled how he managed to win their trust, loyalty and respect, when they hardly ever saw him, let alone spoke to him. His remoteness flew in the face of conventional wisdom where the requirement was to be known by as many as possible of those one commands.

It is not strictly true to say Harris never got out and about – he made his mark with Bennett and the Pathfinders and was reported as having been ‘an inspiration and a stimulant of the greatest value’, with the interest shown in their work.

He also met with the survivors of a Halifax that ditched in the North Sea, and of course visited Scampton after the Dams Raid. He took that opportunity to address the pilots of No 617 (Dambuster) Squadron, and those members of No 57 Squadron who were on the same base, and along with some Poles who were there. “He spoke for ten minutes, telling them how proud they must feel, to be able to hit back at the Hun – he knew it was tough, and it was going to get a lot tougher.” As he strode out, there was strumming on the tabletops, the Poles started to cheer and everyone joined in. There seemed to be genuine affection for the man who had just told them that he would send them over Germany again and again, until only one in three remained. At the door he turned to face the pilots. Suddenly there was silence. ‘Butch’ opened his mouth but no sound came. He took a short step forward, lifted his arm in a smart salute, turned and was gone.

In late 1944, Harris flew to No 692 Mosquito Squadron to present its new badge. The men felt ten feet tall as they marched past their Commander-in-Chief.

He would like to have seen more of his aircrews, but felt that it was out of the question as it was difficult to be light-hearted with men he was ordering to their possible deaths. And he would never have covered them all, and would have been accused of favouring some.

Harris poked fun at the establishment to the delight of his crews who themselves were critical of top brass. The stories of Harris spread, of his running battle with senior civil servants: if they met in the corridor, what would pass for a growl at the Battersea Dog’s Home, implied “Good morning.” On one occasion he encountered a rather uncivil servant head on. In place of his growl he said, “And what aspect of the war effort are you retarding today.”

An airframe fitter who used to work on his Anson aircraft remembered helping himself to the occasional dram of Whiskey from the bar on board. Harris took him aside, “Young man – it’s bad enough you sampling my whiskey, but in future please don’t top the bottle up with water.”

His official messages of congratulation did no harm. Of the attack on Essen he wrote:

You have set a fire in the belly of Germany which will burn the black heart out of Nazidom, and will wither its groping limbs. Your great skill and courage . . . will destroy their capacity for resistance and break their hearts.

These messages went home, and men bent to their tasks with fresh energy, and many men volunteered for additional sorties as they wanted to do ‘a few more for the Butcher.’

Harris was always keen to recognise achievement – Leonard Cheshire remembered that for the whole half hour he spent with Harris, his brain was in a whirl. Harris had a soft spot for pilots who did not realise that they had done more than their fair share of operations (Cheshire did 100). He stated in velvety tones that he wanted to congratulate him, before anyone else, on winning the Victoria Cross. Cheshire was reduced to stunned silence – the VC of all things! He had never thought of Harris with a heart! The interview was like a fantasy – Cheshire was bewildered . . . Harris was used to this spectacle.

On every occasion when I informed anyone that they had been awarded a very high honour, they have invariably been overcome with astonishment – the last thing they expected. I have never known any recipient of the VC not to be astonished – but I have sometimes met others who were astonished that they had not been awarded the VC!

Harris also took a strong line regarding one of his AOCs, Alec Coryton, who saw no point in some of Harris's raids to bomb the Ruhr, some merely to keep the Germans awake. It appeared that Coryton was unable to bear the thought of casualties to his crews. It was a hard letter to write, to recommend his move to another appointment. After complimenting his friend on his doubtless qualities of leadership and fine sense of duty, he explained that what he could not accept was the perpetual disputes over operations.

It is for *me* to say what shall be done, and when, and how; it is for *you* to accomplish it. Responsibility for the outcome is mine and mine alone – where you fail is through your inability to divest yourself of a moral responsibility which is not yours.

You cannot bear the thought of casualties, but you have no monopoly on this. I only hope you may never have on your heart and conscience, the load that lies on mine.

Coryton eventually ended up as an Air Chief Marshal.

HARRIS'S OWN LEADERSHIP

By the end of the war, of the 125,000 aircrew who had served on Bomber Command, 55,000 had been killed, a quarter of the whole British armed services. It was he who made the operational decisions that led to the deaths of the majority, and to many of the 18,000 wounded or taken prisoner.

How did he cope? Did he actually cope?

Some said they named him the 'Butcher' because he cared nothing for the lives of German civilians, nor for his own crews. It was only after the war that people came to appreciate how deeply their master felt about them.

Having experienced the carnage and slaughter in WWI, he was determined to win WWII by bombing.

There are no words with which I can do justice to the aircrew who fought under my command. There is no parallel in warfare to such courage and determination in the face of danger over so prolonged a period, a danger so great that only one man in three could expect to survive his tour of operations.

Harris was always keenly aware of the demands being made on the men and women who served under him, on the ground as well as in the air. Few people appreciate the terrible

miseries and discomfort, and the tremendous hours of work under which the ground personnel of Bomber Command had laboured for six years. He, their leader had no doubt.

Harris once asked: "Do you think I would have risked aircrews unnecessarily, when I admired and valued them as much as I did." Those closer to him did know – Tomlinson and Perry-Fry heard him speak of 'the very nasty, tough, uncomfortable and frightening game of being a bomber airman.' Let none question Harris's deep concern for all Bomber Command. It was one of his greatest leadership qualities.

Let Max Hastings have the last word on this: "Those who seek to present Harris as a latter-day 'donkey', indifferent to casualties, do him an injustice. He was passionately concerned to give every man in his command the best possible chance of survival."

Harris was not given a peerage after the war, but Churchill did bestow a Baroncy on him later. Nor was Bomber Command given any special recognition in the form a campaign medal – it was not considered 'seemly' after the destruction and the loss of life caused.

MAHADDIE

Bomber Command abounded with great characters, none more so than Mahaddie, a 'wee' Scot from humble beginnings. He left school at 13 and joined Halton's 17th Entry.

"They didn't mess about – boys could be flogged, and you learnt not only a trade but also something called discipline. To me an order was an order, not the start of an argument."

He was the first 'Rigger, Metal Airframes', in the RAF.

When in Iraq he applied for the pilot's course. His CO was 'astonished at his gall', and said he would only kill himself and probably others too. Fortunately the AOC felt differently, and by the time he returned to Britain he had 1260 flying hours.

He rose from Sergeant to Group Captain in just 26 months.

While at Halton he had read avidly about the exploits of the aces of the RFC.

On Sunday the 3rd September 1939, he thought "Ball, Bishop, McCudden, Mannock . . . why not Mahaddie?"

"That euphoria," he said, "lasted all of four minutes until the first siren wailed – then a bile set in my gut and stayed there for the duration of the war, until I received a signal from Bomber Harris saying, 'Personal for Station Commander from C-in-C: Hostilities cease at midnight.'"

He was 'hijacked' by Bennett and appointed Group Training Inspector, responsible for the selection and training of all Pathfinder aircrew. He used to call on the squadrons at any hour, to check on the results of their target marking, an activity which made him very unpopular. He called himself the Embolism which word he had found in Chambers Medical Dictionary, defined as a 'wandering clot.' He selected over 20,000 of the best men for the Pathfinder Force, a third of which were lost to enemy action.

All the while he flew on ops –

I was always keenly aware that I had seven bods to look after. Never once did it occur to me that the other six must have thought that they had to look after me. In hindsight I realised what they thought 'We simply must take care of him. Without a flight engineer he couldn't work the throttles or put the wheels down. Without a navigator he wouldn't have the faintest idea where he was. Doddering old fool, he must be nearly 30!' Such thoughts are the essence of a wartime crew.

On his 45th sortie his Lancaster C-Charlie was hit by 174 cannon shells from a Ju 88 night fighter, one round of which was stopped by the parachute pack that that he was sitting on. His last and most satisfying sortie of the war was when he uplifted 32 PoW aircrew from Lubeck.

He left the service in 1959 with the DSO, DFC, AFC and Czech MC, all awarded on the same day at Buckingham Palace back in February 1943. He received a bar to the AFC in 1952.

SPEEDING

Harris was not one to be out and about in headquarters and was rarely seen other than by his staff. The great majority of people never set eyes on their master, except when he was being driven, or more usually driving himself, in his black Bentley or his American Buick at a furious pace between office and home, always going home for lunch and frequently stopping to give schoolchildren a lift.

One classic story was when he was stopped by two police motor-cyclists when speeding home one night.

“Sir, you are travelling much too fast; you might kill someone.”

“I am on important business – but now that you mention it, it is my business to kill people – Germans.”

“Are you Air Marshal Harris, Sir?”

He nodded.

“That’s different – please follow us.”

Afterwards he said, “It was the quickest trip I ever made – they must have liked me.”

He was particularly irritated with drivers who obstructed the lane near his gate. Brian Cooke, who ran the local garage, and who used to accompany him on his longer journeys, commented how naughty he was about ‘unauthorised parking’. Indeed he was not beyond using his own car, the Bentley, to push some offending vehicle out of the way.

Harris liked to sit up front, and when he was not swearing at the idiots on the road, he would be talking knowledgeably and humorously about the history of the towns and villages they were passing through.

SCOUTS

Harris was totally in favour of the Scouts, and used to have them camp on his property. There were, however, certain rules which were written, with a sense of humour:

- Never throw rubbish or anything, except another scout, into the river.
- There must be no shouting after 9.00 pm, please. But sing if you feel like it.
- Please do not feed Rastus, our bull terrier, even if he tells you he is allowed camp handouts. He is not very truthful in that regard. Do not allow him near garbage pits or cookhouses or he will help himself, and he has already been operated on for Scout camp bones stuck in his interior. He will eat anything except a scout.

ALLOWANCES

Harris had a £25 a month entertainment allowance, and he protested when it was cut to £20. He had to cope with 100 official guests every month and it was ruining him financially, “especially having to fill the bellies of many people I loathe.”

Yet with the veggie garden at the back they somehow coped. By the end of the war he had entertained 5000 guests, and also a stream of relations and friends.

There were many dignitaries too: General de Gaulle, Jan Smuts, Pirrie van Ryneveld, Godfrey Huggins and William Temple, the Archbishop of Canterbury, who looked out of the window and murmured, “The precipitation may congeal.” To which Harris responded, “You mean it will bloody well snow.”

Then came the Duke of Kent, the Duchess of Gloucester, and the highlight, in February 1944, when King George and Queen Elizabeth paid an official visit.

Padre John Collins was often portrayed as one of Harris’s archenemies. The truth is rather different – they liked each other. Collins and his family often stayed at Harris’s home and he and Harris got on well despite differing views on bombing.

One visitor to come was the editor of *The Times* who Harris found to be quite pleasant but bone stupid, whose paper was ‘in the hands of servile reactionaries.’

“I will do a lot for my country,” said Harris, “but I am damned if I will have him in my house again – he is a waste of good whiskey!”

HARRIS’S STATUE

One Sunday in 1989, as they were leaving the Church of St Clement Danes, Group Captain Batchelor turned to Sir Michael Beetham, President of the Bomber Command Association. Might it now not be time, he suggested, to give the bomber men their due alongside those of Fighter Command, who were already represented by the statue of their Battle of Britain



The Central Church of the Royal Air Force, St Clement Danes, London

commander, Lord Dowding. The ideal site for a statue of Sir Arthur Harris was there in front of them. The idea was born . . .

The object was simple – to commemorate, outside the church, both the man who had saved them from defeat in the Battle of Britain and the man who subsequently paved the way for victory. The planned date was 1992, the 50th anniversary of Harris taking over Bomber Command, and the centenary of his birth.

Sir Michael wrote personally to the Queen Mother inviting her to perform the unveiling ceremony. She agreed to officiate on Sunday 31 May 1992, a date she had chosen as most suitable for her.

There were serious objections to the project as it would only open old wounds, but also much support for a statue that would honour not only Harris but the 55,000 men who lost their lives. Strong opposition came from abroad too – USA, Canada and Australia, but not surprisingly, the strongest views against came from Germany. The Mayors of Dresden and several other cities that had been bombed, were sharply critical, as was the Mayor of Cologne who thought it particularly insensitive to choose the 31st May, the 50th anniversary of the 1000 bomber raid on his city. He wrote directly to the Queen Mother appealing to her not to take part in the ceremony.





Marshal of the Royal Air Force, Sir Arthur Harris

The Service of Reconciliation and Remembrance was packed and was attended by Leonard Cheshire in his wheelchair, and Margaret Thatcher. Afterwards, all moved outside where the Queen Mother addressed them and unveiled the statue.

As patron of the Bomber Command Association . . . I am pleased to join you on this memorable occasion . . . we should not forget the dark days of war when we in grave danger and Bomber Command gave us hope . . . Sir

Arthur Harris was an inspiring leader . . . nowhere more fitting to honour him and his brave crews, more than 55,000 of them who died defending our freedom, than outside the Royal Air Force church of St Clement Danes, and beside Lord Dowding, whose statue I unveiled four years' ago. We remember them with pride and gratitude.

