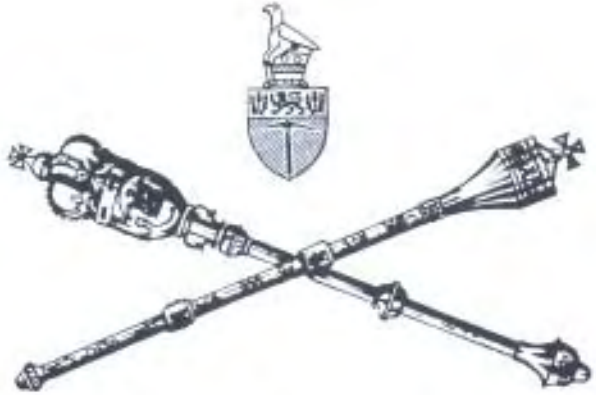
The Golden Jubilee of Parliament 1924 – 1974

The portrait of Cecil John Rhodes by Sydney P. Kendrick which hangs in the entrance hall of the House of Assembly.



The Golden Jubilee of Parliament 1924 – 1974

This brochure has been prepared to commemorate Fifty Years of Parliamentary Government in Rhodesia

Office of the Secretary to Parliament,
House of Parliament,
Salisbury,
Rhodesia.

"*Parliament is not a* congress *of ambassadors from different and hostile interests; which interests each must maintain, as an agent and advocate, against other agents and advocates; but parliament is a* deliberative *assembly of* one *nation, with* one *interest, that of the whole; where, not local purposes, not local prejudices ought to guide, but the general good, resulting from the general reason of the whole. You choose a member indeed; but when you have chosen him, he is not a member of Bristol, but he is a member of* parliament."

Speech by Edmund Burke to the Electors of Bristol on 3, Nov. 1774

A Landmark in History

"Pursuant to Proclamation of His Excellency the Governor, No. 5, the members elected to serve in the House of Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber at 10 o'clock a.m." The date was Friday, 30th May, 1924, and marked the opening of the First Session of the First Parliament of Rhodesia.

The venue was not the present Parliament Building, which since 1899 had been the meeting place of the Legislative Council, the forerunner to Parliament. In order to accommodate the vast number of spectators and guests the newly completed Meikle's Hall on the corner of Third Street and Speke Avenue had been taken over for the ceremony.

After the Clerk of the House had read the Proclamation, twenty-nine of the thirty recently elected members took the Oath of Allegiance which was administered by the Senior Judge of the High Court, Sir Clarkson Tredgold. The House then proceeded to the election of the first Speaker ever to hold office in Rhodesia. On the motion of the Premier, Sir Charles Coghlan, seconded by Sir Ernest Montagu, Mr. Lionel Cripps, a former member of "A" Troop of the Occupation Column and the first person to peg the Jumbo Mine in 1891, was unanimously elected. Business was then suspended until twelve o'clock noon when the first Governor, His Excellency Sir John Chancellor, K.C.M.G., D.S.O. arrived to deliver the opening speech, in the course of which he reviewed exhaustively the Colony's position and said: "This occasion of to-day, as you must all realise, is no mere annual ceremony; it will form a landmark in our history, and will, I trust, leave a lasting impression on the memories of all present".

A vivid contemporary account of the occasion is contained in the weekly edition of *The Rhodesia Herald* of 6th June, 1924. Under a banner headline "Rhodesia's First Parliament", and other headlines "Impressive Ceremonial at Session's Opening", "Pioneer elected as Assembly's Speaker" and "Premier cheered to the echo by thronged hall of spectators" appears the following extract:

"There was a distinguished gathering in the Assembly Chamber long before the hour set down for the opening of Parliament. The main entrance doors in Third Street were opened to the public at 11 o'clock, and for some time before that hour an extensive queue of people drawn from all parts of the country, even from remote districts, was patiently waiting for admission.

The hall was a blaze of colour. Festoons of streamers and pennants swung overhead from side to side of the building, and as the seats were rapidly occupied the fashionable dresses worn by the numerous ladies present enhanced the effectiveness of the colour scheme. In a few minutes the main body of the hall was filled to its utmost capacity and many late-comers were obliged to stand in the aisles at each side of the seats. There was a buzz of animated conversation which was, however, stilled from time to time as the Arnold-Quin Quartette orchestra delighted everyone with fascinating musical selections. The presence of the orchestra was a distinct and novel innovation into such an august assembly. Was it any more novel than the fact that the first Rhodesian Parliament should have been opened in an attractive hall on licensed premises? These two features were signally and typically Rhodesian, and even the presence of a gang of native convicts under the supervision of white and native warders armed with rifles, who assisted in placing chairs for the accommodation of the spectators, which would have created a mild sensation elsewhere, called for nothing more than passing comment.

In addition to the main floor of the hall, the gallery and the stage behind the Governor's dais was thronged, and one corner of the gallery was reserved for coloured people, all on the tip-toe of expectancy. It was truly a Rhodesian gathering, possessing a fine sense of decorum, but not sufficiently trained to the dignities of procedure to refrain from applauding a particularly striking number by the orchestra, and equally lacking in restraint—who would have had it otherwise?—when the popular Prime Minister, accompanied by Lady Coghlan and their daughter, passed along the centre aisle to take their seats. Cheers were raised in no half-hearted fashion when Sir Charles was first glimpsed by the keen observers in the gallery, and the compliment was smilingly acknowledged by the first Premier of the country. Other members were also warmly welcomed by the good-humoured crowd.

The members were accommodated in an enclosure which was railed off, the tables being arranged in horseshoe fashion around the Governor's dais. With the exception of Mr. Mennell, a member of Bulawayo District, who was unfortunately injured in a motor-car accident during the election campaign,

all the members were present. Mrs. Tawse Jollie, who has the honour of being the first woman to be elected to any legislative body in the Empire, was conspicuous not only by the fact that she was the only lady in the members' seats, but on account of her preference for the distinctive pattern of dress adopted by lady members of the British House of Commons."

Mrs. Ethel Tawse Jollie, first woman Member, 1920–1928.

SOUTHERN RHODESIA CONSTITUTION.

LETTERS PATENT providing for the constitution of Responsible Government in the Colony of Southern Rhodesia.

George the Fifth by the Grace of God of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and of the British Dominions beyond the Seas, King, Defender of the Faith, Emperor of India, unto all to whom these presents shall come Greeting.

Recites Southern Rhodesia Order in Council 1898 and Amending Orders.

WHEREAS by the Southern Rhodesia Order in Council 1898, as added to altered or amended by divers further Orders in Council provision was made for the administration of the government of certain territories of Africa under Our protection and known as Southern Rhodesia:

Recites Southern Rhodesia (Annexation) Order in Council 1923.

And whereas by an Order in Our Privy Council bearing date the 30th day of July 1923, and known as the Southern Rhodesia (Annexation) Order in Council 1923 it is provided that the territories within the limits of the Southern Rhodesia Order in Council 1898 and known as Southern Rhodesia, shall, from and after the coming into operation of the said Order, be annexed to and form part of Our Dominions, and shall be known as the Colony of Southern Rhodesia:

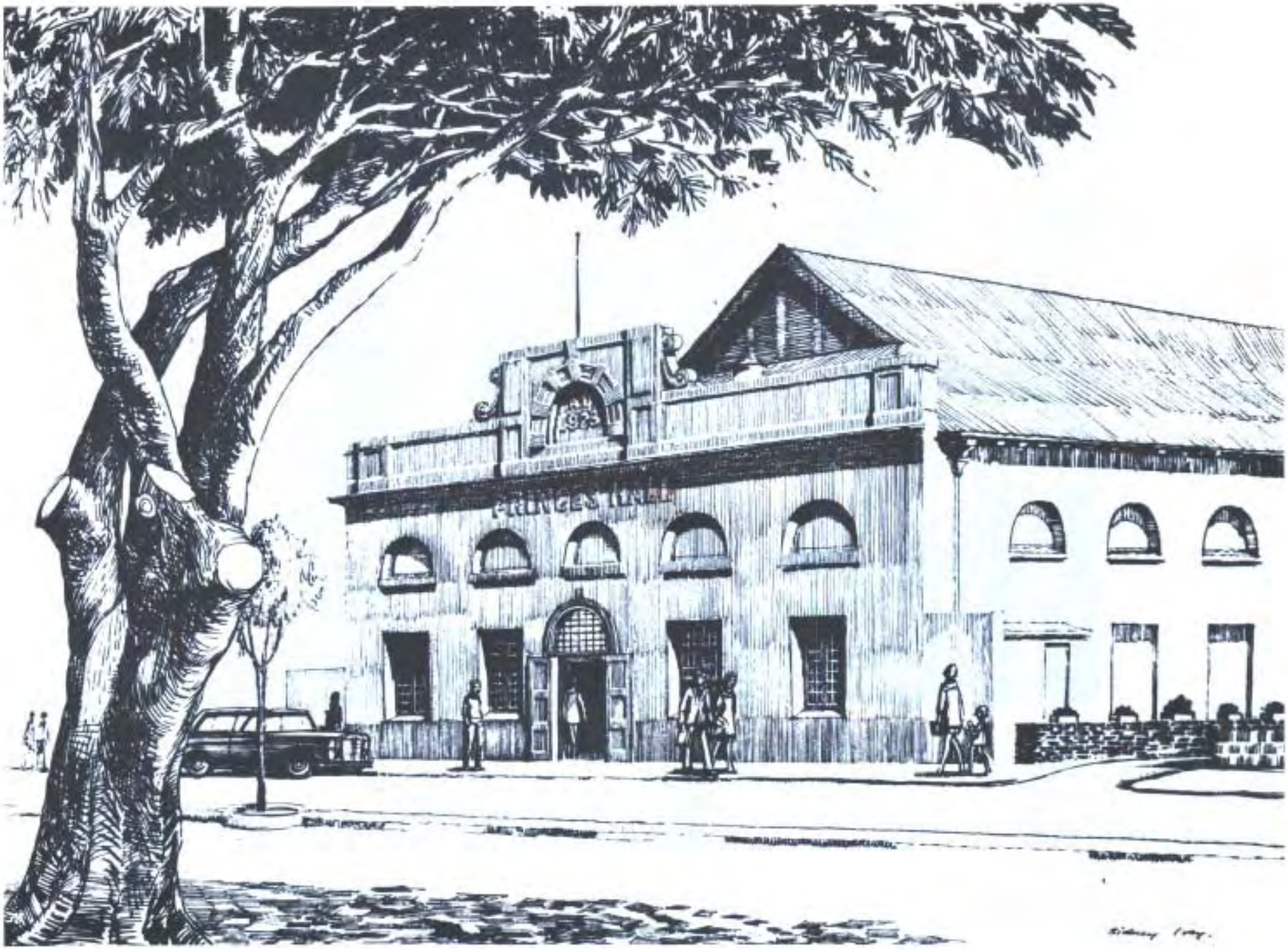
And whereas We are minded to provide for the establishment of Responsible Government, subject to certain limitations hereinafter set forth, in Our said Colony:

