

# RHODESIANA

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THE RHODESIANA SOCIETY  
Salisbury  
Southern Rhodesia

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*The cover picture is from a drawing by T. Baines, F.R.G.S., of his camp at Deka in 1863. (National Archives)*

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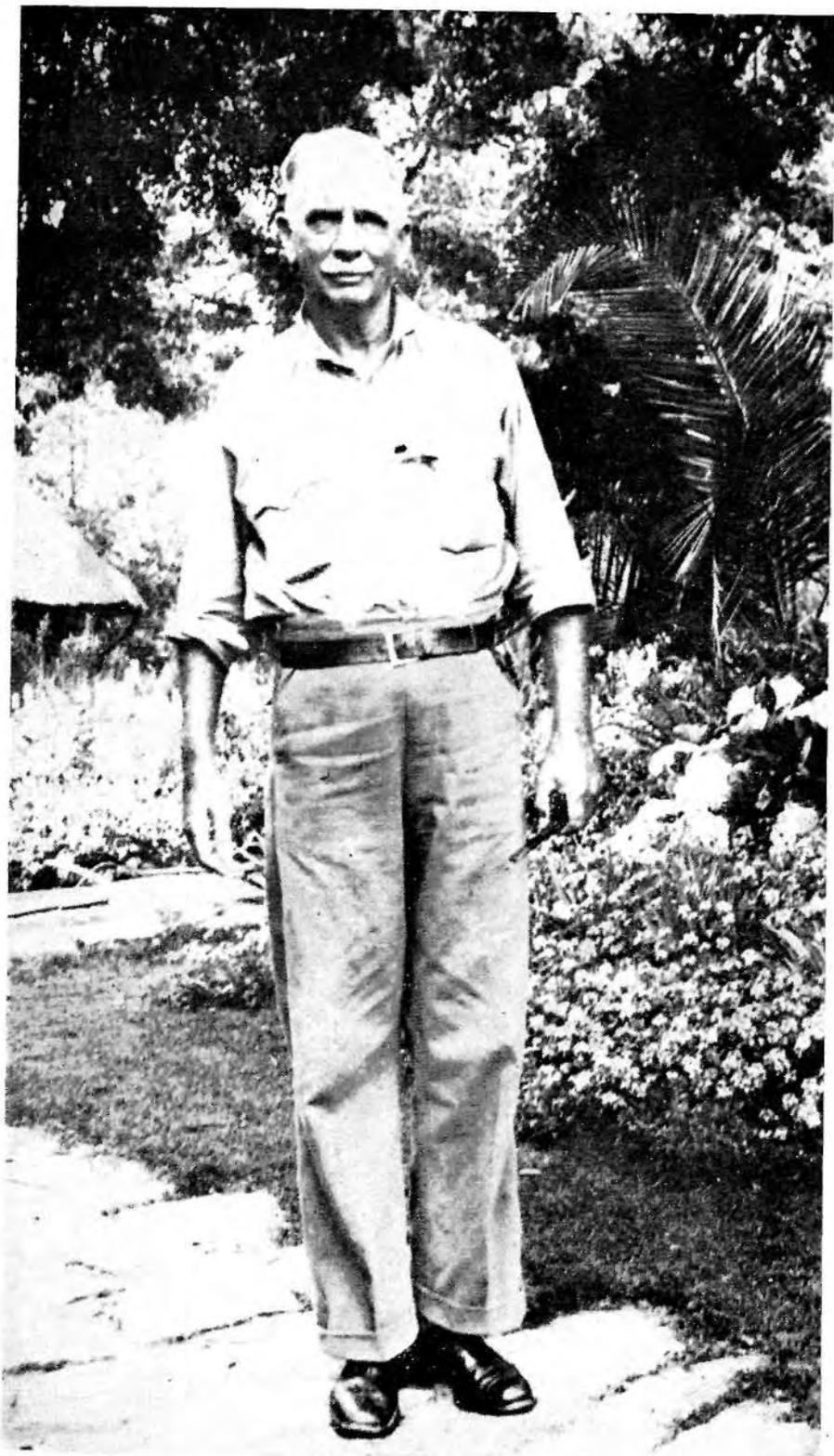
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H. K. Scorrer, about 1945

*(L. K. S. Wilson)*

# The British South Africa Company's Central Settlement Farm, Marandellas, 1907-1910

From the Papers of H. K. Scorrer  
Edited by R. Reynolds

Mr. H. K. Scorrer had a very simple filing system. When he had dealt with any communication, he impaled it on a length of fencing wire with a curlicue at the top and a piece of cardboard at the bottom. Although the wire is rusty and the papers foxed and flaking, a "spikeful" of his incoming mail between August 3rd, 1907 and March 5th, 1910, has escaped destruction. It is a happy chance, for his "files" present a vivid, unstudied record of life at a key point and a vital era in the development of Southern Rhodesia.

Mr. Scorrer was Manager of The British South Africa Company's Central Land Settlement Farm at Marandellas. He had all the problems, not only of a pioneer farmer on a fairly substantial scale, but of a Company employee, semi-civil servant, immigration officer, doctor, veterinarian, banker, trader, agricultural consultant—and guide, philosopher and friend to settlers, all of which duties he carried out conscientiously and with considerable resource and aplomb for a salary of £20 a month.

If anything irked Scorrer, it was probably the paper-work. On January 14th, 1908, the Director of Land Settlement, Mr. C. D. Wise, wrote: "I shall be pleased if you will send with your monthly report a statement of live stock on hand, showing deaths, sales and increases." On August 21st, a note signed by the Accountant, Commercial Branch, asked him to send in his July stock return "by return of post". On August 13th Wise directed him to send, in addition to his monthly report, a general half-yearly report: "You will also refer to any special improvements which have been carried out, the amount of capital and expenditure, the result of previous improvements effected, increase of cattle, whether the herd under your management have improved or otherwise, referring also to the cross-breeding of cattle, future prospects, and any other matters of interest."

On October 23rd, 1909, Scorrer was directed to make out his monthly return in duplicate and send one copy to the Commercial Representative in Bulawayo. On November 18th, Wise wrote with dangerous politeness: "I must ask you to be good enough to send in *regularly* a monthly report of all work done on the farm by the 10th of the following month." To add to Scorrer's burdens, "the Local Accountant will send his representative at intervals to go through stock in your charge, check accounts, and labour tickets." On November 16th, 1909, Wise wrote: "Yours re telephone for which I am much obliged. The matter will now be submitted to the Board." It appears probable that Scorrer

must have asked for a telephone to be installed at the farm—but it must have been a mixed blessing.

Notes for a return of stock made in 1908 list 612 cattle, 110 sheep, 78 goats, 28 pigs, 10 mules and a pony, with a total value of £5,373. 10s. A Friesland bull was valued at £40, 4 Africanders at £20 each, cows at £10, heifers at £9, bullocks between two and four years old at £8, and trained oxen at £10. Sheep were valued at £1 each, a boar at £4 and sows between £3 and £4, mules between £5 and £20 and the pony at £10.

The principles for developing cattle suitable for local conditions appear in the report of a meeting at Marandellas Hotel on August 25th, 1908, between local farmers, the Native Commissioner and an expert from Britain: "Professor Wallace considers that the country will carry half-bred beasts only. Bulls should be imported from England and the Southern South African colonies, and from these we must breed up , . .

"Men who have means and suitable land to grow crops to supply green food to dairy cows all the year round can afford to keep pure herds of European milking cattle. Away from milk supply of towns, grow beef from half-bred cattle . . . . There are several types of Indian cattle. Our northern cattle probably came from the same type as the Madagascar cattle. For working purposes Indian cattle would do well here but not for milk.

"If we don't go too fast with European blood, we shall get a beast that will stand the climate of this country. How will settlers get cattle if a number come in ? We must import from the North . . . . The Mashona cow has splendid qualities. Cross these first with Devon, then Africander, then cross with your standard bull. If you already have a good cross-bred bull with not more than half European blood you can use him . . . ."

Scorrer got some of his stock from the first farm established by Cecil Rhodes—Premier Estate near Umtali. There was a good deal of competition among Estate Managers and settlers to get hold of good cattle and stick to the best of their herds in the constant moving round of stock.

On February 10th, 1908, Wise informed Scorrer that he had bought six cows with three calves, and seven heifers at the Central Estates sale. He wrote: "Cows and heifers were the best class of cattle I have seen in the country, and good prices were realised. The heifers were a particularly good lot (the majority in calf) and showed a good deal of Shorthorn blood. Cows were cross-bred Shorthorn, Friesland-x-Shorthorn and some Colonial. Cows averaged about £19 and in-calf heifers £20 . . . . I think they are good value, but owing to prices ruling, I did not consider it advisable to buy more."

A few days later he wrote that he was ordering 30 Friesland heifers and one Friesland bull, "mostly pedigree cattle entered in the herd book". But in the same week, Scorrer was ordered to send his "biggest Red Bull", one smaller one, and two heifers to Mr. Aukett at Sinoia.

Many cattle were bought from natives (the word was then used unashamedly, and spelt without a capital) and Scorrer received cheques to be converted into gold for their purchase. In January, 1908, a Mr. G. A. Burney made a tour of kraals near Umtali to buy cattle and bring them back with a herd from Premier Estate.

On his return to Salisbury he sent a list to Scorrer and wrote: "You will see that they are very much above what I expected to have to pay—but Hunter whom I met on the way back, said that a White man from Salisbury had been giving £10 a head for full-grown bulls." He listed cattle bought at between £1.10s. and £6. 5s., to a total of £56. 12s. The most expensive bull "came with three others—and they asked £15 for it. It took me the whole of one day to get it for £6. 5s.—and they took the other two away. I offered £6 for the last cow on Monday morning and it was not until Wednesday evening that I procured her for £6. 7s."

Burney was given careful instructions how to get to Umtali, where he "should put up at the Cecil on Wednesday night and will find the cart at Snodgrass's livery stables" and even more detailed instructions on bringing the cattle back. All the passes and permits had been arranged, and he was told: "Don't run any risks at the Oodzi, it will be better to get well up round the head waters. If you have fine weather this last week and it continues they should make a good start."

With unusual deference Wise wrote to ask Scorrer if he could "spare" 15 Angoni cows for a Mr. Walthew. These cows were sold to settlers for £10. 10s. each, one-third cash down and one-third cash at the commencement of each succeeding year. A hundred Victoria cows were bought up from Rhodesdale at an average cost of about £5 each for sale to the settlers at £6 to £7 each.

Of 80 Angoni cows brought in August, 1908, 45 head were supplied to settlers, and Scorrer suggested that another hundred should be obtained "with bulls chosen by you". He asked that the farm Magombi, adjoining the Central Settlement Farm, should be reserved for grazing Government cattle. In December a further 230 head of cattle were brought up from Victoria after spending six weeks in quarantine at Gutu.

As far as buying native cattle was concerned, Scorrer wrote: "I think it would be a good idea if any of the settlers who wished to, went out and bought some for themselves."

Cattle, particularly the imported ones, suffered from a wide variety of diseases. In 1908, Wise sent Scorrer "8 copies of Mr. Bevan's paper on African Coast Fever, for your information and distribution". There is also mention of blackwater fever, gall-sickness, white-eye and blindness. There are a number of pamphlets on the file advertising various specifics, some information passed on by the Estates Office in Salisbury and a couple of letters from other farmers giving their pet remedies. A note from Wise says: "Kindly inform me if you have any medicines on hand for livestock. If not, I will order some for you." Scorrer noted on the letter: "Answered. Wanted—Epsom Salts, ground ginger, raw linseed oil."

In 1909, a cattle dip was constructed for the use of the Land Settlement Farm and settlers on surrounding farms. Wise mentioned that the 40 casks of cement required for this purpose would be supplied at special concession rates.

Scorrer did not lack for good advice. In a letter on a memorandum he had put forward on the management of cattle, Wise quoted at length the comments of the Acting Commercial Representative, who appears to have obtained information that disagreed with almost everything Scorrer wrote. He finished tartly: "If my information be doubted and the Manager has any hesitation as

to the right or wrong method, I would suggest that the Chief Veterinary Surgeon's advice should be sought. I think you will agree with me that pupils should be taught the most progressive way of farming cattle, and that the Central Farm should fulfil the object for which it was started of being an up-to-date lesson in farming matters to those visiting or residing in the district."

In kindlier vein was Wise's letter about a new bull that was expected at Marandellas. He wrote: "The bull should be isolated for a month with five or six heifers to keep him company before mixing with our herd." But that sentiment could not be allowed to interfere with the efficient management of cattle as indicated in another letter, which finished with a curt instruction: "Cut the little Black Bull."

Nor was disease the only problem. Mr. W. J. Bradshaw wrote to Scorrer: "I had one of your oxen killed by lions last week. We only found the carcass (*sic*) yesterday. We sat up for them last night and although they came three times we could not get a shot on account of the thick bush. I am sending to ask you if you have any poison to lend us, if so would you kindly give same to bearer with instructions how to use."

A settler at Headlands wrote: "We have been having a warm time here with lions. They managed to kill twelve cattle, then we had our roof blown off, then a visit from tigers for a change . . ." The reference to tiger—though they sometimes appear in contemporary accounts by peripatetic journalists of their fortnight's visit to Rhodesia, is mysterious: it was probably a jocular name for leopard.

The ups and downs of farming are illustrated by reports on Scorrer's butter. On January 18th, 1908, Mr. A. H. Woodhouse wrote to him on a Company memorandum form (headed "Unofficial"): "Just a line to tell you that William thinks this last lot of butter very excellent. He says just the right amount of salt has been put in. Mr. Wise has taken a lb. to his house to try so I suppose he will write you later about it."

But on February 7th, Wise wrote, this time officially: "Messrs. G. H. Williams and Co., Ltd. have complained to me that your butter does not keep and is being returned by their customers. I think you are not washing the butter enough, it should be well washed in the churn three or four times . . ." By December the Cold Storage were "quite satisfied with the quality, but would like it put up in rather neater pats. They are sending you down a sample pat of the Argentine butter by Saturday's train, and will be glad if you will try to put the butter up in the same style. I am sending for some butter paper which I propose to have printed 'Land Settlement Brand'."

In November, 1908, settlers were invited to send cream "up to 9 a.m. every day from the same morning's milk" to be made into butter at the Central Settlement Farm. It was sent to the Rhodesia Cold Storage and Trading Company, Limited, which issued a credit note for £38. 12s. for 386 lbs. of butter at 2s. per lb. supplied during January, 1909.

On February 8th, 1909, Mr. C. A. E. Scott (who at first farmed "Nurawa" for the Company and in 1908 took a farm of his own) wrote a slightly bitter note to Scorrer: "On thinking over my supply of cream during December 1908 and January 1909, I can't see the justice of my being expected to accept a

nominal amount of butter from my cream supply. I don't ever remember hearing from you or Lereschs that the cream supplied during *December* was thin; during January I am aware that the cream was not as good as previously supplied, but if every day's cream of mine was not made into butter separate from any other supplier's cream, I think it impossible for anyone to come to anything like a correct conclusion as to the amount of butter my January supply entitles me to, especially so if the thinnest of the cream was churned generally. At the same time I am very loath to accept any amount above what I am really entitled to, and I should be much obliged if you would give the matter your further consideration, or communicate to Salisbury on the matter."

Forwarding the letter to Wise, Scorrer wrote: "Attached letter will show that I must have a cream tester as soon as possible. I have made the fairest decision possible in Mr. Scott's case, but part of it is guess work. I cannot churn various creams in separate lots as I do not get enough from one man." Wise returned his memo, with a note: "Babcock tester has been ordered but doubt if you'll get it in time for this season." Scorrer wrote a note to Scott, dated February 10th, that until the tester arrived "the Dairy will have the sole right of making the fairest division of butter possible", and Scott signed it as "agreed to from this date".

There was no great enthusiasm for sheep, and Wise agreed to Scorrer's suggestion that he should castrate a number of young Persian rams, which he had advertised but could not sell. A couple of them were however relieved when he had instructions to send them to Salisbury in a crate, for "the ram at Lomagundi's dead"—a resounding phrase which conjures up possibilities of a ribald Rhodesian ballad.

Some young pure-bred Large Black sows were bought for the farm at £2 each. In January, 1908, the Rhodesia Packing Company, Limited, whose Board was headed by Mr. S. H. Meikle, sent out a progress report following the issue of its prospectus some months before. A number of shares had been subscribed for and the Company had "now no hesitation in assuring subscribers that a bacon factory can be successfully run in Rhodesia". It proposed to obtain a tender for the erection of a plant capable of dealing with 100 pigs a week, but pointed out that the success of the venture depended on a continuous and uniform supply of pigs by farmers.

In November, 1908, the Company wrote: "We, the promoters of the proposed Rhodesia Packing Company, have again most carefully considered the advisability of starting a factory at an early date and have regretfully come to the conclusion that for the present, at any rate, the project must be abandoned. In arriving at this conclusion we have been mainly influenced by two considerations:

- (a) The continued inability of the country to meet the demand for mealies and the consequent high price of that product.
- (b) The luke-warm support given in response to our circular dated 8th January, both in taking up shares and guaranteeing a continuous supply of pigs."

The Company had carefully filed away the information and plans for

future use when the expected surplus of mealies "with which the success of the factory was so inseparably bound up" should materialise.

There is little mention of poultry, though on one occasion two crates, one containing a Leghorn cock and the other four hen turkeys, were sent to Marandellas for Mr. Scott.

Mules were obviously important, and in 1908 a notice was published in the *Rhodesia Herald* offering a reward for the return of a fawn coloured mule lost from the farm. On May 6th, 1909, Scorrer's transport section was reinforced by twelve mules and new harness for them. Wise wrote that he was ordering him a trolley and asked what weight he would like it. A trolley to carry 4,000 lbs. would cost £50 to £60, and one to carry 8,000 lbs. about £80. As a rule eight or ten mules could pull the trolley, but when necessary the whole twelve could be used. Wise wrote: "One reason why I am sending you a trolley is, I am afraid the shaking of a wagon would have a tendency to damage the tobacco leaf; whereas on a spring trolley it would carry better." A letter a few-days later added: "Sooner you can send a load of tobacco into the warehouse the better."

On one occasion Scorrer sent a note to Head Office: "Mr. Scott has asked to have one of the old mules to ride. He also wants a second-hand bridle and saddle for same." Wise replied: "No objection to his having this mule—I recommend the one with one eye. He should get his own saddle and bridle."

In July, 1908, Wise conveyed an offer from Wightman's of 2d. per lb. for potatoes "provided they are suitable for the table." But when samples arrived Wise wrote: "I examined a number of the potatoes received by Messrs. Wightman and Company from you and found that in every case they had disease. At the same time I examined a number of bags from other farmers, for the purpose of choosing seed for Sinoia, and in every case the potatoes were good and quite free from black spots. I draw your attention to this because I do not think it is advisable to retain any of your crop for future seed."

In April, 1909, Scorrer enquired: "What offers for potatoes in ton lots can be obtained in Salisbury?" The replies were not encouraging. G. H. Williams and Co., Pretorius and Co., and W. J. Woods made no offer; Wightman and Co. offered 1d. a lb. "but does not need any at present"; the Rhodesia Trading Co. were "willing to buy if we quote a fair price"; and Meikle's wanted to see a sample.

At different times Scorrer received for planting 60 lbs. of black cow peas, 180 lbs. of vetches, 60 lbs. of manna seed—"enough for about 4 acres", enough barley for 10 acres, castor oil beans to plant 1 acre, 5 lbs. of swede turnip seed, 12 lbs. of rape seed and "500 Bulbils of Agava-Rigida."

In some cases instructions for planting were supplied and with 60 lbs. of lucerne seed Wise sent for Scorrer's information a copy of a memorandum by Mr. E. Goldsmith of Newlands headed *A Practical Farmer's Experience of Five Years Lucerne Growing in Cape Colony*. It started: "I will first say I have had a life experience in farming generally (stock, horses, corn, hops and grazing) in England."

Mr. Goldsmith went on to explain the secret of his success in cutting two years old lucerne, grown on poor white sand without irrigation, six and seven

times a year: "Instantly it is cut give a top dressing of rotten dung (cow or any animal manure)—I am very fond of top dressing, it takes the heavy dew at night and protects the roots from the hot sun during the day besides keeping the soil moist, that is why one should not manure during the wet season." On sowing—he wrote: "A simple 'tea tin' with two holes made in the bottom with a french nail makes a good drill and costs nothing, fix the tin on the end of a 3 feet stick and you have a drill that a man can sow acres per day equally as well as with a machine."

During 1907, 850 citrus trees were ordered for the Central Farm, and 100 for Scott at Numwa. Of these, 750 came from Mr. MacIlwaine of Salisbury, and 200 from Pickstone and Bro. of Groot Drakenstein. They comprised an assortment of twelve different sorts of orange—the majority Washington Navels—lemons, naartjes, tangerines, and a few grapefruit. Scorrer was probably careful about planting them, for a few months before he had been ordered to take up all the citrus trees he had recently planted and replant them 21 feet apart.

He was also sent eighteen Japanese plum trees and a number of hand-books on fruit growing to be distributed on the Land Settlement farms. Instructions accompanying "a small quantity of free seeds" of three kinds of eucalyptus, *cupressus horizontalis* and *pinus halapensis* stated: "The seeds should be sown in beds and covered with a thin sprinkling of straw on hot sunny days, the straw being removed when raining to prevent damping off."

In 1909 Wise sent Scorrer a copy of a memo he had addressed to Mr. F. Weinholt of Inyazura: "Can you give me proportions for using McDougall's Dip for spraying orange trees for scale—I see you recommend it." Weinholt replied: "I have never sprayed orange trees, only deciduous fruit trees. I should suggest spraying one tree first, with about half dipping strength, watch results and if not satisfactory, increase strength of mixture."

An unpleasant sounding wash against Dorthesia scale and aphis was made by boiling up resin, caustic soda and fish oil with "fifteen gallons or more water in the cooking pot". This would not, unfortunately, destroy the "Australian bug in the ovisac," but the pamphlet ended on an optimistic note: "The native ladybirds seem capable of keeping the pest down, but it may be troublesome for a time until they can make themselves felt."

Dealing with other forms of plague and pestilence, Wise wrote: "I hear there are many swarms of locusts in Marandellas: now you have a pump and material I should like you to send out one of the settlers and destroy any swarms found. Please instruct them to be careful with the mixture as I have heard that some cattle have been poisoned near Salisbury owing to careless spraying." To help keep Scorrer busy he was sent two packets of "Nitro Bacterine" and asked to furnish the Agricultural Department with "a report on the results of any experiments you may make". He was also sent directions for taking samples of soil for analysis. Unfortunately the report on the samples he sent was not on the file.

But perhaps Scorrer's worst headaches were caused by tobacco. The first mention of it was in a letter dated October 1st, 1907: "I have ordered 1,000 lbs. of 'Safco' double fertiliser for you to use on the tobacco lands. I enclose

directions for making tobacco seedbeds which may be of use to you. I have ordered two fine-nosed water-pots to be sent to you by Wednesday's mail."

In 1904 the Company had sent Mr. G. Odium to America, and in 1907 to Turkey, to obtain information and seed, and to recruit experts to teach Rhodesians how to grow tobacco. On December 20th, 1907, Wise sent Dimitrios Panagioton to the farm, with a copy of the agreement between him and the Company.

It was a three-year contract to provide him with suitable accommodation, reasonable rations, medical attendance and wages at the rate of £5. 8s. a month during his first year of service, £6. 6s. during the second year and £7. 4s. during the third year. The agreement was subject to Panagioton "proving himself to be a fully competent tobacco grower and handler, and in the event of his proving incompetent the Company shall be entitled to cancel this agreement immediately and shall not be bound by any of the conditions thereof". The contract stated that Panagioton was "hereinafter called the tobacco grower" but in subsequent correspondence he was never referred to as anything but "the Greek".

He was not however to be treated without consideration, for Wise sent Scorrer an extract from Odium's letter from Port Said dated November 22nd, 1907: "They are all good men of the better class, and have been carefully picked. There are warehouse men as well as growers. Kindly request that the farmers and others treat them with consideration, for they are not quite Barbarians, many of them being very nice people. None of them speak any language other than Greek, but they have books and will soon learn. They must be well housed and fed and their health must be looked after. To prevent trouble from fever, I suggest that you advise farmers to provide the men with mosquito nets."

An unsigned note to Wise (not from Scorrer for it was typewritten) stated for his information: "I am told the Greek tobacco growers want the following:- 20 boys by the middle of February—when reaping perhaps more. 1 1/2 [*dozen?*] English Kaffir hoes. 2 tons of sheep manure for seedbeds. They do not like a chemical manure at all. An iron building 30 yards long by 16 yards wide open at front. [*There are sketches of the hoes and the shed.*] 400 15 feet bamboo poles. 50 stringing needles, 1/4 lb. Turkish seed. Kraal manure for tobacco lands.

"They prefer to plant out the seedlings about the end of February and say they would want two or three rains on them afterwards. Too much rain spoils the plant and flavour of the leaf. They do not mind variations in temperature if they have the proper buildings to keep the leaf dry after reaping. In Turkey they reap at about 2 o'clock in the morning and then again in the afternoon, but they have no dews during the reaping season.

"They reckon with manure to get 1,200 lbs. to the acre—Boss man says 450—and the tobacco in Turkey is worth from 1s. 6d. to 5s. per lb., so they say. They require 10 round baskets—3 ft. high by 2 ft. 3 ins. (about) in diameter."

Whether he got what he wanted or not, the Greek does not appear to have settled down in Marandellas. On February 4th, 1908, Wise's assistant sent a memorandum: "Please send to this office the Greek's personal effects as he will be staying in Salisbury for a while. I will write you whether this or

another Greek will be sent to Marandellas when Mr. Wise returns from Umtali." For a little while the Greek remained—like Achilles in his tent—in Salisbury, and thereafter is heard of no more.

Meanwhile a Turk, whose name is nowhere mentioned, had arrived, but did not seem to be settling down very well. His request, at the end of January, (within a couple of weeks of his arrival and at the height of the planting season) to come in to Salisbury for a few days "on private Business" and to see a doctor was not enthusiastically received. The patient Scorrer wrote: "I do not know what he wants to see the doctor about—he is quite well." Wise enquired: "Who is the appointed doctor to the Turks, I believe we have to pay?" The Local Accountant commented: "It depends upon what he is suffering from. If anything caused by his own neglect we do not pay. Should he be really ill we should have to pay the Bill." Wise added: "He has to pay his own ticket." Whether he was suffering from homesickness or some strange Turkish malaise is not recorded, and thereafter the Turk also disappeared from the scene. His efforts had been disappointing, for tobacco picked, apparently too early, in February was worth about 2d. a lb. No. 2 barn was better—worth about 1s. a lb. but "might have been a bit riper when cut". The Turkish leaf was "not bad if properly cured". In March, Scorrer made a tour of tobacco growers in the Bulawayo area with Mr. Rice, a tobacco expert.

Reporting on tobacco from Marandellas in May, Rice wrote: "Rather small leaf, fair colour for air-cured. If a bigger leaf can be grown would suggest two flue-curing barns as the type of leaf will cure a nice light colour." Wise said Rice "thinks we may go ahead with some confidence", and Scott and a farmer named Troake decided to grow tobacco during the following season. (Scott must have had some success for in 1909 the Company agreed to put up a barn for him.) A memorandum form headed "Sales of 1908 Tobacco" records that 775 lbs. of leaf worth £32. 5s. 10d.—at 10d. a lb.—were sent to Cape Town. Railage cost £2. 12s. 7d. and other charges £4. 4s. 3d., leaving a net realisation of £24. 9s.