On the 30th August 1944, Flying Officer Denis Gay, a bomb aimer on 619 Squadron, failed to return from a raid over Konigsberg when his Lancaster was shot down. His daughter Sally was born on the 29th May 1945 (that's exactly 8 months and 29 days later!) and as she grew up she became utterly determined to establish his final resting place. She never did, and in 1996 she died from a long illness, aged 51. Her mother later went through Sally's papers and found a jotting which her daughter had written in 1992:

When the statue of Bomber Harris is unveiled I shall be thinking of a father I never met, but always loved. The father who, when I was a child, I would pray would return so that I could be like other children. This statue is long overdue and I feel the Mayor of Cologne should also erect a memorial plaque in honour of the boys who sacrificed their futures to free Europe from Nazism. Did they not liberate Germany from oppression and enable it to rise from the Ashes of Destruction?

On the 31st May we are remembering, through Bomber Harris, his forgotten and much maligned crews, and I for one will be very proud. Let's not forget.

Just a few thoughts jotted down, not very well. Hope it helps,
Sally.

Arthur Harris would have approved.

AND FINALLY . . .

And finally, I have reserved this till last, as I think it encapsulates everything about the man Harris. I have read it many times and I have never yet been able to get through it in one. So if there is a short break in the reading of it, it is because there is a little glistening of the eyes and a little constricting of the throat . . . It is the introduction to *Enemy Coast Ahead*, the finest book ever written on the Dambusters, by Guy Gibson VC, DSO and Bar, DFC and Bar, aged 25.

Here goes . . .

It may well be that the references to 'Parties' and 'Drunks' in this book will give rise to criticism, even outbursts of unctuous rectitude. I do not attempt to excuse them, if only because I entirely approve of them. In any case, the 'drunks' were mainly on near-beer and 'high' rather than 'potent' spirits.

Remember that these crews, shining youth on the threshold of life, lived under circumstances of intolerable strain. They were in fact – and knew it – faced with the virtual certainty of death, probably in one of its least pleasant forms. They knew, well enough, that they owed their circumstances to the stupidity, negligence and selfishness of the older generations who since 1918 had done little to avert another war and even less to prepare for it.

If, therefore, something of cynicism was occasionally manifest in their attitude to whatever might remain to them of life, and if on occasion the

anticipation of an event, or the celebration of a success and an unexpected survival, called for a party, for the letting off of steam in an attitude of eat, drink and be merry, for next time we shall most certainly die – who amongst the older generations who sent them and tens of thousands like them to their deaths, will dare criticise. If there is a Valhalla, Guy Gibson and his band of brothers will be found there at all the parties, seated far above the salt.

(Arthur Harris).

If you are about to make a new will,
or to amend your existing will,
please think of the History Society of Zimbabwe.

Transport Routes and the Development of Roads in Gazaland

by Marie de Bruijn

This is the text of a talk given to members of the History Society of Zimbabwe in Harare on 16 February 2011.

As we travel around our beloved country today, dodging pot-holes and complaining about the state of the roads, we do not think about how these roads came to be and what hardships had to be overcome. This talk will take a look at only a small part of Zimbabwe, which few people have ever been to, the part of our country once referred to as Gazaland.

Gazaland may be defined loosely as that part of Zimbabwe east of the Odzi-Save river confluence and south of the Umvumvumu River towards the Mozambique border. It encompasses Cashel, Chimanimani and Chipinge. To really appreciate the difficulty encountered in finding and making roads a quick look must be taken at the geography of the area, which forms the southern limits of the 'Eastern Highlands'. It is a mountainous region, with three of the five highest mountain peaks in Zimbabwe being found here. Musapa at 2143m and Point 71 at 2250m are the highest beacons on the border. From these high mountains on the eastern border to the Save Valley, with heights ranging at about 1000m, lie some very steep slopes to be negotiated.

While people moved about on foot it was relatively easy to move through this area. Many footpaths are still being used. The advent of vehicular traffic raised many problems, since oxen, donkeys and horses pulling a cart or wagon cannot move along a contour line but have to go straight up or down a mountain. It was only after roads had been surveyed and cut out of these mountains that vehicular traffic became easier and faster. Some of these roads were later abandoned in favour of roads with better gradients and all the roads were widened.

In the 1890s Dutch farmers, anxious to escape the British rule in the Cape Colony and seeking wide-open spaces, were encouraged to trek to Gazaland to form a buffer preventing westward occupation by the Portuguese. Initially, these people were to settle in an area encircled by the Portuguese border in the east, the Odzi river to the west and a line drawn from the Chimanimani gap to the confluence of the Odzi and Save rivers forming the southern border. The farms around Mutare would form the northern boundary. This is the area marked on the British South Africa Company chart No. L and described as a plateau of 3000–4000 feet above sea level. This would have settled them in the relatively dry, and, as was discovered at the end of the twentieth century, diamond-rich Marange fields!

The trailblazers into Gazaland were the Moodie trekkers of 1892. They had trekked up from Bethlehem in the Free State to Fort Victoria (Masvingo). Here dissension in the ranks split the trekkers and many moved on to Fort Salisbury (Harare). Tom Moodie and the others left Fort Victoria in early November 1892 and followed a scotch-cart road prospectors had made for 40 miles (64 km). This road petered out at the top of a hill, which Moodie named Amens Heights, as it really was the end of the road. From then on a new road had to be searched for. It took them 33 days to cover the 62 miles (99 km) from there to the Save

River. Reaching the Save River just below its confluence with the Devure River, they saw a river flowing about 1000 m wide. In the December of 1892 the Save was probably in flood and just a sea of water with the odd sand bank visible. So immense was the expanse of water, that a member of one of the later treks was convinced they had reached the Biblical Red Sea when they got there.

Having forded the Save River the pioneers faced the daunting task of ascending steep mountains. The Shangaan people of Chief Ngungunyana living here had many footpaths in and over these mountains, but the oxen could not follow them. After crossing the Tanganda River the pioneers arrived at the foot of Driespanberg (three-span mountains). It took days to hack out a route and get the wagons up, hitching three spans of oxen to each wagon. Every day someone had to go down to the Tanganda to fetch water. They eventually got all the wagons to the top on Christmas Day and found water just 300 m further on.

Whilst the wagons were being hauled up all the people had to foot slog it up the mountain. When the Henry Steyn Trek of 1895 got here they faced the added dilemma of getting a very portly dame up the hill. She could not walk up hill and definitely could not go in a wagon. In the end three teenage girls, including my grandmother, Maria Ferreira (15), literally dragged her up, step by step. Two of the girls supported her under her arms, whilst the third grabbed hold of the blanket around her and heaved. After a few steps they let her rest on a little stool. It took the whole day but by sunset she had, at last, got to the top of the mountain.

The Moodie trek forded the upper reaches of the Tanganda River on New Year's Day 1893 and named this drift New Year's Drift. It later became known as New Year's Gift. Tom Moodie finally settled on Waterval Farm on 3 January 1893, and he was buried there after his death in 1894. Waterval now belongs to ARDA, and is situated about 12 kilometres from Chipinge.

As early as 1893 Dunbar Moodie, Tom's brother, pressed the BSA Co. for a wagon road linking Gazaland to Mutare. Nothing was forthcoming so Tom Moodie started making one himself. Unfortunately he died before his road was completed. This became the route the Henry Steyn trek followed after getting to Chimanimani. The col between Hendriksdal and Steynsbank in the Cashel area was known as Moodie's Nek. Legend has it that this was due to an amorous interlude Moodie had there.

When the Henry Steyn trek arrived in 1895, they trekked to Moodie at Waterval and then on up the mountain to Cecilton and Lemoenkop, before going up the Nyahodi Valley to Melsetter. From there they trekked past Eland's Spruit and Clifton and up the notorious Musapa Nek. My paternal great-grandparents, Hendrik and Christina Steyn, settled on Hendriksdal because their wagon broke. The rest of the Steyns went over Moodie's Nek to the Tandaai Valley where most of them settled. More wagons meant a greater need for better roads.

In 1895, Mr. Mansergh of the Beira Railways agreed to survey a road between Umtali (Mutare) and Melsetter (Chimanimani). Work was started on 5 February, and the first sixteen wagons from Gazaland reached Umtali (Mutare) on 8 July 1895. As a result, transport with Chimoyo began. It is not very clear exactly where this road was, since the only real gaps in the mountains are at the Gap in the Chimanimanis, the area east of Cashel, where later a border post into Mozambique was established, and then again the Burma Valley. Another possibility was the wagons had to negotiate Driespanberg and then follow the Save and



Miss Chrissie Euverard and Mrs Maria Steyn on the scenic road to Chimanimani, with the Musapa mountains in the background



**Weltevrede Farm near the Musapa Nek.
The same two ladies on horseback, riding across the mountains**

Odzi Rivers to Umtali. A less mountainous, but also less healthy, route via the Chimanimani Gap to Chimoyo was also used.

In 1897, the Umtali magistrate met Will Longden, first magistrate of Melsetter, at the Umvumvumu River to discuss this wagon road and the problems experienced on it. A new route from Mutare to the Umvumvumu River was selected. This road was much shorter and also had easier gradients. Mr. A. E. Wayland surveyed the road and reserved Government out-spans of convenient distances. The road was opened in 1898. Thanks to the memoirs of Johannes T. Lombard there is a detailed record of this route. It is therefore

possible to plot it quite accurately on a map. He also recorded anecdotes of travels along this route. With a few adjustments, the first 26 miles from Mutare still follows this original route, now a fully tarred road.

From Umtali (Mutare) wagons would pass a huge fig tree on a col before going down to the Dora River and on through Barry's Gift to the Sandapple outspan. This being the first outspan, after leaving town a lot of alcohol was consumed here. Empty bottles were just dumped at a granite kopje, which became known as bottle kopje. The road then went up and over Muradzikwa to a Waterberry tree near a streamlet. In this vicinity they also passed "de Bruijn's outspan", so called, as P. F. de Bruijn would spend part of the night here en route to Umtali by foot. It was also round about here that Hendrik Bezuidenhout and Bennie Lombard spent an intoxicated evening, which resulted in Bezuidenhout shaving off half of Lombard's moustache as he lay in drunken stupor. To disguise what really happened Lombard was forced to shave off the other half before meeting others.

The Mpudzi River now was forded and wagons and coaches arrived at the Mail Stables. Here the Mail coaches could change their mules. A little further on lay the Chitora River. I have a photograph of the coach crossing the Chitora River in 1923. After crossing the White Waters there are two little spruits called Twin Spruit. It was here that a lion spooked Piet Steyn's oxen one night resulting in the death of the span leader. He was trampled to death by the oxen. Having passed King's Brook the wagons rested at the Langboom outspan. The road now moved in a more easterly direction through the granite Gates and on to Cronley. There are some lovely Bushmen paintings in this area and there is (or was) a signpost to them along the main Mutare-Birchenough Bridge Road.

Wagons to and from Melsetter often spent the night at the outspan on Cronley, and a number of dances were held there, so it was sometimes referred to as Dance spruit. It was during the early days of motorized travel that Hans Voster rolled his lorry in this vicinity while chasing a jackal, and following it as it jumped out of the road. He forgot he was in a lorry and not on horseback! From Cronley it was just a little way to McAndrews or, as it is better known, Mutambara Mission. The road followed the Umvumvumu River through an area of black clay soils, which caused many delays in wet weather. In 1910 it was reported that water coming from Mrs. Cashel's property made the road impassable here.



The speaker's paternal grandfather, P F de Bruijn (on left) with family and friends on the Umvumvumu River bridge at Nedziwa Mutambara

The Umvumvumu River was at last forded near the Cashel Police Station, and wagons outspanned under a huge fig tree on Ostend Farm. The road now swung away from the river and up Rutherford's Hill – a steady, steep, slippery incline.

Crossing Pokos Nek the road became slightly easier as it moved along the western slopes of the mountain to the Coral Tree outspan on Johannesburg – the farm of the Trek Leader, J. G. F. Steyn. At about 5000 feet above sea-level, one finds oneself in the beautiful Tandaai Valley where the Cashel Valley peas were later grown. The road slowly climbed up and round bends. One of these was difficult to manoeuvre and was named Benuode draai. Many wagons overturned here including that of Jan Mynhardt. Around Chitemamuro and on through brooks and bends one went across to Steynsbank then to Verdomde draai. The name, Accursed corner, says it all. From there the road went up Moodie's Nek, and followed in reverse the original wagon route in through Paulings' Nek, Musapa and onto Rocklands and Melsetter. The journey took about 8 days instead of the 14 to 21 days' trip of the old route.