Now know ye that We do declare Our will and pleasure to be as follows:—

"A LANDMARK IN HISTORY"

The opening of the First Session of the First Parliament of Southern Rhodesia, 30th May, 1924.

Reproduction of painting presented to the House of Assembly by the Meikle family, 21st May, 1974.



Meikles Hall (later renamed Princes Hall) where the opening of the first session of the first Parliament took place on the 30th May, 1924.

The Background

The first semblance of a representative institution in Rhodesia is to be found in the Legislative Council, established in terms of the Southern Rhodesia Order in Council 1898. This Council, which had no executive responsibilities, consisted of the Administrator of Mashonaland, His Honour W. H. Milton, as President, the Administrator of Matabeleland (these offices were merged in 1901), the Resident Commissioner, as representative of the British Government but without a vote, five senior officials of the British South Africa Company nominated by the Company with the approval of the British Secretary of State for the Colonies, and four members elected by the persons enrolled on the voters roll. This was the first bold step towards what was to mature twenty-five years later as responsible government. According to contemporary reports the elections were fought with great gusto, with many acrimonious personal attacks by the candidates on each other as there were few policy differences between them. The ill-feeling engendered by the elections reached a climax when one of the defeated candidates, W. E. Fairbridge, at that time Mayor of Salisbury, accused Colonel Raleigh Grey, who had been elected to the Council to represent the voters of Mashonaland, of corrupt and illegal practices during the election. After an action in the High Court, Grey was found to be innocent and Fairbridge resigned as Mayor.

Although the Rhodesian voters were now represented in the Legislative Council, which met for the first time on the 15th May, 1899, their four members were quite insufficient to sway any decision. The administration of the country and executive power remained in the hands of the British South Africa Company in terms of its Charter of 1889. The Company, as a commercial concern, had to take into account the interests of its shareholders which did not necessarily coincide with the interests of Rhodesians. Moreover the British Government retained over-all control of legislative measures in the form of disallowance and non-assent. In addition, the High Commissioner for South Africa had the power to legislate by proclamation and did so in at least one instance despite the opposition of the Administration.

The Order in Council of 1898, besides constituting the Legislative Council, had made provision for a resident commissioner to be stationed in Rhodesia to represent the British Government. As a member of both the Executive and Legislative Councils he was closely in touch with all matters of administration, and was in fact the watch-dog of the British Government. His position was a strong one as his views were heeded by the Colonial Office, and he could almost be said to have possessed a power of veto over legislation.

Over the years the grievances of the Rhodesian pioneers and settlers against the British South Africa Company accumulated. The British Colonial Office, concerned chiefly in protecting the interests of the British taxpayer, refused in general to take sides and was principally concerned to avoid future British financial commitments.

In the first session of the Legislative Council the four elected members found themselves in frequent opposition to the nominated members representing the Company. A movement was soon under way to increase the number of elected members. Eventually an agreement was reached and by an amending Order in Council in 1903 the membership of the Council was increased to seven elected and seven nominated members. At the same time the Administrator lost his deliberative vote but retained a casting vote.

Dissatisfaction nevertheless continued, and as early as 1907 a motion was debated by the Council requesting the establishment of responsible government. Shortly afterwards the Company bowed to public pressure and agreed to limit the nominated members to five. This agreement was finally ratified by an Order in Council in 1911 whereby the elected members achieved an over-all majority. They still, however, had no representative on the Executive Council which was completely independent of the Legislative Council. Moreover, the members of the Executive Council could not be removed from office by an adverse vote in the Legislative Council.

In 1914 the British Government issued an extremely important Supplementary Charter which laid open the path to responsible government. This Charter, however, was completely overshadowed by the outbreak of the First World War, and before the war was over, new considerations had entered the sphere of politics both in Britain and Rhodesia. The possibility of an amalgamation between Southern and Northern Rhodesia was mooted, and even greater persuasions were made for Rhodesia to enter the Union of South Africa. This latter course was strongly supported by the Colonial Office on the grounds that the Company's vast financial claims would then have to be met by the South African Government, thus effecting a saving for the British taxpayer.

Victoria, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Queen, Defender of the Faith,

To all to whom these Presents shall come, Greeting.

Whereas a humble petition has been presented to Us by Our Cousin the Most Noble James Duke of Cleveland, Companion of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath, the Most Noble Alexander William George Duke of Fife, Knight of the Most Ancient and Most Noble Order of the Thistle, Privy Councillor, the Right Honourable Percy Scott Lord Lyttelton, G.C.M.G., and John Albertus of Kimberley in the Cape Colony, Knights of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath, Members of the Council and of the House of Assembly of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope, Officer Bart of St Helena, Knight Bachelor, London, Knightsland, Clifford Milton George Earl of Munster, Northumberland, Cayman, and George Lawson, Esq. the Queen's Governor Northern Esq. — Members of Parliament.

And whereas the said Petitioners state among other things

That the Petitioners and others are associated for the purpose of forming a company or corporation to be incorporated, of the capital mentioned for the objects in the said Petition set forth, under the corporate name of The British South Africa Company.

That the existence of a powerful British Company constituted by Charter of Our subjects in authority in South Africa, and having the principal field of operations in that region of South Africa lying to the north of Bechuanaland and to the West of Portuguese East Africa, would be conducive to the commercial and other interests of Our subjects in the United Kingdom and in Our Colonies.

That the Petitioners desire to carry into effect the conditions and agreements which have been made by exchange of the Chief Secretary to the Government of the said region and with other companies operating in the said region as the Petitioners may hereafter determine, within the said region or elsewhere in Africa, with the view of promoting trade, commerce, navigation and good government, including the regulation of liquor traffic with the natives, the Territories which are or may be acquired by or under such companies agreements, grants and treaties as aforesaid.

That the Petitioners believe that if the said companies agreements, grants and treaties can be carried into effect the condition of the natives inhabiting the said territories will be materially improved and their civilization advanced and an organization established which will tend to the suppression of the slave trade in the said territories and to the growth of the trade of the said territories to the immigration of European settlers to the mutual benefit and commerce of Our subjects and of other nations.

That the success of the enterprise in which the Petitioners are engaged is materially assured if it should seem fit to Us to grant them Our Royal Charter of incorporation as a British Company under the said name or title, or such other name or title, and with such powers as to the many the greater purposes of more effectually carrying into effect the objects aforesaid.

That large sums of money have been subscribed for the purposes of the intended Company by the Petitioners and others, who are prepared also to subscribe such further sums as may hereafter be found expedient for the development of the said enterprise, in the event of Our being pleased to grant to them Our Royal Charter of Incorporation as aforesaid.

Now [illegible] We have taken the said Petition into Our Royal Consideration, as the same will tend to the extension of Our Dominions and to the extension of Our Commerce, and that the enterprise in the Petition described may be productive of the benefit of Our subjects and of the civilization of the natives, by the exercise of Our special grace, certain knowledge and mere motion, have constituted, erected and incorporated, and by this Our Charter do constitute, erect and incorporate The [illegible] and any body politic and corporate by the name of The British South Africa Company, the said James Duke of Cleveland, Alexander William George Duke of Fife, Percy Scott Lord Lyttelton, John Albertus Officer Bart, Clifford Milton George Earl of Munster, Northumberland, Cayman, and George Lawson, and such other persons and such bodies as from time to time become and be members of the said body politic and corporate by their respective consents, and incorporated with perpetual succession and a common seal, with power to break alter or renew the same at their discretion, and with the other privileges conferred, and subject to the conditions imposed by this Our Charter. **And** We do hereby [illegible] and declare as follows that is to say:—

The [illegible] of the operations of the British South Africa Company in this Our Charter expressed to be the "the Company" shall be [illegible] of

The Royal Charter establishing the British South Africa Company in 1889.


MEMBERS OF THE FIRST RHODESIAN COUNCIL 1899
TOWNSHEND GRIFFIN
JUDGE J. VINCENT
SIR THOMAS SCANLEN
H.H. CASTENS
J.M. ORPEN
SIR MARSHALL CLARKE
HIS HONOUR W.H. MILTON
CAPT. THE HON. A. LAWLEY
COL. RALEIGH GRAY
O.P. GUBBLER

Sir John Chancellor, the first Governor, administering the oath to Sir Charles Coghlan, the first Prime Minister, in October, 1923.