In August, 1908, pending the arrival of a boiler and piping for a steam box, temporary instructions were given for packing the crop: "The leaves should be sprinkled very lightly with water as they are put up into bundles, afterwards cover them with a damp blanket and leave for 24 hours then repeat the damping and again cover with blanket, the leaves will then be found in a suitable condition for packing."

In September Wise sent a "Notice to Settlers" which read: "The British South Africa Company have decided to engage a tobacco specialist from Virginia, who is expected to arrive during the planting season, and he will be stationed at the Land Settlement Farm, Marandellas, where the Company have decided to grow tobacco extensively, the experiments of the past season at the farm having proved satisfactory, and large and certain markets having been secured. The specialist will superintend the growing and curing of tobacco at the Settlement Farm, and will also be available to visit other farms in the district to advise and assist farmers who are growing tobacco."

Scorrer was instructed to prepare 2,500 sq. yds. of seedbeds—and invited to "get a move on" so that he could start planting on December 1st. One or

two spans were to be put on to breaking more land as Rice and Odium wanted at least 50 acres to be planted, a third barn was proposed and specifications for a tobacco press were being obtained. In the same letter, Wise wrote: "Tobacco arrived too wet and a lot of it mouldy—but natural quality of leaf is satisfactory."

On February 20th, 1909, Mr. Wilson, the Virginian tobacco grower, arrived in Marandellas to grow, harvest and cure tobacco on the Land Settlement Estate and to advise other farmers in the district. Scorrer was instructed to give him a hut and make him "decently comfortable". At about the same time the boiler arrived.

The joint efforts of Wilson and Scorrer seem to have been satisfactory, for on March 30th Wise wrote: "Am pleased with look of your tobacco—I have sent it on to Bulawayo for report—will you send a similar lot by post to Deall [*at Premier Estate, Umtali*] and ask him his opinion—he knows as much about it as most of them—if *you* could get down to Umtali it would be a good thing."

In a letter dated the same day Wise wrote that he had purchased at the Beatrice Mine a 6-horsepower Ruston and Proctor boiler, 1898. After discussing ways of transporting the boiler, which weighed about two tons, Wise wrote: "This boiler, when you get it home, will work your present barns and the others which we hope to be ready for next season if your tobacco is successful and will also drive an engine."

On April 13th Wise wrote that the baling of the tobacco was satisfactory, "but on no account should it be baled any damper". A load was to be sent immediately to the Tobacco Warehouse, Salisbury. Scorrer should stick to his present system of curing, "so long as the tobacco turns out like the bales sent up. When the cold winds come and the weather is colder, you will find it necessary to steam, as set out in my letter of the 6th inst. giving Mr. Garvin's system, in order to yellow the leaf. I am trying to get you two self-registering thermometers so that you will be able to tell whether the barns are running up during the night. Great care must be taken not to get the temperature over 110°."

At about that time Wilson must have been struck very suddenly and severely ill. A telegram from Wise expressing regret to hear of his condition, and saying that the London Office had been asked to advise his relatives, was dated April 20th. But already, on April 17th, Scorrer had forwarded to the Director of Land Settlement an "inventory of papers and valuables found in Mr. Wilson's effects". They included a medal awarded by the Virginian Polytechnic Institute and a Post Office Savings Book recording that Wilson had deposited £45 to open an account in Salisbury.

There is no record of the nature of the illness, but it appears that Wilson had had every care, for a memorandum sent to Salisbury read:—

"Wilson's a/c

Board for one month . . . . .	£4	0.	0.
Bed-clothing, utensils, feeding doctors and nurses and visitors during sickness and funeral . . . . .	£6	0.	0."

On May 4th Mr. Ladley of the Tobacco Warehouse reported that two bales which had been sent up were very good, especially the "reordered" bale

which contained some leaf which he described as "lovely stuff". In an unusual burst of enthusiasm, Wise wrote: "If your bulk is as good as the three bales sent in you will do better than Deall, he thinks."

Later in the month Wise wrote: "Mr. Garvin has had a tobacco barn burned through boy putting some tobacco on or against the flue-pipe—this set fire to the whole barn and spread to the roof timbers, and if Mr. Garvin had not happened to return, all his barns in the block would have been burned." A few days later, Wise warned Scorrer against stacking bales in the barn on top of each other, as the bottom ones got pressed too tight. He also asked Scorrer to advise him without delay on his requirements of Hester and Goldfinder tobacco seed.

A letter written by Wise on June 21st, 1909, is so tattered and dirty as to be almost indecipherable, but it must have been of considerable importance to Scorrer: "I have had pleasure in recommending that you will receive a bonus of 5 % on the amount received on the sale of tobacco grown on the Marandellas Central Farm for the years 1909 and 1910. The Commercial Representative agrees to the payment of the bonus. This will be instead of any increase of salary to which you might be entitled under the terms of your engagement and will I hope be of greater monetary advantage to you."

The tobacco story, as far as it goes, had a happy ending, for on March 6th, 1910, Wise wrote from London: "I am glad to hear that you had such an excellent sale of the tobacco and congratulate you heartily. I am also glad to see that you have got in a good acreage this season and I hope and trust the rains have been favourable." Hitherto, Wise had occasionally written to Scorrer "Dear Sir . . ." but usually put no heading on his letters at all, and he had signed "C. D. Wise". It may have been a mark of his pleasure over the tobacco crop, or perhaps absence had made his heart grow fonder. For the first time, he wrote "Dear Scorrer . . ." and signed himself "Charles D. Wise".

The stores that Scorrer used were much the same as those required by any farmer out in the *bundu*, and varied from a cream squeegee to a ton of black annealed wire. Wherever possible, he ordered from A. H. Day and Company of Marandellas: otherwise he indented through the Salisbury Office.

Items of £5 or £10 in gold or silver for trading appear from time to time in the accounts. Some time before the record starts Mr. Scott had been summoned for trading without a licence and pleaded guilty. In August 1907, Wise wired to Scorrer: "Have taken verbal opinion which is to effect that bartering for food for personal and boys' use is not trading within the meaning of ordinance . . . . If Police issue further summons we will arrange to be properly represented and obtain legal decision to settle matter."

Transport and mail services sometimes presented difficulties. In December, 1908, Scorrer wrote to the Salisbury Office that the mail from Marandellas for Salisbury and England closed at 5 p.m., and pointed out that it would be "a great convenience to traders and settlers living at a distance" if they could be allowed to post letters until 8 or 9 o'clock in the evening, considering that the mail train did not leave Marandellas station until 3.30 a.m. on Wednesday and Saturday mornings. A reply from the Postmaster-General regretted that a later hour could not be arranged, as the Station Master retired at 8 p.m. to

enable him to rise at 3 a.m. He did however agree to accept consignments of butter for Salisbury until he went to bed. Perhaps to "show willing", the Beira and Mashonaland Railways in 1908 agreed to issue return tickets at single fares to enable farmers and others to attend the Agricultural Show in Salisbury.

In 1907 an iron building, in 36 cases weighing four tons, was sent from Beira, but most of the buildings were made from bricks burnt on the farm but with imported timber. The file contains instructions and a number of sketches for building pig-sties, cattle byres, tobacco sheds, barns and houses and a layout for a homestead. Wise wrote on November 16th, 1907: "I do not like the idea of not lining the huts, I think you had better line one and I will have a look at it when I come down . . . . If the hut is not lined and mosquito-proof, the Medical Director when he sees them is sure to remark that we are not following instructions, and it may lead to trouble." A few weeks later, he sent down five rolls of mosquito-netting for Scorrer's and Scott's houses.

A list of costs for a cottage at Marandellas included the following items:-

27,000 bricks. 15 boys making, building			
kiln and burning for one month. . . . .	£7	10.	0.
White man directing work . . . . .	£4	10.	0.
Food for boys. . . . .	£2	5.	0.
Driver and leader for one span of cattle			
for one month for carting . . . . .	£4	17.	6.
Builder for 2 months, 1 week . . . . .	£32	10.	0.
5 builder's boys . . . . .	£5	12.	6.
Food for same. . . . .	£1	15.	0.
Extra work. White men making verandah,			
hanging doors and all fittings. . . . .	£4	10.	0.

Scorrer employed an average of fifty Africans, listed at various times as about ten herd-boys, ten on "stumping and farm" work, six cooks and houseboys, two gardeners, two drivers, two leaders and the remainder working on brickmaking, building, tobacco, planting trees and a wide variety of other tasks.

Apparently Scorrer once complained that African labour was expensive, and Wise replied: "I should say that as the boys' wages are only 10s. per month or, say, 4d. per day, together with rations making the cost of your labour 7d. per day per boy only, it is not expensive." But a few months later Wise wrote: "I have sent you 20 bags of mealie meal to feed these Northern boys. I fear they will be very expensive to us."

In March, 1909, the Secretary of the Rhodesian Agricultural Union wrote that a first batch of about 1,500 Nyasas was being collected, and that in all about 5,000 Nyasas were likely to be available for farmers during the coming six months. A 12-month contract for Nyasalanders, drawn up by the Chief Native Commissioner, laid down that employees should be paid at the rate of 10s. for 30 days' work for the first six calendar months and 12s. 6d. for 30 days' work for the remaining period of the engagement. Half the cost of a blanket and jersey was to be deducted from deferred pay, but the amount so deducted refunded on completion of six months' work. Compensation for injury by accident was £5 for total disablement and £3 for partial disablement.

A steady stream of settlers arrived throughout the period. On November 8th, 1907, Wise wrote: "What arrangements have you made for the accommodation of any further settlers?" On May 10th, 1909, he wrote: "It has been decided to provide accommodation [*in permanent brick buildings*] for ten settlers in all at Central Farm . . . . [*In the meantime*] it is necessary to put up 4 or 5 pole-and-dagga huts *at once* for temporary accommodation."

The file holds a large number of letters introducing prospective settlers—some of them "specially recommended", no doubt a delicate hint to Scorrer—and requests that they should be met, accommodated and shown round. Transport was a problem, and there were constant demands for a cart or buggy. A letter dated July 22nd, 1908, records the names of twelve farms in the Marandellas block "recently granted to settlers". But not everybody was satisfied, and one party left for Umtali to visit Melsetter as they "did not like the Marandellas veldt".

Scorrer was asked to refer particularly in his half-yearly report, to "the number of settlers who are on the farm and to those who have moved away, and state which of them have taken up farms or what has become of them". In October, 1907, Wise wrote to a Mr. J. Walthew: "I am prepared to keep you on as a settler on the Central Farm until the end of April 1908, you giving your services in return for board allowance and lodging. If you prove satisfactory I will plough for you 30 acres free of charge. I regret I cannot entertain your other proposals." Walthew must have accepted, for his land was ploughed on the farm Wye Valley in August, 1908.

Prospective settlers who did not work on these terms were required to pay £4. 10s. a month for rations. Settlers paid 1s. 6d. a morgen for land if they took the whole of one of the available blocks, but they were not allowed to pick and choose the best land. They were entitled to import their effects and implements at half the normal rail rates within six months of their settlement on the land.

In July, 1908, Scorrer wrote that telegrams advising him of the arrival of settlers often arrived too late for him to meet them at Marandellas station "due partly to distance and partly to native runners stopping at kraals on their way out." To save the mules and avoid unnecessary journeys, he suggested that he should make his transport headquarters at Marandellas Police Camp "until the present rush of settlers is over." On May 10th, 1909, the O.C. Police, Marandellas, was instructed that the cart belonging to the Land Settlement Department could not be used by anyone unless he had a written order from Scorrer or the Estates Office in Salisbury.

Scorrer was highly regarded by the settlers, and a letter from Mr. Sloan of "Igudu", Marandellas, who was on his way to England, is typical of several he received: "I had hoped to have the pleasure of seeing you [*before I left*]. I know you will keep a friendly eye on Mrs. Sloan and the one satisfaction I have in regard to being away is that you are in the district in case of any emergency. With kind regards and my best thanks for all your kindnesses in the past." A few years later, when Scorrer asked for the hand of their daughter, Ann, Mr. and Mrs. Sloan readily gave their blessing, and they enjoyed an outstandingly happy marriage until Scorrer died in 1953.

In January, 1910, Mr. J. A. Stevens, then Acting Commercial Representative in Bulawayo, wrote: "I regret to hear from the Acting Director of Land Settlement that the pupils you have at the Central Farm are of so little service to you. It is a great pity that these young men do not take more interest in their work, and it must be disappointing to you." A couple of days later, the Acting Director of Land Settlement, Mr. Inskipp, wrote: "With reference to my minute re. slackness of pupils on Central Farm, the Acting Commercial Representative instructs that before taking any action a reply must be awaited to a letter he has written to the London Office on the subject lest any special promises may have been made to the parents of these young men."

In 1907, Wise wrote: "Out of charity I am sending bearer, Mr..... to you for a month—he will work for his skoff—mind he does work." He seems to have turned out useful enough to be paid, for in March, 1908, Wise wrote: "Will you please inform Mr.....that his time is up. If however he has got nothing to do yet and he is earning his wage we will keep him another month, not unless. He must not look upon this as a permanent job."

One unsatisfactory employee was a man named Edwards who arrived in September, 1907, to work as a bricklayer, carpenter and handyman for £8 a month. In October, Wise wrote: "I have received notice from Mr. Edwards, and have accepted it and told him he can go as soon as he likes. There must be no withdrawal of his notice, and the sooner he goes the better,"

Edwards changed his mind, but Wise, who had known him in England, urged him to return there as "you cannot possibly tell what the effect of the climate is likely to be on your health . . . and I cannot take the responsibility of recommending you to stay out here." He offered to pay £10 from his own pocket towards Edwards's fare, and assured him that returning to England would not be "an effeminate act".

However, Edwards stayed on, and from July 1st, 1908, his salary was increased to £12. 10s. a month. But Wise had been right, for in October Edwards had a serious mental attack. Wise wrote: "I should say it must be the effects of working all day on the scaffold in the hot sun." He had to be certified as insane and was taken off by two policemen to the Bulawayo asylum.

Visitors displayed a gratifying interest in the new Colony, and barely a month passed but Scorrer was instructed to turn out of his hut for some noble lord or other distinguished visitor. Typical is a note from Wise dated September 3rd, 1907: "Lord Winchester is coming out with me on Wednesday arriving before luncheon—I will bring bread, butter, tin'd fruit, bacon, tea, sugar, coffee, biscuits, table-cloth, serviettes, knives and forks, spoons, whiskey and soda water. We come up from Umtali so shall leave early in the morning. Only one hut will be wanted, Smith's or your own, my tent will do for myself and one or other of you two . . ."

An undated note from Wise at the Marandellas Hotel and Store said: "Got in this a.m.—9 o'clock—very bad road. Lord W. got here at 7.30 p.m.! Send mules for Bevan on Wednesday—he might ride back. Boy will leave as soon as mail is in—mules are tired so are we—got two buck."

Most of the V.I.P.'s brought at least their own whiskey and soda water, but not all Scorrer's "guests" were so considerate, and on March 1st, 1909,

he wrote to Head Office: "Is it possible some allowance could be made by the Company for feeding people who visit this farm on behalf of the Company? I provided food free to a great many men (new settlers last dry season). None of these people bring out food and take it for granted they will be provided for. I have two men here now—they came on Sunday evening and will leave again on Tuesday or Wednesday. They tell me they are just filling in the time between now and Saturday next when they are due to go to Lomagundi. I don't like to tell them that they are filling it in at my expense."

Scorror himself would never have been guilty of such a lack of courtesy and consideration. In a modest expense account submitted after his visit to Bulawayo—£7. 3. 9. covered train fare, hotels and meals—he included an item of £1. 4. 6. for "Food for Trip round Tobacco Growers".

In 1909, the Commercial Representative, Mr. P. Inskipp, came out with Wise, who undertook to bring out all necessary provisions "including whiskey and soda water", and instructed Scorror to kill a sheep or goat so that there would be fresh meat. "If you don't mind," he wrote, "it will be better to put Mr. Inskipp in your bedroom. I can put up on a stretcher in the sitting-room with you." One may assume that Scorror didn't mind.

In spite of his manifold duties, Scorror kept up with agricultural developments in the *Farmers' Advocate* and other technical papers, and with the world's news in the *Morning Post*. On December 1st, 1907, he wrote to the Editor of the latter: "Sir, I attach a cutting from an article appearing in your issue of the 16th October 1907. As a Rhodesian farmer I should like to contradict the rather wild statement I have underlined, the true facts being exactly the opposite to those contained in the above-mentioned sentence.

"The main crop of Rhodesia especially Mashonaland is the Maize or Mealie as it is called here. This grain is planted with the first rains which commence in November and planting continues up to the end of the year. The Mealie ripens towards the end of March and the late sowings during April. About the end of April the season's rains cease and we have then before us 5 months at least of sunshine, without rain, in which we can reap, thresh and stack the bags of grain in the open field until such time that it can be carted to the railway or mines.

"I should deem it a great favour if you would insert this in your paper as the sentence I am referring to certainly gives a totally wrong impression of the agricultural industry in Rhodesia.

"I am, Sir,

"Your obedient servant,

H. K. Scorror."

And who, in that era, knew more of the realities of Rhodesia's agricultural industry than the British South Africa Company's faithful servant, Mr. H. K. Scorror?

### **Editor's Note**

In a letter to the author Mr. L. K. S. Wilson writes that the late Mr. H. K. Scorror was his uncle-in-law, and that he is now the sole shareholder in

the Company that owns the Scorrer Estate, which was the home section of the Central Settlement Farm. He continues:

"On reading your article I was startled at the accuracy with which you have interpreted my late uncle's character. I had a great affection for my late uncle and knew him well. From every page of the article . . . his character stands out vividly. I understand you did not meet Mr. Scorrer, and accordingly your interpretation of his character only based on correspondence received by him and letters written by him at a time when he was a young man is quite a remarkable feat."

"The late Mr. Scorrer was the first official instructor in tobacco growing in this country. He had the first tobacco school established under the instructions of directors of the British South Africa Company. From that school many very well-known Rhodesian farmers went forth into the tobacco industry and established it on the sound basis which it enjoys today. There are many very well-known and leading senior tobacco growers or retired growers in this country who would be delighted to read the article which you prepared on papers written even before the growers to whom I refer had themselves arrived in Southern Rhodesia. For example one interesting point, which is related to the period about which you have written is that the late Archie Henderson, who later presented the Archie Henderson Research Station to the nation, was a young Scots building artisan. He went from Scotland to San Francisco where he made a large sum of money after the great fire in San Francisco. He then gave up the building industry and turned to farming which he had always wanted to do. He applied to the British South Africa Company to be allowed to be employed and trained by the Company in Southern Rhodesia. He was sent to my uncle at the Central Settlement Farm and there he built what is I believe to be the first proper grading shed of brick under corrugated iron built in Rhodesia. He also constructed excellent tying sheds. Both the grading shed and the tying sheds are still in excellent condition in Scorrer Estate today and are in constant use. The grading shed is now used as a bulk store and the tying sheds, far too well constructed for ordinary tying sheds, have become the garages and workshops of the Estate.

"With regard to your article the huts to which you refer have long since disappeared but we have on the property the remains of a round brick hut which was the one which must have been occupied by the late Lord Winchester who visited the Estate in 1907.

"Also on the farm is the original post office established at Inoro which was then the centre of administration for the district. I believe the post office was constructed of corrugated iron with wooden panelling and wooden floors with cut timber rafters around about 1896. The late Mr. Scorrer bought this edifice around about 1927 for the princely sum of £1 and had this post office transported to Scorrer Estate. It is now my study with the same timbering in the roof, walls, floors and the same corrugated iron, and in fact the same post office door with the letter box protected by a piece of tin, that served duty at Inoro in 1896."

# Lomagundi

by C. T. C. Taylor

In his interesting historical sketch of the Lomagundi District, printed in *Rhodesiana*, No. 7, 1962, Mr. J. A. Edwards challenged others to carry the record further, and this is an attempt to do so.

As it was to the Ayrshire Mine that the initial development of modern Lomagundi, an area of 8,700 sq. miles (larger than that of Wales), was almost entirely due, and as even the name is in danger of being forgotten to-day, it would seem that considerably more detail of its history should be recorded.

On the 8th May, 1893, the Ayrshire block of gold claims was registered in the name of Umfreville Percy Swinburne, as being on the Maquadzi River, two miles from Chininga's kraal. On the 26th September, 1894, two claims were transferred to H. Hirsch and Co. The *Buluwayo Chronicle* of 1st February, 1895, stated that 100 "boys" were then employed there and that "the mine still continues to justify first expectations". On the 8th August, 1895, the 110 claims were registered in the name of the Lomagunda Development Co. Ltd. Ten Europeans and twenty African employees escaped from the mine to Salisbury in the Rising of the following year. They had been sufficiently enterprising to start a local journal called the *Ayrshire Mosquito*, edited by J. C. Jenkin, the second issue of which was given very favourable mention in the *Rhodesia Herald* of 2nd September, 1896.

In 1901 the "Ayrshire Gold Mine and Lomagunda Railway Co. Ltd." was formed in London, with the address 15/16 George Street, Mansion House, E.C., to acquire the claims and build a railway to the mine from Salisbury. In the prospectus published in March, 1901, which invited subscriptions for 250,000 5½ per cent First Mortgage Debentures in lots of £100 each to be secured by a First Mortgage to trustees on the railway, when built, and on the mining claims, the following details appeared:

"The old workings on the Ayrshire showed that an immense amount of work must have been done by the ancients. In the Western Section the main old workings are 391 feet long, 43 wide and 30 deep. On the Eastern Section they are 347 feet long and 37 wide.

"The area is thickly wooded and sufficient timber available. The River Maquadzi is only a few hundred yards from the mine and affords an ample supply of water. Mr. Telford Edwards, consulting engineer to the Rhodesia Exploration and Development Co. Ltd., has organised an exploratory drive and crosscuts, and trial crushings in 1900 gave averages from 5½ to 19 dwts."

The share capital of the Company was £400,000 in £1 shares, of which 100,000 were in reserve, 200,000 were issued as fully paid to the Lomagunda Development Co. Ltd. and 100,000 to the British South Africa Company in settlement of all their rights under the mining regulations.

Payment of interest on the debentures was guaranteed unconditionally

as to 2 per cent per annum by the British South Africa Company and 3 ½ per cent by the Rhodesia Exploration and Development Co. Ltd. for a period of 20 years.

The British South Africa Company undertook to introduce a Bill in the next session of the Legislative Council of Southern Rhodesia to obtain the powers required for the construction of a 2-foot gauge railway to the mine, and to assign them to the Company. But in consideration of the assistance it was giving in the construction of the 70-mile line, and in guaranteeing interest up to £5,000 per annum, the British South Africa Company reserved the right—in case it should be found advisable to widen the gauge to 3 ft. 6 ins. and to incorporate it in the general railway system—to purchase the railway at any-time from the Company at cost price.

Engineers for the railway were Sir Douglas Fox, Vice-President of the Institution of Civil Engineers, and Sir Charles Metcalfe, Bart., M.I.C.E.

On the 30th April, 1901, an agreement was signed between the two Companies to permit the railway to be built. It was found that the registered location in the Schedule had erroneously stated that the claims were in the Salisbury District; they were now correctly placed in the "Lo Magondi" district and officially transferred by the Mining Commissioner, Lo Magondis.

On the 3rd September, 1901, the Salisbury Chamber of Mines urged the Administration that the requirements of the Mazoe District be considered when this railway was being built, by taking the line 12 miles along the Mazoe Road before turning westwards; this would avoid the Gwebi swamps which were, they said, impassable during the rains; they also urged that it be of broad gauge. They were informed that their representation had come too late.

And so the first branch rail line ever to be built in the Rhodesias was constructed from Salisbury to just above the mine workings on the Ayrshire, 84 miles in all. It ran from its own station, just east of the one used by the Beira and Mashonaland Railways and the Rhodesia Railways on Railway Avenue, across the Umtali road where there is still a siding, up Epton Street and McChlery Avenue, then curved round to cross the Borrowdale Road east of Hodson Avenue, across the north side of the present University site, south of the Mt. Pleasant School to meet the strip between Lomagundi Road and Broadlands Road. It reached its terminus on the 20th August, 1902.

In anticipation of its arrival the mine company had constructed an hotel a few hundred yards short of the terminal point on the Ayrshire, which the *Rhodesia Herald* for the 17th May, 1902, described as: "Excellently appointed and calculated to agreeably surprise the visitor. In fact, it compares very favourably with anything of the kind in Salisbury. It contains a dining room 34 x 21 ft., sitting room 21 x 15 ft., bar, billiard room 34 x 26 ft. for two tables. Each of the eight bedrooms has a fireplace. Stabling is attached for mules and horses. It cost nearly £8,000."

The fare on the Ayrshire line was 6d. a mile and as late as January, 1908. considerable dissatisfaction was expressed in the *Rhodesia Herald* at the poor accommodation provided for passengers, the only coach being "an ancient omnibus, open from end to end, with hard wooden seats running longitudinally. It is of course better than a stage coach, but the inconvenience of travelling on the railway, especially to ladies and children, must be experienced to be

realised." There were two locomotives for the line, named "Jack Tar" and "Hans Sauer". Dr. Hans Sauer was a director of the Ayrshire Gold Mine and Lomagunda Railway Co., who did once travel on the railway in question from Eldorado to Salisbury after a hunting expedition in the Zambezi Valley. The only comment he makes on this in his book *Ex Africa* (Geoffrey Bles, 1937) is that he had shot what he calls a bush-knoorhaan, which they ate cold in the train, and it was so delicious after it had hung for a day or two from a tree before being cooked that his companion would not look up from his meal even to watch a herd of elephant charging across the line.

The line passed through Darwendale Farm, at the south end of the Umvukwe Range, one of the first farms to be pegged in Lomagundi and which represented the beginnings of an agricultural industry that was destined to surpass by a long way that of mining. Otto Christian Zimmerman, who arrived in Salisbury on the 15th July, 1895, and took part in the Mazoe and other patrols in the '96 rising, decided three years later that there was no future for him here and was on his way out of Africa when he was called to meet Mr. Rhodes at Groote Schuur in 1899. The latter offered him six farms in Rhodesia if he would stay. Having said he would be quite satisfied with one farm, he was told that a telegram would be sent north ordering that this be granted him. So he went back to visit the Surveyor-General in Salisbury, where he was surprised to discover that there was a difficult condition attached to the offer: he had to put 1,000 head of cattle on the farm within two years, 1,500 more in the third year, with further increases every year up to five years. Though he knew cattle to be scarce he accepted and went to England to bring into the proposition, as partner, his friend Cyril Ashton Dimmock. They started on Darwendale Farm which was at first only 120 acres but was later increased to 3,000 acres. In 1901 East Coast fever killed off any cattle they had been able to acquire but, instead of giving up, the two partners, starting in September that year, trekked up to the Fort Jameson area to buy cattle; they walked them back, swimming them over the Zambezi near Feira, by April 1902. Mr. Zimmerman made three further long trips for cattle, on his own. The second started on July 12th, 1902, the third on August 15th, 1903 (both to Northern Rhodesia): and the fourth, to German East Africa, on 4th April, 1904.\* In about 1906 his partner, Dimmock (who died in 1921), took over Virginia Ranch, near Maryland, and Zimmerman became sole owner of Darwendale. In 1913 Zimmerman changed his name to Rawson, and was well known to everyone in Lomagundi as O. C. Rawson, or "Boss Jim", till his death on 30th December, 1953. He was an early enthusiast for Turkish type tobacco, and had a Turkish handling warehouse at Darwendale Station in the 1930's, which later became the headquarters of the present Turkish Tobacco Co-operative.