At this time work was also started on a new road running through Sawerombi West and coming out at the confluence of the Nyanyadzi and Biririri Rivers. From here the road probably followed the current road to Mutambara before joining the road to Umtali (Mutare). However, this road was not really utilized and I suspect it was because the initial part of the road from Sawerombi had very steep gradients and the later part was rather dry and barren. The needs of the Henry-Steyn's being a plentiful supply of water and cooler air encouraged the development of the road from Mutambara Mission to Musapa.

Wash-aways and rock falls were a constant problem and, in 1908, Mr. Jansen surveyed the cuttings road. When completed this road proved to be a vast improvement on the old road. The cutting initially went from Steynsbank around the eastern side of the mountain to Komiek Nek. Anyone who has ever travelled the scenic road between Cashel and Chimanimani, would instantly remember this point on the road, where the col literally forms a bridge between two mountains with very steep drops on either side. In addition, the one mountain consists of grey-pink slate, and numerous rock falls occur here. From Komiek Nek to Musapa the road was literally cut out of the mountain side, in places up to 15 meters deep. On one side, the mountain rises steeply from the road, while on the other side it drops 2000 feet to the valley below. The only relatively level piece of land was known locally as Wall's Camp, as it was here that the road overseer "Wall" made camp while building the road. Bearing in mind that this road runs along the slopes of one of our highest mountains, the views can only be described as breath-takingly magnificent. Along this stretch one finds the Staanteintjie, a steam bubbling out of the mountain in such a way that one can stand and drink straight from the fountain.

A beautiful outspan under huge flat-topped acacias allowed some rest before one passed through Groen Hek (Green Gate) and onto Musapa's Nek with its spectacular views of the Chimanimani Mountains. Many travelers left the Mail Coach at Musapa's Nek and opted to walk over the mountains to Melsetter, rather than suffering the much longer and very bumpy road.

This route was definitely shorter but brought with it new hazards – like what to do when an ox-wagon met the Mail coach. One could certainly not just turn aside. No. Both wagons were unhitched and carefully pushed past one another before rehitching and carrying on down the road. This of course, gave an opportunity for a good chin-wag and a cup of coffee.

The advent of motorcars did not diminish this hazard, but actually added vast clouds of dust obscuring the view of the road. Many people actually tried to avoid using this road on the days the R.M.S. (Road Motor Service) lorries travelled to or from Melsetter (Chimanimani). One of these motorists stopped near Komiek Nek due to a blowout. Taking the spare wheel off he decided to bounce it a couple of times to get rid of dust. He bounced it once and the spare wheel bounced a second and third time before bouncing over the edge of the road and disappearing hundreds of meters down the side of the mountain.

In 1914, Will Longden suggested that the road be taken from Komiek Nek to Moodie's Nek and down the western slopes of the Tandaai Valley. This not only shortened the road but also eliminated the notorious stretch along Rutherfords's Hill. An Italian, Armini, was responsible for building this road.

The people living in and around Chipinge had a very long journey via Melsetter and Cashel to Umtali. The completion of the Sabi road in 1922 gave Chipinge a more direct link to Umtali and also Fort Victoria. Most people, however, still used what is now called the scenic road. Although buckboards were used, the normal transport was still wagons. Mr. Reading did own a boneshaker Overland car. He transported Nan Crawhill to the Jollies in Chipinge. Carriers took ten days to get the luggage to Mount Selinda via mountain paths. When it got dark a labourer was engaged to light the way with a lantern. During the 1940s or 1950s, a father told his son, wearing a white shirt, to walk in front of their car when the car lights failed. Having spent the evening at the Chimanimani Arms pub the son agreed. All went well until the son found the car creeping up too close behind. The son walked faster, the father then drove faster until the son jumped out of the road to safety ... the whole tale was told because the dad followed his son, with the obvious result.

In 1928 it took the Oliveys all day to travel the 98 miles (150 km) from Umtali to Melsetter. By 1930 strip roads had been laid from Umtali to the Mpudzi River, and the average time for this journey to Melsetter was four hours. Few rivers had bridges and most were crossed at drifts, and children especially loved watching the wheels of the car churn up the water as they crossed over. Shirley Sinclair in her book, *The Story of Melsetter*, has recorded the following incident:

On an occasion, when Dr. Rose was taking his daughters to school, his son Bill was going to Umtali High for the first time. Bill leaned out in fascination to watch the wheels churn through the water as they were going through a



Oxen pull a car through the Sabi drift, with Mount Rudd in the distance. c1935

deep rocky drift. He leaned out too far and when the car lurched he fell out. The girls screamed but Dr. Rose calmly continued to negotiate the tricky passage. When he had got the car safely through to the other side he stopped and waited. A very bedraggled small boy climbed into the car to the renewed shrieks from the girls as they drew away from his wet form. Dr. Rose calmly said: "I wouldn't advise you to do that again, Bill. Next time you might not be able to get out."

(The Story of Melfetter page 118)

Mr. Travis Henry, son of the Trek leader, Tom Henry, was a superintendent in the Roads Department in the 1930s. Travis met people in the Black Mountain Inn pub and encouraged them to join the Roads Department, convincing them that they would not have to work as hard as they did on farms! Phillip A. L. du Preez and his wife, Nellie, began working for the Roads Department in 1936. Their first camp was at Mpudzi Bridge. Home was a tent and a tarpaulin. They had to move a lot and, each time they moved, they had to break camp in the morning, pack everything into their bakkie and mule-drawn scotch cart. At the new site camp, the tent was pitched and, if needed, water was fetched with a mule-drawn water cart.

Later a one-ton truck would help them move faster and also transported the workers when the job was far from home. Walls were made from the metal sheets which came from the 40-gallon drums in which tar was carried. The road from Umtali to Birchenough Bridge was being re made, straightened in places and new bridges built, including the Birchenough Bridge. Birchenough Bridge at that time, 1935, was the third largest single-span bridge in the world. The building of this bridge became the focus of the whole community. Many journeyed to the Save, to bear witness to the moment the two halves of the span were hooked together. For the official opening most of the surviving pioneers gathered, their thoughts returning to the first time they had had to cross this river 40 years before. Gazaland now had easy access to Masvingo as well.



The beautiful Birchenough Bridge – southern gateway to the Eastern Highlands

During the Second World War there were many Italian internees sent to this county. The government asked P. A. L. du Preez to employ 40 Italians to make a new road from Waterval to Skyline. They built themselves a camp and one of them was cook. They also made their own wine from fruit and raisins. During the weekends they walked all over the countryside visiting the local people. Some of them escaped over the border. Most Italians learnt to speak good English and peace was celebrated with farmers and Italians together. They erected a stone at a bridge on this road, which unfortunately was destroyed in the 1970s.

Once this road was completed, the big job began in building what is now the main Melsetter-Cashel/Nedziwa road, a road also built, mainly, by the Italians. Initially, it was built as a gravel road in 1949, but a full tar road was completed by 1967.

In the Chipinge area the farmers made most roads, the Scotts and Giffords being responsible for almost all the roads on the Eastern Border of this area.

The weather also has had a great effect on roads here. In 1933 the Tandaai bridge was washed away. In 1936 a cloud burst at Moodie's Nek caused the river to rise 30 feet. 1937 was a very dry year until a cyclone hit the Cashel area – 36 inches (about 900 mm) of rain fell in just three days and for a week the roads were very wet. Steyn de Bruijn kept a span of oxen in a camp near the de Bruijn home to pull out cars that got stuck on the main road nearby. In 2001 cyclone Eline proved to later generations just how destructive and disruptive the weather could be.

These mountain roads twist and turn and rise and fall all the time. In 1964 a visitor to the area wanted to know at the start of a journey whether they would be travelling north, south, east or west. They were disconcerted to receive the reply "Yes" but soon realized that that was the only possible answer to give.

I salute all those surveyors, engineers and ordinary men who toiled so tirelessly to improve the transport and communications in the Gazaland sector of our country.

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Thomas I. Ferreira b. 1853. – 1895 Pioneer with Henry-Steyn Trek.;

Johannes T. Lombard b. 1903

Maria M. Moolman b. 1880 – 1895 Pioneer with the Henry-Steyn Trek.

The Unsung Heroine: Muriel Ena Rosin's Political Experiences in Rhodesia, 1945–1980

by Ushehwedu Kufakurinani and Estella Musiiwa

This is the text of a talk given to members of the History Society of Zimbabwe in Harare on 9 June 2011.

History is constantly being re-written. In today's revolutionary Zimbabwe, history is seen through new eyes, is revealing new perspectives, and, with a new ruling order, is justifiably showing a vigorous new orientation. Several articles which have recently been published in *The Herald* have shown, in clear black and white (in more senses than one) that the new look must be presented in the post-war rhetoric of the evils of colonialism and of the oppressiveness of the Whites and their system. While accepting that much of the criticism is true and entirely justified, and deploring and actively opposing the treatment of Black Zimbabweans as second class citizens in the past, I and many White people like me, find it sad to observe that the White, so called, 'liberal' seems almost entirely ignored or forgotten by these modern-day historians.¹

The period since 1900 has witnessed a remarkable increase in the number of women in political representation at the international level. Finland was the first country to appoint a woman parliamentarian in 1907. Since then the world has witnessed an increase in the numbers of women in parliament.² This paper serves to contribute towards literature on female parliamentarians. The paper seeks to bring to the fore one White woman, Muriel Ena Rosin (nee Wolff), whose political experience and contribution in Rhodesia seems to have escaped historical recognition. She was one of the only three women to enter parliament during the colonial era and was the only woman parliamentarian to enter the Federal Government. This paper highlights her experiences in Rhodesian politics and her contribution to urban political discourse at a time when few women were engaged in active public politics especially at national level. Her life story is reflected in several documents that she left behind and these are in the custody of the University of Zimbabwe Women's Law Department located at her former residential place in Mt. Pleasant.

Rosin was born to a Jewish family in London in 1909. She was educated at King Alfred School, London; "Villabelle" Neuchatel, Switzerland; Secretarial College, Wiesbaden Germany; and Mrs. Hostear's Secretarial College, London. Prior to marriage she was Private Secretary and Translator to a Swedish Electrical Engineer in London. On arrival in Rhodesia, Muriel Rosin joined the Children's Home committee in 1923, and was Chairperson of the House Committee from 1943–1946. She was the founder and Hon. Secretary of the Lady

¹ Muriel Rosin, "White Liberals Have Had a Long Crusade," *The Herald*, 8 April 1982.

² Pamela Paxton, Melanie M. Hughes and Jennifer Green, "The International Women's Movement and Women's Political Representation, 1893–2003," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 71, No. 6 (Dec., 2006), pp. 898–99.

Stanley Girls' Club. Other social engagements included the following: Member of the Committee of the Loyal Women's Guild, Chairperson of the Salisbury Women's Institute, later a member of the Executive of the Federation of Women's Institutes, and for three years Liaison Officer to Government for this Federation. She was Chairperson of the Lady Chancellor Maternity Home, for two years. For ten years (until elected to Parliament) she was Chairperson of the Salisbury Women's Council, and Founder Chairperson of the Salisbury Union of Jewish Women, and for several years Chairperson of the Women's Zionist League. She was the founder chairperson of the National Soroptomists Organization. In 1949, Muriel Rosin was awarded an MBE for her contribution to public life, especially her wartime effort in giving voluntary translation services – in French and German – to the censorship board. In 1953, she was given the Coronation Medal for her community activities.

Apart from community activities, Rosin assumed responsibilities in public institutions. She served as a member on various school councils including the Ellis Robins' School Council and St. George's school Council. She was the only woman to serve on the Inaugural Board of the University College of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. Rosin was the first woman to be appointed to a Government Board in Rhodesia. Prior to election to Parliament in 1954, she was the Consumers' representative on the Dairy Marketing Board, and the Grain Marketing Board. But, most importantly, Muriel Rosin was a mother of three children, two boys and one girl, and later became a granny. She was married to Kipps Rosin a renowned surgeon of his time.

“THEY HAD TO SETTLE FOR ME”: MURIEL ENA ROSIN IN THE SOUTHERN RHODESIA PARLIAMENT, 1946–1958

No woman had ventured into the legislature in the early Rhodesian days of the British South Africa Company (BSA Co.) rule (1890–1923) until Mrs. Tawse Jolly entered Parliament (1923–1933). As one of the only three White women ever to have entered Parliament in Rhodesia, Muriel Ena Rosin was affectionately referred to as “*the only ‘man’ in Welensky’s Party*”³. The third woman, Maureen Watson, came after Muriel Rosin and served in the Southern Rhodesia territorial parliament. Most of all, Muriel Rosin holds a unique record in the history of Rhodesia’s parliament, being one of only three White women in Rhodesia ever to have won for herself a seat in the House of Assembly. This was followed by her success in becoming the only woman ever to have served in the Federal Parliament (1958–1963).