Among Rhodesians the movement for responsible government grew stronger, and the Responsible Government League was formed. Led by Sir Charles Coghlan, who had been an elected member of the Legislative Council since 1908, this body was strongly opposed by the Rhodesia Union Association, which favoured incorporation in the Union of South Africa. By 1920 the number of elected members in the Legislative Council had been increased to thirteen, and in the general election of that year the issue of responsible government as opposed to joining South Africa was fiercely canvassed throughout the country, each side contesting every seat.

The result was decisive. The Responsible Government League won twelve out of the thirteen seats, and at the first session of the newly elected Council Coghlan was successful in carrying a resolution by twelve votes to five in favour of the establishment of responsible government.

RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

Campaign Fund

The [illegible] Responsible Government is well [illegible] and supported with [illegible]

A VIGOROUS CAMPAIGN NEEDS MONEY.

"RHODESIA FOR THE RHODESIANS" is a matter worth fighting [illegible] and worth paying for.

All supporters of the principle of

Responsible Government

are urged to subscribe to the Campaign Fund.

Remittances should be made to THE TREASURER, Responsible Government Association, [illegible]

Special Edition.

Bulawayo Chronicle.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 1922.

REFERENDUM RESULT.

We have just received from Salisbury the following Official Statement of the Referendum Result:

For RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT:

8,774

For UNION:

5,989

In due course, as provided by the Referendum Ordinance, there will be a detailed statement as to the voting in the various districts.

WHY WORRY ABOUT
Responsible Government
WHEN YOU HAVE THE
THREE IRRESPONSIBLES
IN
"The Edge 'o Beyond"
AT THE
PALACE - TO-NIGHT

In the following year Coghlan led a delegation to London to interview the recently appointed Colonial Secretary, Winston Churchill. Churchill strongly supported Rhodesia's entry into the Union, and General Smuts, the South African Prime Minister, offered tempting terms for incorporation including a seat for Coghlan in the South African Cabinet. Coghlan never wavered. He and his supporters campaigned vigorously throughout the country with the result that when a referendum was held on the 27th October, 1922, on the issue of responsible government versus joining South Africa, 8 774 votes were recorded for Coghlan and 5 989 for the Unionists. The following year administration by the British South Africa Company, under the Royal Charter and the protection of the Crown, ended. The country was annexed to and became part of His Majesty's Dominions as a Crown Colony with responsible government by virtue of the Southern Rhodesia (Annexation) Order in Council of 1923, as read with Letters Patent dated the 1st September, 1923, which provided for the 1923 Constitution.

The debating Chamber of the House of Assembly, from Mr. Speaker's Gallery looking towards the Speaker's Chair, with the Press Gallery above.

Responsible Government and the 1923 Constitution

The essential attribute of responsible government consists of the requirement that the Government of the day is responsible and accountable to an elected assembly of members, and that if it loses the confidence of a majority of the elected assembly it must either resign or dissolve the assembly and call a general election. This is the collective responsibility of the government as a body. In addition, individual ministers of government are responsible and accountable to the assembly for their official actions and for the administration of the departments of state under their control. These features require, therefore, that the ministers who compose the government must be members of the legislature. This in many ways is an advantage to Government. A Minister who is criticised has the right to reply. Writing of the events which followed the outbreak of war in 1914 and the criticism in the press of his administration of the Admiralty, Churchill has stated: "No attack in the House of Commons gave me the opportunity of defending myself". (Churchill has also stated: "I do not resent criticism even when, for the sake of emphasis, it parts for a time with reality"—House of Commons, 22 Jan. 1941).

Parliament, on the other hand, does not govern the country. That is not its function. The classic description of its role, written over one hundred years ago in Erskine May's Constitutional History of England is as follows:

> "*Parliament has no direct control over any single department of the State. It may order the production of papers for its information: it may investigate the conduct of public officers: and may pronounce its opinion upon the manner in which every function of the Government has been, or ought to be, discharged. But it cannot convey its orders or directions to the meanest executive officer in relation to the performance of his duty.*"

Similar testimony has been given by the eminent Victorian statesman, William Ewart Gladstone. Speaking to Mr. Roebuck's motion for a committee of inquiry into the conduct of the Crimean War, which led to the fall of Lord Aberdeen's Coalition, he addressed the House of Commons on 29th January, 1855, thus:

> "*Your function is not to govern this country. It is, if you think fit, to call to account those who do govern it.*"

The 1923 Constitution made provision for a Legislative Assembly consisting of thirty members. For the first election the registered voters were divided into fifteen electoral districts. The voters' qualifications were based on the existing electoral laws in force. Provision was also made for the Legislature to pass a law to constitute a second chamber to be designated the Legislative Council, which together with the Legislative Assembly would constitute the Legislature. This latter provision was never implemented during the operation of the 1923 Constitution, and the Legislative Assembly remained the Legislature for all purposes of the Constitution. Provision was made for the election of a presiding officer for the Legislative Assembly to be designated the Speaker, who was not required to be a member of the Assembly. The Legislature was given power, subject to the provisions of the Constitution, "to make all laws, to be entitled 'Acts' which shall be required for the peace, order and good government of the Colony".

The Governor was empowered to appoint such officers as he thought fit, not exceeding six in number, to be Ministers, one of whom would be designated as Head of the Ministry and styled the Premier (this designation was subsequently altered to Prime Minister). The Governor was further to assign to each Minister the headship of such department or departments as he thought fit. After the first general election of Members of the Legislative Assembly no Minister was to hold office for a longer period than four months unless he was or became a Member of either House of the Legislature.

The President of the Senate's procession led by the Deputy Principal Doorkeeper (Senate) followed by the Serjeant-at-Arms, Mr. President and the Secretaries at the Table.

Mr. Speaker's procession led by the Deputy Principal Doorkeeper followed by the Serjeant-at-Arms, Mr. Speaker, and the Secretaries at the Table.

The procedure of Parliament

The procedure of the new Legislative Assembly was broadly based on that of the British House of Commons, with those alterations made necessary by its much smaller size. In particular, the traditions and customs surrounding the office of Speaker have been closely followed. Rhodesia has been fortunate in having a succession of Speakers who have upheld the great traditions of impartiality and independence during their tenure of office.

The Speaker, who has been described as the interpreter and custodian of the rights and privileges of the Members of the House, has duties which are as various as they are important. Each day when the House is sitting the Speaker, clad in wig and gown, walks in procession to the Chair in the debating chamber. This procession consists of the Principal Doorkeeper, the Serjeant-at-Arms carrying the Mace on his right shoulder, the Speaker and the Secretaries at the Table, who are the senior officers of Parliament. After bowing to Members on either side of the House, the Speaker reads prayers, and the day's business can then begin. While in the Chair, the Speaker decides and enforces all points of order, regulates debate, calls upon Members who wish to speak, and if two or more Members rise at the same time, he decides which one should address the Chair.

Certain of the Speaker's duties relate to the rights of minorities, for the Speaker has the power to refuse to accept a motion for the closure (i.e. "That the Question be now put") which brings debate to an end. The Standing Orders which regulate the business of the House may be suspended upon motion moved after notice, which in practice entails a day's delay, but in cases of urgent necessity, "of which Mr. Speaker shall be the judge", any order or orders may, with the leave of the House, be suspended upon motion moved without notice.

If a Member claimed that a breach of privilege of Parliament had been committed it would rest with the Speaker to determine whether a *prima facie* case had been established. Further, if a Member asked leave to move "the adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance", the Speaker must decide, in his absolute discretion, whether the matter falls within the established rules covering motions of this type, and if he determines that it does, the motion would take precedence over the business on the Order Paper and would be debated that day.

Colonel the Honourable G. H. Hartley, I.C.D., O.B.E., E.D., Speaker of the House of Assembly, seated in the Speaker's chair.

The Speaker has considerable disciplinary powers. If a Member's conduct in the House were grossly disorderly the Speaker could order him to withdraw from the precincts of the House for the remainder of that day's sitting. The Serjeant-at-Arms, who is an officer of Parliament appointed to attend upon the Speaker, would act on such orders as he received from the Speaker to ensure the Member's withdrawal. If the Speaker considered an offence committed by a Member in the House so serious that a more drastic punishment was required he could "name" the Member. In this case the procedure is as follows: The Speaker says, "Mr. X, I have to name you for disregarding the authority of the Chair". Whereupon the Leader of the House, who is a senior cabinet minister, or in his absence any other minister, rises and moves: "That Mr. X be suspended from the service of the House". The Speaker forthwith puts the Question for decision, no amendment, adjournment or debate being allowed. On the motion being carried the recalcitrant Member is suspended on the first occasion in any session for four sitting days, on the second occasion for eight sitting days and on the third or any subsequent occasion for sixteen sitting days. In the case of great disorder arising, where a number of Members disregard the authority of the Chair, the Speaker is authorized by Standing Orders of the House to adjourn the House without putting any Question, or to suspend any sitting for a time to be named by him.

These drastic powers are seldom used. For the most part the Speaker's call of "Order" is quite sufficient to prevent breaches of the law and custom of Parliament. A good Speaker gains from Members what has been aptly described by Graham in "Mother of Parliaments" as the "willing acquiescence and not the reluctant submission to his decisions".