On the 11th May, 1903, the land around the Ayrshire mine, which was pegged as a farm of 3,029 morgen 64 roods, was registered in the name of the Ayrshire Gold Mining and Lomagunda Railway Co., with an annual quitrent

\*These journeys were described by O.C. Rawson (formerly Zimmerman) in "Trekking cattle through Northern Rhodesia in 1904" (*Northern Rhodesia Journal*, v. 2, no. 5, 1955, pp. 24-34, and no. 6, 1955, pp. 33-45) and "Cattle buying on the Kafue" (*ibid.*, v. 4, 1961, pp. 536-545).

of £6 2s., but it is doubtful if it was then used as a farm. At the peak of its production the mine had 60 stamps which would need a lot of fuel to operate. A correspondent to the *Rhodesia Herald* on 11th October, 1904. said "wood trains run into Ayrshire Camp daily from some 15 miles out and the forest near the line looks 'like unto him that carrieth a banner when he fainteth'." Twenty-five years later, the area round about the Ayrshire still carried signs of devastation caused by wooden sleighs dragging in fuel. The footage completed at the mine by 1904 was given as: Sinking, 3,237 ft.; Driving, 6,414 ft.; Cross cutting, 4,295 ft.; and Rising, 95 ft. The accommodation at the Ayrshire Hotel was described as excellent. Mr. George Peake, who becomes prominent later in the story of Lomagundi, was the manager and Mr. M. Mitton, another well-known Rhodesian, became chef in 1905. The latter, who has considerable knowledge of the area, agrees that the original registration of the mine in 1893 is most inaccurate in describing it as being "2 miles from Chinanga's kraal". Chief Chinanga lived some 20 miles away on what is now Mafuta Farm; a section near there is to-day called Chininga. Colonel Rhodes visited the Ayrshire, on behalf of the London directorate of the British South Africa Company, in December, 1904.

It was an announcement by the London Office of the Rhodesia Exploration and Lomagunda Development Co. (presumably the same Company that had sold the Ayrshire originally) dated 7th September, 1904, that started the Lomagundi mining boom, by stating that a banket reef had been discovered there. "Banket" derives from a Dutch word meaning almond candy, and it is a South African mining term used to describe the gold-bearing formation of which the Rand is the chief instance. The site, the Eldorado, was recorded on the 14th June, 1895, as having been transferred from the original discoverer, Arthur Eyre, to B. M. W. Swan. The Railway Company, on the 14th February, 1905, entered into a contract to extend the Ayrshire rail line from the 67-mile peg to what was called "Eldorado-Banket", a distance of 12 miles, the road bed, culverts, etc., to be capable of taking a 3 ft. 6 in. gauge line but the track to be 2 ft. It was first called the Eldorado Railway but was cited in an ordinance of 1908 as the "Lomagundi Railway Extension". The spot from which it took off was called "Banket Junction", that is to say, the junction for the line to the banket reef. This was open to traffic by the 12th July, 1905, and a hotel and store opened at the Banket Junction on about 25th September that year under the management of A. G. Cottrell. A reasonable road 16 miles long was opened direct across country from the Ayrshire to the Eldorado; it should be realised that at this time there was no true road, as we know it to-day, from Salisbury to Eldorado, let alone Sinoia, the Ayrshire railway being the chief means of communication.

Late in 1906 the Ayrshire reef petered out, but on 4th January, 1907, it was reported as having been encountered again 250 feet below the sixth level, giving 23 dwts. across a full 5 ft. drive. A writer in the *Rand Daily Mail*, quoted in the *Rhodesia Herald* for 24th April, 1907, said: "In the Lomagundi District there are the Ayrshire and Banket mines, the latter just about to start crushing. A 2 ft. gauge railway runs up from Salisbury; this was once part of the old Beira Railway, and it serves the need of a mining community, if it doesn't

make very rapid trips. The Ayrshire mine crushes some 8,000 tons per month with 60 stamps and ranks with the East Gwanda mines, next to the Wanderer, the largest in Rhodesia".

The slowness of communications is indicated in the official mail service schedules published in the press on 28th January, 1907:

*Salisbury — Ayrshire (by rail)*

Leave Salisbury (Sundays and Wednesdays)	9.30 a.m.
Leave Eldorado Junction (67 mile siding)	3.37 p.m.
Reach Ayrshire (Sundays and Wednesdays)	5.15 p.m.
Leave Ayrshire (Tuesdays and Fridays)	9.00 a.m.
Reach Eldorado Junction	10.41 a.m.
Reach Salisbury (Tuesdays and Fridays)	4.45 p.m.

*Eldorado Junction — Lomagundi*

(i.e., Banket Junction to, presumably, Sinoia Camp; by runner)

Leave Eldorado Junction (Sundays and Thursdays)	4 p.m.
Reach Lomagundi	8 p.m.
Leave Lomagundi (Mondays and Thursdays)	6 p.m.
Reach Eldorado Junction (Tuesdays and Fridays)	9 a.m.

*Ayrshire — Lomagundi*

(presumably by runner on the connecting road)

Leave Ayrshire (Tuesdays)	10 a.m.
Reach Lomagundi (Tuesdays)	5 p.m.
Leave Lomagundi (Mondays)	2.30 p.m.
Reach Ayrshire (Tuesdays)	9 a.m.

It will be noted that the spelling of the name of the district had now settled down to that in use to-day. It might also be remembered that, until about 1930, when the Rhodesia Railways Road Motor Services came into operation, the mail to points between Eldorado and Sipolilo was regularly carried by a very trustworthy and plucky African on a bicycle, who was armed with a rifle to protect him from attack by lion en route. Lion's Kloof, a point about two thirds of the way to Sipolilo, was aptly named.

It would appear that the British South Africa Company had, at the beginning of 1907, exercised its option to purchase the Lomagundi Railway line at cost, but it was not until January, 1908, that a new passenger coach was provided. As a correspondent to the *Rhodesia Herald* said then: "It is a credit to the line and thanks are due to Mr. Wibberley [*the General Manager at the time*]. The establishment of 2nd class fares is also much appreciated."

There were some 30 Europeans and 200 Africans employed at the Ayrshire by now, and the staff at Eldorado was also growing; additionally a few small mines were in operation, the Ki Ora, Jolly Boys, Inguroth and Eureka. The profits at Eldorado for the last four months of 1907 had already reached a total of £10,607. Items in the *Rhodesia Herald* for early in 1908 indicate the activity going on in the area. "On 28th December, 1907, the Ayrshire Hotel was a scene of splendour when, on the invitation of Mr. and Mrs. George Peake, about 120 people turned out to their costume ball. The purveying as usual was beyond reproach, and the function is regarded as the most successful

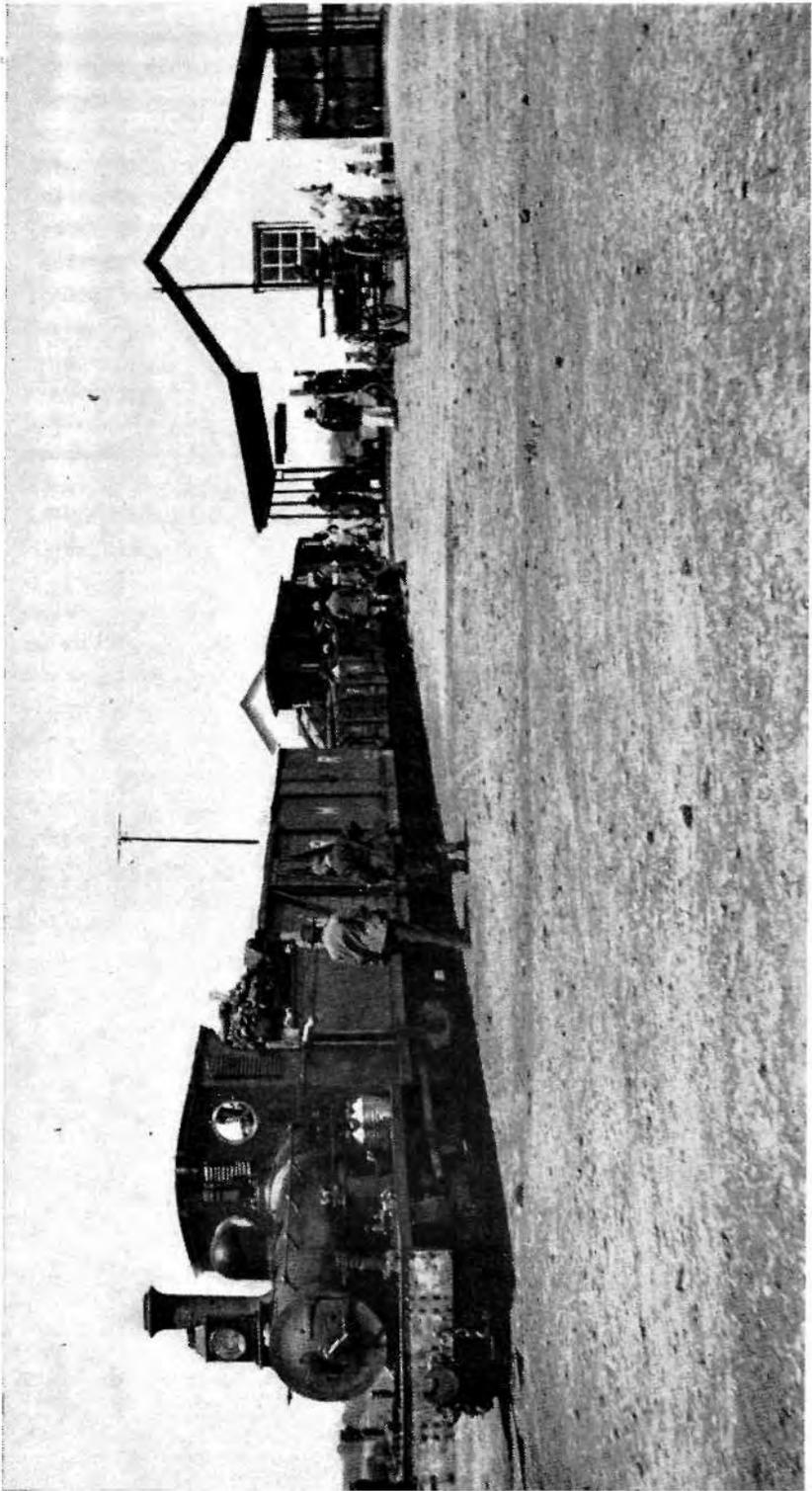


Figure 1. The Salisbury terminus of the Ayrshire Railway, about 1910.

(National Archives)

ever held in the district. Mr. Galloway provided the music and some of those present were:— Mesdames Price, Galloway, Anderson and Waugh, Messrs. Tilley, Storm, Price, Ricardo, Youdi and Raath." Several of these became well-known as early farmers in the district.

The history of railroads, and particularly of locomotives, is of interest to many. Some who read this article may be intrigued to trace the only three locomotives that are generally accepted as having operated on the historic 2 ft. gauge Ayrshire line—"Hans Sauer", "Jack Tar", and the modified, less powerful, engine reported as having been sent out in July, 1914, to help dismantle the line. Mr. Frank Warner, of Sutton Estates, recalls seeing the latter, looking very much like a toy engine, finally being returned to Salisbury from Banket Junction inside one of the 3 ft. 6 in. trucks, on the side of which someone had chalked in bold letters "The Last of the Pioneers". One wonders if it ended up in some amusement park.

Figure 1 is reproduced from a postcard that was on sale around 1910; it shows the Salisbury terminus of the Ayrshire Railway; in the extreme right background can be seen a portion of the kopje. The sign on the verandah reads "Station Master". It is impossible to distinguish any name or number on the locomotive.

Figure 2 is from a photograph taken at Banket Junction around 1913 by Mr. Mitton. The man in uniform is the Station Master, Mr. Hall. The locomotive carries no distinguishable number, but definitely has the name "Hans Sauer". Unfortunately the print is over-exposed and the negative has been lost.

The third photograph (figure 3) taken by Mr. Roy Creeth of the Southern Rhodesia Department of Tourism and published in *Africa Calls*, January/February 1964, shows a 2-foot gauge locomotive now in the grounds of the new museum in Umtali. The locomotive was presented by the Rhodesia Railways who provided the only information available—that it was "dated 1897 and made in England, and used on the Beira-Umtali line until the gauge was increased to 3 ft. 6 in. Subsequently it operated on the Ayrshire Railway and the Selukwe Peak Railway, ending its life on the forestry line operated by Igusi Sawmills. Its total weight is 18 tons, but it was able to haul a load of 42 tons at a top speed of 42 miles per hour." It is numbered 15 and bears a close resemblance to the locomotive in figure 1 particularly as regards the cab, though there are small differences in the front of the boiler, the footplate and handrail, and in the headlamp base. But these could easily have been made during repairs, and so it seems likely that this engine and the one shown in figure 1 are one and the same—"Jack Tar". The name of this engine is seldom mentioned in connection with the Ayrshire Railway, whereas references to the "Hans Sauer" are frequent.

The locomotive numbered 7, and also named "Jack Tar", that was exhibited at the Rhodes Centenary Exhibition at Bulawayo in 1953, was there described as being still in use as a shunting engine, and was of 3 ft. 6 in. gauge. It was made in 1896, a year earlier than the one now in Umtali.

Figure 4 shows part of the Ayrshire Mine settlement in about 1907. The large building with the verandah, on the right, was the hotel and one can



Figure 2. Locomotive "Hans Sauer" at Banket Junction, about 1913  
(*M. Mitton*)

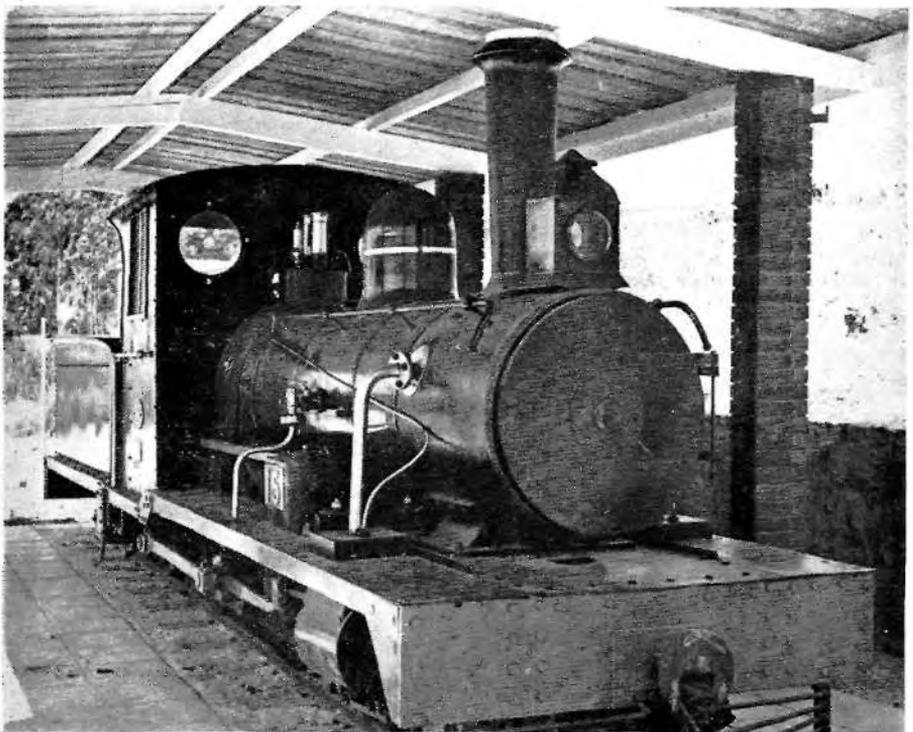


Figure 3. Narrow gauge locomotive now in Umtali Museum.  
(*S.R. Dept. of Tourism*)

see from this that it must indeed have compared very favourably with any other hotel then existing in Rhodesia.

As there were then over 20 children on the Ayrshire a government school was opened there on 3rd February, 1908, under the charge of Miss A. Montagu Salmond. The annual general meeting of the Ayrshire Recreation Club took place on 10th January. There was an annual meeting of the Ayrshire Mine Rifle Club on 2nd February, with 23 members present. Dr. Leach who had been resident Medical Officer since mid-1905, left for Abercorn, in Northern Rhodesia, in mid-1908, and was replaced by Dr. Ward, from East London. The Ayrshire Golf Club held its annual general meeting on 12th April but "due to blanketty tiredness", as the Secretary called it, very few attended. On 5th May Miss Salmond organised a concert at the Ayrshire Hotel, entrance money to go to the purchase of a piano for her school.

In late March of that year, a number of people were reported to have come to the district to look for farms following rumours that the Ayrshire rail line was about to be widened. A Mr. Bliss was said, on the 14th April, to have taken up some ground near the May Mine and called it "Lone Cow".

The first sign of bad news came at an annual meeting of the Ayrshire Gold Mining Co. held in London and reported on 25th March, 1908. The meeting was told that the Company owed £18,000 and that no further capital could be raised by the sale of shares as they were at a serious discount on the market. It was therefore proposed to re-organise by cutting down the capital value of the shares and then issuing a further 30,000 to be guaranteed by Mr. Abe Bailey.

Lomagundi now came into prominence through its elephants. On 2nd August, 1907, the Wesleyan missionary, the Rev. W. T. Grantham, reported that ten fully grown elephants accompanied by three calves had attacked and killed an elderly native. On 9th January, 1908, another African was attacked and gored. On 13th January they were menacing the Banket Junction area, and such an outcry was raised by local residents that on 30th April the destruction of elephants was authorised anywhere in the Lomagundi District, "except within the Urungwe Game Sanctuary as defined by Government Notice No. 237 of 1906". On 18th June the press reported that the campaign was being continued with unabated energy and that 41 had been shot to that date. Elephants' feet were on sale in the area at the rather high price of £1 apiece; when baked they were, it was said, a famous delicacy. An authority advised that they should be cooked for 36 hours and they would then taste like "glorified cow heel". By 10th July 86 had been shot as well as one hunter named Eloff killed by a ricochet. It was said that there were at least a hundred more beasts to be accounted for.

By this time London papers had picked up the story and on 20th August the *Rhodesia Herald* reported considerable indignation among sportsmen and the Press at "the wholesale slaughter of elephant in Rhodesia". The obvious answer came from Lomagundi that if those who complained lived there and were dependent on a maize crop for their livelihood, they would think differently; the subject then dropped out of the local press.

On 15th June, 1908, the first wedding to take place at the Ayrshire was

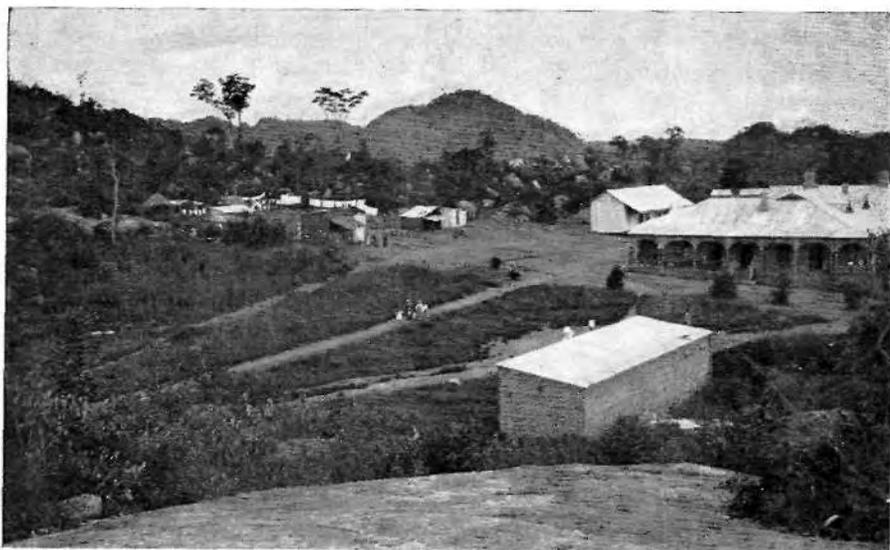


Figure 4. The Ayrshire Mine Settlement, about 1907.

*(National Archives)*



Figure 5. Banket Junction, 1916.

*(E. W. Alderson)*

reported; it was between Mr. Household (who was the blacksmith) and Miss Carlaw, daughter of a small-worker in the area. The Rev. Wright-Davies officiated. A strange incident occurred this month. The Mine Secretary, Mr. E. Holmes, going on leave to England, was relieved by a new secretary, a Mr. Macintosh, on the 16th. On the 19th it was realised that the latter had not been seen since the previous evening and, as he was presumably new to the veld, search parties were sent out. As the new secretary had taken the key to the mine safe, Mr. Holmes, who had a duplicate key, was asked to return at once by special train. On the 20th the latter was back and opened the safe, to find that between £800 and £900 was missing—and so was the new secretary, and, despite the issuing of his description by the Police, he still is.

In September, 1908, there were complaints that the Administration was very apathetic in not appointing the local Native Commissioner a Magistrate for the district of Lomagundi, with power to hold Courts anywhere necessary. "If Court is held at Eldorado, it is most inconvenient for the Ayrshire, and *vice versa*. The trains do not connect at all and there is no traffic to warrant them doing so."

The *Rhodesia Herald* of 1st October, 1908, carried the sad news that the Ayrshire was soon likely to close for at least some time. The bulk of the workmen had received 24 hours notice, and those on monthly pay had had their legal notices. As a result there were numerous applications for farms in the area, and the Chartered Company restricted grants to 3,000-acre lots, with the condition they be occupied within six weeks of their being granted. This caused the start of farming in the area between Ayrshire, Eldorado and Banket Junction, by such as G. Galloway, W. Knight, K. Dingwall and G. Peake of the Ayrshire. H. Kneiser, a hunter and wood contractor to the Eldorado, had obtained a large grazing lease in about 1904 between the two mines. The closing of the Ayrshire was confirmed on 23rd October and, as many of the parents of children there had transferred to the Eldorado, it was proposed that Miss Salmond and her school go there also. The Ayrshire correspondent for the *Rhodesia Herald* reported in the issue of November 12th that:—"The closing down of Ayrshire is a tragedy. A good many people had spent a considerable sum of money in making themselves comfortable homes on the property. The Ayrshire to-day has a very mournful appearance, houses lately occupied are already falling into ruin and owing to scarcity of water the mill has stopped—for the first time. As to the future of Ayrshire, it is difficult to prophesy. That its palmy days are over is evident—the good old days when everybody had plenty of money and we had not reached our latter day high standard of civilisation, bringing in its train 'biled' shirts, Paris creations, cheques and class distinctions. That the high degree of civilisation made life pleasanter than in the early days, when we all met together on common ground and tried to make life as pleasant as possible for each other, is doubtful. It would be sad to think that the place where so many of us have lived, moved and had our being for years should return to the wilderness from which it was won, or that one of the termini of civilised South Africa should be blotted from the map." This sentiment was, unfortunately, to be experienced later in other parts of Southern Rhodesia. The value of the gold output from the Ayrshire had dropped in that month to £2,148, whereas

that from the Eldorado had risen to £12,405, and it was evident where the new centre of Lomagundi was to be. In 1909 the Eldorado employed 80 Europeans and 1,000 Africans, a good hotel and store had been built there, and the former was being run by Mr. Peake of the Ayrshire, still with Mr. Mitton as the chef.

The March returns for gold outputs gave none from Ayrshire, but £14,276 from Eldorado. On 23rd April it was reported that the Lomagundi Rifle Club had started at Eldorado, and on 4th October, in the first press mention of it, the address of the new Lomagundi Farmers' Association was also given as at that mine, but the special meeting then reported took place at the Rhodesia Company's Trading Store on the Hunyani River. This was for long known as Deary's Store. Mr. Alick Money, who farmed near Dunphaile, presided. New members elected were Messrs. Gordon, Quinn and Miller and letters accepting membership were read from Dr. Nobbs, the Director of Agriculture, Mr. C. D. Wise, the British South Africa Company's Director of Estates and Mr. V. F. Stephan, the manager of the Eldorado Mine, an elderly Frenchman who, on 10th August, 1908, was reported as having relieved Mr. J. E. Parke while the latter went on leave; he had previously been manager of the Wemmer Mine near Johannesburg. The meeting stood in silence in memory of the late Mr. W. E. Scott, the popular Native Commissioner of Lomagundi who was reported to have been killed by a buffalo near Miami on 17th September, and who was buried on the roadside at the spot. For the record, at the Pro-Cathedral in Salisbury on 27th January, 1911, there was dedicated a tablet "To the memory of the late Mr. William E. E. Scott, N.C. and A.M. of Lomagundi. Born Dec. 17th 1871, killed while on duty by a buffalo Sept. 17th 1909. Erected by his brother officials of the Native Department, and friends, as a token of esteem and affection for a faithful servant of our Government and a good man." This tablet is now in the porch of St. Mary's Church, Sinoia. Scott's grave is still marked by a cairn surmounted by a cross, beside the old strip road which branches off from the new main road five miles beyond Sinoia. It is just visible from the main road, a few yards past a store on the right hand side.

The Eldorado must have been a much more pleasant spot than the Ayrshire, which was situated in a hollow surrounded by tall kopjes. The Company had announced as early as February, 1908, that they intended to erect a hospital and that they had engaged a resident Medical Officer and a nurse, and that the European quarters had been arranged with much care and thought for the comfort of the employees. Figure 6, taken by Mr. Mitton in 1909, shows the Eldorado Mine when at its peak. It must have been taken looking north from the railway track, the village being on the ridge in the left background.

Mr. Edwards's historical sketch of the Lomagundi District in *Rhodesiana*, No. 7, tells of the murder of the Native Commissioner, Lomagundi, at Sinoia in June 1896. It would seem of interest to Lomagundi to know that on October 24th, 1909, at the 11 o'clock service in the Pro-Cathedral, Salisbury, a bell was dedicated, which had been presented by Mrs. Barter, of County Cork, Ireland, in memory of her brother, Arthur J. Jameson, the Mining Commissioner, who was murdered at the same time. Until about 1952 it hung on a metal structure

in various parts of the Cathedral grounds, and was the only bell in use there, But at that date it appears to have been given to St. Andrew's Church, Arcadia, where it hangs from a frame and is in use today. It is inscribed:—

"In memory of Arthur John Jameson  
Born near Dublin Feb. 1860  
Killed in Mashonaland June 1896."

It would seem to be the right thing for residents of Lomagundi to acquire a bell of similar size (for Arcadia needs one) for exchange with this, which should surely now go to Sinoia Church, if the Church authorities agree; an approach has already been made by the Parish of Lomagundi for this purpose.

In 1910 all Lomagundi activities centred on Eldorado. There was an affair on the 28th and 29th May, to celebrate the delayed Empire Day, with a performance by a vaudeville company from abroad in the "commodious dining rooms of the Eldorado Hotel". Seventy people attended the Ball that evening and some hundred enjoyed a free picnic lunch next day provided by Mr. Peake on the Sports Ground, where a point-to-point race and a football match had taken place. There must have been considerable activity in the area, for the railway earnings for May, 1910, on what were called the Lomagundi and Eldorado branches, totalled £1,772. In August they rose to £2,275.

In February, 1911, it was reported that a Mr. J. Cook, a former manager of the Battlefields mine, was to superintend the re-opening of the Ayrshire mine, which had been absorbed by the Rhodesia Exploration and Development Co. from the previous owners, the Rhodesia Banket Co. Several months of de-watering would be needed; but there appears no further news until the following February, when a clean-up of slimes yielded £253.