While the general experience of women in politics was that they were restrained by several factors from participating in politics, Muriel Rosin’s entry into politics demonstrates the contrary. Her husband, in fact, encouraged her to participate in public life. She noted with some sense of nostalgia,

My husband, then a busy young doctor building his practice, always encouraged me to find outside interests... and I think such interests are terribly important for a wife, that they make for a stimulating companionship – so long as they don’t interfere with the running of a woman’s home or with looking after her children.⁴

Rosin’s son, Clive, confirmed his father’s initiative and central role in his mother’s

³ D. Mitchell, “Muriel Rosin – A Fighter for the Downtrodden”, *The Daily News*, 10 September 1999.

⁴ Muriel Rosin Papers, Newspaper Cuttings, *Rhodesia Herald*, (cutting not dated).

political activism. He remarked, “Parliament! Without Kipps this would never have happened. My father wanted her in Parliament to enhance his self-image.”⁵ However, for the son this was for the wrong reasons altogether, namely his father’s concern with his public image.

Muriel’s accession into public politics owes a lot to her husband, Mr. I. R Kipps Rosin, who was well known as a powerful personality, a gifted and articulate speaker with a brilliant mind and a wide circle of admirers and friends ideal for political support. Upon invitation to participate in politics, Kipps found that he was far too devoted to his surgical practice, so he suggested that the United Party ask Muriel instead. She agreed to take it on. Her first entry into the political arena came towards the end of the Second World War, when she joined the United Party Action Group in 1945. In 1946, she stood for what was known to be “a losing seat” – Salisbury South, and she lost the elections.⁶ Rosin’s pro-liberal stance, among other things, worked to her disadvantage. She recalled:

Salisbury South had been held for forty years by Colonel Walker, a Labour member who had done wonders for his constituency. Hatfield, situated on the South side of town, was a suburb inhabited largely by artisans, all White of course, and therefore a stronghold of Rhodesia’s skilled labour class. They were fiercely protective of their exclusive grip on their privileged position, knowing full well that they would soon be replaced by cheaper Black labour if Blacks were given a chance to compete openly with them for jobs. For that reason alone, they would not support any candidate who showed the slightest indication of handing over their privilege to the Blacks.⁷

Thus, for her, race and class in her ‘dummy run’ constituency worked against her and she lost the elections.

Having been invited into the male-oriented political arena, Rosin felt that elements of male chauvinism lingered on. She lamented, “... they didn’t want women in parliament that is why I lost. The Speaker threatened to resign if I was elected.”⁸ She added, “In any case, Allan Welsh who had sat with Mrs. Tawse Jolly in the first Southern Rhodesia Parliament had so disliked hearing her voluble contributions that he vowed he would resign if another woman was admitted to parliament.”⁹ Although Muriel lost the elections, she was top of the six women who participated in the elections, was second to Henry Walker (with a difference of only 43 voters) in the Salisbury South constituency, and was 43 out of a total of 99 participants. Overall, her 295 votes contributed to the total votes that saw the United Party win 43.2% of the elections.¹⁰ The results of the election spoke to Rosin’s popularity as a potential political candidate.

While Rosin missed the 1948 elections, she did not hesitate to stand for the 1953 elections. The campaign for the 1953 elections was also characterized by competition from established male politicians. Rosin highlighted the challenges she encountered, “One of

⁵ Mitchell, Muriel Rosin Draft Biography, Epilogue – Family interviewed, 28 June 1999.

⁶ Muriel Rosin Federal Election File, 1960–1962, Paper titled – ‘Mrs. Muriel MBE’

⁷ Diana Mitchell, Muriel Rosin Draft Biography, Chapter 6.

⁸ Special Correspondent, “WHERE ARE THEY NOW ROSIN: Arch-enemy of UDI,” *The Herald*. 10 December 1998.

⁹ Diana Mitchell, Muriel Rosin Draft Biography, Chapter 6

¹⁰ “Southern Rhodesia General Election, 1946,” http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Southern_Rhodesian_general_election,_1946, Accessed 26 January 2009.

my least favourite opponents on the election campaign was a man called Charles Olley, an incredibly mean man who stood for the Dominion Party.”¹¹ She also had to contend with apathy on the part of the voters. She commented on the public negative attitude towards politics:

People at that time were not interested in talking politics. . . . When we canvassed them, they were discussing bread-and-butter issues, the local crèche or road or sewage, they wanted to show me their butterfly collections. Only one male constituency said, ‘Talk to my wife.’ The women, without exception said, ‘Talk to my husband.’ It was only after 1952 that they became really interested in politics as the Federation debate got underway. . . . because Africans were on a separate voters roll, getting their votes was not easy. We had a hard time trying to get Africans onto the voters’ rolls in Highfield and Harare townships because this effort was being denounced by African Nationalist leaders.¹²

Notwithstanding the competition, Rosin contested and won the Marimba seat for the Old United Rhodesia Party in 1954. This was to change her life, as she acknowledged, “. . . and now I was to make myself thoroughly familiar with the task, which was to occupy the next nine years of my life. I made sure that I nursed my constituency, and reported back to constituents.”¹³

The period 1954–1958 was one of the most important episodes of Rosin’s political life. From 1954 to 1958 Rosin served in Garfield Todd’s Parliament in the Southern Rhodesian constituency of Marimba. “It was a marvellous time to be in politics,” she recalled. “We were all so idealistic, so highly motivated to do something for the country. Some of the men I worked with: Hardwicke Holderness, Garfield Todd (now Sir Garfield), the late Ralph Palmer, Paddy Lloyd and many others – all believed they had an important role to play in building the country which was rapidly becoming a little gem in Africa.”¹⁴ After a break of twenty years a woman had, for the second time, invaded what had been for so long regarded as a male preserve.

As soon as she was in Parliament, Rosin lamented the absence of women in politics, being a firm believer in the importance of women politicians in society. For her, women’s participation in politics was vital because, “. . . when it comes to human relationships women probably have a far greater understanding and, through their children, influence than men.”¹⁵ Rosin argued that:

The world is made up of men and women, and both should make their contribution to its affairs . . . or perhaps it is better expressed by saying they have the same outlook but from a slightly different angle. This angle has value.¹⁶

Rosin was quick to point out that the absence of women in parliament did not necessarily

¹¹ Diana Mitchell, Muriel Rosin Draft Biography, Chapter 6.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Diana Mitchell, Muriel Rosin Draft Biography, Chapter 1 – Introduction and/synopsis.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Jill, “We have a contribution in parliament,” says a woman candidate,” *The Rhodesia Herald*, 22 October 1958.

imply that women were not interested in politics. Far from it, there were many women who were participating at Local Government level. She accounted for the lack of women parliamentarians as follows:

The lack of women in Parliament doesn't mean that women are not interested in politics.... But our Parliament is fairly small, and there is great competition for nomination as a candidate. That's where a woman's difficulty lies – too many men want it. It may be added that there is still a certain lingering of the Victorian attitude in that not all husbands are happy at the thought of their wives going in for politics.¹⁷

In this way Rosin saw the lack of participation of women in parliament as a product of complex factors such as the gender constructions as well as existing structures of the political field.

In the Southern Rhodesia Parliament Rosin served on the Licence Control Select Committee, the Pensions and Gratuities Select Committee and Public Accounts Committee. Her special interests were the traditional feminine social and education welfare, thereby bringing the normative 'feminine private' into the 'public male' sphere. In fact, one of her first speeches in the House was on the Children's Protection and Adoption, with particular reference to children adopted outside the Colony. She recommended that they be allowed birth certificates in the name of the adopting parents.¹⁸ She also received much publicity and support on her drawing attention to the child marriages where children reaching the age of puberty were contracting marriage, and there was actually a record of a 13-year-old girl marrying.¹⁹

Rosin was noted for fighting for the greater recognition of women. She supported the law passed on intestate estates. She noted, "My success in getting through a motion on improvement of women's rights in the matter of wills and inheritance laws was an achievement which gave me great satisfaction."²⁰ Another of Rosin's outstanding contributions was in the area of safety. She took particular interest in the Roads and Road Traffic Amendment with special reference to the wearing of safety helmets (the 'Muriels') and asked for more stringent action to be taken against people who drove to the danger of the public.²¹

As criticisms against Prime Minister Garfield Todd mounted, it became convenient for Rosin to leave the Southern Rhodesia Parliament. At the end of her career in the Southern Rhodesia territorial Parliament Rosin had held one of the United Rhodesia Party's 26 seats (there were four independents) and gained valuable political experience in the four years (1954–1958) spent in the 8th Parliament of Southern Rhodesia.

¹⁷ "She's the Only Woman MP in the Federation," *Edinburgh Evening News*, 24 March 1961. See Marshall H. Medoff, "Determinants of Political Participation of Women," *Public Choice*, Vol. 48, No. 3 (1986), pp. 245, who identifies cultural, ideological and male conspiracy as some of the factors that militate against women participation in politics.

¹⁸ "Indispensable Woman in the House: Mrs. Muriel Rosin, M.P." *The Umtali Post*, 29 April 1957.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* See Rebecca E. Deen and Thomas H. Little, "Getting to the Top: Factors Influencing the Selection of Women to Positions of Leadership in State Legislatures," *State and Local Government Review*, Vol. 31, No. 2 (Spring, 1999), p. 124, "Women legislators tend to be more supportive of the issues concerning women and children, social services and education... Additionally, women (especially those who consider themselves feminists), are more likely to place issues of women and children as priorities."

²⁰ Diana Mitchell, Muriel Rosin Draft Biography.

²¹ *Ibid.*

“THE ONLY ‘MAN’ IN WELENSKY’S PARTY”: MURIEL ENA ROSIN IN THE FEDERAL PARLIAMENT, 1958–1963

Mrs. Rosin is a firm supporter of the moderate policies being followed by the Federal Government, and regards it as one of the tragedies of developing nations that what is objectively the best policy is usually too slow to please great numbers of people. “But our parliament is far from anti-black,” she emphasised. “There are 12 African members, and only one woman – by comparison you might say it was anti-feminist! Of these 12, nine support the Government, and the other three are divided between the two extremes.”²²

Rosin was taken up once again with a serious political career in the Federal Parliament, almost by chance. But in retrospect it seems to have been no accident that she became the only woman ever to serve during the ten years of life of the Federation (1953–1963). As already stated, she had little inclination to serve in Edgar Whitehead’s ninth parliament and was determined to get the United Federal Party’s nomination for Salisbury West.

When the Federation came in 1953, Rosin had not even imagined a role for herself in attempting to steer the destiny of a young, White-ruled African country into a multi-racial future. But her five years service in the Southern Rhodesia’s Parliament, commencing in 1954, earned her great respect as an imperative debater and a conscientious representative of her White constituents, amongst whom was a tiny minority of Blacks, qualified to vote under the common voters’ roll. She had also been given the chance to show another side of her character, possibly identified by the United Party leadership as a valuable attribute for politicians entering the tricky waters of multi-racial power sharing for the first time in the country’s history.

Campaign for the Federal Parliament seat was met with stiff competition from established male politicians. Harry Reedman, a very conservative United Party member wanted the Salisbury West constituency nomination for the Federal Parliament but lost it to Rosin. As was the case with the 1954 elections, Rosin was not the only female contestant during the 1958 Federal Parliamentary elections. Five women stood for Parliament in the general Federal election.

Rosin never stopped to decry the absence of women in National politics. Among other things, she detested the Rhodesia Front for excluding women from the ranks of its party. *The Rhodesia Herald* of 1958 notes,

Mrs. Rosin (65), who became the first woman member of the Federal Assembly in 1958, caused a stir at a recent Rhodesia party meeting when she said the best illustration of the Rhodesian Front’s Government’s “archaic outlook” is the fact that the Party has never put a woman candidate up for Parliament. ‘In this day and age it appears unbelievable. Look at the world and see the part women have played and are paying politically in other countries.’²³

Rosin was challenging the conventional gender constructions that discouraged women’s participation in politics which she attributed, partly, to what she called the Victorian attitude.

²² “She’s the Only Woman MP in the Federation,” *Edinburgh Evening News*, 24 March, 1961.

²³ *Ibid.*

Regardless of competition from other Parliamentary aspirants, Rosin went on to win the 1962 Federal elections unopposed. Incidentally, the year 1962 marked the beginning of the end of White rule in Southern Rhodesia. It was also the year that marked the defeat of Edgar Whitehead's United Federal Party.