The more important rulings by the Speaker on matters of parliamentary procedure are preserved in the records of Parliament. Over the years they come to form a body of "case law" or precedents to which future Speakers would refer in similar circumstances. A Standing Order of the House provides as follows:

> "*In any matter for which these Standing Orders* (which regulate the procedure of Parliament) *do not provide or which are not provided for by a Sessional or other Order, the decision of Mr. Speaker . . . shall be final, and in arriving at such decision he may take as his guide the relevant practice and such parliamentary precedents of this or another country as may be applicable in the circumstances.*"

Thus a ruling by the Speaker cannot be questioned, and his conduct in the House can only be debated on a substantive motion moved after notice specifically for that purpose. In terms of the present Constitution the Speaker cannot be removed from office except by an affirmative vote of not less than two-thirds of the total membership of the House of Assembly. Moreover his salary as Speaker is charged upon and paid out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund and cannot be reduced during his continuance in office.

What has been written above about the Speaker and the procedure of the House of Assembly applies equally, *mutatis mutandis*, to Rhodesia's Senate and its presiding officer, the President of the Senate.

Rhodesians may take great pride in the manner in which over the past half century the customs and traditions of Parliament have been maintained. On the other hand there has been no die-hard conservatism with regard to procedure. Where it is thought that improvements could be made, these have been effected. The present edition of the House of Assembly Standing Orders is the Tenth, and at each revision attempts have been successfully made to improve and streamline the procedure in the House and to omit material which served little or no useful purpose. As the leading text-book on Parliamentary Procedure by Erskine May puts it: "The true standard for measuring the relative importance of a form or rule is the extent to which it is essential or serviceable to the exercise by each House of its parliamentary functions."

Finally, the privileges of Parliament are essential to its proper functioning. It is of some significance that the first bill to be introduced in the first session of Rhodesia's first Parliament was the Powers and Privileges of Parliament Bill, the long title of which read as follows:

> "To define and declare the powers and privileges of the Legislative Assembly of Southern Rhodesia; to secure freedom of speech and debate or proceedings in the Legislative Assembly; and to give summary protection to persons employed in the publication of parliamentary papers."

Subsequent Parliamentary Developments

The 1923 Constitution was to serve Rhodesia for some thirty-eight years, and under it nine Parliaments were elected. Towards the end of this period the Federation of Southern Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland was established in 1953, and many of the more important functions of Government were transferred to it. The Federal Constitution provided initially for a Parliament, to be known as the Federal Assembly, of thirty-five Members including six Africans, two from each of the three territories, and three members with special responsibilities for African affairs. In 1958 the membership of the Federal Assembly was enlarged to fifty-nine members and the African membership was doubled.

From the outset the Federal Assembly had close ties with the Rhodesian Parliament. Its first series of sittings in the early part of 1954 was held in the Rhodesian Parliament and its Speaker, the late Sir Ian Wilson, had previously been Speaker of the Rhodesian Parliament. Of the Members representing Southern Rhodesia in the Federal Assembly many, including the first Federal Prime Minister, had either held office or sat in the Rhodesian House. As representative institutions were at a comparatively primitive stage in the two northern territories at the time of the establishment of Federation, it was inevitable that the customs and procedure of the Federal Assembly were closely based on those of Southern Rhodesia. Moreover, for its entire life the Federal Assembly was housed in a building adjoining the Rhodesian Parliament which today forms the first three floors of the north wing.

The Federation did not survive. Despite the vehement opposition of the Federal Government, the British Government agreed in December, 1962, to allow Nyasaland to secede from the Federation, and the death blow was delivered on the 29th March, 1963, when the British Government announced that any territory would have the right to secede. The Federation was finally brought to an end by British legislation on 31st December, 1963, by which time all its functions of government had reverted to the three territories.

In the meantime following a referendum a new Constitution had been granted to Rhodesia by Britain in terms of the Southern Rhodesia (Constitution) Order in Council, 1961, made on the 6th December, 1961. The major portion of the new Constitution was to come into operation on "the appointed day", which, in effect, was the date of the dissolution of the Ninth Parliament.

One of the principal provisions of the 1961 Constitution increased the membership of Parliament from thirty to sixty-five members, elected from fifty constituencies by voters on the higher, or "A" electoral roll and fifteen elected from fifteen electoral districts by voters on the lower, or "B" electoral roll. As the lower, or "B" roll consisted predominantly of Africans, this would for the first time in Rhodesia's history ensure the election of Africans to Parliament.

Provision was also made for a Declaration of Rights and for a Constitutional Council whose sole function was to act as the watch-dog of the people for safeguarding their rights under the Declaration by examining any bill passed by Parliament which was submitted to it or any subsidiary legislation enacted after the coming into operation of the Constitution and by reporting to Parliament whether, in its opinion, any such bill or subsidiary legislation contained any provision which was contrary to or inconsistent with any of the provisions of the Declaration of Rights. Any such law (including any subsidiary legislation) which was found by a court to be contrary to the Declaration of Rights could be pronounced to be invalid.

Under the new Constitution the powers of the Governor were curtailed. While his appointment continued to be made by the Sovereign on the advice of the Secretary of State, the Rhodesian Government had a constitutional right to be consulted before any name was submitted to the Queen. The Governor was required to act in accordance with the advice of his Ministers in all matters except in regard to (*a*) the dissolution of the Legislative Assembly; (*b*) the choice of the Prime Minister; and (*c*) the appointment of the Chairman of the Constitutional Council where he was required to act on the advice of the Chief Justice. In regard to the choice of Prime Minister and the dissolution of the Legislative Assembly, the Governor would act in accordance with his own discretion, but he was required to exercise that discretion in the same manner as the Sovereign in the United Kingdom in similar circumstances.

The "reserved powers" vested in the British Secretary of State disappeared. In contrast to the position under the 1923 Constitution, the Legislative Assembly had power to amend or repeal any of the provisions of the new Constitution except those relating to the functions of the Sovereign and the functions of the Governor as the Sovereign's representative. The power of disallowance by the Sovereign was retained only in respect of any act which might be inconsistent

The Honourable J. W. Pithey, I.C.D., C.B.E., President of the Senate, seated in the President's chair.

The Senate mace on the Table of the Senate.

The debating Chamber of th Senate, looking towards the Pres dent's chair, with the interpreter booths and the Press Gallery abov

with any international obligations imposed on the Sovereign in relation to Rhodesia or which altered to the detriment of the stockholders or departed from the original contract in respect of any stock issued under the British Colonial Stock Acts by the Rhodesian Government on the London market. Such laws could be disallowed within six months of their being passed. Certain provisions of the new Constitution were, however, specially entrenched; that is to say they required a special procedure for their amendment. These provisions were those which related to the Declaration of Rights, appeals to the Privy Council, the Constitutional Council, the Judiciary and the provisions for amending the Constitution, securing civil service pensions and giving effect to the restriction on the amendment of the franchise and also provisions in regard to land.

One interesting point was that whereas the 1923 Constitution made provision, as already mentioned, for the establishment of a Second Chamber, there was no such provision in the 1961 Constitution.

A further important provision contained in the 1961 Constitution was that the Legislative Assembly was specially empowered to make laws having extra-territorial effect. The legislative powers continued to be vested in the Legislative Assembly of sixty-five Members elected in accordance with the electoral law for the time being in force relating to elections. Qualifications and disqualifications of voters continued to be governed by the electoral laws of the country and the legislature had power to amend the franchise and electoral laws generally. However, any amendment of the franchise which had the effect of rendering ineligible for inclusion in the "A" Roll or the "B" Roll, as the case may be, any person who would have been entitled to be included in the Roll on the basis of the new qualifications would require for its enactment the special procedure referred to above for the entrenched clauses of the new Constitution.

Reference was made earlier to the transmission of bills passed by the Legislative Assembly to the Constitutional Council. Certain categories of bills, however, were excluded from this provision in the Constitution. These were Money Bills, Bills certified by the Prime Minister to be of so urgent a nature that it was not in the public interest to delay their enactment, and Bills which amended, added to or repealed any specially entrenched provision of the Constitution or which under the provisions of the Constitution were made subject to the same procedure as if they were such bills.

It will be seen from the above that the 1961 Constitution was a milestone on the path of Rhodesia's Parliament towards full and unimpeded legislative sovereignty. From the time of the break up of the Federation the Rhodesian Government sought to negotiate independence with the British Government. These attempts failed. Britain in due course conferred independence on the two northern territories of the former Federation, which were eventually renamed Zambia and Malawi. Rhodesia, which for forty years had enjoyed responsible government, was denied legal sovereignty.

★ ★ ★

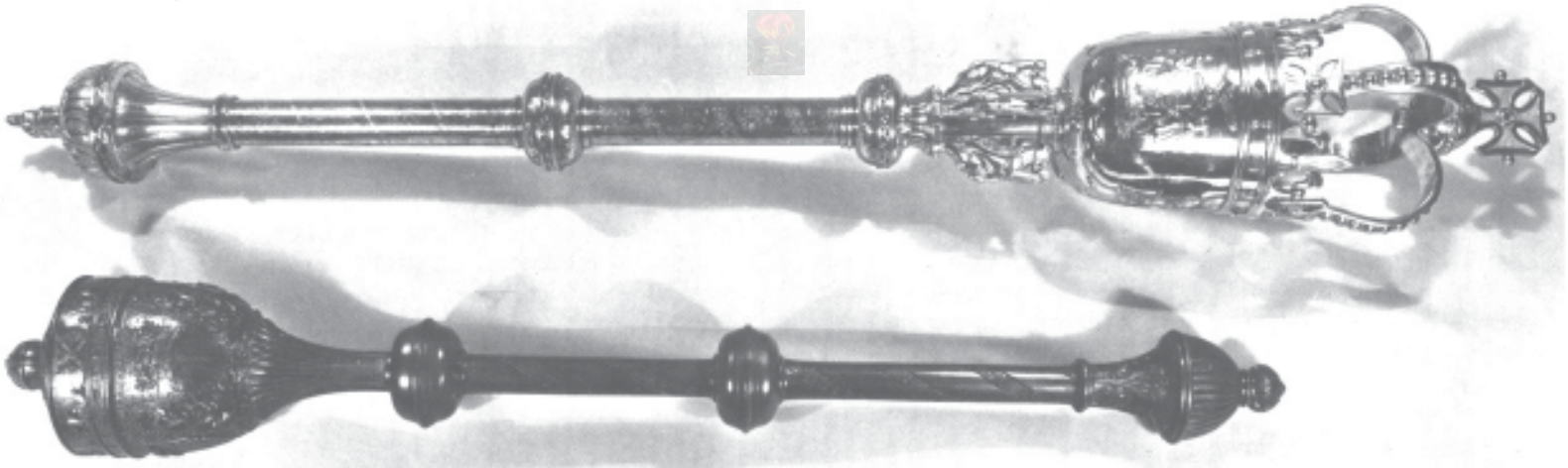
In November, 1964, the Rhodesian Government, having been empowered by an Act of Parliament, held a referendum "for the purpose of determining whether the voters of Southern Rhodesia are in favour of or against Southern Rhodesia obtaining independence on the basis of the Constitution of Southern Rhodesia, 1961." The result left no room for doubt. 58 176 votes were cast in favour and 6 101 against.