As Sinoia is now about to come into prominence, more of its early history should be mentioned. A map of 1895 shows that a mining commissioner named Spreckley had a camp near the present site. The police who replaced the Imperial troops in 1896 settled near Chinoya's kraal (later corrupted to Sinoia) and called the place Lo Magundi's, after the local Mashona chief. In the National Archives is a single copy of a journal named the *Lo Magundi Hornet*, dated 8th January, 1898, and numbered Vol. I, No. 9. This would appear to be a monthly publication; it has four pages measuring 9 x 13 inches, was printed by the Salisbury Printing and Publishing Co. for the proprietor and editor, T. V. Rock, and was priced at 2/6. From it one learns that the total Police strength there was 13 whites and 19 Africans, and that they had already created a record by having arrested 1,100 Africans as alleged murderers during the recent rising. Also that in the Lo Magundi Camp were Mr. G. A. Jackson, the Native Commissioner; Captain Pocock, the Claims Inspector; Lieut. Griffiths; Sergeants Wood and Brown, in charge of the local hospital; Corporals Davis, Clifton and J. Armstrong, Paymaster and Postmaster; Troopers Andrews and Hempseed; Messrs. Evans, Nell and Jones, presumably prospectors; and Rock, the editor. The editor wrote that Lo Magundi was rapidly becoming civilised, as Messrs. Deary and Co. had nearly completed their new store and one of the local prospectors was said to be negotiating to import a bicycle from Salisbury. Though by 1899 the name of Fort Sinoia had been used, as late as 1908 it was still called Lomagundi.

As "Deary's Store" and "Deary's Drift" were well-known in the early days of Sinoia, it might be in place to explain their origin, which is in danger of being lost. H. J. Deary, who was a personal friend of Cecil Rhodes, must have arrived in Tuli shortly after the Pioneer Column, for he had started the Tuli Trading Co. before 1892, in which year he came to Salisbury to open a branch of that company, and stayed there. Messrs. Hill and Paddon of Kimberley were then responsible for forming, in his name, the firm of Deary and Co., which had stores eventually in Salisbury, Sinoia, and Abercorn—now Shamva. Two Dearys claimed the 1896 medal—F. C. and H. J. "Deary and Co." was eventually incorporated with the Rhodesian Cold Storage and Trading Co. Ltd. H. J. Deary became an important merchant, was a leading member of the Salisbury Sanitary Board (which preceded the Municipality), Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce, and was Salisbury's second Mayor. He died in London on May 13th, 1907.

The 4th April, 1911, is the first date on which one finds mention in the press of Sinoia as a place of residence, in an account of a political meeting held in the hotel there, which had been built by Mr. C. S. Wilson, encouraged by Mr. S. R. Garrard, who had run Deary's store after the first manager, McDermot, left and had now opened one at Sinoia. A number of small mines were now operating in Lomagundi, including the alluvial claims on the Angwa, and there was a fairly big mine called the Golden Kopje some ten miles beyond Sinoia. The first press report of a meeting of the Lomagundi Farmers' Association in Sinoia is dated 26th November, 1911. At this meeting the railway company was urged to extend the broad gauge rail line to Sinoia and the Golden Kopje. This was a timely request as the Beira, Mashonaland and Rhodesia Railways had started widening the gauge of the "Northern Extension" line on 22nd May, 1911, and by 5th June had completed it as far as thirteen miles from Salisbury. On 28th October a Halt at Avondale (5 miles 78 chains from the Salisbury terminus) was established; this is still commemorated by Halt Way on the north side of the Lomagundi Road. The need for some modernisation was given in June in an article explaining why the Eldorado train would often arrive so late; the example given by travellers was that of a passenger who was so absorbed by the passing scenery that he dropped his false teeth by the side of the track. So at the next halt the sympathetic driver and fireman turned out most of the passengers and backed the train to look for the missing molars. Halts were often made to cut wood for the engine, third class passengers being "encouraged" to cut and bring it in.

It was reported on 28th June, 1911, that the Eldorado mine school was closing down, though on 29th August the Eldorado Banket Gold Mining Co. issued an optimistic statement saying that since 1909 the mine had paid 90 per cent in dividends, the net profit for 1910 being £92,742, and that the ore body there was a true sedimentary or banket reef, of as permanent a character as possible; the question of the life of the mine, they said, could not arise for many years to come.

In 1912 farms in Lomagundi began to be more numerous and Sinoia commenced to move ahead, though the Railways showed a loss for January of £221. The Lomagundi Gymkhana Club held its first meeting in Sinoia in

July on ground close to the town which had been personally laid out by Mr. Wane and was said to do him great credit. That month a golfing team from Salisbury spent a week-end there and was surprised that such a small community could within a year have laid out such a golf course, albeit still on the rough side, and could have an active membership of 41. There were also tennis courts and a racecourse of 1½ miles. The Sinoia Caves were then "little trodden by the foot of man; there is nothing to tell the wayfarer that, hidden from view (even when almost beneath his feet) lies the world's great sapphire." People had managed to get there before, for instance Miss Gertrude Page visited them from Eldorado in October 1910, just after her book *Two Lovers and a Lighthouse* had had a good reception in England. (It was not until 8th August, 1917, that the Government started to improve the Caves by cleaning the entrance and installing some stone steps to the Silent Pool.) Also this month the Lomagundi Farmers' Association, which was acquiring a large membership, asked the Public Works Department to put the road to Ayrshire in order "as the farms as far as there are occupied, and the road is in a shocking state".

In 1913 Mr. Percy Inskipp, the local manager of the British South Africa Company, and Mr. C. D. Wise, the manager of the Company's estates, visited the area to see the increase of farms, and such an impression was made on them that a telegram was displayed outside the Magistrate's Court to announce that the rail extension to Sinoia was to be proceeded with immediately. The widening of the gauge had gone four miles beyond Banket Junction by 4th July and people in Eldorado were looking forward to the toy train soon being a thing of the past. It was decided to bridge the Hunyani River at the Rowdy Boys drift and work was started there in August with a Mr. Forbes as contractor and Mr. Diespecker as engineer-in-charge, but shortage of labour, and the rains, delayed progress. The Post Office called for tenders to run a post-cart service on the rough track between Eldorado and Sinoia to serve the growing population. In spite of many cases of blackwater fever a number of farms were being opened. On 8th September, 1913, it was reported, that the Thorneycreek Ranching Co., whose directors were the Fraser-Mackenzies, the Hon. John Parker and his cousin Tim Parker (who later was to become General Manager of Barclay's Bank in Britain), and which had in July 1912, through their managing director Mr. A. Edmonds, purchased the 23,000 acre Lone Cow Estate from Mr. Bliss, had now purchased the farm Weston Park, near Banket Junction, and the directors were to be seen touring around "in a very powerful motor car, the first to be used hereabouts". But it was not the first car to go through the area. Mr. Mitton, who recalls that this car was a "Krit" tourer from the U.S.A., claims to have been the first to bring a car into Lomagundi when, in 1910, he drove out from Salisbury to Banket and on to Eldorado a Gladiator car for Mr. Stephan, who had come to manage the Eldorado a year before and had railed the car up from Johannesburg; it took Mr. Mitton a month to do the journey over the atrocious track.

In January, 1914, Sir Starr Jameson arrived at Eldorado by special train, and later several motor cars "after a struggle with the local roads" deposited his party safely at the Sinoia Court House; the same month great progress in construction was reported from the Golden Kopje which was

"a buzzing hive of activity. Accommodation is strained at present and the boarding house has a bucksail annexe, decidedly uncomfortable during storms". Great hopes were entertained for a mine near Sinoia called the "Adriatic" owned by McDermott and Villars (which came to naught); these factors spurred on the rail extension work and the Hunyani River bridge, record rains consolidating the track that had been laid. A station house, goods shed and quarters in Sinoia were ready by the end of May and were said to be "extremely well planned and charmingly situated".

Finally, on 8th June, 1914, the *Rhodesia Herald* correspondent reported that "a large crowd assembled to witness the launching of the big bridge over the river. Though it has taken months of preliminary labour, the actual placing of the huge spans in position after once starting them took only ten minutes. The motion of the massive sections, despite ample grease, emitted a groaning which could be heard both at Sinoia and Eldorado and was impressive. In the launching process over 75 tons were practically balanced on a 3 foot basis while in motion." On 22nd June the first train (3 ft. 6 in. gauge) ran to Sinoia, Mr. George Pauling, the railway contractor, being aboard. And now Messrs. Elcombe and Co. were able to announce their intention of running "a most commodious wagonette from Sinoia to the Golden Kopje" to take out passengers and perishables beyond Sinoia Camp on the arrival of trains. The following month the building of their premises in Sinoia was well advanced and they pointed out that "visitors to the Sinoia Caves are now spared all inconvenience by being able to book right through, and even the necessary camping and commissariat will be provided." With the completion of this broad gauge line, the Ayrshire line became very much a subsidiary one, and the Press reported that a new engine had been provided early in the year—presumably of less power than the original two—to be used for the modified service, and a shed constructed for its stabling at what was now the terminus to the Ayrshire line. Banket Junction. Figure 5, a photograph of Banket Junction, shows, in the foreground, the 3 ft. 6 in. tracks leading to Sinoia and in the left background trucks standing on the 2 ft. terminus of the Ayrshire line. This photograph was taken early in 1916 by Mr. E. W. Alderson, A.R.P.S., who was Station Master at Banket Junction from 1915 to 1918. At the time the photograph was taken the Ayrshire rail track was in process of being removed, and Mr. Alderson had for the purpose two trucks, two bogies, a guards van and the new locomotive. The station shed had just been shifted from the west to the east side of the rails; wires for the telegraph had not yet been connected to the four insulators on the roof. Only the left half of the shed belonged to the Station Master; the larger right end section was the Post Office, also run by the Station Master.

Early in this year of 1914 there were said to be some two hundred farmers around Sinoia and there were complaints that there was no school house worth the name and a hall for meetings was very much needed; on 15th March, 1913, the Lomagundi Farmers' Association had voted a sum of £750 towards building one on a stand that had been donated by Government, next to that of Mr. Wilson, but now it was found that this had been sold to Mr. Peake and the British South Africa Company was asked to provide another site. In the event it was not until 1920 that a Hall was completed. The Eldorado

Branch of the Standard Bank was shifted to Sinoia early in 1914. On 30th July the first Village Management Board was appointed in Sinoia; the chairman was H. S. Keigwin (Assistant Magistrate) and the members S. R. Garrard, C. H. Dixon and Dr. J. M. D. Scott.

On 11th September, 1914, only about five weeks after the start of the First World War, there appeared in the local press a letter from Colonel Grey, M.L.C., who complained that there was a German fort only two to three days march from the Victoria Falls, yet "though the Nyasalanders have been fighting for some time with Germans in East Africa, there is no settled plan for action by Rhodesia, only a policy of masterly inactivity." It may be this that spurred an engineer on the Eldorado mine to make a gun from an old cam shaft, which was dubbed the Eldorado Spitfire. Four photographs of this gun appeared in the *Bulawayo Chronicle* of 20th November, 1914, with the description that "it is accurate up to 1,200 yards. At 900 yards it hit a target 7 x 7 feet, the shot of over ½ lb. penetrating the thick piece of iron. At 700 yards, using pieces of lead and iron, it blew the target to pieces." Its motive power was eight Africans who drew it with trek chains. No mention appears of its having gone into action.

This would seem the appropriate moment for a short account of the history of the roads into Lomagundi. Though there appears to have been some sort of track at places alongside the rail line to Banket Junction, resulting from the building of the Salisbury-Ayrshire railway, the recognised road into the area for years approximated to that originally taken by the Imperial troops in 1896, going from near Wellesley, over a portion of Little England, crossing the Umvukwe Range via Eyre's Poort (about seven miles north of the present crossing on Sutton Estate) and thence down to Banket Junction, or vaguely in the direction of Sinoia. The Eyre brothers had set up a trading store at the top of the pass, where prospectors wandering in could obtain vital supplies; they do not appear to have been farmers, for the country round about their original homestead is described as broken and rocky. It is just north of Umvukwe Oog. This pioneer road seems to have crossed Kilmacduagh, Malembwi and Templeton's Ranch. Local residents eventually began to take a hand to provide roads and drifts through the rivers, as official departments responsible did not seem to have the funds or staff. On 10th May, 1914, it was reported that Mr. Albert Peake, who by the previous January had himself "made" over 100 miles of road, all connected with well-established farming communities, was again gratuitously assisting the Roads and Mines Department in making roads eastwards of Banket Junction, and putting up milestones (made of cairns of stones with the numbers on a large stone balanced on top) from there up to Birkdale Farm (then owned by Mr. Hamilton G. Woods), number 1 being in Banket. Tenders called for in the *Gazette* for the cutting of trees on the proposed Banket Junction-Sipolilo route were for some reason cancelled on 14th September, 1914, and it was again left to local enterprise. The Umvukwe Farmers' and Ranchers' Association, which had come into existence the previous year and many of whose members were on the Lomagundi side of the dyke, pitched in to help. But it was not until 16th August, 1918, that the press was able to report that the road from Salisbury to Sinoia was at last in good order. O. C. Rawson had by then made a good drift through the Gwebi River

at Darwendale, and local farmers everywhere had helped either with gangs or with mealie meal for those working on the job. It was accepted that the accomplishment was mainly due to the Native Commissioner at Sinoia, Mr. H. S. Keigwin, whom Mr. Alderson recollects coming across in 1916 directing a gang of convicts on the construction. He elected to do this as there seemed to be no one else available. This was the route that more or less followed the railway line, and which was the main north road until the present one was completed, with its deviation eastwards at Inkomo, in the late 1950's.

Around 1907 and 1908 one finds references to a cattle trading post called variously "Sipoliloes" and "Sepolilos". On 12th October, 1923, appear in the *Rhodesia Herald* the first reports from a correspondent in what was by then "Sipolilo". By then there was a small police post and an Acting Assistant Magistrate there, and, until the end of the Second World War, the Ayrshire district came under that post. The road from Sipolilo that crosses the Umvukwe Range north of Eyre's Poort via the Mtorashanga Pass to Concession seems to have been in existence before 1914. It was later connected to Eldorado through the settlement of farmers around 1920 in that area. Some six bachelors who took up farms there under the Rider Haggard scheme gave this road link the almost official name of "The Street" due to their habit of proposing to go up, or down, the street to visit each other. One of them, W. R. Keevil, was responsible for cutting the road connecting his farm, Berhills Ranch, on the Street, with the Banket-Mtorashanga road not far from the Ayrshire mine. His murder in 1937 was one of the tragedies of Lomagundi; he had returned from Salisbury with cash to pay his own employees and those on the Murenza mine (worked by B. Minton on what is now Bakwe Kop farm) and unfortunately was roused from sleep by an African who was engaged in removing the keys of his safe from his trouser pocket and who then savagely murdered him. Good police work trapped the African who was eventually convicted in Sinoia and hanged in Salisbury.

It was not until the late 1930's that low level bridges, built with funds provided by the Beit Trustees, began to make the subsidiary roads safer for motoring. Residents of those days will recall how one had to learn by experience which drifts, even on main roads, had to be taken in reverse in the wonderful T model Fords, due to the gravity feed from petrol tank to carburettor. It was also about that time that a trip from Sinoia to Salisbury ceased to be a possible all-day adventure, thanks to the completion right through of the hard strips.

To return to general history, and the remaining items that concerned the war in the area. On 25th September, 1914, Mr. Alf Smith, who had become a J.P., was nominated leader of what was called Unit (Class III) for Local Defence, which was shortly converted into the Banket Rifle Club. Alf Smith had been a chemist and acquired fairly large land holdings in Lomagundi, including Wold Farm and Kildonan. He suffered from being unable to cool his body by normal perspiration, and so always carried an umbrella and was accompanied by an African with a can full of water with which he could be sprayed when his temperature rose too high. He first appears in the news on 1st August, 1912, when, in company with Mr. Selby Larter, who had been an employee of the Standard Bank when it first opened at Eldorado and now owned Dunphaile

Farm, he encountered five fully grown leopards on Wold Farm. Alf Smith comes into this history again in connection with the Muriel Mine. It should perhaps also be recorded that Selby Larter's brother, the late Cyril Larter, is said to have grown a crop of burley tobacco on his farm Bessfield Grange in 1913.

The *Rhodesia Herald* for 29th July, 1915, reported that in the High Court, Salisbury, Wm. Philippi and Co. had sought a provisional judgement against Lillian Alice Henry for rent of the Sinoia Hotel and for cancellation of the lease. The defendant argued that the plaintiffs were enemy subjects and therefore had no *locus standi*. This objection was upheld and the application dismissed. The sequel to this was that, on 17th August, 1918, Lezard and Co., "favoured with instructions from the Controller of Enemy Property" put on sale the three stands (each 100 x 120 ft.), buildings, furniture and goodwill of the Sinoia Hotel, which then consisted of six new and six old bedrooms, cook's room, bar, sitting room, dining room and store. Presumably the Henry family bought it in, for they owned it for many years thereafter.

The mines in Lomagundi were beginning to run down. In August, 1916, the Montrose, Union Jack and Golden Kopje (40 stamps) were linked under the ownership of the Golden Kopje Proprietary Mines Ltd., the output for the previous June having totalled £10,179. Early in 1917, with a production of around £6,000 a month, they were advertised to let on tribute. At that time the Ayrshire, with five stamps, run by J. Perhat, produced some £90 a month and the Eldorado £9,972. In May the Golden Kopje dropped to £818 from slags treated at the Falcqn Mine. In August Eldorado fell to £6,076; there were then twelve alluvial miners on the Angwa producing from £26 to £198 each.

To offset the fall in gold, in June that year came the excitement of discovery of chrome by the Peake brothers on Umvukwe Ranch, owned by them. Twenty-five miles were rapidly pegged, samples being said to run as high as 52 per cent, and talk of a branch railway to deal with the output began to be heard. In January, 1919, the Peake brothers caused further excitement by opening up 2,000 yards of an asbestos strike at the foot of the Umvukwe Range, which they called the Ethel Mine after the daughter of George Peake (who, some ten years later was destined, as Mrs. Southey, to die with her husband when their car fell off the Muneni River bridge on the Banket-Mtorashanga road one night). In a face of 120 feet fifty-six vertical seams of high grade asbestos were said to have been found and, as the ruling price of first grade ore was then £150 a ton, it was expected that this mineral and chrome would replace the dwindling gold output of Lomagundi. During part of this year (1919) what was now called the New Ayrshire (and it appeared on maps as such for some years) was run by Arnold and How with five stamps and produced from £250 to £350 of gold a month. In October it was registered by Murdoch Macauley as the Last Shot, by which name it is now shown on our maps. Macauley had no stamps and only treated the slimes. To anticipate, he died on 16th October, 1950, and next year his estate was wound up and the claim was transferred to Mr. P. E. N. Nicolle of Banket, in whose name it stands at the moment of writing. The final return for the Eldorado (under the original Rhodesia Exploration and Lomagunda Development Co.) was a clean-up in

October, 1919, worth £3,373. In June, 1920, it came into the hands of Messrs. Austen and J. Murdoch Eaton (who later became an M.L.A.), with an output of £799.

But it was agriculture that now began to put Lomagundi on the map, for in March, 1921, returns were published for 1920 showing that the district had reached third place in the country's record, for acreage under cultivation and for productivity. In June, 1922, it was reported that a Banket Farmers' Association had started and wished to fix its boundary with the original Lomagundi Association. In October, 1923, the Ayrshire-Sipolilo Farmers' Association held its first meeting at Two Rivers Ranch, on the Maquadzi, with Captain Spence, M.C., as chairman. Maize and, increasingly, cotton, were the main crops; small cotton ginneries sprang up in the settled areas in the next few years. Mechanisation had not yet arrived and trek oxen were the motive power on farms. Therefore a movement eastwards of the tsetse fly belt from the escarpment caused alarm. At a meeting of the Ayrshire-Sipolilo Farmers' Association on 5th July, 1924, Mr. J. Fraser Mackenzie stated that he had lost no less than nine spans of oxen the previous year through fly on his farm Chiwe. Those, such as Mr. Rawson, who had trekked cattle through from the north in the past, had known more or less where the fly belts were on either side of the Zambezi and took care to move their beasts through these during the night only, when the fly did not feed. By 1927 Jack Fraser Mackenzie had put in operation a tractor plough that took its power from electric cables slung over the field to be ploughed, the current being obtained from a steam engine; a fine piece of pioneering, though extremely expensive. His brother, Dick, was also pioneering in the cutting and export of Banket mahogany, some of which was installed in Rhodesia House in London, from a nearby farm, Allan Grange.

In the '20s several links with the past were severed. It was reported in early January, 1923, that Miss A. Montagu Salmond had been seen passing through Banket after a stay with the Kidwell family in Sinoia. This sturdy and adventurous pioneer had started the school at the Ayrshire mine in February 1908, and transferred to Eldorado with her school at the end of that year. She was often to be seen striding through the veld on her walks with a revolver at her side. No trace was found of the date she left Eldorado, but the correspondent who furnished this item to the press said that since the war she had been in Australia, New Zealand, Japan and Germany, and that she was then on her way to a teaching appointment in India.

On 1st August, 1923, there was reported the death in Sinoia hospital on 29th July of Mr. George Blacklaws, who came to that district in 1906, his activities being "confined mainly to the alluvial diggings on the Angwa where he was well known and much respected. This removes the last but one of the original 'Angwa Pirates', the last survivor of this gay band being Mr. A. E. Warry, now on the mica fields. Mr. Blacklaws was a native of Forfar, Scotland."

On 1st January, 1926, news reached Sinoia that Mr. A. E. Aukett, who was one of the first to take up a farm near Sinoia, having been on his farm Auk's Nest since 1909, had been found dead in a cave on a kopje. As there was only a small aperture giving access to this cave and the body was lying in a cleft some way down, it was decided to leave it there; wreaths were placed

inside and Mr. E. G. Howman, the local magistrate, conducted a service at the cave mouth.

The mica fields referred to above were near Miami and started producing in 1919. A sorting and grading centre was set up at Miami, where soon there was erected a hotel and store. Various items of interest in mining affairs took place in the early, and mid '20s. The Union and Rhodesia Trust Co. bought the chrome claims from the Peake brothers in April 1920 for £450,000, of which £130,000 was paid in cash and the balance was to be issued to the vendors as fully paid-up shares. It seems that then a British Asbestos-Chrome Co. Ltd. was formed with a capital of £2 million, and the shares of the previous company were to be allotted to this one within a period of four calendar months after a railway from the chrome area to Banket Junction had been opened and was in full working order. The matter came into the courts when, in November, 1922, the Board of Executors brought a case to recover a proportion of the commission of £45,000 due to the estate of a deceased "Natty" Arnold, who had been involved with his brother, S. A. Arnold, and H. G. Latilla, in the deal. The Peake brothers argued that, as no railway to the chrome had been constructed, they were precluded from dealing in any way with the share allotment, out of which this sum would be paid. Mr. J. Murdoch Eaton moved a resolution in the Legislative Assembly on the 23rd July, 1924, that this railway branch be built. On 1st January, 1926, a letter appeared in the *Rhodesia Herald* from Col. Frank Johnson in which he protested against a statement made in the Assembly by the Colonial Secretary (the Hon. W. M. Leggate, C.M.G.) that he, Col. Johnson, had proposed to build this chrome line though authority had never been given. He wrote that the facts were that, two years previously, Mr. Latilla had offered to build the line provided the grossly unfair chrome rates on the Rhodesia Railways were rectified, these being in practice a subsidy to the mines at Selukwe. In June, 1925, he himself had been pressed to build a private light rail line, but realised that the districts it passed through would need a public one. A detailed survey of the route had been made and he now asked the Minister of Public Works for permission to build the line without further delay, either as a public one or as a private mineral line. In fact the line, from Maryland to Kildonan, was built by the Railways and opened for traffic on the 2nd July, 1930.

It was some time therefore before the Lomagundi chrome could be profitably exploited, and a further set-back occurred when, on 28th February, 1923, it was announced that the Ethel asbestos mine was to close for the time being, the market having been completely disrupted as a result of drastic action recently taken by the French in the Ruhr Valley. But one European and forty Africans were to remain on the property.

Better mining news came two years later. The Miami mica was doing well and the *Rhodesia Herald* for 18th March, 1925, reported that a new hotel was being started there by Mr. Goldberg, and new stores and a butchery were being erected. The Mica Producers' Association held an annual meeting at the Grand Parade on the 8th when Mr. Sayers was nominated President. Mr. Goldberg had been President the first year. In 1925, the Southern Rhodesia Base Metals Corporation Ltd. was formed with a capital of £150,000, all issued, to acquire 18 blocks of claims in Lomagundi, including the Alaska

Copper Mine, in return for £30,000 in fully paid-up shares. On 23rd June, 1926, it was reported that the shares had risen to over £5 on the market as a result of a new discovery by the Company 65 miles west of Sinoia in a wild and remote district, which they intended to call the Copper Queen, and which they looked upon as potentially one of the really big mines of the world. Again this was timely for gold output continued to decline. For instance the returns for December, 1924, made no mention of the Ayrshire; Eldorado, now run by Mr. Murdoch Eaton alone, returned £642. In April, 1925, there was a clean-up of the Jolly Boys (R. L. Barratt) worth £57. The Golden Kopje (C. Brunton) fell to £229 in June, 1927, with a final clean-up the next month of £76.

The high prices for tobacco in 1925 and 1926 encouraged land settlement, and set older growers looking through the motor car catalogues, but soon thereafter it became a problem to sell the crop. In spite of ominous signs growers remained confident that Britain must buy their output. In 1926 there were sufficient settlers in the Sinoia area for a Lomagundi West Farmers' Association to be formed. In the first half of 1927 over 130 immigrants came to farm and a number of them settled in Lomagundi, including some who came out under the Empire Settlement Scheme. The first of seven block farm schemes in Lomagundi was started with the pegging by Government surveyors of twenty Crown Land farms in what was called the Dora Block, not far from the Ayrshire Mine (*see Appendix*).

On the 1st April, 1927, a post and telegraph office was opened at Banket Junction. There was still sufficient confidence in tobacco to cause a committee to be set up by Banket area growers to erect a grading shed at the Junction, with a capital of £7,500, but alarm began to be felt at the end of the year and the failure to sell the 1928 crop proved disastrous to many farmers, a number of whom left the country. Luckily, Rhodesia Railways now came to the rescue and enabled quite a few to keep their farms, and their staffs, by engaging them on sections of new line. Thus in 1929 some Lomagundi farmers, with their African employees, started working with George Pauling on the chrome line from Maryland to Kildonan. Then a number went on with Pauling to Kazungula to construct the Zambesi Sawmills line between Kazungula and Livingstone; for a further two years they found employment around Lobangwe on the rail deviation.

Despite the slump, the Banket Farmers' Hall, the site for which had been made available by the Government at a very low price and which had been kept clear by using it for three tennis courts, was opened on 20th May, 1929, by the Governor, Sir Cecil Rodwell, K.C.M.G.

One of Lomagundi's tragedies occurred in March, 1929, when the Government Medical Officer at the Sinoia Hospital, Dr. Barrett, went out to shoot wild pig in a friend's mealie lands; through an oversight there was no warning to the African maize guard, who mistook the doctor for a marauding pig and shot him dead. This was a sad loss to the district, for, in spite—or because—of the pink quinine tablet that everyone took at sundown time (these being obtainable at all post offices in brown bottles of 100 for 2/3) malaria was rife, and the doctor had become an expert on this disease.