In the words of Diana Mitchell, her biographer, Rosin was, to a certain extent, "devoid of the racist sentiment endemic among many of her fellow Rhodesians."²⁴ Like some of the liberals of her time, she embodied a multiracial sentiment. The Muriel Rosin Papers harbour letters that seem to buttress Rosin's multiracial sentiments. She did campaigns with African members of Parliament, particularly Chipunza. She related with and represented Africans that sought her assistance. In one instance, a Mr. M. N. Machingaifa approached Rosin in 1961 asking for some assistance in raising some £1,000 to cover the building and running of his typing and bookkeeping school.²⁵ Rosin took up this case with the relevant authorities though the final outcome of this request is not indicated in the sources. Indeed, some Africans made it clear that they felt comfortable bringing their issues to her 'as members of your constituency namely Salisbury West.'²⁶

It seems everyone one wanted a piece of Rosin when she was in Parliament. Even her White compatriots approached her on several occasions seeking representation on issues of various magnitudes ranging from invitations to come to address African women,²⁷ addressing Business and Professional Women's Clubs,²⁸ divorce and maintenance policies within the Rhodesian Society,²⁹ frustrations and disappointments with various government departments such as the Education department,³⁰ requests for pensions for the 1900 Boer War veterans,³¹ general old age pensions³² to personal problems such as immigration challenges.³³ These were some of the issues that inundated Rosin's table as she went about her every day duties as a Member of Parliament in both Southern Rhodesia and later the Federation.

Being a liberal, Rosin's political challenges in the Federal Parliament was the race issue. Racial relations were central to the concept of 'Partnership' between Blacks and Whites, which the Federation intended to be based on. This issue had been put

²⁴ Diana Mitchell, Muriel Rosin Draft Biography, Chapter 8 – Federation

²⁵ Federal Election File, 1960–1962, Letter from A. M. N. Machingaifa to Muriel Rosin, dated 26 September 1961. Rosin actually went to the site of the school and was impressed. She then tried to convince the government and some non-governmental organizations to assist Machingaifa but to no avail.

²⁶ Federal Election File, 1960–1962, Letter from S. N Karonga Health Assistant, Federal Health Services to Muriel Rosin, dated 12 December 1961. Karonga had written to Rosin asking her to represent them in their grievances against the Health Department with regards to conditions of service especially promotion avenues. Rosin took up the case with Dr. Sheffield, Assistant Medical Director, and brought mixed results which she communicated to Karonga in a letter dated 4 January 1962.

²⁷ Federal Election File, 1960–1962, letter from Winfred Wilson, African Administration Department to Muriel Rosin, dated 13 September (no year).

²⁸ Federal Election File, 1960–1962, Letter from the Business and Professional Women's Club of Bulawayo to Muriel Rosin, 3 November 1961.

²⁹ Federal Election File, 1960–1962, Letter from Mrs. B. Caine to Muriel Rosin, dated 11 March 1958.

³⁰ Federal Election File, 1960–1962, Letter from Bill to Muriel Rosin, dated 23 May 1961. A copy of this letter was also sent to the Director of Education.

³¹ Federal Election File, 1960–1962, Letter from F. E. Evans – wife of a veteran of the Boer War to Muriel Rosin, dated 2 November 1958.

³² Federal Election File, 1960–1962, Letter Financial Minister, Macintyre to Rosin, dated 10 August 1959.

³³ Federal Election File, 1960–1962, Letter from Muriel Rosin to Malcolm Barrow, Minister of Home Affairs, dated 27 September 1960.

in place before Rosin joined the Federal Parliament. In essence, Africans were the junior partners and this was metaphorically summarized in a popular “the horse and the rider” saying. Upward mobility of Blacks was based on educational and property ownership qualifications. The whole idea was to create a Black middle class or better still, in the words of M. O. West, “it was the centrepiece of the battle for the hearts and minds of the elite Blacks...”³⁴

Rosin also saw the Federation as “an important step in building a Black middle class.”³⁵ The administration of African affairs, however, remained in the hands of territorial governments. Rosin found such a situation not only deplorable, but working against the whole idea of a multiracial society whose upward mobility was based on merit for all people, regardless of colour.

Rosin also noted that an arrangement that would relegate African affairs to territorial governments would disgruntle the Africans and ultimately lead to a revolution that would result in Europeans losing all they had acquired. Rosin lamented:

It was a mistake not to have made African Affairs the responsibility of the Federal Government when Federation was first formed. The separation of certain Ministries on racial lines with the European as the privileged class gave Africans the impression that Federation was meant to perpetuate, and even strengthen, White supremacy.³⁶

She believed that, had the Federal Government been able to take on “an all embracing responsibility without racial divisions, a Federal State might have been created with a promise of durability.”³⁷ In fact, she was convinced that, “the running of some ‘African’ affairs separately from ‘European’ affairs contributed to the downfall of the Federation as Africans felt ‘cheated’” adding that “... African Affairs should have been a Federal subject, so that African people would have taken on the same degree as Whites.”³⁸

Debates on mixed racial couples proved to be some of the most difficult issues Rosin had to contend with. At one point in time she was challenged by some women’s organizations to oppose any proposed changes in the racial law. The question of mixed racial couples was to be raised in both the Federal and territorial Houses throughout Rosin’s time in parliament. Rosin herself had at one time been under criticism from other women for her association with Chad Chipunza, a fellow MP in the Federation, who she worked with in Highfield and Mbare (Harari). She recollected, “women here at home were horrified that I should be travelling about with a Black man! I thought it perfectly natural and still wonder what all the fuss was about.”³⁹

Inter-racial marriage policy in the country was one of the issues which defined race relations in Rhodesia which degenerated into an unbalanced and emotional level. Rosin says she was in favour of change but had to compromise in order to accommodate the

³⁴ O. W. Michael, *The Rise of an African Middle Class: Colonial Zimbabwe 1898–1965*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 2002

³⁵ Diana Mitchell, Muriel Rosin Draft Biography, Chapter 8.

³⁶ Federal Public Relations Division, “Opinion in African Newspapers Federation,” 3–6 May 1963.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Special Correspondent, “WHERE ARE THEY NOW ROSIN: Arch-enemy of UDI: She stood and Believed in elimination of racial discrimination,” *The Herald*. 10 December 1998.

³⁹ Diana Mitchell, Muriel Rosin Draft Biography, Chapter 8 – Federation

interests of White women. She acknowledged how race and gender at times subverted her liberal stance:

I believe that every one has the right to sleep with whomsoever they want to. But I could not stand alone on this. As in the Federal Parliament later, I was approached by every woman's organization of that time. They all wanted it to remain illegal to mix the races. 'After all, our daughters wouldn't be safe,' they insisted. Todd, who had originally been in favour of change, turned around eventually, for reasons not entirely clear, and voted against the change. I think the truth is that he wanted an even more radical and complete change.⁴⁰

Rosin went along with the new law that made it illegal to mix races in marriage. Of course, she had to take into account the interests of her constituents at the expense of her multiracial sentiment if she was to protect her parliamentary seat.

Another controversial issue arose when a Black man, Lawrence Vambe, married first a Coloured wife, then a White woman. He had to go into exile because the law did not allow them to live in 'all-White areas' together. Rosin was criticized by her nephew for not opposing this state of affairs. But from Rosin's perspective, "he (the nephew) was unable to see that I had to express the views of women, my White constituents."⁴¹ It was only expedient for Rosin not to challenge the laws against inter-racial marriages.

Rosin also participated in debates that led to changes in some racial laws. For example, she participated in the passing of a law allowing Herbert Chitepo, the country's first Black advocate, to practice law in the city. He could now, at least, open offices in the areas previously the sole territory of Whites.⁴² The former Land Apportionment Act had prevented Black professionals and businessman from operating in White areas. Even Federal MPs had to live in the outer boundaries of Salisbury in the high-density township of Highfield.

As housing was a territorial matter, Rosin was very instrumental in the building of Highfield, a high-density suburb for Blacks. She convinced the government to turn the Beatrice cottages in Mbare, a former camp for Italian prisoners of war during World War II, into a house ownership scheme. During WWII the families, women and children only, of South African Germans, had been interned in the Beatrice cottages south of the city. After the war this area was turned into a place where middle class Blacks could own or occupy property. In the second large township, Highfield, there was also an owner/occupier scheme. Title and ownership was considerable advance for Blacks at the time. A revolving fund was set up to help them to purchase their own homes. Rosin was part of a committee looking into what was needed. The houses previously had communal bathrooms and kitchens and the committee put in private facilities and carparks.

The Federation short-changed Africans on various fronts and in the '60s, it was increasingly coming under threat of dissolution. Rosin, being an ardent believer in the principles which underlay Federation, participated in the attempts that were made to convince the British that Federation was the way to go. She travelled to UK with a fellow MP, Chad Chipunza, in 1961 when the life of the Federation was seriously threatened with the demand

⁴⁰ Diana Mitchell, Muriel Rosin Draft Biography, Chapter 6

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

for secession by two of its partners. They addressed British business organizations and political parties in Parliament. The dissolution, however, came in spite of their efforts.

With the end of Federation, Muriel Rosin lost her political seat and for some time decided 'not to stand again.' She explained, "My seat in the Federal Parliament was no longer in existence. Not only was I of the wrong political persuasion, being regarded in the context of the times as far too liberal, but I was also a woman!"⁴³ According to her, she therefore experienced double opposition, as a liberal, and as a woman.

"THE GRANDMA WHO LEADS A POLITICAL PARTY": MURIEL ROSIN'S POST-PARLIAMENTARY POLITICAL ACTIVISM, 1963–1979.

Taking independence unilaterally is rather like chopping off your leg to cure an in-growing toe nail. In the last couple of years we have allowed fears to dominate our lives so that we have only – two choices – to allow ourselves to become victims of Black domination, or to achieve independence speedily, even to steal it – with all the evil consequences which would flow from such action. These fears are entirely unfounded.⁴⁴

Challenges to Muriel Rosin's political career surfaced when the Rhodesian Front was fully established and campaigned successfully against the multi-racial United Federal Party. With the break-up of the Federation, things could not have got much worse on the political front. The former United Federal Party and Rhodesia National Party members went on to re-form under the leadership of Williams as a pressure group, called the Rhodesian Constitutional Association. Rosin worked closely with Williams' wife, Marize, and other dedicated women, among them Peggy Southby, Mary Myers, and Kay Thomas. They formed committees to keep members in touch with political developments in the country but were very firmly against forming another party until the time was ripe. The result was division as there emerged a group of young men who, in 1967, called themselves the Centre Group who aimed at building a political party to confront Smith's RF. Throughout her political career, Rosin was an arch-enemy of Ian Smith's Unilateral Declaration of Independence.

Even though she was no longer a Parliamentarian, Rosin did not quit politics. She joined the Rhodesian Constitution Association (RCA) where she helped by leading a Woman's Wing that organized meetings, raised funds and generally remained loyal to the concept of legitimate constitution. She campaigned together with the Centre Party against Smith's 1969 Constitution in the referendum of that year. Together with other women, she distributed small insignia among RCA members – a gold crown to indicate their continued loyalty to the British crown. When in the 1970 referendum they were asked to vote on two questions: continued loyalty to the Crown and acceptance or rejection of Sam Whaley's RF constitution, they lost out on both counts.⁴⁵

Rosin made numerous speeches, especially with the multiracial Centre Party, to counter Rhodesian Front propaganda. She addressed audiences in many parts of the country but the task was overwhelming. In the elections that followed shortly after the Referendum, the

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ "Time on our Side: Candidate" Muriel Rosin Files, Newspaper Cutting, (Not dated). Statement made by Muriel Rosin probably some five years after UDI.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

Centre Party returned seven Blacks to Parliament but every one of their White candidates were defeated at polls. The Rhodesian Front won every one of the fifty seats in Parliament. The Rhodesian Front embraced the new constitution and rejected the association with the British Crown, thus effectively cutting Rosin and her counterparts off from mainstream world politics.

The emergence of a new White-led political party under the joint leadership of Alan Savory, a former Rhodesia Front Member of Parliament, Dr Morris Hirsch who had been active in national and local government politics for many years, and Mr. Ashburner had given new impetus in getting the political opposition to Smith moving again after the failure of the Centre Party to make any gains for a multi-racial approach to dislodging the Rhodesia Front regime. Tim Gibbs was elected to the leadership which then prepared to challenge the Rhodesia Front's stranglehold and fight the 1974 elections. At that juncture, Rosin "decided that time was ripe for action" and she joined the Rhodesia Party. She recalled, "I agreed to stand for the Mt. Pleasant Constituency, Ahrn Palley made a bid for the nomination, but he was soon persuaded that my chances were better since I was supported by a nascent opposition party."⁴⁶

In spite of putting up 35 candidates and mounting a national offensive, they all lost. Many candidates lost their deposits. She reminisced, "My only consolation, as a loser in Mt. Pleasant constituency was that I was later to discover that I was the 'top of the losers', having scored the most votes among the opposition candidates."⁴⁷ Rosin lost elections not because she was a woman, but most likely because she was a liberal and therefore on the wrong side of what the majority of her electorate believed in. In fact some of them appreciated her political prowess as expressed in Harold Vickery's invitation, "Mrs. Rosin, why don't you join us, we don't enjoy hurting you – we would rather such a nice person was on our side."⁴⁸

In 1977, the Centre Party, the Rhodesia Party and Bob Stumble's pressure group – 'The Pledge', joined forces to form the National Unifying Force (NUF) in a final futile attempt to unseat the RF in the general elections of 1977. Rosin explained the intentions of the NUF:

We have joined with the Centre Party and the National Pledge Association – the National Unifying Force – so that the voices of those 25 percent of Whites who have supported us can be heard. We represent the people we feel genuinely want to stay in this country under Black rule – providing it's non-Marxist. We feel we have a role to play in whatever interim government is set up; a part to play in the setting up of a constitutional commission and the evidence presented to it. We feel we have an educative role to play as well, acting as catalyst between Black and White. We don't feel White people are sufficiently aware of the need of established points of common interest between the Black people, nor of how to learn to live together. In a word: we want peace in the country.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ H. Silk, "The grandma who leads a political party," *The Rhodesia Herald*, January 25, 1977.