★ ★ ★

Further talks on independence were held with the British Government in October, 1965. No agreement was reached, and in a broadcast to the nation on the 11th November, 1965, the Prime Minister declared Rhodesia's independence and announced a new Constitution, closely based upon the 1961 Constitution but without any elements of subordination to Britain. When Parliament met shortly afterwards on the 25th November, 1965, the Speaker ruled that the 1965 Constitution was valid. Subsequently, by the Constitution (Ratification) Act (No. 1 of 1966), the 1965 Constitution was duly ratified by a two-thirds majority of Parliament.

The maces used by the Assembly of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, now kept in the Archives.

The gold mace was presented to the Federal Assembly by the British House of Commons in September, 1954.



Proclamation

Whereas in the course of human affairs history has shown that it may become necessary for a people to resolve the political affiliations which have connected them with another people and to assume amongst other nations the separate and equal status to which they are entitled

And Whereas in such event a respect for the opinions of mankind requires them to declare to other nations the causes which impel them to assume full responsibility for their own affairs

Now Therefore, We, The Government of Rhodesia, Do Hereby Declare

That it is an indisputable and accepted historic fact that since 1923 the Governments of Rhodesia have exercised the powers of self-government and have been responsible for the progress, development and welfare of their people.

That the people of Rhodesia having demonstrated their loyalty to the Crown and to their kith and kin in the United Kingdom and elsewhere through two world wars, and having been prepared to shed their blood and give of their substance in what they believed to be the mutual interests of freedom-loving people, now see all that they have cherished about to be shattered on the rocks of expediency.

That the people of Rhodesia have witnessed a process which is destructive of those very precepts upon which civilisation in a primitive country has been built; they have seen the principles of Western democracy, responsible government and moral standards crumble elsewhere, nevertheless they have remained steadfast.

That the people of Rhodesia fully support the requests of their Government for sovereign independence but have witnessed the consistent refusal of the Governments of the United Kingdom to accede to their requests.

That the Governments of the United Kingdom have thus demonstrated that they are not prepared to grant sovereign independence to Rhodesia on terms acceptable to the people of Rhodesia, thereby persisting in maintaining an unnecessary jurisdiction over Rhodesia, obstructing law and trade with other states and the conduct of affairs with other nations and refusing assent to laws necessary for the public good, all this to the detriment of the future peace, prosperity and good government of Rhodesia.

That the Government of Rhodesia have for a long period patiently and in good faith negotiated with the Government of the United Kingdom for the removal of the remaining limitations placed upon them and for the grant of sovereign independence.

That in the belief that procrastination and delay strike at and injure the very life of the nation, the Government of Rhodesia consider it essential that Rhodesia should attain, without delay, sovereign independence, the justice of which is beyond question.

Now Therefore, We The Government of Rhodesia, in humble submission to Almighty God who controls the destinies of nations, conscious that the people of Rhodesia have always shown unswerving loyalty and devotion to Her Majesty the Queen and earnestly praying that we and the people of Rhodesia will not be hindered in our determination to continue exercising our undoubted right to demonstrate the same loyalty and devotion, and striving to promote the common good so that the dignity and freedom of all men may be assured, Do, By This Proclamation, adopt, enact and give to the people of Rhodesia the Constitution annexed hereto.

God Save The Queen

Given under Our Hand at Salisbury this ..... day of November in the Year of Our Lord one thousand nine hundred and sixty-five

Prime Minister

Deputy Prime Minister

Ministers

The present composition of Parliament

On the 20th June, 1969, the Government, having been empowered by an Act of Parliament, held a referendum to determine the opinion of the voters on the following questions:

(*a*) whether the voters were in favour of or against the adoption of a republican form of government for Rhodesia; and

(*b*) whether the voters were in favour of or against the proposals for a new Constitution for Rhodesia as set out in a White Paper and published in a *Gazette* Extraordinary on the 21st May, 1969.

The proposal for a republican form of government was approved by 81 per cent. of the electorate, and the new Constitution by 72 per cent. Thereafter, Parliament by a two-thirds majority enacted the Constitution of Rhodesia, 1969, a new Electoral Act, a Land Tenure Act and a High Court Amendment Act to give effect to the constitutional proposals accepted at the referendum. The 1969 Constitution came into effect on the 2nd March, 1970, which was the date of the dissolution of the eleventh Parliament of Rhodesia.

Some of the principal provisions of the 1969 Constitution which relate to Parliament are as follows:

The legislative power of Rhodesia is vested in the Legislature which consists of the President of Rhodesia and the Parliament.

The Legislature is the sovereign legislative power in and over Rhodesia and has power to make laws, to be entitled "Acts", for the peace, order and good government of Rhodesia, including laws having extra-territorial operation.

The Parliament of Rhodesia consists of a Senate and a House of Assembly.

The Senate consists of twenty-three Senators of whom ten are Europeans elected by an electoral college consisting of the European Members of the House of Assembly, ten are African Chiefs elected by the Council of Chiefs, five of whom are from Matabeleland and five from Mashonaland; and three are persons of any race appointed by the President of Rhodesia. The President of the Senate, who is its presiding officer, is not a Senator, but is elected by the Senate. The Constitution also provides for a Senate Legal Committee which is a Committee of Senators the majority of whom have prescribed legal qualifications. It is the function of this Committee to examine bills and subsidiary legislation and to report to the Senate whether they contain any provision inconsistent with the Declaration of Rights, which is contained in the Second Schedule of the Constitution.

The House of Assembly consists at present of sixty-six Members of whom fifty are Europeans elected by Europeans enrolled on the rolls of Europeans for fifty European Roll constituencies, eight are Africans elected by Africans registered on the rolls of voters for four constituencies in Matabeleland and four constituencies in Mashonaland, and eight are Africans elected by four electoral colleges in Matabeleland and four electoral colleges in Mashonaland comprising chiefs, headmen and elected councillors of African councils in the Tribal Trust Land. The Speaker is not a Member of the House of Assembly but is elected by the House.

It is provided in the Constitution that when the total amount of income tax assessed on the income of Africans exceeds sixteen sixty-sixths of the total income tax assessed on the income of both Africans and Europeans the number of African members of the House of Assembly shall be increased so that it bears the same proportion to the number of members of the House of both races as the total of the income tax assessed on the income of Africans bears to the total amount of the income tax assessed on the income of both Africans and Europeans. This provision has effect until such time as the number of African members equals the number of European members. It should be noted in this connection that the 1969 Constitution defines "European" as "a person who is not an African".

In the foregoing narrative an attempt has been made to trace the growth of representation in Rhodesia over the years. From the four representatives of the pioneers and early settlers in the Legislative Council of 1899 there developed in twenty-five years the thirty member Legislative Assembly of 1924. Today the public of Rhodesia are represented in an independent bi-cameral Parliament by eighty-nine Senators and Members. The responsibilities, however, have also increased. To cite but one example, at the time of the attainment of responsible government the total annual expenditure of the Government amounted to £1 356 489. The current main Estimates of Expenditure provide for a total expenditure of $287 890 800 from revenue funds and $15 858 112 from loan funds; and it is Parliament which debates and authorizes this expenditure.

A view of Salisbury taken from the Kopje in 1896. The unfinished Cecil Building is marked and can be seen more clearly in the enlarged inset.

A history of the Cecil Building

The Cecil Building has been associated with the administration and government of Rhodesia since 1899. The original building, one of the oldest in Rhodesia, is still the core and focal point of the present structure. It was built in its original form by two partners, Robert Graham Snodgrass and David Mitchell, who, early in 1891, had arrived in Salisbury with a wagon load of trade goods from the railhead near Vryburg. The bulk of this consignment consisted of cases of Scotch whisky which was in particularly short supply at the time. Soon after their arrival in Rhodesia, the partners began to build hotels. Snodgrass, during his travels, had acquired a knowledge of architecture and the building trade, and it was he who designed the structures they built.

In 1895, they undertook their most ambitious project, the construction of the Cecil Hotel which in later years was to become the hub of Rhodesia's House of Assembly. On the 31st July of that year, stands 1956, 1957 and 879 (which was later renumbered 1958) were granted to the partners. Construction must have started fairly promptly for, in the *Government (B.S.A. Co.) Gazette* of 12th February, 1896, appears a notice of application for a liquor licence submitted by the partners "in respect of premises situated in Cecil Square", and the first *Handbook to Rhodesia*, published at the beginning of 1897, contains an advertisement for the Cecil Hotel, Salisbury.