Some of the more recent advocates for the continuation of the railway

from Sinoia to Kafue, in Northern Rhodesia, may be surprised to learn that a report from Kafue to the *Bulawayo Chronicle*, dated 1st August, 1912, stated that "Messrs. Pauling and Co.'s surveying party, headed by Mr. Buncombe, arrived there [*Kafue*] on the 2nd. inst., having traversed the route of the proposed new railway, Eldorado to Kafue. From reports it appears certain that the junction on this side will be about halfway between the bridge and Nega Nega Siding." This would appear to be a piece of wonderful optimism, seeing that the Beira, Mashonaland and Rhodesia Railways did not start to widen the gauge of the 2-ft. track from Salisbury to Eldorado till 22nd May, 1911.

The case for this rail link from Sinoia to Kafue became of national interest when it was made a live issue in the general election held in September, 1928. In pre-election speeches a number of candidates for the Rhodesia Party (which won) came out in its favour; but as the second Moffat Ministry, which resulted from the election, appeared apathetic, a National Sinoia-Kafue Committee was set up at a public meeting held in Salisbury on 23rd August, 1929. At the meeting it was stated that the railway Directorate had ruled the line out on grounds of expense: the report said that in 1915 it would have cost £2,100,000. General Hammond, who carried out an enquiry in 1925, had estimated its cost then at £2,600,000. Now it was said to have risen to £3,000,000. Government Ministers said it would, be premature to construct now, though some of their back-benchers were in favour. In January, 1930, the National Committee changed its name to the Sinoia-Kafue and Beit Bridge Committee. On 16th April that year Mr. Murdoch Eaton, M.L.A., proposed that the link be constructed, but his resolution was lost by 17 votes to 10 and, though it has at various times been raised since then, particularly by resolutions at Congresses of the Lomagundi Regional Development and Publicity Association—which was formed in 1949—that was the nearest the proposal has come to receiving Government support. However, by 1st August, 1930, the line had been extended beyond Sinoia to Zawi; the Lion's Den Siding on this route, where it crossed the main north road, proved of value when Kariba Dam came to be built.

In the 1931/32 season it was thought that, with the new U4 variety of seed, cotton could once more become the staple crop, but low prices, disease and insects proved otherwise. Then over-production of tobacco in the 1933/34 season brought legislation forcing growers to sell 20 per cent of their crop, at prices varying from ½d. to 2d. a lb., at the old Cotton Ginnery still standing, but in other use, in Salisbury on Fourth Street, near Manica Road.

During this period mining in Lomagundi also slumped seriously. The Miami mica fields continued normal production, but the total gold returns for May, 1929, came to only £544, and in June fell further to £450, including a final clean-up of the Eldorado worth £207. Mr. Alf Smith, whom we last met in 1914, now comes back into our story. Like many others, he employed an African prospecting boy. After he had ploughed a land for maize production on what was then a portion of his farm Kildonan, he or his boy spotted in the middle of it some gold-bearing quartz. Smith showed this to some of his friends but neglected to do anything about it, or to tell his wife, before he died not long thereafter. Mrs. Smith later sub-divided and sold off portions of the farm, including the section containing the land with the reef. A near-by store keeper,

Mr. R. C. Kenaird, later engaged Mr. Smith's prospector and learned of the find on the latter's farm. When the surrounding land had remained fallow for the statutory twelve months, he pegged and registered his claim in 1932, naming it after his daughter Muriel. Two years later he sold it for £12,000 to the East Transvaal Consolidated Mining Co., and in 1946 it was re-registered in the name of the Coronation Syndicate; it has since developed into Lomagundi's most successful mine. It is about 22 miles, across country, east of the old Ayrshire. The ore is highly refractory and much of it had to be sent abroad for refining. Before the last war it went to Germany, and later to the United States, and it was strange to see piles of the small heavy sacks of ore lying about the platform of Banket Junction awaiting dispatch. The gold output of this mine was worth over £250,000 in 1963 and it could exist on its production of electrolytic copper alone. In February, 1964, a blast-furnace smelter was officially opened which now processes concentrates at the rate of one ton an hour, producing copper matte of a grade of 45 per cent to 55 per cent, according to press reports, which also state that development includes the installation of a main haulage on the twenty-second level at a depth of 2,235 feet. This haulage is already 1,000 feet in length, and is to go to between 1,200 and 1,300 feet. With its completion it is proposed to sink a sub-vertical shaft from the twenty-second level for a further 2,500 to 3,000 feet for further exploration of the mine in depth.

The local Road Councils date from the early '30s. An attempt was made in 1930 to form an Eldorado Road Council, which would embrace also the whole Ayrshire district, but this failed due to farmers' fears of the penalties imposed for non-payment of levies. When it was formed some years later, it was responsible for eventually persuading the Rhodesia Railways finally to give up their right to the old Ayrshire rail line from the Junction to the mine and allow it to be put in good order as a road.

Farmers in the Ayrshire district will recall the disturbance caused during the 1933 grading season by the fantastic affair of Melek, an African employee on a local farm who developed a grievance against his employers, poisoned their water supply and decamped with a bicycle and a rifle. The Police became fully interested after Melek unnecessarily fired on a European who was motoring through the area; they offered a reward for information leading to his capture and set up a headquarters on a local farm. For several weeks lorries full of African police careered around following various clues, and farmers were now and then asked to turn out with all their employees to comb areas of the veld where Melek had last been reported to have been seen. He had a sense of humour and let it be known that he amused himself by watching at close quarters the activities of Police and farmers who were plotting to capture him. Though he was nearly caught one day Melek managed eventually to cross into Portuguese territory with the rifle—and normal farming activities were thankfully resumed.

Though flue-cured tobacco was a main crop by 1939, prices paid did not allow much profit for expansion or the payment of past debts and that year a number of Lomagundi farmers were again assisted to retain their employees by being engaged, with them, to dig and wash tin at the Kamativi Mine over the

Gwaai River near Dett. The Second World War, in spite of the partial ban on the enlistment of tobacco growers, caused a number to get away on active service, their farms being taken care of by wives or relatives until they returned.

Mr. O. C. Rawson had in due course naturally acquired a considerable holding of land around Darwendale, and had a kind of private settlement scheme established on parts of it; he was by some considered a hard taskmaster, but his trainees almost all turned out to be most successful tobacco growers. In 1942 he persuaded the Government to make an exchange of 23,624 acres of Rekomitje Farm, which he claimed had been rendered useless for farming by chrome mining, for 17,718 acres of land on the Karoi plateau. This raised a wave of protest, not only in Lomagundi but also in Salisbury. The Member for Lomagundi, the late G. H. Hackwill, M.P., who had for some time advocated the Karoi district as suitable for block settlement, threatened to resign from the Government party in protest at the exchange. The Department of Lands had, before the war, been considering the possibility of development there but had been deterred by rumours of its unsuitability for flue-cured tobacco for various reasons, including something called "Karo disease". After the war, when the popularity of Rhodesia with immigrants emphasised the need for new settlement schemes, the fact that a man of Mr. Rawson's standing and experience should put such value on land there brought Karoi again into favour, with the result that 171 farms were surveyed, 90 of them being taken up by ex-Service men. The area proved to be very healthy and excellent for tobacco, and in a few years a small township came into being on the main north road.

This period brought an increase in population in all farming areas, with the return of those who had been on active service, new settlers, and established farmers engaging assistants and pupils and, in some cases, subdividing their farms. By 1946, for instance, there were some 125 Europeans in the Ayrshire district, which then separated from the affiliation with Sipolilo; and it became possible to start an Ayrshire Club on Nyarapinda Farm, eight miles from the old Ayrshire mine. This was officially opened on the 16th June, 1948, by the Governor, Sir John Kennedy. It was so well supported that eventually a theatre seating 146, with a very adequate stage, was also built on the Club premises and officially opened by the Rt. Hon. Viscount Malvern, on the 5th October, 1956. This fine little theatre on a farm must be unique in Africa. In 1947, due to approaches made to the authorities by the Ayrshire Farmers' Association, the anomaly of the name of Banket "Junction", where there was no longer any trace of the junction with the Ayrshire railway, was removed and the place became officially just "Banket".

About this time Mr. K. J. C. Fox, the owner of the farm Raffingora, about six miles west of the Ayrshire Club, had the vision of establishing a township, and so in the period between 1946 and 1958 there came into being there a successful garage and engineering works, a large European and African general store and butchery, a hotel aptly named the Settlers Inn, and a church named St. Stephen's, with a gold tobacco leaf as weather vane, which was consecrated by Archbishop Paget in December, 1956. The post office and telephone exchange, built in 1955, has the name "Raffingora" and this misleads

people into thinking that the name applies to the club, theatre, and the whole district, whereas these still bear the historic name of "Ayrshire".

As will be seen from the appendix, between 1946 and 1963 a number of blocks of land were opened for settlement in Lomagundi by the Department of Lands, this being made possible by the improving success in cultivation of high quality flue-cured tobacco there.

This story appears to affect only the European population, but in fact it very much concerns the Africans. Until as late as 1925, Lomagundi was very sparsely settled by an indigenous Bantu population. The kraals of the Mashona were very small and few and far between. The success of flue-cured tobacco, which requires about one male labourer per acre and, during the height of the curing and grading season, gives employment to all the labourers' women and children who wish to accept it, has provided good wages, medical services, and even education for their children at the many farm schools, for a great many thousand Africans in many parts of Southern Rhodesia, but particularly in Lomagundi. This is especially true for many from Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, for whom there has always been a welcome on the farms as the local Mashona could not provide all the labour required; it is no exaggeration to say that, until at least 1934, many of these foreign Africans met modern civilisation for the first time on our tobacco farms. The average number of immigrant Africans into Southern Rhodesia between the years 1941 and 1946 increased by 40 per cent, according to official estimates, and many of these came to Lomagundi. In the same period, the number of male Africans engaged in agriculture in the district rose from 18,900 to 22,906. Yet the total indigenous African population, all ages and sexes, of Lomagundi as at the 31st August, 1948, was given officially as 62,100, or just over seven per square mile.

The value today of flue-cured tobacco produced in Lomagundi may be judged from recently issued figures of sales by districts in 1963. This district sold over 53 million pounds—well over a third of the total Southern Rhodesian crop—with a value of more than £11,000,000.

As a result of a meeting of local public bodies in Sinoia on the 21st January, 1949, convened by Mr. G. H. Hackwill, M.C., M.P., and addressed by the Hon. E. C. F. Whitehead, a further public meeting held on the 21st April that year brought into being the Lomagundi Regional Development and Publicity Association, with, as Chairman, Mr. Hackwill, and as Hon. Secretary, Mr. A. F. B. Jones, a post the latter long held. This body was mainly responsible for many improvements in local social and medical services for all races, for having the Sinoia Caves taken over as a National Park and greatly improved, for acquiring an excellent High School in Sinoia which had long been an urgent need, and it has recently taken on the task of looking after the matter of amenities for tourists to the Kariba area. It is also to be credited for the success, after years of struggle, of getting the Mana Pools area declared a game reserve.

The building of Kariba Dam, started in 1956, and the formation of the great lake, have brought more tourist attractions to Lomagundi; there will soon be two more big game reserves available to the public here near the shore of the lake, a matter of great importance now that the big game of Africa is being steadily destroyed elsewhere. Until about 1930 herds of eland, sable and

kudu were frequently to be seen in most parts of Lomagundi, but closer settlement eventually drove them all away, and the new game parks will, it is to be hoped, now allow them to multiply again. It is perhaps of interest that, in 1905, the press reported attempts to domesticate the eland in Lomagundi.

In 1947 MTD (Mangula) Ltd. took over the old Molly and Nora copper mines near the Hunyani River, north of Sinoia. Now, the output of ore, produced more cheaply than any in Northern Rhodesia, is steadily increasing. It is all transported by road the forty-odd miles to the Alaska Mine for refining. Mangula has become a small township across the river opposite Raffingora.

In the early 1950's the Electricity Supply Commission was able to carry its power lines into a number of farming areas in Lomagundi, from transmission points at Banket, Sinoia and Mtorashanga (the centre of the African Chrome Mines Co.), and so brought the blessing of electrical power to farms for pumping, milling, lighting and, for the housewives, the joy of electric cookers, refrigerators and deep freezers. The linesmen soon earned a high reputation of being prepared to turn out at any time, in any weather, even sometimes at considerable personal risk, to repair breaks in the line due to storms or veld fires. The 20-foot tarmac road from Salisbury to Chirundu, completed soon after 1960, put the final civilising touch to Lomagundi.

In spite of the slump in chrome due to Russian dumping at a cut price in 1963, five blocks of claims still manage to sell this mineral. Small quantities of mica continue to be produced in Miami, and three producers of beryllium exist near there. Three old-time gold mines are still registered, the "D Troop", thirty miles north-west of Sinoia, the "St. Leger" on Sholliver Farm, and the "Eureka" in the Sipolilo Reserve, which had an output worth some £4,300 in 1963.

As will be obvious, most of the material for this article was obtained from old numbers of the *Rhodesia Herald* and the *Bulawayo Chronicle*, on record in the National Archives. Thanks are due to several individuals who answered queries put to them, and to the Mines and Lands Departments and Rhodesia Railways. It is unfortunate that railway records prior to 1930 were destroyed in the London office by enemy action during the last war, so almost all that part of the story is mainly compiled from items in the press. Obviously, such a history cannot be fully complete; it is regretted if any items that loom large in some people's memories have been omitted.

APPENDIX

*Occupied Farms allocated to settlers in the Lomagundi District compiled from their records by the Department of Lands*

(Note: The following gives only the original allocation of farms and. does not take into account any further sub-divisions that may have occurred later. It would seem therefore that the total number now must be greater than that given by this list.)

*Occupied Farms in Blocks*

Period	Block	District	Number occupied	Scheme	Number of grantees
1926-1940	Dora Block	Lomagundi	18	Empire Settlement	5
1946-1952	"	"	2	—	—
1938-1940	Karoi Block	Urungwe	2	—	—
1946-1952	" "	"	127	Ex Service-men's Scheme No. 1	90
1953-1963	" "	"	42	—	—
1946-1952	Doma Block	Lomagundi	46	Ex-Service-men's Scheme No. 1	30
1953-1963	" "	"	21	—	—
1948-1952	Horseshoe Block	Sipolilo	13	Ex-Service-men's Scheme No. 1	9
1953-1957	" "	"	4	—	—
1946-1952	Victory Block	Sipolilo	18	Ex-Service-men's Scheme No. 1	15
1961-1963	Tengwe Block	Urungwe	54	Young Rhodesian Scheme No. 5	20
1962-1963	Vuti Block	Urungwe	67	—	—
Other Farms Occupied					
1915-1940	Lomagundi		118	Empire Settlement Scheme and Ex-Service-men's Scheme No. 1	8
1946-1952	"		87	Ex-Service-men's Scheme No. 1	26
1953-1963	"		24	—	—
1917-1940	Sipolilo		2	—	—
1946-1952	"		12	Ex-Service-men's Scheme No. 1	1
1953-1963	"		4	—	—
1946-1952	Urungwe		9	Ex-Service-men's Scheme No. 1	7
1953-1963	"		11	" "	1

# Sofala

by R. W. Dickinson

Twenty miles south of Beira, on a wide stretch of lonely beach, lie the crumbling remnants of the first Portuguese fort built on the east coast of Africa—Fortaleza de S. Caetano. It seems to emphasise its isolation by its position—three miles from the rest huts of Nova Sofala and about a mile from the Administration, and fully visible only at low tide. The coast here has changed dramatically—the sea has encroached until the fort is now usually under water, but even in 1505, when Pero dAnhaya began to build it, the position must have been very isolated.

Maps of as late as 1864 show that the fort stood on a low sandy promontory in the delta of what was once a great river, probably the Buzi, which now finds its way to the sea twenty miles further north. The position, although forcing dAnhaya to build on sand, had two great advantages: it enabled the Portuguese to command the anchorages and entrances to Sofala Bay, and it gave a clear field of fire all round. The effectiveness of the second advantage may be judged by the fact that throughout the attacks of rival Europeans, Arabs and African tribes some of which, like Gungunyana and the Vatuva, ravaged to within gunshot of the fort, the building was never captured.

The recently published *Documents on the Portuguese in Mozambique and Central Africa, 1497-1506* (note 1) give a lively picture of the building of the fort. DANhaya had six ships, three of which were constantly on patrol to protect the builders and the garrison while three continued on their journey to India to load up a spice cargo. Disease was constant and quantities of beads and brass bangles were set aside to buy supplies for the sick. Six deaths a month seems to have been a normal occurrence. The garrison of the fortress included the Captain, his men, the Vicar and two chaplains, a factor, a warden, a keeper of the armoury and his men, a cobbler, a physician, interpreters, seven carpenters, seven masons, a quarryman and (rather disproportionately) three women camp followers: these were the pioneer days. Religion, defence and construction were all well catered for. The lists of trade goods make interesting reading and July of 1506 must have seen a trade boom at Sofala—after various items of clothing come 12 books of foolscap bound in parchment all eaten away by rats, 12 slaves, 8,618 brass bangles, 42 barber's brass basins and 91 brass chamber pots—somewhere in Africa some really indestructible relics of Sofala await the archaeologist!

D'Anhaya pursued rather different tactics towards the Moors from those indulged in by Vasco da Gama—d'Anhaya tried to win their friendship with gifts. In less than a year, however, tension mounted and on 19th May, 1506, dAnhaya had to set up a blockade of Moorish shipping to secure his supplies, and on 11th June of the same year a visitor from Portugal found dAnhaya dead and the fortress laid waste. The information is given in a letter to the King of Portugal written by Pero Quaresma who was on a voyage from

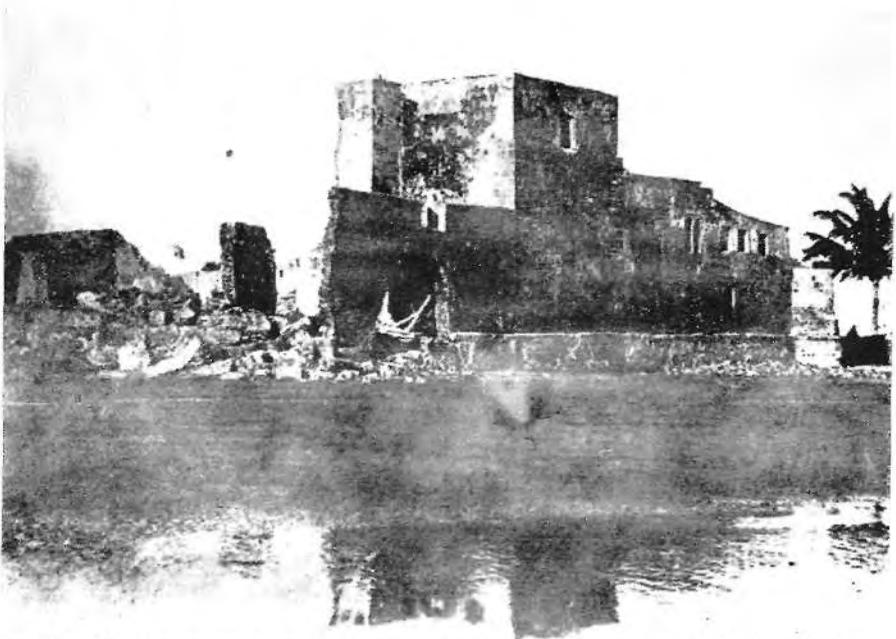


Figure 1. The fortress of S. Caetano at Sofala in 1904; from "A cidade da Beira". Beira, Comissão de administração urbana, 1934.

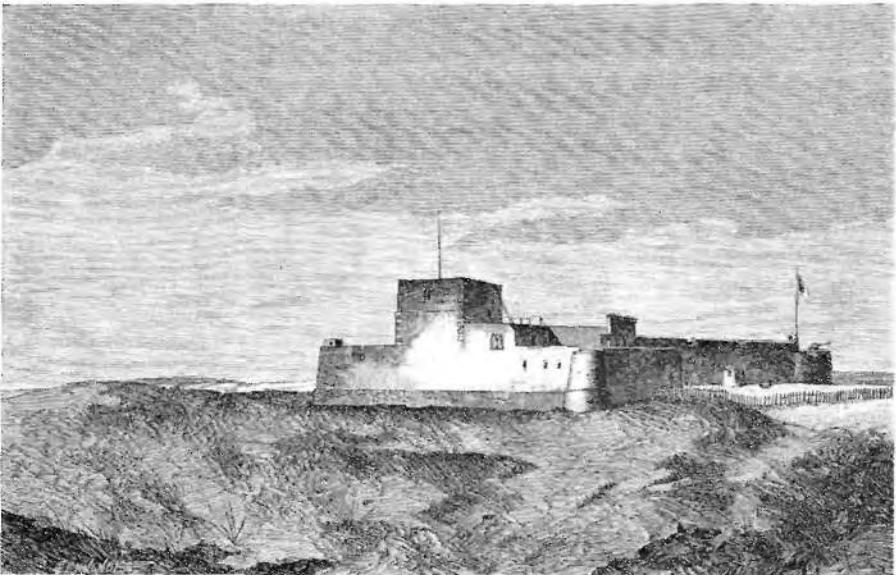


Figure 2. South and east faces, 1885.

Lisbon to Sofala and Mozambique. He reached Sofala on 11th June, 1506. "We found the fortress laid waste and Pero d'Anhaya dead and the provost and seventy-six men without supplies as Your Highness will see from the letter sent by Manuell Fernandez who is captain there; Cide Barbudo sent me into the caravel whilst he left for India, leaving me in the fortress, for which I with my men shall make a wall with the timber from the moat, and I stayed there till the Moors made peace with the fortress . . ." (note 2).

The fort was rebuilt and was constantly under native attack throughout its 400 years—it was indeed Portugal's extreme outpost on the east coast, but so well was the position chosen that the fort never again suffered defeat, except at the hands of stone-robbers and storms.

The sea accomplished what the enemies of Portugal failed to do—the destruction of a monument which stood for 400 years as testimony to the perseverance and courage of Pero d'Anhaya and his men.

In 1904 as can be seen in fig. 1 the tower of d'Anhaya and the east defences were still complete; the west side of the fort had been battered into submission—one wonders how much a single event was responsible for the destruction: the shock-waves from the eruption of Krakatoa in 1883.

In 1904 Beira was being built and stone for the foundations of buildings and for road surfaces was at a premium. Now the last sordid chapter of the fort was reached. Father Raphael organized innumerable journeys by sea between Sofala and Beira, wrenching the limestone blocks from the fort and dumping them ignominiously into the foundations of the Cathedral and the Tribunal (note 3). It was impossible to save this historical monument, but if only the priestly builder had diverted a little of his frantic energy from stone-removal to a few diagrams, photographs or notes, historians today would be the richer, rather than distinctly the poorer, by his efforts.

D'Anhaya chose the position because it afforded surveillance and defence but why choose Sofala? I believe there can only be one reason: he chose Sofala because the Arabs were there—it was the southernmost tip of the Zenj empire. One would expect, therefore to find some relics of the Arab occupation, and one would expect to find them very close to the ruined fort, for the new conquerors would, for prestige and control, surely build their fort close to the Arab centre. The only evidence now visible of the 500 years of Arab domination is a tomb held in great veneration by local Africans and a place of pilgrimage. The tomb is one of a few with squared cement kerbs, and over it, about 30 years ago, a brick shelter was raised (note 4). Pilgrims, according to their means, leave either a rich silk covering over the canopy of the grave or a piece of cloth on a nearby tree. On a recent visit I counted 53 silk coverings.

Two traditions exist about the identity of the Arab buried there. I was told recently, by the African custodian, Mustafa Dines, that this is the tomb of Saide Abdul Raman, a trader who came from Turkey with four dhows in 1500 and established Shafi Mohammedanism in Sofala. Dora Earthy however, recounts that in 1931 her African informant gave the name of 'the famous Arab who died 400 years ago' as Sufo (note 5). This bears an odd resemblance to Zufe, the king of Sofala whom d'Anhaya killed (note 6). Both names may have connections with the name 'Sofala'.

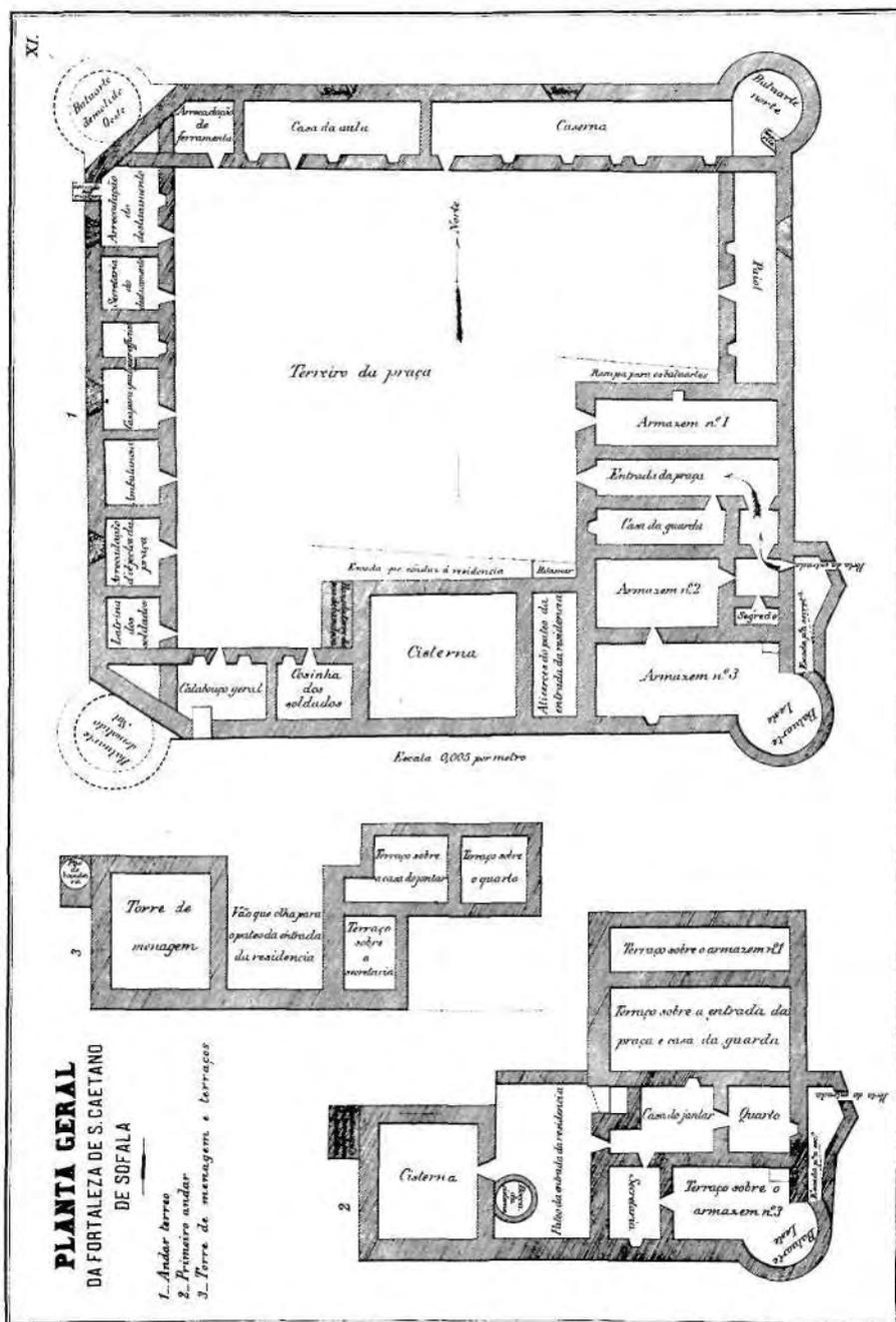


Figure 3. Plan of the fort in 1885.