Because of its policies, especially its support for majority rule, NUF appealed to some Blacks. One Mr. Sadamba who was contesting the Harare seat as an independent said that it was the only White party which stood on the platform of reality adding that “if Whites vote for NUF, we shall know that their thinking has changed...”⁵⁰

Rosin did not stand for any constituency at that time but was drawn once again into the busy schedule of political meetings. She took on the role – as often before – of leading the women’s effort, backing up the party with organization, fundraising and so on. When Tim Gibbs resigned in 1977, Muriel Rosin was unanimously appointed President of the Rhodesia Party.⁵¹ As president of an opposition party, Rosin continued to challenge the policies of the Smith government. She, for instance, criticised the lack of freedom in the media which she dubbed “a very one-side media which did not allow any controversial debate on political subjects to take place.”⁵² She argued for the media to be opened to all, including nationalist leaders as well as opposition parties, and urged Smith to “accept the irreversibility of the progress to majority rule openly and without fear”⁵³

During the UDI period Rosin fought hard to try and have the Land Apportionment Act completely repealed. This met with serious opposition as Ian Smith’s Rhodesian Front played on the fears and racial prejudices of the White electorate, saying that if they voted against it they would get Blacks as their neighbours. She recalled,

They had a big advert which said, ‘If Black people lived next to you would you like it?’ I remember a friend of mine, when one of the RF canvassers came to her and he said, ‘Do you realize that if you don’t vote for the Rhodesia Front you might have a Black person next to you?’ and she said: ‘Do you know that house at the back of my garden. And you see that little house next door? There are Black people living there, they are my neighbours.’ These were the domestic workers, apparently.⁵⁴

These fears and racial prejudices were described by Rosin as ‘entirely unfounded.’⁵⁵ With the advent of political independence in 1980, Rosin resigned from politics from which she had carved a niche and made a print on the male dominated political platform.

CONCLUSION

Though Muriel Ena Rosin entered politics at the instigation of her husband, Rosin proved to be a strong frontiers political figure in her own right. She won three elections and lost three, but that did not distract her from politics until the advent of independence in 1980. The fact that she was unanimously voted into a leadership position as the president of the Rhodesia Party testifies to her ability to stand as a political icon in the process of state formation by challenging the canonical male chauvinism reminiscent of the political scene of her time. Rosin provides an example of a woman who set herself forth to redefine the course of colonial discourse by creating space for herself in the Rhodesian institutionalized public politics. In many ways, her story helps to tell a part of Zimbabwe’s colonial history from

⁵⁰ *The Sunday Mail*, August, 1977

⁵¹ Silk, “The grandma who leads a political party.”

⁵² “Hear all Sides – Rosin”, *The Rhodesian Herald*, 7 March 1977

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ Special Correspondent, “WHERE ARE THEY NOW ROSIN”

⁵⁵ “Time on our Side: Candidate” Muriel Rosin Files, Newspaper Cutting, (Not dated).

the eyes of a liberal Rhodesian woman. It is no doubt an incomplete story but, nonetheless, it tells us, partly, the racial relations, sexuality, political developments as well as gender relations of the Rhodesian state and society.

Rosin's political experiences in Rhodesia clearly demonstrate ways in which her gender-neutral identity as a 'parliamentarian' was constructed. She earned herself the gender-neutral title 'MP'. Not only did she break the gender-defined boundaries in politics, but also vehemently spoke against racism. She was a meritocrat who believed that cream would always rise to the top, whether male or female, Black or White.

The political experiences of Rosin in colonial Zimbabwe are quite significant in a number of ways. Her story demonstrates that there are many possibilities that lie before women in different societies. Historically, women have been closed to many avenues such as politics and administrative occupations which have been defined as male domains. Rosin's experience is most telling on how women can be opportunistic as well as resourceful in breaking societal and ideological barriers. It is a story that inspires women of all races to see possibilities that lie even in places that have been drawn as unreachable.

At another level, Rosin's story confirms the idea that White society was not homogeneous. While some of the Whites may have carried with them extreme racial prejudice, there were, indeed, some that fought in opposition to such an establishment and, in fact, went out of their way to support majority rule. In this light, the bifurcation of oppressed versus oppressor in colonial societies in which the Blacks were the former and the Whites the latter needs to be revisited and qualified. This is an important aspect because it has a bearing on post-colonial race relations and how the post-colonial state and society reconciles with its colonial past.

Rosin's experience in a way celebrates womanhood. Women do not have to abandon their selves to achieve certain goals. Rosin remained a family person and also became a mother-figure as a political woman not in competition with men but complementing them. She carried 'motherhood' into the so-called public sphere where she became involved in national issues such as child welfare, health and safety as well as education. These areas were traditionally taken to be the preserve of women at home. Taking these into the public arena, Rosin argued that a feminine touch was a prerequisite in any political set-up because women could see things with a different eye from men and this would benefit both parties. This is an important observation which societies today are increasingly subscribing to.

Finally, Rosin strikes the observer as one of the few individuals within the settler community that tried to rise above social constructions such as the racial prejudices of the time. As has been noted, she worked and travelled with Chipunza, a fellow MP, many times as they carried out Federal and party duties and was an object of criticism for this. Her archive also reflects some of her personal relations with Blacks and her interests in assisting those who knocked at her door seeking her help financially or otherwise. A leaf or two can be plucked from this accommodating and perseverant political woman. Of course as the paper has shown, Rosin was not without blemish for, in some cases, she, too, was found wanting.

From Pupil to Headmaster – Some Personal Recollections at St George’s College

by Brendan Tiernan

*This is the text of a talk given to members of the History Society of Zimbabwe
in Harare on 11 September 2011.*

I thank you for your invitation, through Tim, and my brother-in-law, Bill, to come and lunch with you, and for me to address you now. And thank you for your very flattering introduction.

However, I am deeply conscious of the difficulties you have presented to me: I am in front of an audience who, after a good lunch on a Sunday afternoon, would probably, as I would, head off at this time to domestic quarters for a little R and R. Secondly, in my natural environment, were I to see a weary head wobbling off its elbow, or a fiddly hand shifting implements around in bored distraction, I would cry out “Boy, stand up and tell me what I have just said?” So, I am here before you, deprived entirely of my normal weapons. Perhaps like schoolboys, you can cultivate their wonderful skill at maintaining a fixed and concentrated stare which, in the face of the unavoidable, belies a mind vacant of anything but fantasies.

Apart from these circumstantial hurdles, there is another more deeply rooted difficulty you have faced me with. I know that the only possible qualification I have for addressing this gathering of wise and experienced faces today, is that I am a Headmaster. Headmasters are a rare breed – and I say that not with reference to their genetic endowment, merely to the fact of their relatively small numbers within any given population group. (And I see a few in this gathering.)

They have long since been judged to have left the human race, to exhibit little sign of genuine human interaction, or desire for material needs. (When adolescents are asked the question of what they want to do with their lives or what they want to be, you will hear none ever claim to want to be a headmaster or headmistress. I bet no child of yours ever expressed that wish: nor did any child of my mother.) And so with Headmasters, as with High Court Judges and other senior agents of society’s police force, there must be no secrets, no weaknesses no visible signs that would betray a human origin. To be credible, they must have an aura of mystique; otherwise that pedestal upon which they are placed, the armour of their authority as it were, will crumble and crack. And so it is in the interests of headmasters to preserve this delusion, particularly in the face of their pupils and their parents, and it is quite difficult for me today to indicate that I may have any human sensibilities.

Fortunately the headmasterly mystique, has been protected by a number of things. Most people such as yourselves, from the time you became thinking animals at the age of about twelve – assuming that such a transformation did take place at all – will have had only one headmaster in your lives. If that is not the case, it may suggest that you have some educational skeletons in your cupboard. Moreover the occasions, upon which you as pupils

may have met your headmasters at close quarters, may not have been favourable to a careful and objective character study. All the more so, if the interviews with your headmaster have been limited to his request to you to bend over, and yours, upon the receipt of a few short, sharp shocks on your rear-end, to a consequent yelp of discomfort.

Of course when one becomes the Head of the School at which oneself was a pupil, there are indeed a few additional hazards to overcome. One does not wish it to be widely known that the very sceptre of one's office, which hangs behind the door of the HM's study, was used on one's own rear end on numerous occasions; or that one is aware of the favoured secret smoking corners around the school because one used them oneself so often. (But here one must allow a sense of fair play to intervene in order not to take unfair advantage.) Precautions do need to be taken e.g. the school magazine of 1959 in which there is a photograph of the twelve year old future headmaster, in blond wig and female attire, playing the role of Renée La Lune in the school drama production has been carefully removed from the Library and deposited in the School Archive.

In my day as a school boy, the headmasterly mystique was enhanced by the fact that such personages were all clerical gentlemen. (The chief among them was called the 'Rector'.) So not only were they not of human origin, they were directly associated with the divine, a claim that I could only with the greatest difficulty make for myself. As a pupil I used to take my revenge upon him, when I had emerged from his office, after a little divine retribution for some misdemeanour or other, and try to conjure him up in my imagination attired in his pyjamas. I felt that somehow if I could only see him in my mind's eye wearing pyjamas, that would reduce his aura to more human dimensions. Sadly, I never succeeded in this objective and it only gave me a strong aversion to ever wearing pyjamas myself.

The issue of corporal punishment in my school days was accepted without question or argument. At St George's any teacher was able to require it as a punishment, but not, of course, to carry it out in person. Two masters were assigned this responsibility, and the pupils had a choice of executioner, so to speak. And there were eager debates amongst us pupils as to which of the two had the heavier hand. At shower time for junior boarders, we could all see the telltale stripes across the derriere, and the darker and more visible they were, the greater the admiration was expressed for the recipient. They were regarded as badges of honour in our constant war against "the enemy".

I received corporal punishment at regular intervals although I was never remotely in the big league of those who actually competed to have the highest tally of strokes in any one term. My offences were usually disobedience of rules and obligations, but as I grew older, for being caught smoking – despite the fact that Form L VIs and U VIs were allowed to smoke during their free time in their common rooms, an unusual school privilege in those days and the envy of visiting teams and pupils from other schools.

Of course today, as Headmaster, I have had to review my attitudes to both corporal punishment and smoking, in view of changing social mores. With one brief interval, I have been an inveterate smoker all my life – so perhaps this may be attributed partly to that unusual privilege we had. The privilege was withdrawn in the late eighties owing to pressure from non-smoking staff members, and I would not dare re-introduce it, although my own office is still a smoking zone, much to the frequent complaints of my Secretary.

Even as a young pupil one absorbed a very palpable sense of the history that surrounded the College, possibly because its early foundation is roughly equivalent to the early History

of our young country, and possibly because the Jesuit Staff, most of whom were English, encouraged this aspect of education.

The founding Jesuit Rector, Fr Marc Barthelemy, was that rather unusual creature, an Anglophile Frenchman. He first crossed the Limpopo in 1892, and just after he had founded St George's in January 1896, he was gazetted as Chaplain to the BSA Company's forces, at the start of the first Chimurenga. Col. Robert Baden-Powell wrote of him at the time, "He is with our forces and is doing grand work, in helping the wounded and giving the last rites to all who wanted them, whatever the creed."

The current site of St George's is on Hartmann Hill named after another Jesuit, Fr Hartmann who was a Chaplain to the Pioneer Column of 1890, and the land was awarded to him for this service. It was said that Dr Jameson rather coveted this property, but his attempts to buy or swop were made in vain, an unusual case of a German getting the better of a Scot. In 1926 the Jesuits made the courageous decision to build the school anew because the St. George's in the centre of Bulawayo, had no room for expansion. And so to Salisbury it moved, lock, stock and barrel.

I have in my office an old Visitor's Book; I look at it from time to time, and on one memorable page dated 1st October 1906 – the occasion I suppose was a prize-giving – one can make out the signatures of such early Rhodesian Luminaries as Selborne, Milton, Rodwell, Coghlan and Winchester. Other signatures in the book include at various times, those of Earl Grey, Otto Beit, John Chancellor, Violet Astor, and much later, Leonard Cheshire, Len Hutton and Godfrey Huggins.