In 1896, the building was far from complete; the walls were up, part of a temporary roof was on, and floors had been put into a few of the rooms. The great difficulty and cost of bringing up heavy loads of building material from the railhead (this went up to 1/– per lb.), the rinderpest outbreak and the Rebellion, all combined to bring building operations almost to a standstill. Nevertheless, certain parts of the building were habitable after a fashion. Early in 1897, the hotel was taken over by the British South Africa Police as temporary quarters for the men assembled in Salisbury during the Rebellion. Many pioneers could recall sleeping in what is now the Chamber of the House of Assembly which at the time had no floor or proper ceiling. This occupation was not continued long, for on 24th September, 1897, a paragraph in the personal column of the *Rhodesia Times and Financial News* announced that Messrs. Snodgrass and Mitchell had let the Cecil Hotel to one "Mr. Lazarus of Australia", who took the opportunity to inform prospective customers that he intended to carry out extensive improvements. The hotel was reopened on 1st October, 1897. It is clear that the building at this date was an hotel in name only as it was quite unfinished. The bar and the dining room were the only parts of the building fit for use.

Unhappily, Mr. Lazarus found that the Cecil did not pay, and in February, 1898, the hotel reverted to the control of the owners, who placed Mr. Alfred Smith in charge of it. But the continuing difficulties which beset attempts to transport heavy materials to Salisbury made it impossible to run the shell of the hotel as a paying proposition. Snodgrass and Mitchell had raised a bond of £3 500 from Mr. Rhodes and £7 000 from the British South African Company to enable them to erect the building and it was probably for this reason that the Company, who were looking for suitable premises for use as Government Offices near their existing buildings, began to negotiate with Snodgrass and Mitchell for the Cecil Hotel in the latter part of 1898. In October, 1898, it was announced that the building was to be sold, and the following description of the property appeared in the *Rhodesia Times:*

> "The Cecil Hotel is a double-storey building measuring 90 ft. by 75 ft.; the ground floor contains a dining room 28 ft. by 45 ft.; a billiards room 28 ft. by 41 ft.; public and private sitting rooms; a reading room; extensive cellarage capable of holding a large stock of wines. The first floor contains 18 bedrooms. There is also a very extensive double-storeyed stable, a coach house and all necessary outbuildings."

On 12th December, 1898, the Cecil Hotel was sold to the British South Africa Company for £7 000. The *Rhodesia Herald* of Wednesday, 14th December, 1898, reported that the intention of the Company was to use the building as a General Post Office. The files of the Public Works Department show, however, that it was the real intention of the Company to use the building to provide office accommodation for the Administrator, the Executive Council, the Survey Department, the Postmaster-General, and above all to provide an adequate debating chamber for the Legislative Council. The report of the Director of Public Works states: "The building is in a very unfinished condition; many of the rooms are not floored, ceiled or plastered and the verandah with balcony has not been erected."

Although £7 000 had been paid for the building, it was only valued at £5 700 by the Public Works Department. Authority for completion of the building was issued and the Public Works Department started work in March, 1899. But the difficulties of transporting materials to Salisbury hampered the progress of the work, so that it dragged on until March, 1900, although some of the rooms were in use by the middle of 1899, including the Chamber. The files of the Public Works Department of this period are filled with telegrams ordering material, complaining of delays, urging shipping and forwarding agents to expedite deliveries, asking for tenders for timber, glass, paints, putty and corrugated iron. Contractors skimped their work; the Municipality, when called upon to place a granite kerb along the pavement beside the building, pleaded poverty as their excuse for not doing so. Nevertheless, in spite of all the difficulties of floods, fever and rinderpest, the work was at last completed at a cost of £8 000. The finished building was to retain its external appearance until the alterations carried out in 1938 were put in hand.

The first meeting of the Legislative Council was held on May 15, 1899, in what had been the dining room of the old hotel but was now to be the Debating Chamber of the Council. The Chamber was handsomely furnished with a "Chair" for the Presiding Officer, i.e. the Administrator, and tables and chairs for the Members. All the furniture in the Debating Chamber was made of oak and upholstered in dark green leather. The same "Chair" is today still in use and is used by the Speaker of the House of Assembly. The other furniture from the original Council Chamber, having been suitably refurbished, is now in use in the Senate Chamber. A letter from Mr. A. H. Holland, then Clerk of the Administrator's Office, describes how the office space in the building was utilized:

> "Sir William took the room in front on the Club side. I had the room next to him and also the small room with the strong room. The Resident Commissioner had the back room; Robertson, the Clerk of the Council, had the front room overlooking Cecil Square; the Treasury had the rooms on the balcony facing the Club and the Surveyor General was in the rooms on the other balcony with the Attorney General with the rooms just on top of the stairs".

The year 1924 saw the opening of the First Session of the First Parliament under Responsible Government. This ceremony took place in the Prince's Hall as it was considered that the Chamber in the Cecil Building was too small for this great occasion. The *Bulawayo Chronicle* of 31st May felt that the hall would be admirable as a parliament building until a suitable structure could be built and indeed, during the First Session, serious consideration was given to possible alternatives which could well have heralded the end of the Cecil Building's association with the Legislature of Rhodesia. It was eventually decided that improvements should be made to the Cecil Building which, however, were to prove quite inadequate over the years. At this time, the Legislative Assembly shared the building with the Audit and Treasury Departments which were housed on the top floor. Working conditions in the Audit Department were so poor due to insufficient light from the windows that electrci lighting had to be used throughout the day. The Governor and a private secretary used the two front rooms on the ground floor, the remainder being being given over to the Legislative Assembly.

By 1932, office conditions had become cramped. There was only one Committee Room with sometimes two or three committees wishing to sit on the same day; the Hansard reporters used a passage way as an office, the four Officers of the Legislative Assembly worked in the main records room and the library was described as being "more or less a corridor". In this year, the Audit and Treasury Departments moved out of the building but the Department of Education at some later date moved into the offices above the debating chamber. However, in 1934, the Department of Education vacated two rooms for the use of the Legislative Assembly which must have eased the situation to a certain extent. In 1935, during a debate on the adequacy of the Cecil Building, a member remarked that "The electrician who saved it from fire last year should be fired himself". However, the early 1930's was a period when much consideration was given to improvements and it was between 1937 and 1938 that major alterations were made. The Chamber was enlarged and the ceiling raised to its present height. A central staircase was built to obviate the necessity and inconvenience of using the old external staircases. The wooden balconies were replaced by a concrete structure and the present-day facade was added.

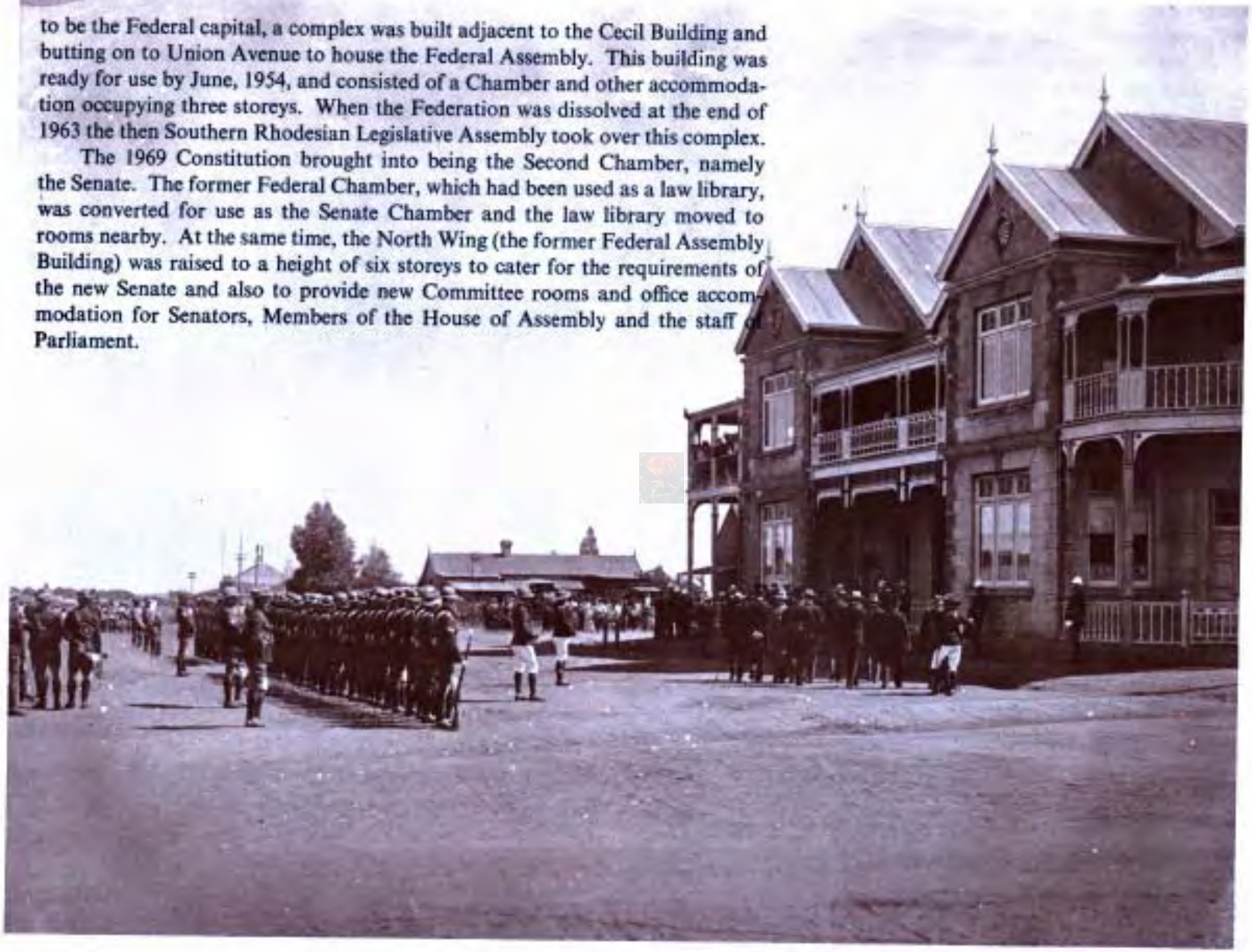
After the Second World War, further major additions were made. A double-storey wing with a small courtyard was built on to the North side adjoining Third Street. The courtyard itself was roofed over in 1962 and added on to the library accommodation. It now houses one of the stack rooms of the library. A double storied West Wing was also added and with the subsequent additions made to it in the early 1960's, now comprises the Ministerial suites, the Members' dining room, the visitors bar and the kitchens.