No remains of buildings of the Arab time can be seen, and I offer two possible explanations for this. The settlement may have been of pole and dagga construction and would thus have entirely disappeared through the ravages of the sea. If more substantial remains still exist, they may now be permanently under water, probably east of the fort, or under the sand dunes to the north-east.

Despite the ravages of the sea and of the builders of Beira, a good deal of the outlines of the fort can still be seen on the sand. A plan in the office of the Commandant at Nova Sofala shows a building 240 feet square with a round turret at each corner, a double-storey section facing the open sea (the 'torre de menagem'), a 17 ft. wide sentry walk behind the walls and gun embrasures on walls and turrets. In the centre was an open parade ground, and round it were the living quarters, while to the east of the tower lay the armouries. An extension to the east, in the form of a walled courtyard approximately 200 ft. by 50 ft. protected the entrance.

As the sea gradually encroached on the west, the round turrets must have disappeared, for a plan of 1885 does not show them. This later plan which is reproduced here (figure 3), together with sketches of the fort (figures 2 and 4) gives more detail than the earlier one (note 7).

The plan does not agree in certain details with the side views. The plan for instance, gives only six gun embrasures ('Setteria')—while an extra one on the seaward wall appears in the sketch (figure 2), together with a pill box containing a cannon north of the entrance. The line of the wall flanking the east entrance does not tally in sketch and plan, and the north wall in the sketch (figure 4) is certainly not the neat affair of the plan but a rather botched repair: one can only assume that the sketches are truly contemporary with the visit of a gunboat in 1885 and that the plan is an adaption of an earlier plan. The axis of the fort lies north and south in this plan, and it is typical of the discrepancies one constantly encounters in the various diagrams that there is a difference of 45° in the lie of the fort figured in a plan of 1864 reproduced in the *Historia Militar e Politica dos Portugueses em Moçambique* (note 8). This can hardly be attributed to a hurricane.

Let me turn now to what can be seen on the ground today. The tower (see 1 in figure 6) was built of limestone blocks and the mortar here has defied the attentions of the stone robbers. Where the stone came from is a mystery: some say the blocks were brought from Portugal as ballast for the ships—this would certainly include those carved with the arms of Portugal. Another tradition asserts that much building stone came from Kilwa. The only source of stone to be seen at present is a limestone quarry at Nova Sofala. A document of 1506 mentions a quarryman and seven masons. The rubble littering the site consists mainly of cobbles, and there seems to be no local source for these.

In the remains of the tower an arch can still be distinguished, lined with bricks. Above this arch the small stone bearing the arms of Portugal, now to be seen in the garden of the Commandant, would probably be mounted. The large armorial stone which decorated the outer gateway (see figure 5) is now in Lourenco Marques. The girdle walls must have been much less substantial than the tower, and only the south-east turret (2 in figure 6) can now be identified.

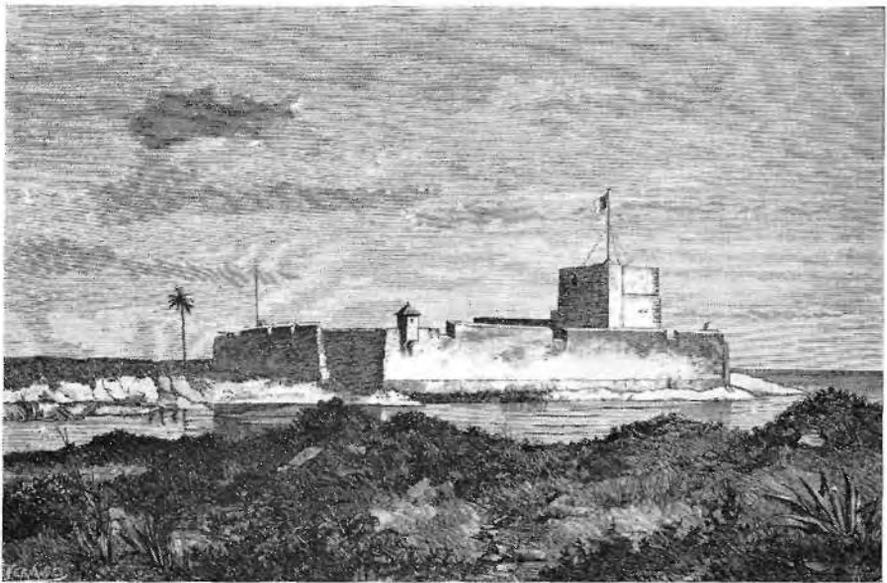


Figure 4. North and west faces, 1885.

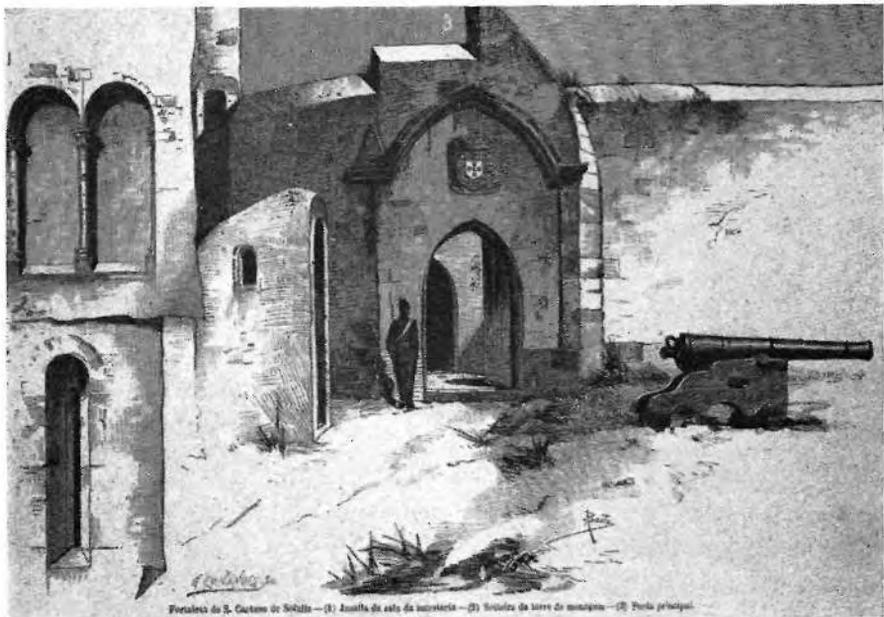


Figure 5. The entrance gate, 1885.

On the west (see note 9) a portion of internal wall face remains (3). The west, the south and the east walls (4) are now represented by a mound of rubble, in which the Indian Ocean trade beads and broken pottery ranging from Ming export ware of the early 16th Century to relics of modern picnics are constantly being exposed by the sea.

The most popular bead seems to have been the Indian red cane bead, varying from two to six to the inch. But many of the types described by Caton Thompson (see note 10) can be recognised—the pale yellow ones, type 2a, pale blue, type 4a, and dark blue, 4d, occur.

On the west mound of rubble a 5-foot line of log stumps protrude, forming part of what must have been an early stockade (5). The construction of the fort took 53 years, and in the early stages a wooden rampart which could be quickly erected would be a necessary expedient, and inside this, the stone tower would rise (see note 11).

About a third of the way along the eastern mound the gateway of the fort can be discerned as a gap (6). East of the tower and within the ramparts is the site of the armouries where rusted cannon balls and cannisters of shot can be chipped from the marine encrustation which binds them (7). In the north-east corner of the ruin field lie three drums of a column, reducing in diameter from 3 ft. 6 ins. to 1 ft. 6 ins. but no such feature appears in any plans or reconstructions (8). In the centre of the northern limit of the ruin field (no line of rubble exists here) is what appears to be another entrance, although no plan gives this and the Commandant's plan places a water tank here (9).

At the west corner is a puzzling block of cemented rubble, 4 ft. by 5 ft. square, plastered on three sides and pierced by a cylindrical hole 2 ft. 6 ins. in diameter (10). From the plan in the Commandant's office, this could well be part of the chimney from the west wall of the 'torre de menagem', or a vent from the latrine in the 'Cala bouço geral', according to figure 3.

About 200 yards north of the fort the sea occasionally uncovers the stone bases of small houses with the usual litter of broken pottery similar to that found in the fort (11). Another tide covers this evidence as though it never existed, and with this in mind it is always possible that some strong tide will uncover the remains of the Portuguese village of Old Sofala and even afford us a glimpse of Arab remains. Two tasks are urgent: the photographing from the air of the ruin field at a low spring tide, with the sun in position to give us the shadows of the rubble mounds, and a close examination of the fascinating mangrove swamps and sand dunes along the present shore-line for any evidence of the old settlements.

#### NOTES

1. *Documents on the Portuguese in Mozambique and Central Africa, 1497-1840; v.1, 1497-1506.* Lisbon, National Archives of Rhodesia and Nyasaland and Centro de Estudos Historicos Ultramarinos, 1962.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 627.
3. In 1957 Sr Octavio de Oliveira of Beira, after intensive study of the records of the Franciscans, produced a paper on the life of Father Rafael, Maria da Assuncoa, later Bishop of Limira. Father Rafael was one of the three pioneer Franciscan Fathers who landed in Beira in 1898. From 1904, when the fortress of S. Caetano at Sofala was

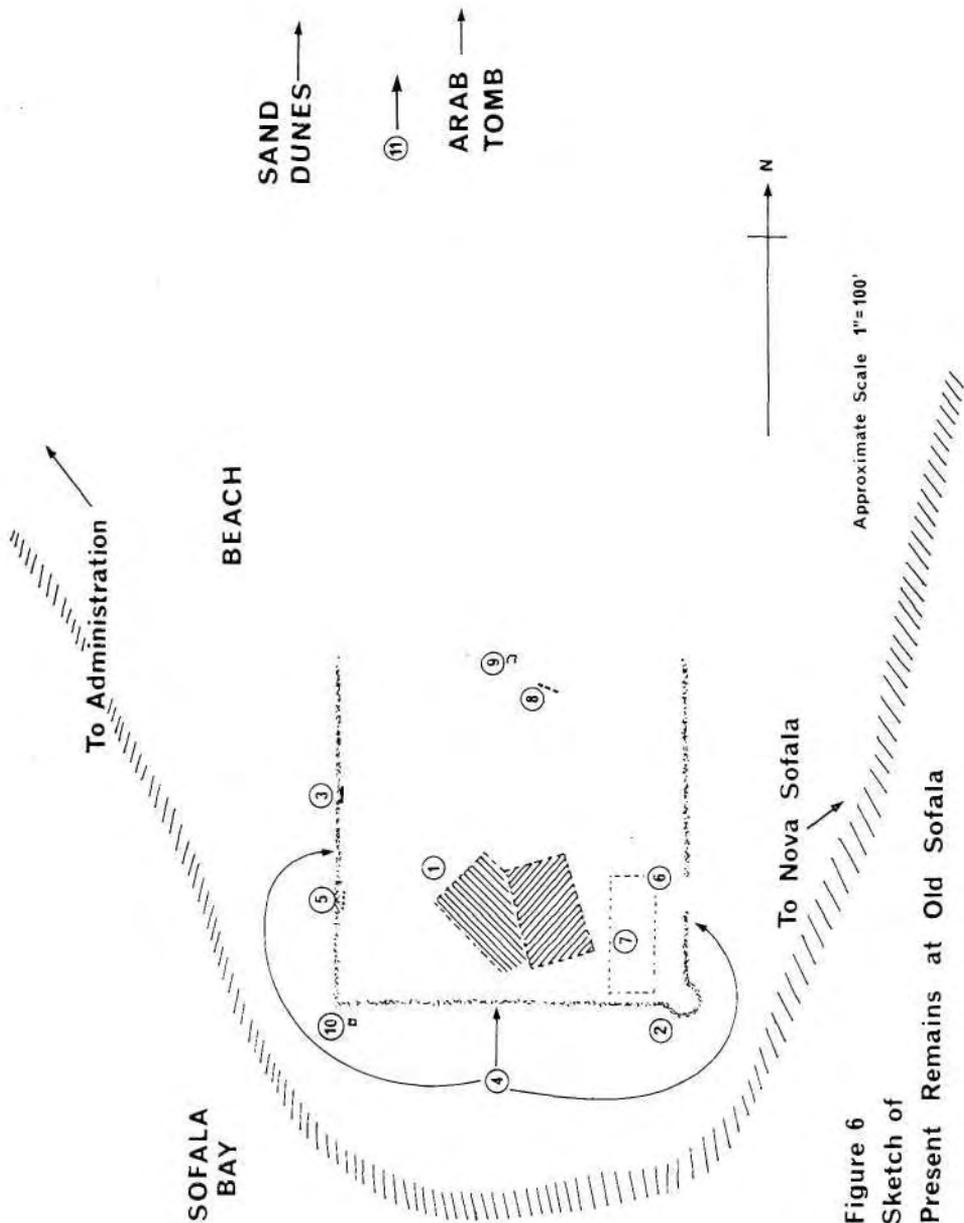


Figure 6  
Sketch of  
Present Remains at Old Sofala

still reasonably complete, this Franciscan Father ordered load after load of stone to be removed from Sofala to Beira until the once proud fortress assumed the wretched appearance we know today. Every stone block that could be detached was torn from the walls of the fortress by an African prison gang and transported in the steam tug boat appropriately called the "Ophir". In Beira the stone was used not only in building the cathedral but was also put into the roads of the city.

I am indebted to Snr de Oliviero for allowing me to read his unpublished manuscript and for his kind permission to use his findings.

4. See E. D. Earthy, "The VaNdau of Sofala", in *Africa*, v. 4, 1931, p. 223-4.
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Documents on the Portuguese*. . . . , op. cit, p. 91.
7. Figures 2, 3, 4, and 5 are reproduced from *Relatorio da viagem da Canhoneira Rio Lima de Lisboa a Mozambique*. Lisbon, Imprensa Nacional, 1889. I am indebted to Sr Octavio de Oliveira, of Beira, who kindly loaned the book to me and permitted photographic reproductions to be made.  
The views give the authentic impression of the flat featureless coastline which contrasts strongly with the romanticised sketches such as "Sofala at the end of the 16th century" reproduced in H. Tracey, *Antonio Fernandes* . . . Lourenco Marques, Imprensa Nacional, 1940, with its vista of non-existent mountains.
8. See J. J. Teixeira Botelho. *Historia militar e politico des Portugueses em Moçambique de 1833 aos nossas dias*. 2a ed. Lisbon, Centro tipografico colonial, 1936; at p. 80.
9. The bearings relate to the plan in figure 3 and the sketch in figure 6.
10. G. Caton Thompson. *The Zimbabwe culture*. Oxford, Clarendon press, 1931.
11. *Documents on the Portuguese* . . . . , op. cit. p. 93.

# Operations around Mpepo, German East Africa, 1917

by H. A. Cripwell

Two critics in their reviews of one of the two latest works on the German East African campaign of World War I both head them with the word 'forgotten'—"A campaign better forgotten" by Peter Suffolk in *Punch* and "Forgotten front" by Christopher Sykes in the (London) *Sunday Times*. The subject of their reviews is *German East* by Brian Gardner, published by Cassell; what he has written covers the whole conduct of operations from 1914 to 1918. I quote from the introduction: ". . . the first general account of the whole of this campaign from the point of view of *both sides* [my underlining]. Some small actions and columns have been omitted. Information about them is scanty; much of it inaccurate—even official records *being now recognised as frequently doubtful and misleading* [my underlining]". If that can be said of the whole how much more likely are the parts to be mis-described, forgotten for a while but there for some interested person to delve into in the years to come?

In the *Sunday Times*, of the 21st July, 1963, there was an article headed "World War One Fever", opening like this:- "One of the greatest offensives of the first world war is taking place today. August 4, 1964, will see the fiftieth anniversary of the 1914-18 Armageddon, and British publishers, television executives, film producers and scholars have the date circled in red". *The First World War* is an illustrated history by A. J. P. Taylor, published by Hamish Hamilton, which has been reviewed in the paper mentioned as "Brilliant and bitter". *German East* has been followed by *Duel for Kilimanjaro*, by Leonard Mosley, published by Wiedenfeld and Nicolson, another with the slant leaning even more towards the Germans' successful opposition to British attack. All this seems to have been set on foot by R. Meinertzhagen's *Army Diary, 1899-1926*, published by Oliver and Boyd.

A small column with small actions was the part taken by the Northern Rhodesia Police in the Field, under C. H. Fair, D.S.O., in operations round Mpepo against Aumann in the second half of 1917. It may be wondered why Fair's name has not been prefixed by rank; he was a captain in the N.R.P. under date 28th October, 1914, had been granted the temporary rank of major on the 14th January, 1917, followed by the acting or temporary rank of lieutenant-colonel on the 6th August that same year. This account is mainly to stand up for him in view of what some future historian may care to say on reading the contents of a file in the National Archives of Southern Rhodesia (reference BC 1/4/1) in which there is a copy of a report to the General Officer Commanding, Nyasa-Rhodesia Field Force, signed by R. E. Murray, Colonel Commanding Rhodesian Column, at Mpurukasese under date 29th September, 1917, numbered MUR 119. Extracts, both by direct quotation and indirectly, will be found in

this account. However it must clearly begin by setting out the allegations against Fair and the recommendation arrived at; in part it reads as follows:—

'The Chief Staff Officer,

'HQ, NORFORCE, SONGEA.

'Sir,

Lt.-Col. C. H. FAIR, D.S.O.

I have with regret to bring to your notice the conduct of Lt.-Col. FAIR, D.S.O., N.R. Police, during the recent operations in the RUHUDJI Valley about MPEPO.

'The points which I chiefly wish to lay stress on are:- (1) His conduct which I consider prejudicial to good order and discipline, (2) His dispatch of wires which tended to mislead me as to the situation at MPEPO and the disposition of our forces, (3) His unjustifiable misinterpretation of my orders causing considerable delay in the taking up of the pursuit of AUMANN'S force thereby permitting the enemy to make good his retirement without opposition . . .

'The MPEPO operations have worried me considerably as I feel that had they been carried out in a proper manner AUMANN'S Force might have been disposed of for good and all.

'This is not the first occasion on which Lt.-Col. FAIR has been in command of more than one company and has failed me.

'I am confident that his present command is quite beyond him and that he is unsuitable for the position he now holds, and I request that Lt.-Col. STENNETT, D.S.O., be sent up to take command of the N.R. Police in the field'.

A copy of the report was sent to Fair under date 16th October, 1917, well over a fortnight after it could have reached General Northey; mails, even official mails, took a long time to reach their destination. Fair acknowledged the receipt of it under date 16th November, 1917—a month on the way—at Kapati Mtoto; he obviously felt that correspondence between parties so far apart would be futile and said so; but he did ask for a personal interview with the General Officer Commanding; whether or not he did get an interview is not recorded in these papers. As an aside it is gratifying to set out that in the Despatch dated 21st January, 1918 (by which time it is unlikely Fair had got back from Mahenge) from Sir Jakob van Deventer, Lieutenant-General Commanding-in-Chief, East African Force, there is this:- "I wish to bring to your Lordship's favourable notice the names of the following officers:- . . . Lieutenant-Colonels . . . C. H. Fair, D.S.O., who commanded columns under General Northey with conspicuous ability and success". How successful he was if he was granted an interview can be indicated by the outcome of a still later report by Murray.

Kenneth Bradley, in his contribution on the 1914-18 campaign, in Chapter III of W. V. Brelsford's *The Story of the Northern Rhodesia Regiment* (1954), has devoted some consideration to what went on, on pages 43 and 44. A very reasonable account of the happenings of the day can be found in the Despatch already quoted from, in paragraphs Nos. 10, 15, 18, 24 and 25; they are too long to be quoted here, although some extracts may be found later in



this article. These happenings have been fairly fully recorded in Chapter 276 "The campaign in German East Africa (IV)"—of *"The Times History of the War,"* v. 19 (1919), reliance being made on Van Deventer's Despatch and several other sources. There is no account in *Nelson's History of the War*, written by John Buchan as it progressed, although one of the maps he provides (in v. 21) shows a movement of British troops eastward from Lupembe towards Mahenge, against Tafel and the Tabora garrison, which could have been by none other than the N.R.P. and the Rhodesia Native Regiment, which came under Fair's direction. There is a bare reference in *The First World War* (1960) by Cyril Falls but nothing in *The Great War* (1933) by Winston Churchill.

R. W. M. Langham in *The Northern Rhodesia Journal*, v.3, 1957, p.260, disposed of what was done in the following words:- "About July or August, 1917 (I think) Major Fair, D.S.O. (N.R.P.) had orders to attack Mahenge, which was an important position held by Von Tafel. As Fair's supplies had to come from Mwaya or Mbamba Bay (both on Lake Nyasa), a glance at the map will show that it made our lines of communication very long for the troops attacking Mahenge". Even he, so busy at the time further south, knew little of what was trying to be done by Fair's Column just as we were ignorant of his jobs of work. By that time Mwaya was right off the lines of communication so far as Fair was concerned; the road to Mbamba Bay between Songea and Wiedhafen was still being opened up and there can be no doubt Fair's supplies came to him by way of Wiedhafen, Songea and Kitanda.

It is necessary to amplify what Bradley says—even to deny that "the rains were over". After the unsuccessful pursuit of Wintgens in April, May and June, 1917, what became the 1st/1st King's African Rifles, under Major G. L. Baxter, D.S.O., had been detached from the command of Lieut-Colonel R. E. Murray, D.S.O., D.C.M., British South Africa Police, and sent south to join up with its sister battalion, the 2nd/1st, and some European troops, the remnants of the 1st and 2nd South African Rifles, the 5th South African Infantry and the South African Motor Cycle Corps, in proposed operations against Lincke along the road towards Liwale. The instruction from General Northey read as follows :-

"NORFORCE to MURRAY NEW LANGENBERGE NF 3086 June 18th SECRET Information vide NF 3070 June 15th except 29th F.K. strength 10 whites 60 askari 1 MG arrived 16th instant MARAIMBOR-OTO 25 miles east of KITANDA, 4 whites 50 askari 2 MG KAPAIPANGA 30 miles N.N.E. Kitanda (stop) In conjunction offensive against main enemy force south KILWA and IRINGA Columns attack on RUIPA G.O.C. intends contain Aumann's force about MPEPO, prevent it assist RUIPA by advance on LIWALE attacking enemy wherever met, occupying TUNDURU, denying enemy food centres, attack enemy at MWEMBE (stop) Two companies N.R.P. about LUPEMBE will establish themselves strongly west bank RUHUDJE and by active patrolling keep enemy on east bank constantly apprehensive attack (stop) S.A.M.C.C, TANDALA, will be ordered to send 50 rifles garrison LUPEMBE (stop) MONOKAR will be LIKUJU 30th June. O.C. Songea Column, will concentrate BIKARS, N.I.S.C, and section

mountain guns at LIKUJU by same date lending detachment SECSARUCA to garrison LIKUJU (stop) On 2nd July Songea Column under Stevens consisting MONOKAR BIKARS and N.I.S.C, section guns and field wireless will move on LIWALE (stop) Murray's Column will commence embark MWAYA for ILELA 25th June march thence to SONGEA (stop) RHODNATS complete with carriers embarking first will march independently from ILELA to SONGEA to KITANDA where it will relieve SECSARUCA detachment which will then rejoin its unit at LIKUJU (stop) On Murray's arrival SONGEA he will assume command all troops that area including Songea Column under Stevens (stop) He will send strong detachment occupying TUNDURU whence patrols will be sent in all directions (stop) He will keep H.Q. and remainder his Column in reserve SONGEA (stop) Fulton has separate orders to attack enemy at MWEMBE with KARWUNFOR supported by 5th S.A.I, (stop) Reports daily to ZOMBA".

It might be as well to identify the abbreviations:- S.A.M.C.C.—South African Motor Cycle Corps; MONOKAR—1st K.A.R.; BIKARS—2nd K.A.R.; N.I.S.C—Nyasaland Imperial Service Contingent; SECSARUCA—2nd South African Rifles; RHODNATS—Rhodesia Native Regiment; KARWUNFOR—1st/4th K.A.R.

Thereafter Murray's men moved from Rungwe in Occupied Territory on the 22nd June, 1917; the R.N.R., under Major Carbutt, were in front and in due course reached the vicinity of Kitanda to operate in close contact with 'E' and 'F' Coys, N.R.P., under Captains G. M. Withers and L. A. Russell, left behind earlier in the year when the pursuit after Wintgens had begun. On the road, after disembarkation at Ilela (Weidhafen), 'C' Coy, N.R.P. under Captain E. G. Dickinson, was detached and sent off into the blue, eventually turning up in the same area. By the time Murray's Column reached Songea on the 4th July, 1917, its strength was rather low, to put it bluntly: 'A', 'B' and 'D' Coys, N.R.P., under Major Fair, Captains G. P. Burton and B. J. Graham respectively (say 5 or 6 Europeans and 120 Askari strength per company) and the bare remnants of the combined B.S.A.P. Service Companies, shortly to be transformed into machine and Lewis gunners.

Sometime later Lieut-Colonel G. M. P. Hawthorn, D.S.O., turned up to take command directly of the two K.A.R. battalions in their forward position. Murray, probably now temporary colonel, styled himself 'CO.' or 'O.C Rhodesian Column'; as such he sent off Fair to operate in the Mpepo area, seemingly retaining overall command; (it comes out later, in one of Fair's signals, that he was in direct contact with the General; a possible source of difficulty must surely lie there). Murray's then association with Hawthorn and, later, with Lieut-General W. J. T. Shorthose, D.S.O., and the 1st/4th K.A.R., remains a puzzle since they also seemed to operate in direct contact with the General Officer Commanding despite the order: "On Murray's arrival SONGEA he will assume command all troops that area including Songea Column under Stevens". No doubt, someday, someone will dig it out or the final volume of the Official History will be published.