Huggins was the College's first official school doctor in Salisbury and always remained a great friend to the College. In 1946 as Prime Minister and Minister of Defence he presented our College Cadet Corps with its own Colour. Fr Barthelemy had founded the Cadet Corps soon after the 1896 Chimurenga; and many of its erstwhile members over the years had died in each World War, and it was in their honour that Huggins deemed that the College Corps should have its own Colour.

Thereafter every year on St George's Day, amidst great pomp and ceremony and after much effort had been expended in rehearsal and on the burnishing of brass and boots, the Colour was trooped before distinguished guests and parents. It was a matter of the greatest esteem to me as a pupil in Upper VI to be appointed a 2nd Lt in the Cadet Corps – the only officer rank a pupil could aspire to – not least because the selection would have been made by the Officer Commanding the School Cadet Corps at the time, Reverend Father, Captain Sir Kenneth Nixon SJ. Fr Ken Nixon was one of those extraordinary characters that the Jesuits produced with amazing frequency. A member of the Anglo-Irish ascendancy, his family had been awarded a baronetcy which Ken eventually inherited. As one of the appointed College executioners during those years, we boys had a healthy respect for him, despite the fact that he was adjudged the more light-handed of the two, and the queues awaiting redemption were generally longer outside his office than outside the other executioner's. We often referred to him as the "three 'C's man" on account of his priority of enthusiasms: Cricket, Cadets and Catholicism, in that order. School legend had it that at every full moon Ken would display behaviour that was lunatic. While my later adult association with him alleviated any remaining doubts in the matter, Ken, already a somewhat eccentric personality by schoolboy standards, would play up to his reputation in fine style. He had an undiluted antipathy for the feral cats that used to make their noisy presence felt on the school campus

from time to time; and every so often he would select a rifle from the Cadet Armoury and aided by the light of the full moon he would roam the Campus, and shots would ring out as he attempted to eliminate the feral cats, enhancing both his own reputation and school discipline at one and the same time, for on such nights no pupil dared venture forth. I don't think the feral cat menace was seriously affected one way or the other.

Boys are the most charming characters – but only to their mothers. Even wives and girlfriends have a more balanced view. Which is why Teddy Roosevelt's political advice: "Talk softly and carry a big stick" is, I think, good advice for Headmasters. I have four hulking stepsons who occasionally cast their shadow over my doorstep. I hear their mother talking in such glowing terms about these four reprobates that I sometimes have to take a moment to realise that she is talking about the same stepsons I know, even though they are all Old Georgians.

Like headmasters, adolescent boys tend to leave the human race but at a much earlier age, i.e. at about 15. Most rejoin it by about 25, but during this period much patience and some careful strategy is required. Like most boys I had a strong rebellious streak and it took me about 10 years after I had left school to even dare to return. When I did, I received a warm welcome from my former teachers who mercifully seemed to have entirely forgotten the many peccadilloes I had been guilty of. As I came to realise, each boy is at the centre of his own universe, but only one of the very many that teachers deal with during the course of their career. Few boys are original even in their naughtiness, so even when they are at their most irritating and think they are creating a unique impression, they are merely being predictable boys. Some firm leadership, a little personal interest and a method of utilising both their energies and their share of bravado, is usually enough to tame their worst tendencies.

For me, as a schoolboy, the master who practised this simple philosophy most effectively was Col. J M Lind, simply referred to by all at the College as "The Colonel". Michael Lind was an Englishman who had ended his military career as Officer Commanding Her Majesty's forces in Northern Rhodesia. On his retirement he joined the St George's Staff where he taught English and coached Rugby. He was as effective in the classroom as on the Rugby field: uncomplicated, plain-spoken and demanding. You knew where you stood and you knew what he wanted. He taught me English for a year, but was my Rugby Coach for four. He took, I feel, a great risk in appointing me as Captain of 1st XV in my final year and I hope his confidence was rewarded. When for six years as a teacher, I myself had 1st XV coaching responsibility, I tried hard to emulate his methods and his spirit, and I will carry my admiration for him to the grave. If but one pupil could view me with the respect with which I viewed the Colonel, my teaching life would have been amply rewarded.

Surprisingly, perhaps, even to me, a by no means brilliant or industrious pupil, my favourite subject was Latin. I attribute this entirely to the succession of excellent Latin teachers we had at school. Two of them, Fr Thomas Crehan and Fr Ian Falconer, were at various times, like other Jesuits at the College, seconded as (Classics) lecturers to the young University College of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, which in its beginnings was an external College of the University of London. Even in those years, and certainly among the English Jesuits, the tradition of a "classical education" continued to be encouraged. I pursued the study of Latin at University, and at every school to which I was sent after qualifying, I was required to teach it. This suited me enormously for a number of reasons: I enjoyed the subject, I could communicate my enjoyment, and as a particular bonus, I had smaller

examination classes of pupils who had chosen the subject out of preference. What situation could be more ideal for a teacher!

I was very sad to read recently the letter of a Harare Headmaster to his school parents explaining why he had just resigned: he said that it was the worst job in the world and that he had been extremely lonely. This mystified me somewhat: with 750 pupils, 1,500 parents, and nearly 200 Staff members of varying descriptions, the last thing I feel is lonely. Of course being able to satisfy the aspirations of some 2,500 people is a next-to-impossible task and endeavouring to keep everyone heading in the same direction is equally interesting. But lonely! . . . On the contrary, my chief solace is to seek sanctuary as often as possible in my own house, alone but for my wife.

Becoming a Headmaster has been a very challenging, possibly an overwhelming role, quite unlike anything that I had experienced before in its scope and scale. There is no doubt that responsibility for anything that goes wrong is mine even though I have had some wonderfully committed people with whom to share that responsibility. I hope that what I have lacked in natural ability I have at least been able to make up for in my great affection for the school and its ethos, and I have had access to the advice, expertise and support of some very gifted people, without whom I would have been completely at sea, particularly in areas of law and finance which feature heavily on the menu.

If I were to be asked to express my educational philosophy to a pupil it would be this:

- generally achievement comes from effort;
- education is considerably more than what is delivered in the classroom;
- have the sense and the courage to attempt different things;
- the world is best served by people who have a strong moral outlook, i.e. who clearly know right from wrong and behave accordingly.

The times themselves have been fairly tempestuous, politically and economically, and I believe that it has been incumbent on the school as a moral entity to express its views from time to time, and to give an example to our pupils that one has sometimes to stand up and be counted. I quote here from a letter to my Board Chairman written by the Minister of Education in May 2003: “(By his communications) Mr Tiernan demonstrates the extent to which he is an enemy of the Government of the country and the people who elected it. . . . Accordingly, the Government demands that you remove Mr Tiernan from the Headship of St George’s College by the end of this month . . .” It is I believe symptomatic of the exceptional nature of St George’s that this peremptory demand was totally ignored. The man who gave this order was Aeneas Chigwedere who is significantly responsible for the destruction of education in this country.

One of my serious defects is that I am technologically challenged. My ignorance in this area is protected by a solicitous secretary and a dependable wife. There is a story of a Headmaster, equally defective in this area who could well have been me:

“A teacher was leaving the school one late afternoon when he observed his Headmaster standing in front of the Shredding Machine with a piece of paper in his hand.

‘Listen,’ said the Head, ‘this is a sensitive document, and my Secretary has already left. Can you make this thing work?’

‘Certainly,’ said the teacher as he turned on the Shredder, inserted the document and pressed the start button.

‘Excellent, Excellent,’ said the Headmaster, as he observed the paper disappearing into the Shredder, ‘I just need two copies.’”

My journey to St George’s began at the age of ten, when my nervousness at leaving home was masked by the excited anticipation of the three-day railway journey from Ndola (on the Copperbelt) to Salisbury via Bulawayo. I loved that journey because I was so unaware of what my destination would entail, and like most children I was utterly fascinated by the power of the steam engine. It totally distracted me from any immediate feeling of dread at my future prospects. The denouement came some days later when the initial excitement and the novelty of the situation began inexorably to wear off, and reality set in.

And here I am almost 55 years later with the prospect of but a year to go, counting the days, not excitedly as a 10 year old awaiting his return home, but as a veteran contemplating the inexpressibly wonderful privilege of having been at an exceptional school for so long. My fascinated faith in that steam engine has done me proud in commencing a journey long ago but one that only now is about to end.

If you are a member of the History Society of Zimbabwe,
please ensure that the Society headquarters
– <denjostephens@gmail.com> – has your email address,
as communications by post are no longer affordable.

Rhodesia Fairbridge Memorial College

A Personal Narrative

by One Who was There

by Francis Webster

This is the text of a talk given to members of the History Society of Zimbabwe in Harare on 22 September 2011.

For us, accustomed as we are to the wonderful climate of Zimbabwe, Pitlessie in Fifeshire Scotland is a grey and gloomy place at the best of times. In 1942 it was even more dreary. The second world war was rising to a crescendo. The men were absent fighting, leaving the dismal village to an assortment of women and young children.

My brother and I attended the local primary school and there we had a miserable time of it. We were poor. So was everybody, it might be said. But, we were poorer than the rest and this consigned us to the bottom of the social ladder.

Lower than the bottom, in fact. My mother had met a ship passing in the night and in 1942 I was born illegitimate. In 1945 she repeated the error and my brother was also born nameless. It would have been fair if the village had accorded her credit for raising a family single-handedly in those difficult times, but that was not the way of the Scottish countryside and so she, and her children, faced derision.

In the face of this, I became a loner in my peer group but maintained the approval of my school teachers through diligence in the classroom. Home, be it ever so humble, was where I wanted to be. And humble it was. We all had to do our bit and one of my tasks was to light the fire in the kitchen early each day. We had coal but no firelighters and I could be seen in the village at first light, each day, searching the road and pavement for scraps of kindling. This brought me to the attention of the Welfare people and an outraged mother faced questions about care levels. After accepting a typical Scottish leathering, I was quite pleased with the outcome because Mike and I got a free lunch at school each day.

Seeing my unhappiness, the teacher came across details of the Fairbridge Child Migrant Scheme and drew it to my mother's attention. (See the appendix to this article for details.)

After interviews and intelligence tests, I was accepted for the Fairbridge scheme and found myself at Liverpool Street station, the first step on my journey to Rhodesia. It was all OK until my mother cried – huge tears rolling down her cheeks. I was blind to her love and only felt the fear of a child who understood for the first time that he could be leaving his Mum and family for ever.

I was relieved when the train drew out of the station and I turned my attention to the eleven other children in the party, who were generating excitement with exaggerated expectations of fruit and wild animals in the promised land. For the next three weeks our two Housemothers did everything possible to cushion us from the pain of parting. Our play was boisterous and, to the passengers who only wanted sunshine and peace as the *Arundel Castle* steamed south away from Southampton and towards Cape Town, we must have

seemed a bad lot. Which explains the cheers every time a member of the crew was seen with a child migrant under each arm re-packing the steerage cabins.

But, when made aware of our situation, both crew and passengers also did their best to make sure we enjoyed ourselves and so the two-week journey by ship to Cape town and the three-day trip to Bulawayo by train were filled with all the play and fun that young children would wish for.

In later life I studied some child psychology and learned that a child deprived of family love responds with aggression. Useful knowledge for exam success, but of no help at all to a 9-year-old who arrived at Fairbridge in 1951. The new boys had their first meal in the dining room and returned to the dormitory as soon as knives and forks were downed.

No sooner was I at my bedside than a young fellow (John Potts was the name I remember) stuck his fist under my chin and asked me if I wanted a fight. I said “No” and he turned to the dormitory and yelled “Coward!”. The call was taken up by the assembled boys, “Coward! Coward! Coward!”, and I realized that the derision I had experienced in Scotland would not go away that easily. Stung to anger, I threw myself at the offending Potts. A bad mistake, as it turned out. He was the stronger and faster of the two and he soon had the better of me. I had a number of similar experiences over the next few weeks and although I learned the basic rules of street fighting, I was of light build and poor co-ordination and so unsuited to the pastime.

Once again I became a loner in my peer group but, at Fairbridge, I compounded the error by alienating the staff of the College.

First, I gave up the diligence to my studies that had earned me staff approval in Scotland. Then, in the dining hall, I refused to clean my plate of the piles of pumpkin, squash, marrow and similar “healthy” food that was heaped on my plate by the kitchen staff. And so I went to war with the housemothers, who supervised meals and had been raised in food rationed Britain. The sin was Waste.

Finally, I took up smoking and, despite all my efforts at secrecy, I got caught often. And so my visits to Robbie Robinson, our Headmaster and Guardian, for formal punishment became all too frequent and my reputation as a troublemaker became perilously long.

Hoping for some mitigation, I wasted an hour plagiarising the work of George Mac Donald and wrote:

Here bend I, Francis Webster
Have mercy with that stick, please Sir,
As I wud ye, if I were Sir,
And ye, were Francis Webster

I never did use the little ditty. Just as well. Jacko might have laughed and let me off. Robby, that pinnacle of discipline and humanity would have belted me the six I deserved then admonished me for clumsy plagiarism. Harry Cov and the others, ever quick to sense “cheek”, would have doubled the sentence.