With the introduction of the Federation, premises had to be found for the Federal Assembly. Before it was finally decided that Salisbury was to be the Federal capital, it was arranged that the Federal Assembly should temporarily use the offices and Chamber of the Southern Rhodesian Legislative Assembly. Accordingly, the first meetings of the Federal Assembly were held in the Chamber of the Cecil Building. When it had been decided that Salisbury was

Cecil Building in 1902

to be the Federal capital, a complex was built adjacent to the Cecil Building and butting on to Union Avenue to house the Federal Assembly. This building was ready for use by June, 1954, and consisted of a Chamber and other accommodation occupying three storeys. When the Federation was dissolved at the end of 1963 the then Southern Rhodesian Legislative Assembly took over this complex.

The 1969 Constitution brought into being the Second Chamber, namely the Senate. The former Federal Chamber, which had been used as a law library, was converted for use as the Senate Chamber and the law library moved to rooms nearby. At the same time, the North Wing (the former Federal Assembly Building) was raised to a height of six storeys to cater for the requirements of the new Senate and also to provide new Committee rooms and office accommodation for Senators, Members of the House of Assembly and the staff of Parliament.



An opening of the Legislative Council in the early 1900's.

Cecil Building, with Cecil Square in the foreground, in 1924.

Cecil Building, showing the new facade built in 1937 and the West Wing Extension added in 1952.

The courtyard of the House of Assembly in 1953.

The entrance hall of the House of Assembly.

Some Items of Interest

Within its walls, old and new, the Parliament of Rhodesia has many features linking it not only to the comparatively brief span of Rhodesian history but also, through ties of custom and tradition, to the centuries of development of parliamentary government in Great Britain. Foremost amongst these, perhaps, in its significance and its historic associations, is the *Mace*.

The Mace and Despatch Boxes

The Mace is the symbol of the authority of the House, and, through the House, of the Speaker. Without the Mace, the House can do nothing but adjourn. Descended from the heavy spiked or serrated club-like weapon used in mediaeval times, the earliest ceremonial maces were borne by the Serjeants-at-Arms, a royal bodyguard established in France by Philip II and later in England by Richard I, Coeur-de-Lion. During the 13th century ceremonial maces began to be ornamented with precious metals and jewels.

The use of the mace in Parliament probably dates from before the separation of the Houses of Lords and Commons, in the 14th century. It is generally accepted that when the King first appointed one of his Serjeants-at-Arms to attend upon the Speaker, a Mace went with him as the symbol of the authority vested in the Speaker. The Mace which is still in use in the House of Commons at Westminster is that made by Thomas Maundy in 1649: the head, incorporating the Royal crown and the cypher of Charles II, was added after the Restoration. The previous Mace had been destroyed or otherwise disposed of with other royal regalias by Oliver Cromwell. The Maces of the various Parliaments of the Commonwealth are almost all copies, with minor variations, of the House of Commons Mace.

The acquisition of a Mace for the Rhodesian Parliament was suggested by the Colonial Secretary, Sir Francis Newton, shortly after the start of the first session of the first House of Assembly, in June 1924. He considered "that we should endeavour to maintain the dignity of the powers and privileges of the House by the exhibition of such a symbol . . .". Sir Ernest Montagu was cautious: he wondered whether this would mean the appointment of a new member to the staff to act as a Mace-bearer. Southern Rhodesia was a young colony, and did not want to be too extravagant. More vigorous opposition came from R. A. Fletcher, who did not see any need to go in "for this Mace business". It was, he felt, really a relic of barbarism: if they wanted a symbol of that sort, instead of spending money on a Mace they might get a knobkerrie which could be carried into the House—an interesting comment, in the light of the decisions taken some thirty years later by the Parliaments of Ceylon and Fiji to model their Maces on traditional war clubs. However, Sir Francis Newton allayed fears of additional expenditure—the duties of "Mace-bearer" might, he thought, be usefully performed by the existing staff—and the Mace which is still used, modelled on that of the House of Commons, was supplied by Garrard and Company of London in 1925. It is described as follows: "A chased silver-gilt Mace, the head surmounted by a Royal Crown, enclosing date 1924, and divided by caryatides supporting arches into four panels containing one the Royal Arms, one the Arms of Southern Rhodesia, and the remaining two the cyphers of G.R.V.; the end of the staff terminated by four female figures, and the rod divided by two bulb-fluted knops, and wreathed with the National Emblems of the Rose, Thistle and Acorn; having a terminal trumpet-shaped knop enriched with chased acanthus leaves, and Roses and Thistles in the panelling". Its over-all length is 1,22 metres and its mass approximately 4,36 kg.

The sculptured brackets on which the Mace rests on the Table of the House are made of Rhodesian copper, supplied in 1963 by the Messina (Rhodesia) Development Company, Limited, from its Mangula mine and featuring the Zimbabwe bird and the flame lily motif.

The Senate Mace, presented to the Senate by the House of Assembly in 1970, was designed and made in Salisbury. Constructed of Rhodesian silver and gold, it is embellished with Sandawana emeralds presented to Parliament for the purpose, and features the Rhodesian coat of arms, the Zimbabwe bird and chevron pattern, the flame lily and the lion and thistle from Rhodes' coat of arms. Its length is 1,27 metres, its mass 3,4 kg.

The Mace plays an important part in the day-to-day ceremonial of both Houses. Borne by the Serjeant-at-Arms, it precedes the Speaker and, in the case of the Senate, the President of the Senate, in their daily processions to and from the respective Chambers. While the Speaker or the President is in the Chair the Mace rests on the brackets on top of the Table of the House. When the Speaker or the President leaves the Chair and the House goes into Committee, the Mace is transferred to the lower brackets beneath the Table.

Despatch Boxes

The Despatch Boxes now to be seen on the Table of the House of Assembly were presented to Parliament by the British South Africa Company in February, 1963. The boxes are made of English oak, with bronze metalwork depicting the Rhodesian coat of arms, the Royal Crown, the flame lily, the thistle from Rhodes' arms and the coat of arms of the British South Africa Company.

The origin of the practice of having a despatch box on each side of the Table of the House of Commons is not known, although it is probable that in their early form they were personal boxes in which Ministers and officials of the House kept their papers. Now, they hold only the Bibles and forms of oath or affirmation for use in swearing-in Members. Ministers are entitled to speak from the Despatch Box on the right of the Speaker's Chair when addressing the House.

The mace and despatch boxes on the Table of the House of Assembly.