At this time more or less facing the British forces operating from the

south were the two groups of the enemy under Hauptmann Aumann in the Ruhudje River sector and under Hauptmann Lincke in the Mponda—Matanda River sector, the whole under Hauptmann Tafel, with headquarters at Mahenge, he having a further group under his direct command in the Idete River sector. Intelligence gave that Aumann had 'L' Company under Oberleutnant Bauer, at Mkapira, and 'A' Company, under Lt. Jaekl, 5th Field Company (F.K.) under Lt. Gutknecht and one small revolver or black-powder gun (remaining of two) under one Fromme at Mpepo, approximate strength 32 Europeans, 360 askari, armed with 8-mm. rifles, with six machine guns; he had a hospital at Litete River. Lincke was not too far away with the following troops: 6th F.K., under Hauptmann Poppe (11 Europeans and 107 askari), 7th F.K., under Lt. Kalman (6 Europeans and 140 askari), 15th F.K., under the sector commander himself (13 Europeans and 96 askari), 24th F.K. under Oberlt Schulein (12 Europeans and 116 askari), 29th F.K., under Oberlt Schroeder (17 Europeans and 60 askari), a Police detachment of 4 Europeans and 21 askari and a battery under Oberlt Vogel, the strength of which nor the number of machine-guns available to them not being ascertained. Considering that the enemy would be more or less on the defensive the combined forces of the N.R.P. and the R.N.R. against Aumann and of the K.A.R. against Lincke were not too strong for their aims; we who were engaged in the operation knew we were not strong enough,

During July the three companies of N.R.P. did some training round Songea, mostly for the benefit of their newly-joined European non-coms or were occupied in escorting convoys of food for the K.A.R. Fair, for his part, insisted on lessons in Nyanja for the newly-joined Europeans—without books it was a slow business making notes in odd pocket-books and bits of paper. As Langham has recorded in his article in *The Northern Rhodesia Journal*, 'D' Coy moved off to garrison a post on the road to Tunduru; when 'A' Coy left for the Mpepo area 'B' Coy took over its camp on Kilossa Hill. During this time, as described by Bradley, the other three companies—'C', 'E' and 'F'—under the command of Dickinson as temporary major, had been active in driving the enemy right back to the Ruhudje in association with the R.N.R. An action appears to have taken place at Pangasi on or before 10th July for which date there is a casualty report for that area; I cannot plot this point. A successful period has been described by "Ndhlovu" in *The Outpost* (the regimental magazine of the B.S.A.P.) for May, 1932, and two succeeding months, from the standpoints of 'C' and 'F' Coys, N.R.P., in what was being done to cover the R.N.R.'s approach from the south; from that account it is clear how the call went out for pontoons to help in crossing the Ruhudje. He tells of how native canoes had been recovered from where they had been abandoned as worn-out and had been patched up by some of the machine-gunners who were handymen in the use of their meagre tools and equipment. No doubt Carbutt, with the memory of his similar activity on the Zambezi River at Kariba some seventeen years before, had suggested what should be done; as it was, when the pontoons arrived there was no need for them.

What "Ndhlovu" and Bradley have recorded can well be repeated. Having got across the Ruhudje Russell attacked the enemy in our old trenches at Mkapira on the 29th July, suffering one askari killed (Corporal Mashongo



Lt.-Col. C. H. Fair, D.S.O.

*(National Archives)*

still fondly remembered by both Russell and J. H. C. Whitehead who had also been in the previous action there on the 30th October, 1916; Russell has recounted how this man must have sensed danger or seen some movement which escaped his notice in the attack at noon that day on what he calls Mamba Ridge—he was Russell's orderly; he made a sudden dive forward in front of Russell and received a bullet through his head). One other askari was wounded and a maxim-porter also wounded in killing three enemy askari and capturing four others in the long grass as they bolted. Murray's signal No. M2157 to Russell and the R.N.R. is in cipher and has still to be decoded; let us hope it was one of congratulation; but it could consist of further urging to press ahead. Everything everywhere was being done by our troops in the area to comply with the General's orders of the 18th of the previous month; but clearly not enough to satisfy Colonel Murray, in Songea, whatever the General might have thought and said; so Fair was ordered north with his company.

Murray has recorded that he handed Fair his written orders (Operation Order No. 48) before 'A' Coy, N.R.P., with whom the writer was serving, left Songea for the Mpepo area; these are his words:- "I spoke to him about the situation and the difficulties I had had to contend with and impressed upon him the importance of dealing with AUMANN with despatch either by destroying him or capturing his force and, failing this, by driving him out of the MPEPO Area MAHENGWARDS". It is to be wondered whether it was then made clear that Fair would be in direct contact with the General Officer Commanding as well as at the end of a line to Murray?

Fair's company was stiffened, by two machine and four Lewis guns (newly arrived in this theatre of the war), each manned by two Europeans with appropriate askari and porters and another European in immediate charge of each party, a medical officer and a medical orderly with "blue-boys" and a European signaller; without doubt the force was as strong a one for a company as could be got together, well-seasoned with warlike intentions and background. Incidentally was the Lewis gun the 'lighter machine-gun, with tripod and gun in one part. . . mobility is most important' indicated by Sir Douglas Haig to Mr. Lloyd George's assistant in June, 1915, as a "need" (see *Douglas Haig, the educated soldier*, by John Terraine, published by Hutchinson in 1963)?

Fair's advance to Mpepo was usually carried out in two treks each day (Murray's own drill) from somewhere about 6 a.m. till 10 or 11 a.m. in which time some eleven miles might be covered; then an afternoon march in which a greater distance might be tackled. Of three sets of estimates for the daily distance covered before the R.N.R. in camp facing Tutura was reached they average just over 18, just over 26, 25, 27 and just over 18 miles covered for the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th and 7th, the 6th being at rest other than for Sgt O'Brien who left with his section to go ahead and for Gradwell on his heliograph who was then in communication with both the R.N.R. in front and with Kitanda behind, or for the newly attached wireless unit which had joined on the 4th working with Songea and another set to the north. It must be emphasised that the nature of the country was dreadful in the extreme with well-watered rivers and extensive swamps amidst somewhat forbidding hills covered in bush and jungle; the excellence of the marching must be understood and accepted. A fairly well-worn

track was followed from Songea to Kitanda; only a few days before leaving base a party of Belgian officers had come in from the north to make contact with Murray; their account of their journey was mostly expressed in the waving of arms, it was understood; we did not know then that we should have much to do with them later when the means of communication was bad French and worse Swahili. After Kitanda there were some instances of wrong turnings having been taken, so adding to the tally of miles. The day the wireless unit was picked up the old hands identified their whereabouts on seeing the marked graves of Lieuts Simpson and Bridges of the R.N.R., and some of the 5th S.A.I., killed the previous January; they recalled the attempt to relieve the R.N.R. at that time, which had come to nothing; it only emphasised in how little an area of country two opposing armies could operate.

It was found that the R.N.R. were facing a strong enemy force at Tutura, a concentration elastically stretched for many miles as we later found to our cost; our local intelligence was not of the best by any means—we had got good contact with the outside world which only served to rub in the lack of the other. This day, 7th August, 1917, was also noteworthy for the fact that the Europeans went back to half-rations after living well for several weeks, the ups-and-downs which had become routine the nearer or further we got from a supply base. Dickinson was then some miles away to the north.

'A' Coy's first bleeding, in these operations, was the next day when winding its slow pace, mostly up hills, towards the indicated enemy position, and luckily well spread out, if not intentionally; a burst of machine-gun fire ran along the line to catch Pte Nyonyo in the back, a bullet passing through his rolled-up blanket; it seemed a grievous injury but was soon attended to. The firing disclosed that the enemy were now in occupation of a hill previously held by the R.N.R. which had moved to the supposed main position at Mpumu or what was later renamed as Signal Hill, some three-quarters of a mile further ahead; this hill was named Thornton for easy reference and 'A' Coy was ordered to wipe out this point at the earliest opportunity.

Mr. Latham lead a reconnaissance, supported by two Lewis guns, hoping to draw some indication of strength; odd shots were fired from both sides with little advantage to either before evening fell and withdrawal to rifle-pits on our part across a wide valley, some half-mile from the enemy. It was said that there were only four or five Europeans and not more than sixty askari in the whole enemy position; but this picquet was the key—no wonder that the machine-gun was retained there in contrast with our idea that the point was only lightly held. As it was on the crest of the hill Fair considered, that half his company, under Mr. Tarbutt, with one European non-com, would be sufficient to clear it away.

First thing next morning Nos. 3 and 4 Sections moved off down the hill; the four Lewis guns were posted at points from which the picquet could be overlooked and at which they fired bursts from time to time while the askari worked their way down the hill and up the opposite one, complete silence being observed by the enemy. Several hours passed, in getting across the valley, the final advance not taking place till after 3 p.m. when no food had been taken and water bottles were getting low. Panting, sweating, practically done-in, it

was almost impossible not to disclose our approach and our appearance at the top was greeted by a blast of fire from rifles and the unexpected machine-gun impossible to withstand. Our withdrawal was immediate and was rubbed in by the machine-gun following us down the hill and firing at any sounds and cries we made as we tried to get together again. At only a few yards apart in the thick bush the German fire orders were clearly heard; after a few bursts the gun packed up and went off, presumably along the path to the main position. The members of the picquet continued *to* open rifle fire on any movement as our men made their way back to their own side. It was a bad affair for 'A' Coy: Mr. Tarbutt was killed by a shot through the throat, four askari were killed and two wounded, of a force less than sixty all told.

During the night the enemy withdrew from the picquet point and our dead were properly buried to complete the rough jobs done by the Germans. Patrols had been out early to 'draw fire' and establish contact, but without reply, not the characteristic tactic of our opposite numbers. Feeling their way towards Mpumu our patrols found there was no opposition in front of them and the enemy's look-out point was taken over during the day. It was clear we were back to the old drill of fighting our way through rearguard actions and delaying movements, the slowest form of warfare imaginable. Meantime the R.N.R. and Dickinson's force had crossed the Ruhudje and were making their way towards Aumann's main position at Mpepo; the enemy moved slowly back through country which had only recently been traversed by us. For instance, on the 23rd July, Lieut A. H. Rutherford, R.N.R., had been killed near Goa-Goa in probing his way through the bush with his platoon, having run into an enemy detachment of four Europeans and sixty askari; his grave was not again reached until nearly three weeks later and that fact may illustrate how far ahead patrols had been operating of the main body. It was only when heavier pressure was applied, that the enemy withdrew, naturally. On the 27th July the R.N.R. had a couple of askari casualties. At that time Intelligence reports now available for inspection showed that our forces were under strength for what was being attempted.

It was with some surprise that it was heard that some pontoons were being sent up to help in the crossing of the river when we had just heard that the job had been done; that interesting incident and the subsequent raiding of the various sets of trenches at Mkapira which caused Aumann to abandon them has been described, by "Ndhlovu". The high brass having called for pontoons, the lesser metal had to receive them when they were offered; but it seemed a waste of man-power to send back an escort to meet them at the previous Monday night stop since all knew the convoy was already being escorted by a party of R.N.R. replacements. The pontoons were like coffins, several times longer and wider than any for a human being; it was a business moving them along, particularly as the now well-trod path was ruled against and a fresh track opened up, through the swamps and hills—presumably local intelligence feared a repetition of the enemy's quick change of strength when Tarbutt was killed on Picquet Hill, Thornton hill or Tuturu or whatever it was. However, if those pontoons had ever to be used there would have been a great need for the services of a skilled plumber to plug up the places where joints had come apart—some-

thing better than "Ndhlovu's" machine-gunners. An idea of the journey can be given by saying it took twice as long to get back to the column as it took to get to the convoy.

On the 11th August it was announced that Fair had been advanced to the acting or temporary rank of lieutenant-colonel to command all the forces in the area; Lieut P. Allport was called in from 'C Coy as Staff Officer; Mr. Latham was promoted temporary captain to command 'A' Coy but there was no replacement for Mr. Tarbutt. Sgt O'Brien reported sick and was invalided back to Peramiho where he later died, on 8th September. Headquarters was set up on the captured German position at Mpumu; the R.N.R. moved on and sundry small parties of the enemy were sought without success. The three Europeans left with 'A' Coy spent the next forty hours, for instance, in slow and careful enquiry, seemingly, of every bush and rock, not more than seven miles being covered without any contact being made with the enemy in and about the Pitu stream. Similar experiences were the lot of 'C', 'E' and 'F' Coys N.R.P., and of the R.N.R. in trying to implement the orders to 'destroy, capture or drive Aumann eastwards'. A pleasant memory for those concerned was a distribution of chocolate to everybody by Captain Latham, everybody in our small party getting a bit; nobody had thought they would be away from their kits for so long, no blankets—only the existing small ration of rice for the askari and porters—everybody's experience then when it was raining still.

It was not until the 13th August that the N.R.P. and R.N.R. came together but their junction speeded action very considerably; it was considered that Aumann was now in the prepared position at Mpepo and Intelligence reported accordingly; actually we later found that the Germans had remained in their old trenches at Mkapira without participation in any activity right up to the general retirement to the east. On the 16th Murray recorded this—it is the first reference in Murray's report to what had been done since Fair left Songea:- "Fair with one coy., N.R.P., was operating against a small enemy party about TUTURU approximately 18 miles south of MPEPO, the remainder of his force, viz., RHODNAT and DICKINSON was dug-in on the right bank of the RUHUDJI at its confluence with the KITATU River. I was not satisfied . . . and instructed Fair to go forward and take command of the operations in person."

On the 18th Fair replied to Murray's expression of dissatisfaction of the 16th, emphasising the arduous work done by Latham with only two European N.C.O.'s both ignorant of the native language, and by the Lewis gunners, since leaving Songea; he drew attention to the absence of members of the B.S.A.P whose presence always had an excellent moral effect on askari. In his report to the General, Murray contends that the reply ignored orders and he enters into a controversy as to the arduous nature of the work being performed, containing an absurd statement that "had he had another company of N.R.P. he would have bagged Aumann". By the 16th incidentally, both Carbutt and Dickinson had moved through Kitatu and were almost facing the main enemy position at Mpepo, Fair following close on their heels; so sure was he that the enemy were now on the strict defensive that he left the wireless and two machine-guns behind at Mpumu Hill escorted by only a weak section; he reported his

junction with Carbutt as being on the left bank of the Msima stream, about one and a half miles from the enemy position; he got there in good time to share in the shocks of the next day's advance.

Operations continued to be badly hampered by rain; but the probing and the pushing went on, small patrols of a section and a Lewis gun being sent out and kept out feeling for contact with the enemy; sundry wounded casualties were inflicted on our opposite numbers, understood at the time, and later to be confirmed by what was found by us.

It must have been with some surprise that the main enemy position was opened up, on the 17th, in coming into a clear field of fire, later accepted as 2,000 yards; both N.R.P. and R.N.R. got knocked about in a frontal attack when coming under very accurate machine-gun fire in which Lieut J. H. Williams, R.N.R., and over twenty others were wounded, Williams dying the next day of his wounds. An attempt was made to form a ring round Aumann in the idea that his Mkapira party had come in—there was nobody to spare to go back and confirm the information; it was a very slenderly-manned ring. However, Fair strung out his force round the position as well as he was able; where it was beyond his means to establish a continuous line then patrols as strong as possible were kept on the go night and day. It was clear that Aumann felt he was doing his job staying where he was.

A curious phrase came into use: 'drawing fire'. Very good use was made of the newly arrived Lewis guns in taking over from the maxims, which went into reserve, being dug-in to form a strong point; it was generally felt that one Lewis was as good as three maxims since it could be moved quickly from one point to another; it had the added advantage of not requiring so many hands to operate it. It was here that Fair made good use of his irregulars, the *ruga ruga*, locals who had been drawn to the service of Britain by the persuasions of sundry of our Intelligence Officers and scouts; pay, of course, entered into it; they were armed with all manner of weapons from any and every source; they carried their ammunition in any bandolier, pouch-belt or other receptacle they could acquire; and their usually tattered clothing could never be styled a uniform. When not wending their way through the bush looking for an enemy they were always being found a job, even to digging rifles pits or trenches.

On Sunday, the 19th, Fair called upon Aumann to surrender, Captain Latham being the parlementaire; the proposal was rejected, the enemy envoy reputedly making very sarcastic reference to the various parties 'here, there, anywhere' put out in the show of strength; if anything more was wanted, after Murray's messages, to put ginger into Fair's plans, that was it. On both sides, it is apparent, signals were many; on this day he sent Murray his No. F102 to say that Aumann had refused when asked to surrender; it did nothing to calm 'the Commanding Officer'.

It was no easy matter to approach the enemy position so well laid out had it been—it was said it had been prepared over the last six months; those who were able to walk over it after it had been evacuated were most impressed with its strength. I quote "Ndhlovu" 's description of it; he had had the opportunity of making an inspection soon after the last shot was fired there: "The German position was most carefully prepared for defence months before

occupation. There were large pits outside the trenches with spiked bamboo stakes sticking up at the bottom. These pits were covered with a light screen of grass or vegetation, with trip lines placed on the edge of them; so woe betide the wretched man who fell into them. They had underground shelters, evidently constructed through the daily 'hate-stunts' of our aeroplane from Lupembe. For a depth of from 500 to 2,000 yards the grass had been cut, giving the occupants of the fort a perfect field of fire, thus making frontal assault, except at very heavy cost, impossible".

Captain Griffin arrived on the 20th to take charge of the machine-guns and Dickinson was promoted temporary major the next day. Considerable stocks of ammunition and more Lewis guns came forward while the aeroplane made daily visits and dropped a few bombs in the direction indicated to it by calico strips laid by us. After nightfall activity was stepped up and advance always made, perhaps a new line of trenches or rifle-pits or a machine-gun post completed, an enemy strongpoint forced to disclose its whereabouts. Not that daylight meant rest for somebody from each company would be out all day feeling, feeling . . . ; the slightest movement drew a hail of bullets from across the way and the posting of picquets at evening was usually a nervous occasion. The nightly expenditure of machine-gun ammunition by our opposite numbers at this time was surprising; it was during one of these night sessions (I think) that Sgt Northcote, R.N.R., won a Military Medal 'displaying great coolness and courage and bringing-in a wounded askari from the enemy trenches'. One morning after a characteristic night of nerves it was suggested that Dickinson had shouted something to his batman that sounded like 'Charge' to his bugler, who obliged with the call, to provoke the opposition into a prodigious waste of ammunition.

It was on the 24th that Murray considered and noted the situation as most unsatisfactory: Aumann was holding up our advance; much valuable time had been wasted in fruitless assaults on the enemy's position; there appeared to be still a lack of co-ordination and preparation of plans, and serious neglect of proper reconnaissance; in fact, there was apparently little chance of accomplishing anything. He, therefore, gave Fair the following orders:- "M2404 25th August Orders were to clear AUMANN out of MPEPO or destroy him. To date very little or nothing has been accomplished. Three plans are open to you. One investment two assault three throwing your main force across line of retreat thus cutting off supplies and compelling AUMANN to come out and fight. Regarding two plans for assault must be carefully considered and chances of success carefully weighed. Regarding three AUMANN not likely to break out west southwest or south. Therefore these points can be lightly held permitting your main force being thrown across lines of communication and retreat". It can be felt that Fair surely had realised from the start what the alternatives were in achieving his aim; it did not need peremptory signals to sting him into the knowledge of his job. He had been awarded his Distinguished Service Order on the recommendation of Colonel Murray so that it must be concluded that at that time his star was shining; after well over twelve months' active service under Murray's command he must have got some idea how difficult it was to satisfy his Commanding Officer.

On our side, quite apart from signals from superior officers, nobody was satisfied with what was being accomplished; a composite body under Captain Thornton, R.N.R., with Lieuts Booth, V.C., D.C.M., R.N.R., and Lacey, N.R.P., consisting of four sections of N.R.P. and one platoon, R.N.R., with four Lewis guns were detailed to make a frontal attack before dawn on Saturday, 25th August, while everybody else did their best to attract attention elsewhere. Unfortunately the various parties failed to fore-gather at the indicated spot until it was too late to take advantage of the cover of darkness to approach as near as possible to the enemy's abattis. Our Commanding Officer was wrath and showed it; he ordered that action on the same lines should be laid on for the next dawn; at least the many supposed-to-be-accompanying demonstrations must have given the enemy cause for thought.

However the second attempt at a frontal attack fared no better although it caused the expenditure of what seemed to be thousands of rounds of ammunition from the other side; at one particular spot the enemy had made good use of daylight and had ranged one of the places from which we had demonstrated the previous dawn so that when zero hour came on the second occasion and we began our stuff we found ourselves made to hold our heads well down in our rifle pits under the hail of fire. For some unknown reason this suddenly stopped and the opportunity was taken to get out before it was light enough to see; when the enemy opened up again they kept it up until daylight to find the birds flown! The Colonel's wrath now turned worse and he ordered in practically everything we did not carry ourselves with the promise that when we had made good our shortcomings then we could get our effects back—as if we were not doing our best, but we did not know the way he was being hectorated by Headquarters.

That very afternoon (Sunday, 26th August) it was decided, apparently, that since the main position seemed to be beyond our strength it must be made useless by other means; probably Murrary's signal of the 24th underlined the new intention. A small hill had been noted as overlooking Aumann's way back to Mahenge; it is likely that this point had been viewed and examined innumerable times during the past seven or eight days without the realisation of its importance having sunk in. Captain Withers with 'E' and 'F' Coys and a section of 'A' Coy, N.R.P., and appropriate machine-guns attacked it; there was some resistance from the strong picquet found to be in possession, 11 mm. bullets flying all over the place, mostly overhead in the long grass, but it was not long before the place was overrun, with only slight casualties on our side. It was obvious a counter-attack must come and rifle pits and gun emplacements were started; surprisingly the Germans had not found it necessary to dig in there and must have kept very quiet whenever our patrols were probing around if, in fact, they had been holding it at any time at all. Picquets were still being placed when the first enemy machine-gun opened up causing sundry Europeans out in front of our line to scuttle back at top speed; this was followed by a well-drilled charge with the bayonet; a European feldwebel and his companion askari opposite number were not stopped until a maxim on our left flank had been whipped round to fire behind it after they had crossed our thinly-held line. The characteristic 'hiya, hiya' had accompanied the enemy attack—it is

usually claimed to be 'retire, retire' suggesting that that should be done, as emanating from one of the defenders. In fact a portion of the hurriedly-started line of rifle pits were abandoned by some of the defenders in the charge; they were mixed up with *ruga ruga* who delayed not on the order of their going and so influenced the askari—I cannot say. With the fall of these two very brave men their fellows withdrew in a hurry. For their part in this action Ptes Hasseriis, Long and Brooks, B.S.A.P., were awarded the Military Medal; the citation for the latter included his part in the subsequent action at Likassa. The appropriate Defence Force Order, No. 302, dated 19th November, 1917, setting out the citation for the awards to Hasseriis and Long, indicates that the action they were concerned in took place on 12th August; that this is a mistake is borne out by the citation for Brooks's award giving the date '26th' in association with the '30th' for Likassa. Is this one of the inaccuracies indicated by Gardner?

This account is somewhat fuller than that given by Bradley; and it is here where something more than what is recorded in either the appropriate Despatch or by Bradley has been set out; the former has this:- "The Lupembe column, under Lieutenant-Colonel Fair, forced back the enemy in the Mpepo area, and by the 20th August was hemming in the enemy detachment there, which finally gave way and retired towards the east. Our troops followed in close pursuit, and on the 30th inflicted a severe local defeat on the enemy, killing or capturing three whites and 92 askaris". Bradley goes a little further:- "This hill [known as Single Hill] was the key to Aumann's main position, for, having subjected Withers to heavy machine-gun fire all day on the 27th, he vacated his whole line during the night and retired north-eastward. The Northern Rhodesia Police [no mention of our comrades, the R.N.R.] went in pursuit, and found him on the 29th entrenched along a wooded height at Likassa on the bank of the Litete River. Their attack failed but the enemy's counter-attack, which penetrated the trenches, was also beaten off and night fell with both forces dug in in their respective positions. The fight had been one of the fiercest in the experience of the battalion, the casualties on both sides numbering over 130, ninety-four of which were on the enemy's side, some 30 per cent of their whole force . . . . On the field the action appeared to be indecisive, but Aumann could not fight again with a third of his column killed or wounded, and he retreated rapidly north-eastward towards Mahenge".

The immediate consequence was the abandonment of Mpepo by Aumann during that and the following nights, since Fair strengthened the position he had won as soon as the enemy opened up on it the next morning with machine-guns and a counter-attack which broke down. At the main position the R.N.R. was in close touch with one of the entrenched posts and under heavy fire one minute when there was complete silence as they rushed forward to find nobody in occupation—expended cartridge cases were still warm. So spread out was the position that it took some time to make sure all was clear. However, patrols were soon making their way down the clearly seen path of retreat but progress, as usual, was slow; it had become known that another entrenched position had been prepared by the enemy a few hours' march further back, spread over three hills. Soon after the whole force was on the move towards Likassa and the next engagement; there was a feeling of great confidence after the stalemate of

the past few days; this feeling was reflected in the regular capture of odd enemy askari at their posts along the line of the enemy's withdrawal. Fair was compelled to operate his attack in three prongs and each night Dickinson, Carbutt and he were in separate sets of rifle-pits, the usual hastily scraped-together defences, some distance apart. So passed the 27th, 28th and 29th.

On the morning of the 30th all stood to arms with first light in the usual anticipation of enemy attack; none being forthcoming Dickinson and Carbutt moved out to their fronts; Fair detached a couple of Lewis guns and sent them to the latter with an escort of a section of 'A' Coy, N.R.P., which, otherwise, remained in reserve. What happened after that indicates the conclusion that Aumann had decided that attack was the better form of defence, concentrating on Dickinson but placing forces in front of Carbutt to hold him back the most effectively. After at least an hour of contact in the heavy forest Dickinson was forced to withdraw to his rifle-pits of the night before; if those rifle-pits had not been there, there could have been a 'little' Majuba where the British defeat was blamed on Colley's failure to dig-in. During the course of the morning Fair sent a detachment of 'A' Coy, with several machine-guns, to join in but it was found that little could be done in the thick bush to identify friend or foe and it withdrew to avoid unnecessary complications.

Carbutt in one of his advances later in the morning came under heavy machine-gun and rifle fire while crossing an open glade and Lieut Booth was shot through the hip while several askari were killed and wounded, one of them Cpl Suga who remained with Booth the rest of the afternoon until the medical orderly, Sgt F. E. Sims, got there to do some bandaging and move Booth away for treatment. There are some wild tales of what Suga did; certainly the enemy put some bullets through Sims's Red Cross flag before they would let him get out of the firing-line; both these two received decorations later for their bravery.

Meantime Dickinson was experiencing something of the fury for which the German is renowned; luckily he had twelve machine-guns under his command and most of these were eventually re-installed in their positions of the previous night. Manning them were a solid core of Murray's own training; the askari were at the peak of their efficiency and followers willingly of their European officers and non-coms. However, it must be remembered that arrival at the previous night's situation was not in drill time; that morning Dickinson had advanced in very extended and open order and his withdrawal had to be made under the covering fire of those on one side or the other of those withdrawing. Lieut Arundel had extreme difficulty in joining up with the main body with the machine-gun in his immediate charge; he was awarded a Military Cross and the citation says this:- "During an attack on (an) enemy's position this officer was ordered to take his machine gun out of action preparatory to our line retiring. In the thick bush he lost direction and was fired on from three sides by the enemy at close range. He immediately brought his gun into action and cleared a way through the enemy's lines and made good his retirement thus saving his gun detachment and ammunition". It was considered that he had set a fine example of coolness at a critical time; when not firing Arundel had the lock of the gun in his hand, to make sure that if it were captured then it would not be of much use unless he, or his body, were also in the bag. It was later considered that

some of our casualties had been the result of non-recognition when racing for the cover of our old rifle pits, mixed up with the rushing enemy—it was quite impossible to separate friend from foe in the trees.

While Arundel was making his way back the bulk of Dickinson's force was at grips with the enemy; on several occasions our askari threw their assailants out at the point of the bayonet or in volley-firing; it was in controlling these operations that Sgts Africa, D.C.M., and Changamasase, N.R.P., were prominent, both subsequently being awarded the Military Medal. However, action continued, for a long time during which we suffered some grievous damage in the deaths and wounding of many war-worn British troops; one white was killed and four wounded, six Africans killed and thirteen wounded according to the casualty list issued. (Bradley gives the figure as over one hundred and thirty for both sides, ninety-four being the enemy's score; it is likely he has included the casualties suffered by the R.N.R. ?) The one European killed was Pte Roelke, B.S.A.P., who had been associated with Pte Brooks in the important action the few days before; their gun seemed to have been concentrated on, for Brooks was wounded at about the same time that Roelke was killed; he had three wounds but was able to instruct an askari to put a bullet through the side-plates of the gun to prevent it being of any use to the enemy if they managed to capture it. The knowledge of so many casualties, if anything, was an incentive to our askari to throw out the attackers and, after some time, the enemy gave up and withdrew. The terrain was a shambles, trees being stripped of bark and pitted with bullet holes; it would be a long day before the signs of battle would be obliterated. For his admirable handling of the situation Major Dickinson was awarded the Military Cross; his award and the others must have been granted on Fair's recommendation to someone higher up as it was unlikely he had been given authority for any prompt award; it is a let-up in the recorded attitudes of Murray that is hard to fathom.