Respite was on the way. Following some boyish misbehaviour I found myself in the Bulawayo General Hospital for minor repair. In the next bed was a young lad (named Peter Abbott) the son of a well-known ranching family from the Filabusi area. He and I struck up a friendship and, during one of their frequent visits, his parents invited me to spend school holidays with the family.

I could not have asked for better. Instantly I had affectionate foster parents, a companion

foster brother to share the ten thousand acres of playground known as Tsomo Ranch and two delightful older foster sisters known as Judy and Jenny. I loved the family dearly and, for the remaining years I spent at Fairbridge, I had a place called home.

After completing Primary School at Fairbridge, I was enrolled as a day scholar at Milton High School in Bulawayo. We continued to live at Fairbridge and travelled to and from High School by bus. I learned to pass examinations without working. So successful did I become that my Math teacher, quite unfairly, accused me of cheating. I had one great disappointment. My foster brother and my brother-in-law both attended Plumtree, and, to this day, I cannot persuade them that Milton was the better school

Leaving school at the end of 1959 to look after myself was a walk in the park. My peer group at Fairbridge had taught me to box my own corner and the Abbott family had shown me that boxing was often the least desirable option when the going got rough. I joined the Civil Service in the Ministry of Internal Affairs and my first two mentors were strong-willed grumpy curmudgeons. Noel Robertson and Alan Wright were District Commissioners of the Matobo and Nuanetsi Districts, with firm ideas as to how a young cadet should behave. I quickly learned the values of fairness and hard work. With these lessons I had a moderately successful career and later joined Rio Tinto, a private sector mining company, where I earned an extra bob or two and had the privilege of working for a company that really meant it when it said it would become the world's best in matters of health, safety and the environment.

In between I, alongside every other young man of my generation, was drafted into the army to do my bit for the failing Rhodesia This would have delighted the Trustees of the Fairbridge Society who were Victorian in outlook.

I disliked the army. Fairbridge had given me all the T-shirts I needed for barrack room camaraderie and discipline and, to be honest, I have never enjoyed an environment where I am required to make my own bed.

The Army, so we are told, makes you a stretcher bearer if you have no arms and a field runner if you have no legs. They put me in the Intelligence Corps.

In 1965, my beloved Auntie Gwen died but co-incidentally my brother, Michael, kept a childhood promise and migrated to Rhodesia with his wife and child. Having lost the Abbott family, I now had my own kith and kin in Rhodesia as a continued family base until I married my own wonderful wife, Rozanne Baillie, in 1971.

By 1972, the war was rising to a further crescendo and, to me, was headed for check mate. In company with many of my friends and colleagues at that time I decided that "Light at the end of the tunnel" was a myth and I decided to take the short cut to the end of the tunnel by emigrating back to the United Kingdom.

Despite an absence of 21 years, my British Birth Certificate entitled me to a Passport which drew barely a glance from the Immigration desk officer. Rozanne and I found jobs, bought a house, made friends and, like so many departing Rhodesians, made a success of our life in Britain.

But the call of Africa and our families back in Rhodesia, was always in our ears and when Zimbabwe was declared independent in 1980 we made the trip back. So it happened that in 1951, a small, and it must be said, bewildered, little boy left Britain with the memory of his mother's tears to witness the slow failing of Colonial Rhodesia as a child migrant. The picture to be replaced in 1980 by that of a mature and consenting adult making the

same journey to share in the birth pains of an emerging Zimbabwe setting out to take its place on the world stage as a new, expanding and vibrant country..

Arriving at Rio Tinto's Eiffel Flats Headquarters, I rocked back on my heels as if struck with a blunt object. The white community had lost the war, had lost the Lancaster House peace process which followed and had lost the moral high ground with the international community. Despite this there was a party as if there was no tomorrow No more call-ups – I was told..

On recovering our credulity, Rozanne and I were encouraged to find that a substantial number of our friends were intent on staying on in the new Zimbabwe. Four years later, we were transferred to Harare after Andrew, our only child, was born. We became members of a play group made up of people in similar circumstances and so were privileged to live through the successful birth of the new Zimbabwe and to enjoy all the sun, wide open spaces, and friendly people that our wonderful country has to offer.

Whilst Zimbabwe has been good to us, this is not to trivialize the very real hardship that soaring inflation and/or brutal land repossession has meant to so many people of our generation but we have learnt to count our blessings. Even when I suffered a stroke in 2006, the standard of medical care at the Avenues Clinic and the subsequent rehabilitation at St Giles has enabled me to resume an active life.

I am often asked whether or not I regret having become a child migrant. There is no answer. Our Lord gives us but one spin of the wheel and I will never know the outcome had I stayed in that little village of Pitlessie. But I will say this: "If a second spin was on offer, I would like to do it all over again". Thank you for listening.

APPENDIX

Kingsley Fairbridge

Born in Grahamstown, in the Eastern Province of the Cape, 1885.

His father was a surveyor in the Mutare area.

He had the opportunity for long treks in the veld and saw rolling, "empty" hills.

Had a vision . . .

The Vision

Children not adults should be trained to farm in Rhodesia.

"I saw great Colleges of Agriculture springing up in every man-hungry corner of the Empire. I saw little children shedding the bondage of bitter circumstances and stretching legs and minds amid the thousand interests of the farm. . . .

. . . I saw waste turned to Providence, the waste of unheeded humanity converted to the husbandry of unpeopled acres."

The Vision takes root

Completed his education through Rhodes Scholarship at Oxford.

Presented his vision to the Colonial Club in 1909.

The scheme was agreed to, but BSAP Company said it was premature for Rhodesia.

Offer from West Australia and established first Farm School at Pinjarra.

Died in 1924, aged 39, before Rhodesia college started but . . . “He lived to see 200 children from many a dark and dreary back-streets, brimful of happiness, enjoying the ever varied teeming interests of a farm.” – *Ruby Fairbridge*

The Vision moves to Rhodesia

The Fairbridge Trust purchased an ex-RAF Camp, 8 miles from Bulawayo. It comprised corrugated iron huts on brick piles.

Rhodesia Fairbridge Memorial College

First 18 boys in December 1946.

Primary School at Fairbridge, then by bus, daily, to Bulawayo High Schools.

A total of 276 children before closure in early 60s.

The children of each dormitory were cared for by a Housemother.

Emphasis on agriculture no longer applied.

Onward migration

In 1996 only 40 (i.e.15%) of the 276 were still in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe).

If you are about to make a new will,
or to amend your existing will,
please think of the History Society of Zimbabwe.

History Society of Zimbabwe National Chairman's Report

I welcome you all to the Fifty-ninth Annual General Meeting of the History Society of Zimbabwe.

Our society has been described as the most successful private association in the country. If this accolade is true, that it is so is due solely to you, its members.

We, who seek to identify topics of interest and speakers of renown are indebted to many of you who faithfully attend all our functions.

We have been extremely fortunate over many years now, to enjoy the comfort of this wonderful auditorium. That we have been so fortunate is due to the kindness of the headmaster of Prince Edward School, Mr. Kevin Atkinson, to whom we are exceptionally grateful. Kevin will be handing over the baton at Prince Edward later this year and taking up the responsibility of headmaster at St. George's College, replacing Mr. Brendon Tiernan there.

It is significant that Brendon Tiernan was our guest speaker at our last annual function, and we have indeed been most fortunate in the many headmasters who have addressed us over the years on many topics of interest. As many of you who attended that function will know, for the first time we hosted an annual lunch rather than the dinner we'd always held in the past. This change was generally welcomed and I find it fascinating that these shifts, which may be minimal in themselves, generally reflect substantial changes in the structure of our lives. In the case of the change from dinner to lunch, for future historians who read this in 50 years' time, it was caused by the increasingly hazardous driving conditions, the almost total disregard of the road rules, the exponential outbreak of potholes on what used to be our pristine streets and lastly, that we have a membership which is definitely of the more mature and whose collective night vision is on substantial decline!

Our editor, Mike Kimberley, has once again produced an outstanding journal, *Heritage of Zimbabwe*. With his next edition, Mike will equal the number of journals edited by Vernon Brelsford, who produced twenty-four earlier editions. This is a fantastic record of sheer hard work and dedication by Mike, and it enables us to retain, record and publish a mass of historical and personal information concerning the formative years of our country, which would otherwise have been lost. Our gratitude knows no bounds Mike for all that you have achieved on our behalf.

Whilst our events currently consist almost entirely of talks at this venue, we are ever mindful of the joy, fascination and excitement that were engendered when we used to undertake longer outings to remote parts of the country. If a map were produced of the areas to which we have travelled and about which we have learned, this would cover every compass point of the country. It is our great hope that at some time in the future the Society will be able to re-commence such wonderful events.

Your national committee comprising Mike Kimberley, John McCarthy, Dennis Stephens, Bill Sykes, Prof. Ray Roberts, Robin Taylor, David Rockingham-Gill, Fraser Edkins and myself, have met on regular occasions throughout the year. What used, in the past, to be the major topic of discussion i.e. how we might raise funds to meet the costs of publishing our journal, has, over the past few years, changed so that we now consider how best we can

utilise, for the benefit of the Society, the funds which have accumulated. We are prudent and ensure that we have sufficient funds to meet the production of the following year's journal, and the fact that we are in such a healthy financial position rests on three foundations:

- 1) The decision to do away with formal subscriptions and to require each member to meet the cost of production of the journal which he or she purchases.
- 2) Our indebtedness to Fraser Edkins who has continued to raise considerable income for the Society through the sale of our back numbers of heritage.
- 3) That Dennis Stephens is our treasurer. We are indeed immensely blessed to have Dennis in this position as his sound advice and vast experience have been a significant factor in the reversal of our financial state.

Robin Taylor will be giving his report as chairman of the Mashonaland branch of the Society. I must pre-empt whatever he has to say by acknowledging that he has done a quite superb job as chairman of the branch, and that it has been under his dedication and direction that we have been so fortunate in the breadth of knowledge and caliber of speakers over this past year.

I must express here my extreme admiration for and gratitude to Robin for the excellent work he has done.

Both Robin and I will be standing down. For my part this is a constitutional requirement which was brought into being some time ago, whereunder the chairman can serve for only two terms. This practice has also been adopted by the branch also in order that new blood and fresh ideas are constantly injected into our Society.

Whilst the focus of our talks has generally been on subjects relating to the history of this country, we have, on occasion, had speakers such as Rob Caskie speaking on subjects associated with our neighbouring countries. In Rob's case he spoke on the Anglo-Zulu battles (Isendlwana and Rorkes Drift) which occurred in 1879.

I feel it is most beneficial for us to widen our horizons from time to time, acknowledging that our situation requires us to do so. Indeed Rob Caskie now speaks around the world on Scott of the Antarctic. Such is Rob's talent that even in the dry heat of October here, I have no doubt we would feel the icy blasts off the snow and ice of that distant place!

An approach has been made to us to publish all the information in our *Rhodesiana* and *Heritage* journals on the internet. We are still to make a decision on this, and we are calling for more information. With the advance of accessibility to knowledge gaining pace almost on a daily basis, it is an exciting prospect that the information we have so carefully garnered should be made available to as wide an audience as possible.

I must also mention the generosity to the Society of Jono Waters. Jono, who was and still is renowned for his financial reporting and expertise, made the decision to extend his business into publishing. In the knowledge that my father had written a short history on the suburb of Highlands, which had never been published, I gladly made available my dad's manuscript which Jono enhanced substantially with many excellent historical photographs, and which book he then published under his "new ZANL Publishing House". He then very generously donated one hundred copies of the book to the Society for sale at \$10 a copy. We are enormously indebted to Jono for this. Jono had also made available considerable numbers of the fascinating posters depicting our record breaking issue of bank notes issued during the years of disastrous hyperinflation. The proceeds from these sales of these posters also accrued to the society.

May I ask for your indulgence please as I reflect on a personal matter relating to our Society?

My dad was a founder member, one of seven, who formed the Society in 1953 then named The Rhodesiana Society. Dad remained a member of both the National and branch committees until his death in 1979, at which time he was National Chairman.

I too was a member of both committees when dad passed away and have been honoured to have remained thereon from then to the present. Hence dad and I have maintained a presence on the committees of this wonderful Society for the whole of sixty years of its existence. I cannot tell you how proud dad and I are of that fact.

I conclude by expressing my deep appreciation to all of the members of the national committee and I have no doubt that, with the strength of membership support exhibited by all of you here tonight, and many more, that the Society will continue to thrive.

Tim Tanser

National Chairman

If you are a member of the History Society of Zimbabwe,
please ensure that the Society headquarters
– <denjostephens@gmail.com> – has your email address,
as communications by post are no longer affordable.

If you are about to make a new will,
or to amend your existing will,
please think of the History Society of Zimbabwe.