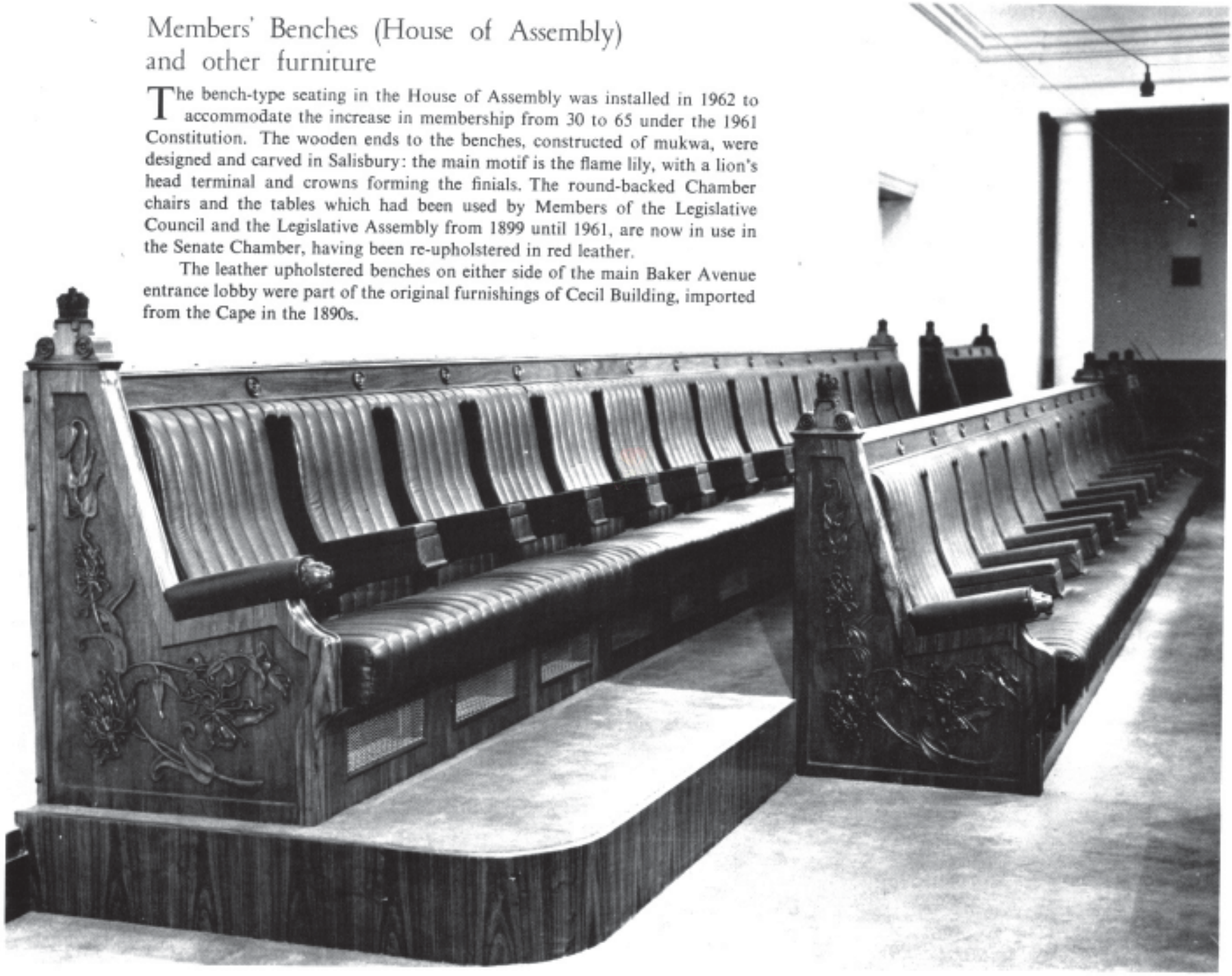
The Speaker's Chair

The Speaker's Chair, used by the Administrators of Southern Rhodesia until 1923 and by the Speakers since that date, was made in 1899 by Messrs. Isaacs and Company of Cape Town, to a design prepared by the Administrator, Sir William Milton, in consultation with the Public Works Department. It bears the arms of the British South Africa Company carved in high relief.

Members' Benches (House of Assembly) and other furniture

The bench-type seating in the House of Assembly was installed in 1962 to accommodate the increase in membership from 30 to 65 under the 1961 Constitution. The wooden ends to the benches, constructed of mukwa, were designed and carved in Salisbury: the main motif is the flame lily, with a lion's head terminal and crowns forming the finials. The round-backed Chamber chairs and the tables which had been used by Members of the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly from 1899 until 1961, are now in use in the Senate Chamber, having been re-upholstered in red leather.

The leather upholstered benches on either side of the main Baker Avenue entrance lobby were part of the original furnishings of Cecil Building, imported from the Cape in the 1890s.



Art Treasures

Over the years a large and valuable collection of works of art has been built up: paintings, sculptures, photographs of historic interest, specimens of Rhodesian postage stamps, etc. Much of this material is, inevitably, in parts of the House to which members of the public do not have access: a collection of William Cornwallis Harris prints of African animals, painted in 1840 and a portrait of Cecil John Rhodes by Edward Roworth, hang in the Government Party Caucus Room and a collection of group photographs of past Legislative Council and Assembly Members is to be found in the corridor on the First Floor leading to Ministers' offices. Along the corridor on the Ground Floor leading from the Union Avenue entrance to the Senate Chamber is a complete series of mounted postage stamps issued in Rhodesia since 1924 and in the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, as well as the beginnings of a display of medals and decorations.

His Excellency, Sir John Chancellor, G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O., D.S.O.

The Honourable Lionel Cripps, C.M.G., first speaker of the Legislative Assembly, 1924–1935.

Many items of interest will be found in those parts of the House to which the public may have access. In the main Baker Avenue entrance lobby are portraits of Cecil John Rhodes by Sydney P. Kendrick and of the President of Rhodesia, the Honourable Clifford Dupont, I.D., by Veronica Burleigh. A bas-relief memorial tablet to Sir William Milton, designed and executed by F. M. Taubman, and "donated by men who honoured and esteemed him", also hangs here. A small shield set into the wall is composed of fragments of stained glass from the Palace of Westminster, recovered after the destruction of the House of Commons Chamber by bombing in May 1941. The elephant tusks which form lamp standards at the foot of the main staircase were presented to Parliament by the Ministry of Agriculture and mounted in their present positions in 1936. There mass is 35,38 and 33,11 kg respectively. In a niche on the landing halfway up these stairs is a bust of Cecil John Rhodes, mounted on a marble column. At the side of the landing is a photograph of the Opening of Parliament by His Majesty King George VI, which took place during the Royal Tour of Rhodesia in 1947.

In the Members' Lounge to the right of the main entrance lobby are portraits of the Administrators of Rhodesia, presented to Parliament by the British South Africa Company in 1939 to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the granting of the Company's Royal Charter, and of the country's Governors. Artistically, possibly the most valuable items in this room, however, are the miniatures of Cecil John Rhodes and Alfred Beit painted by the American artist Amalia Kussner Coudert in 1901. The miniatures were discovered in an antique shop in London during the Second World War, and were presented to the South African Government, which in turn presented them to the Government of Southern Rhodesia.

In the gallery on the First Floor above the main entrance lobby are portraits of the country's Prime Ministers and also of the Speakers of the House of Assembly. A bust of the present Prime Minister, the Honourable Ian D. Smith, I.D., by Mrs. Inge Haxen, will also be found here. A portrait of the President of the Senate, the Honourable J. W. Pithey, I.C.D., C.B.E., by Alison Bashall, hangs outside the Senate Chamber. On the other side of the entrance to the Senate hangs a large portrait of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II: a copy of the State portrait by James Gunn. On the First Floor above the entrance to the Senate Chamber is a large painting of Victoria Falls from the eastern side, by E. H. Holder.

In the Members' Dining Room are two items of considerable value and interest. The painting of the Victoria Falls by Thomas Baines, the artist and explorer, was presented to Parliament by Mr. Hugh D. Lermitte, of Muthaiga, Kenya. It bears on the back the following inscription: "The Mosi O A Tunya, 'Smoke Sounding', or the Victoria Falls of the Zambesi River, South Africa. Latitude observed 17.55.4 South, Longitude approximately 25–55 East. T. Baines, London, 1867. From sketches taken on the spot during the journey of J. Chapman and T. Baines, 1860." This is believed to be the largest canvas painted by Baines.

The National Tapestry, which also hangs in the Members' Dining Room, developed from a suggestion made in 1946 by Lady Tait, wife of the then Governor of Southern Rhodesia, that the Women's Institutes collaborate in the creation of a tapestry depicting notable events in Rhodesian history, on similar lines to the Bayeux Tapestry. A Needlework Committee was set up in 1948, and in 1963 the completed tapestry was presented to the nation "as a memorial to the country's pioneer women", and hung in Parliament. The 42 panels, which are embroidery on linen, run to a total length of 30 metres, and show scenes ranging from prehistoric times, through the martyrdom of Father Goncalo da Silveira in the sixteenth century to the establishment of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. They incorporate some five million stitches, representing many hours of exacting work and artistic endeavour by the women of Rhodesia. A full description of the tapestry, with colour reproductions of the panels, has been published and is entitled "Rhodesian tapestry: a history in needlework, embroidered by Women's Institutes of Rhodesia".

In the Members' Bar, adjoining the Dining Room, is a chalk and charcoal drawing of the "Boiling Pot", Victoria Falls, by R. Gwelo Goodman. There is also a collection of caricatures of former Members by the South African cartoonist Leyden.

Apart from the items of sculpture which have already been mentioned, a link with Westminster stands facing the Third Street entrance to the Strangers' Gallery: this is a crowned lion holding a shield, which at one time formed part of the decorative stonework of the British Houses of Parliament. Damaged by bombing in 1941, it was one of a number of relics presented to Commonwealth Parliaments as symbols of their common parliamentary tradition after the reconstruction of the Palace of Westminster.

The Members' dining-room, House Assembly, showing the painting of t Victoria Falls by Thomas Baines, and t National Tapestry on the wal

The Members' lounge, on the walls of which hang portraits of Administrators and Governors of Rhodesia.

The gallery on the first floor of the House of Assembly.

In the corridor leading from this entrance to the House of Assembly Chamber are bronze busts of Lord Malvern, Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia from 1933 to 1953 and of the Federation from 1953 to 1956; of Field Marshal Jan C. Smuts, Prime Minister of South Africa from 1919 to 1924, and from 1939 to 1948, by Jacob Epstein*; of Sir Leander Starr Jameson, Administrator of Mashonaland 1891–1896, Administrator of Matabeleland 1894–1896 and Prime Minister of the Cape Colony, 1904–1908, by Marion Walgate; of Cecil John Rhodes, also by Marion Walgate; of H. F. Verwoerd, South African Prime Minister, 1958–1966; and of Frederick Courteney Selous, 1851–1917, hunter, explorer and author, who was guide to the Pioneer Column in 1890 and later worked for the British South Africa Company.

The Rhodesian coats of arms which hang above the Speaker's Chair in the House of Assembly and above the President's Chair in the Senate were carved from solid mukwa by an African sculptor, Job Kekana.

Another object of interest is a Tower Musket which was discovered under the floor of the Assembly Chamber during the repair of termite damage some years ago. It is a Whitworth muzzle-loading rifle and it was manufactured, probably as a trade musket, in 1873.

* This is a copy of the head of the full-length statue of General Smuts by Epstein which stands in Parliament Square, Westminster, London.

The Coat-of-Arms of Rhodesia, carved by Job Kekana, which hangs in the Senate Chamber.

The House of Assembly, originally Cecil Building, as it is today.

The painting of the Victoria Falls by Thomas Baines which hangs in the dining-room of the House of Assembly.

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