One of Murray's complaints was an alleged lack of pin-pointing the place from which Fair forwarded a signal; messages which passed between Carbutt and one of his company commanders, Thornton, on this day are recorded as to and from Kiwali; yet Fair, Dickinson and Carbutt could hear the others in action in the surrounding bush. This apparent difference in the name of a point was one consequence of the British attack being in three prongs on very unsatisfactory sets of maps so that a locality might well be only that of the particular occupant of a hut or group of huts.

It is interesting to compare the casualty figures for this 'local defeat' given in the Despatch, by Bradley and as now submitted; Bradley remarks:- "On the field the action appeared to be indecisive, but Aumann could not fight again with a third of his column killed or wounded, and he retreated rapidly north-eastward towards Mahenge"; it will be sought to show that that was not so since 'A' Coy, N.R.P., at least, had another brush with his forces, in association with the Belgians near Kalimoto (Kazimoto ?) on the 26th October, well to the south of Mahenge; the other three companies of the N.R.P. were also kept busy maintaining touch with the retreating enemy.

The night of the 30th August was an uneasy one for all concerned—what was to stop Aumann trying to retrieve his twisted fortunes at dawn ? However

nothing happened from him and tension was relieved when a German medical orderly came in under a white flag asking that their wounded, numbering forty-three, be taken over; some sixty-seven enemy askari were buried during the day as well as our own. Meanwhile Aumann made good his retreat through Kasanga and Malele (Mlilila ?); in fact, the medical orderly had not been made aware of probable movements on his side and, on leaving Dickinson's camp, next pitched up in that of Carbutt; he was sent on in the general direction of Mahenge.

A welcome arrival that day was Lieut R. C. D. Latimer, rejoining following his recovery from wounds earlier received; he was posted to 'A' Coy, N.R.P., so relieving the burden caused by the death of Tarbutt and absence of O'Brien, so soon to die. In the afternoon of the 31st August the column moved off in pursuit of the enemy, 'F' Coy being left as garrison at Kasanga when that point was reached. There was heavy rain again the next day but not enough to hold up the advance; the following day both 'A' Coy and the R.N.R. exchanged shots with the enemy. A rumour went round that we had either by-passed an enemy detachment or it had got round our rear so 'A' Coy was sent back to Kasanga to look into the matter; no contact was made and it came back to join up with 'C' and 'E' Coys at their camp on the Fulua stream; some difficulty was found in getting through the jungle and across the river following a scare which may have been the enemy or game moving from one place to another.

On the 5th September our advance found Malinje abandoned apart from a picquet which was cleared out. A bright moment was reached that day when the spare kit left behind at Mpepo was now brought forward and distributed to the various owners; another highlight that day was the scramble by the askari for the heap of green onion tops left behind by the enemy who had been satisfied with the bulbs. Strong rumours and information persisted that an enemy detachment was somewhere about, so patrolling in all directions became the order of the day for 'A' Coy while 'C' and 'E' moved ahead in the direction of Sofi.

In the interim Fair most certainly must have reported with satisfaction his success to Murray, if not to the General Officer Commanding—no copy of any signal is extant in this part of the world, so far as can be said. Murray came back with the following on the 7th, a repeat of the General's NF4449:- "M2495 KARTUFOR not yet left IRINGA. You must keep constant pressure on AUMANN and drive him as far east as possible from the line MALINJI-MPEPO which you have now made good. AUMANN's troops now probably much shaken and should be given no time to regain morale. 24th F.K. now definitely reported to have gone KAPOROMO east of MAHENGE. In view of this and HAWTHORN'S and BELGIANS' pressure do you consider you can now spare two companies N.R. Police for operations this end. Do not wish to decrease your command but situation now apparently permits of this move". In view of what is to come it looks as if Murray sent this with his tongue in his cheek; his reputation refutes such an attitude for it was not in him to award faint praise. It is likely there was an exchange of signals for within days the R.N.R. left Fair's command, it being generally supposed by us

they were going on Line of Communication duties right back from Kasanga to Songea; in the National Archives file there is recorded the signal No. 219 of the 9th from Fair to Murray reading "R.N.R. leaving for yours via KITANDA tomorrow". It must be conceived that this suggestion to withdraw two companies, N.R.P., did not appeal to Fair; he presumably tendered the idea that the R.N.R. should be withdrawn from his command if somebody had to go; and it was accepted—it is strange his signal about them bears no reference to one of Murray's although it seems to have been accepted by him that it tied up with his No. M2495.

There was now a greater disparity than ever in numbers between our advancing troops in this sector and the defending enemy; Fair simply could not cover the ground. No wonder he took some solace in going after the many elephant in the area even if it did result in a knee being put out in a fall he suffered in the jungle. It was not all ivory hunting since the meat was needed to feed the several hundreds of natives living in camp and carrying loads on the Lines of Communication; Europeans also enjoyed the spoils of many of their fellows' days in the bush in the supply of fresh meat.

It has been found that a small party of R.N.R. were certainly left at Mpepo; a parade state at Songea on the 23rd September signed by Regimental Sergeant-Major W. S. Baker, M.M., shows that elements of headquarters and the two companies were then there, in all twelve Europeans and one hundred and thirty askari; adjoining pages of his Field Message books record askari having reported in from Mpepo and Msongo; if not scattered on Lines of Communication it disclosed a very low paper strength for the regiment. An interesting venture into the future is disclosed with the record of three Europeans and twenty-eight askari having been sent from Songea to 'the border' on the 27th—long before there could have been more forward thinking of Von Lettow's probable movements than can be seen in General Northey's No. NF 3086 of the 18th June, already quoted from; they went to that portion of the border opposite to Mwembe in Portuguese territory.

So satisfied was Fair with his view of the operations that he submitted recommendations for the promotion of Captain Dickinson to temporary major and of Lieuts Allport and Wardroper to temporary captain, dated back to the 1st August, 1917, on the 14th September from Malinje; he recommended also that Allport should be granted the extra duty pay of Staff Officer from that date; he concluded his minute (No. 60) with these words:- "I would respectfully point out that these three officers are not only fully competent in their duties but deserving of promotion to higher rank". He was not to know for a long time of the outcome.

Little of consequence took place thereafter for many days all of which were spent by the four companies in patrolling mainly east and north-east towards Mahenge; on the 12th September Lieut Latimer and his half-company of 'A' came back having covered some thirty miles without contacting an enemy at all; it was interesting later to hear from a friend in 'C' Coy that villagers had reported that he had been followed by an enemy party practically all the way back to camp. On the 14th 'A' Coy moved out of Malinje and reached Sofi, said to be the point the Belgians were aiming at, in track of 'C' and 'E',

Coys which had started earlier and by that time were at Mifanji (Mafingi?) on the road approaching Liheta, through Mtimbira. Fair reported these movements to Murray; following exchanges, later to be complained about, the aim for Liheta was abandoned in favour of the enemy party, indicated as Aumann's 'A' Coy at Idete, two miles further south, behind which was his main body at Mgangira with posts thrown out in the direction of Hangalunga. A picquet guarding an abandoned strong point was cleared out on the 17th, the date of the last signal quoted by Murray in his letter of complaint.

It must be that the apparent hanging-about during this time was what angered Murray; it might have been the imminence of the participation in events of the Belgians; or it might have been that unfortunate letter recommending promotions. Murray has alleged that, at least, two of Fair's signals to him had not arrived and complains that they should have been repeated by Fair once the lack had been made known to him—they would then have been several days old. It was, surely, easier for Murray's Signal Officer to have been called upon to produce or account for what failed to arrive in the Commanding Officer's hands? There was also an alleged departure by Fair from his orders in sending patrols *north* when his general instructions were to operate *east*. If information came in indicating that an enemy was in the north was it to be left to the Belgians to deal with? Murray, however, approved of what had been done when he heard more of what was happening towards the north.

On the 18th a message was received from the Belgians that they were advancing towards us, firing being heard in the direction of Mafingi; next morning Captain Latham went out and met some of the Belgian officers while Fair's whole force returned to Mtimbira. Incidentally Murray had advised Fair that the Belgians were reported to be in Kalimoto (Kazimoto?); that was not to happen for some time. The reason for the return to Mtimbira is not clear since 'C' Coy went off again the next morning on the same track, and were said to be making for Sofi and Lukoko. 'A' Coy filled in those next two days by a trip to Malinje and back, then followed in 'C's tracks and joined up with it at Hangalunga where the evidence of recent enemy occupation was clearly to be seen, several abandoned camping places being reached in the course of the next few days. Half of 'F' Coy had now joined the forward detachment from Kasanga which had been mysteriously burned out. There was again little rest for anyone in patrolling through the bush and jungle seeking to make contact with an elusive enemy—he was doing his bit of just keeping out of the way; from time to time there were brushes with sundry askari being wounded but no real contact while 'C and 'F' got still further ahead to operate in the vicinity of Chihaka and Gibiriti; the country was really deadful and the going up and down hills covered with bamboo most exhausting; there was still some rain and conditions were far from pleasant. One of the European machine-gunners who had been on column since 'A' Service Company, B.S.A. Police, had left Salisbury in 1915 (1849, Sgt G. R. E. Upton) was sent into the camp hospital with blackwater fever; numerous others were undergoing medical treatment when it was reported that Doctor Storrs was suspected of suffering from enteric fever and Doctor Wallace had been called back from his forward duties with Dickinson's detachment.

The passing of nearly a month must have exhausted Murray's patience, a month in which nothing useful could have been recorded by Fair, something his superior officer was not prepared to tolerate. So the report of the 29th September was written and submitted to the General Officer Commanding; a copy was sent to Fair on the 16th October following (why the delay?), received by him at Kapati Mtoto on or about the 16th November (a lapse of a whole month) from the date of his acknowledgement of it.

In the meantime Fair had his four companies all together at Gibiriti, probably only the second time in the conduct of these operations; they were camped on a formidable hill described in one participant's account as "requiring two and a half hours to climb but lovely and cool at the top with large shady trees growing there—the highest point around for miles". The enemy were then dug in a few miles ahead at Mubiki from which they moved that night; a patrol had gone out at sundown to investigate the enemy position, being warned that the column would move out to attack at 7 a.m. next morning unless a smoke signal before then indicated, an enemy retirement—of which Fair was very confident. The patrol had a bad night; elephants were roaming, bamboos were continually going off like rifle shots and the askari were scared as hell. So the smoke signal did not go up until a few minutes after seven, the column moved and the luckless European non-com got it in the neck. Later in the day that same patrol encountered a German doctor, escorted by a sergeant-major, seeking treatment for twenty-seven sick and wounded German Europeans and four religious sisters at Sali Mission, three miles further on; they came in the next day and were passed down the line under escort. Meantime the enemy had prepared a new position at M'Gombere, once more on three small hillocks, about twelve miles ahead, according to four German native maxim-porters who deserted to us. By the time it was reached an alleged strength of over one hundred rifles had dwindled to a mere picquet, of whom four were captured when Lieut Latimer charged it with half of 'A' Coy.

On the 19th October a scout and several askari of the Belgian forces passed through, followed by stronger groups; what had they been doing in the month since Captain Latham had met some of their officers? One of our patrols having slept out had been drubbed, fortunately without incurring any casualty, that morning when approaching a rise in the ground, later to be known as Mwaya; the forward point had crossed a sweet potato garden some six hundred yards long and was under the ridge when the rest of the patrol began to follow; halfway across a machine-gun opened on them and they had to scuttle back to safety. The Belgians decided to have a try but were not so lucky, one of the Europeans being wounded before they got back out of range; so a plan was laid on for that night. Our machine-gunners dug a suitable pit just outside the potato patch in preparation to afford covering fire at first light; a strong party working from our right flank soon after dawn found the enemy gone; when they reached the crest of the ridge someone remarked he could see so-and-so sitting in the bottom of his pit six hundred yards away!

Here there was a river which was too deep to be waded, one of the numerous Ruaha's but also known as the Lohambere, and the majority of the askari and porters were called upon to help to bridge it; this task took the best

part of two days before the column could go on to Kazimoto, passing through the Belgians who were camped between Mwaya and the point they named Saidi; they were in contact with the enemy as was evident from the volume of firing to be heard.

On the 25th Mr. Latimer, with his half of 'A' Coy, was sent out to co-operate with the Belgians in attacking a point named Mpili. It was found that the enemy had a position across a deep stream, probably the Lohambere, which the Belgians were reluctant to tackle—they contented themselves with volley-firing across it. Mr. Latimer scrambled across on a pole bridge with a small party of askari under heavy machine-gun and rifle fire; he was almost immediately wounded in the arm together with two askari; when he tried to come back he was forced to take cover and was losing a lot of blood until Sgt Koka managed to get him on to a machila and dragged him back along the ground. It was fortunate the pole bridge was screened to the enemy and their pursuing bullets simply went through the treetops; somehow Mr. Latimer was manhandled across the bridge and some sort of bandage and tourniquet tied round his arm. He had still to be brought back to medical attention at Kazimoto and he suffered extensively in crossing one stream in the dark in the branches of the interlocking and over-hanging trees; the route taken was straight towards the evening star! With the approval of Mr. Latimer the European non-com with him had pulled out of the fight—if the Belgians were not prepared to cross the stream and get to grips with the enemy it was like throwing stones at an abandoned house! It was interesting but confusing to be told that the Belgians named the place of this action Dongwala and claimed later they had buried numerous enemy as well as one of their own officers who had died trying to get his men to move on; his grave was well graced by the piece of plank on which was written the Belgian equivalent of "Killed on the field of honour". When the Belgians moved on, the next day, they were followed south by 'C' and 'E' Coys, south in the direction of Kapati.

It was on the 29th October that Fair recorded he had been relieved of the command of the Northern Rhodesia Police in the Field, this he recorded a fortnight later; it does not seem that the fact was made public to us at the time as he had gone ahead with the forward companies. It was not till the 6th November that Lieuts Allport and Wardroper left the column, it being said that they were going towards Mpurukasese to meet Lieut-Colonel H. M. Stennett, D.S.O., on his way to take over affairs. Meantime rain fell from time to time and it was lucky it was so; the water was very bad practically everywhere; rations were sparse and most days someone was out trying to shoot for the pot. Nevertheless for the last fortnight of October it is correct to say the column was regularly in contact with the enemy or exchanging shots.

On the 4th November Mr. Neame came to replace Mr. Latimer and was sent out without delay with his half-company to join up with the forward forces said to be about twenty miles away at Ulera Hill; by the time he got there they had moved on again; that afternoon there was very heavy thunder, and a threat of storms, accompanied by great heat; usually trekking was done in the early hours of the morning. By the 6th the column was at Kapati Mtoto to gather in one hundred and thirty-nine Europeans and one hundred and

eighty askari sick in a temporary hospital; their state beggars description and the next two days passed in attending to them. When Mr. Neame came in on the 8th he was sent on to Kahamba, on the Luwegu River, where a further enemy group was waiting to surrender; this place was reached on the 11th to find another seventy-eight Europeans and some askari; rain had now been falling for three days and things were far from pleasant. To show how far south Fair's Column had now gone, we met two European non-coms from the 2nd/4th K.A.R., having come from Portuguese territory through Tunduru after the fleeing Tafel.

In the course of the next week the column moved back to Kazimoto, passing the sick and wounded in front of them. On the 22nd November 'A' Coy was sent to take over Mahenge from the Belgians, Fair accompanying it; the next day the other three companies set off for Mpurukase through Mponda's where the K.A.R. had suffered much heavy fighting. 'A' Coy remained at Mahenge until the 7th January, 1918, being relieved by a detachment of the R.N.R. under Captain J. R. Moffatt, when it left to rejoin the rest of the regiment at Songea, which was reached on the 22nd. Colonel Murray left for the south on the 27th so it is likely Fair did have some talk with him—there is no record though; his desired interview (as will emerge later in this paper) with the General was impossible in Occupied Territory since he (the General) had left it for Nyasaland on the 18th December; Fair probably travelled back to civilisation that way and they may have met.

There is nothing left now but to refer to the report of the 29th September and the reply of the 3rd October, both by Murray, in regard to Fair's alleged unsuitability and incapacity to command the Northern Rhodesia Police in the Field and his refusal to approve certain desired promotions respectively. The former has been quoted from fairly fully; this is what was said, sometimes paraphrased, in Murray's reply about the promotions:—

"Ref: MUR. 121.

RHODESIAN COLUMN,  
MPURUKASESE,  
3rd October, 1917.

Lt.-Col. C. H. Fair, D.S.O.,  
O.C., N.R. Police,  
MALINJI.

Acknowledging your Minute No. 60 of the 14th ult., having reference to the promotion of certain officers of the N.R. Police.

(1) Capt. E. G. Dickinson, N.R. Police, to be Temp. Major.

The commanding officer considers this promotion unnecessary in view of the fact that he has submitted to the G.O.C. certain recommendations in regard to the command of the N.R. Police in the Field. Until this matter has been definitely arranged your recommendation must remain in abeyance.

(2) [Lieut Allport can be promoted Temporary Captain whilst in command of a company, having relinquished his appointment as Adjutant].

(3) [No reason at present for the promotion of Lieut Wardroper as Capt Dickinson is in command of 'C' Coy, N.R.P., and there would appear to be no vacancy for him (Wardroper) to fill].

Considerable difficulty exists today in keeping your Companies up to

strength in rifles. It is further becoming more difficult to find volunteers to act as N.C.O.'s for the N.R.P. Lastly there is little or no hope of recruits other than the 60 now en route to SONGEA coming forward from the south. It is therefore a matter for consideration whether it would not be advisable to do away with one of your Companies and merge it into the remaining five; this would enable you to bring them more or less up to strength. The Commanding Officer would like your views in this connection; he considers it to your advantage to have five strong Companies to six weak ones, and he wishes you to keep this point in view when submitting your report.

(Signed) G. Parson,  
Major, B.S.A.P.,  
S.S.O., H.Q.,  
MURRAY."

That drew the following reply, also in part; it is dated at Kazimoto, 2nd November, 1917, one day less than a month having passed since it would have been called for; it is not likely Fair delayed long in making it:—

"No. 61.

The Senior Staff Officer,  
Headquarters, MURRAY.

Sir:

I have the honour to acknowledge your letter No. 121 of the 3rd ult.

(1) I note that Captain Dickinson's promotion is in abeyance until certain recommendations have been arranged. As I am at present in command of the N.R. Police in the Field I would be glad to receive a copy of the recommendations referred to.

(2) and (3) [Comments].

[Paragraphs A, B, C and D with reference to the advisability of doing away with one company and a suggestion that the writer should be given the task of recruiting both whites and blacks; attention was drawn to the fact that two companies operated away from the other four].

I have, etc.,

(Signed) C. H. Fair,  
O.C., N.R. Police in the Field."

It bears the endorsement "File" and is initialled "G.P., 15/12/17".

In due course the Northern Rhodesia Police in the Field became the Northern Rhodesia Police Service Battalion, with four companies under Dickinson, as temporary lieutenant-colonel. What share Fair took in the new set-up is not known.

The state of mind come to by these exchanges must have been considerably influenced by the receipt of the report of the 29th September; as has been shown, the copy of it was not passed to Fair until the 16th October and he deals with it in a letter from Kapati Mtoto on the 16th November, as follows:—

"The Senior Staff Officer,  
Headquarters, Rhodesian Forces,  
MPURUKASESE.

Sir:

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 16th ult.; together with a copy of your MUR. 119.

I would like to point out that although I was relieved of the command of the N.R. Police in the Field on the 29th ult., I had no idea that an adverse report on me had been sent to the General Officer Commanding until I received a copy on the 15th inst.

As there is now nothing to be gained by replying at length to the various points referred to by the Commanding Officer, and as a discussion on paper is seldom satisfactory to both parties, I trust that I will at an early date be given an opportunity of proving to the General Officer Commanding that, far from having done or left undone anything to deserve such censure, I have done a great deal which is worthy of commendation.

The last three paragraphs of the report are so grossly unjust that to me it seems incredible that the Commanding Officer could have dictated them without being greatly influenced by some person directly antagonistic to me.

For the sake of clarity let us suppose the last three paragraphs are lettered X, Y and Z in their proper sequence. The remarks in para. X at the conclusion of the most successful operations in which the N.R. Police have taken part are somewhat extraordinary. Regarding para. Y I would be glad to be informed on what occasions I have failed the CO. when I have been in command of more than one company. (This statement is all the more strange when one considers that from the commencement of the offensive I have generally commanded more than a company, and that Capt Latham has practically had the command of 'A' Coy, excepting when the company was operating away from the Column.) I cannot reconcile the remarks made in para. Z with some of the conversations I have had with the Commanding Officer concerning the command of the N.R. Police in the Field, the good work I had done throughout the campaign, how absolutely necessary it was to retain my services, etc. (I would like to recall to him the incident when we were in the vicinity of CHIWERE Mission when at his request I enquired into the disaffection of one of the N.R. Police companies and by a few words stamped out all discontent.)

With all modesty, and with all respect to those in authority over me, I know that I am not only in every way fitted to command the N.R. Police in the Field but quite capable of commanding a much larger force. From the commencement I have strived to get the corps a good name for work in the field, and in so doing I have faithfully served the Commanding Officer. That we might have done better at times I am fully aware, but even the very best of native troops cannot always be expected to behave like veteran Europeans.

As at present I am directly under the orders of the General Officer Commanding, and to avoid, delay, I am forwarding one copy of this letter to the Chief Staff Officer. I also forward a copy to the O.C., N.R. Police in the Field. I trust that this is in order.

I have, etc.,

(Signed) C. H. Fair, Lt-Col.,  
Northern Rhodesia Police."

It also bears the endorsement "File" and is intialled "G.P., 15/12/17"; the end would appear to have been reached but the very next day after Fair's two submissions were put away, Murray fired his last shot; had these complaints and subsequent correspondence gone the way most records of the campaign seem to have gone then this writer would never have been able to record his view of what C. H. Fair, D.S.O., did in the operations against Aumann in the closing months of 1917. This is what Murray submitted:—

"MUR. 141.

RHODESIAN COLUMN, SONGEA.  
16th December, 1917.

HEADQUARTERS  
NORFORCE

Sir:

*Temp. Major C. H. FAIR, N.R. Police.*

Major FAIR has, I understand, been granted one month's leave in the MAHENGE area and I have the honour to request that at the expiration of his leave he be allowed to return to LIVINGSTONE for duty there.

I have, etc.,

(Signed) R. E. Murray, Colonel,  
CO., RHODESIAN COLUMN."

It bears the following endorsement: "Headquarters, Murray: The G.O.C. directs me to say that he concurs with the above suggestion. (Signed) A. E. Court. Capt., D.A.A.G., Songea, 16/12/17".

It is conceivable all this dirty-washing was too late to influence a recommendation both Murray, as Commanding Officer, and the General must have made resulting in the statement in the General Commanding-in-Chief's Despatch of the 21st January, 1918, already quoted.

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# Letters to the Editor

## "SHIFTS AND EXPEDIENTS OF CAMP LIFE"

Sir,

I was pleased to find some extracts from "Shifts and Expedients of Camp Life" in the last issue of *Rhodesiana*, for this remarkable book is perhaps not so widely known as it deserves to be.

In these hard times, it is perhaps worth mentioning that it gives a recipe for making "whisky" from sweet potatoes. Explicit instructions for distilling a similar spirit are given in Vol. II, page 245 of "The Albert N'Yanza, Great Basin of the Nile", by Sir Samuel Baker. He clearly found his product highly satisfactory, as the following quotation shows:

"I found an extraordinary change in my health from the time that I commenced drinking the potato-whisky. Every day I drank hot toddy. I became strong, and from that time to the present day my fever left me, occurring only once or twice during the first six months, and then quitting me entirely. Not having tasted either wine or spirits for nearly two years, the sudden change from total abstinence to a moderate allowance of stimulant produced a marvellous effect. Ibrahim and some of his men established stills, several became intoxicated, which so delighted M'Gambi, who happened, to be present, that he begged a bottle of spirit from Ibrahim as a sample for Kamrasi. It appears that the king got drunk so quickly upon the potent spirit, that he had an especial desire to repeat the dose . . . . When I explained to him that it was the produce of sweet potatoes, he expressed his great regret that he had never sufficiently appreciated their value, and he expressed a determination to cultivate whole districts."

Yours faithfully,

J. C. Ferguson.

Waterfalls, Salisbury  
28th April, 1964

## A HISTORY OF CIVIL AVIATION

Sir,

I am collecting material for a History of Civil Aviation in the Rhodesias and Nyasaland, and would be very grateful for any help which any member might be able to give with respect to events which occurred in the early days of flying.

The following would be of especial interest:

1. Information about the Aeronautical Society which was nearly, but not quite, formed in Salisbury in 1912.
2. Photographs, letters or anecdotes concerning the aircraft "Rhodesia", which toured the country between April and October, 1920, and of Major Miller's aircraft, which operated from June to August, 1922, before crashing at Rusape on 13th August.
3. Photographs, letters or anecdotes concerning the flying activities of the late Capt. J. Douglas Mail, who operated from Bulawayo in the 1920's.

Any such assistance would be greatly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

Jack McAdam.

c/o Central African Airways

P.O. Salisbury Airport

## A Note

### PRE-PIONEER MISSIONARY IN SOUTHERN RHODESIA

The Reverend Fr. W. F. Rea, S.J., has edited, with comments, a valuable extract from the diary of Fr. Peter Prestage covering the year 1884 when he was at Tati and Lobengula's kraal. It has appeared under the title of "Pre-pioneer missionary in Southern Rhodesia" in *Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu*, v. 32, 1963, and also in *St. George's College Chronicle* of June and December, 1963.

## Notes on Contributors

Mr. H. A. Cripwell arrived in Bulawayo some time before his father attested in the British South Africa Police in December, 1898. Attended St. John's Preparatory School before going to St. George's Boys' Public School where he matriculated. Entered Southern Rhodesia Native Department in 1915. Served in German and Portuguese East Africa, World War I, 1917-19, with B.S.A. Police Service Company and Northern Rhodesia Police Service Battalion. Mentioned in despatches. Retired from Native Department in 1957. Member of the Natural and Historical Monuments Commission of Southern Rhodesia. Contributor to sundry local publications from time to time of articles on Rhodesian history.

Mr. R. W. Dickinson is Headmaster of Donnybrook African Primary School. He is an honours graduate in history of Durham University and has specialised in the history of the Roman Wall. He studied for three years under Dr. Ian Richmond, now Professor of Archaeology of the Roman Empire at Oxford University, and dug under his supervision at Corstopitum.

Mr. Rex Reynolds is Public Relations Officer to the British South Africa Company. He has had 30 years of experience as a journalist. Possessed of very general interests he has a special one in historical research.

Major C. T. C. Taylor, an "Old Contemptible", farmed in the Ayrshire district of Lomagundi from 1928 to 1956 (except during service in World War II). As from 1953 he was the last President of the Federation of Regional Development and Publicity Associations. He is Honorary Life Vice-President of the Lomagundi Regional Development and Publicity Association, and Deputy Chairman of the Southern Rhodesia Tourist Board.

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