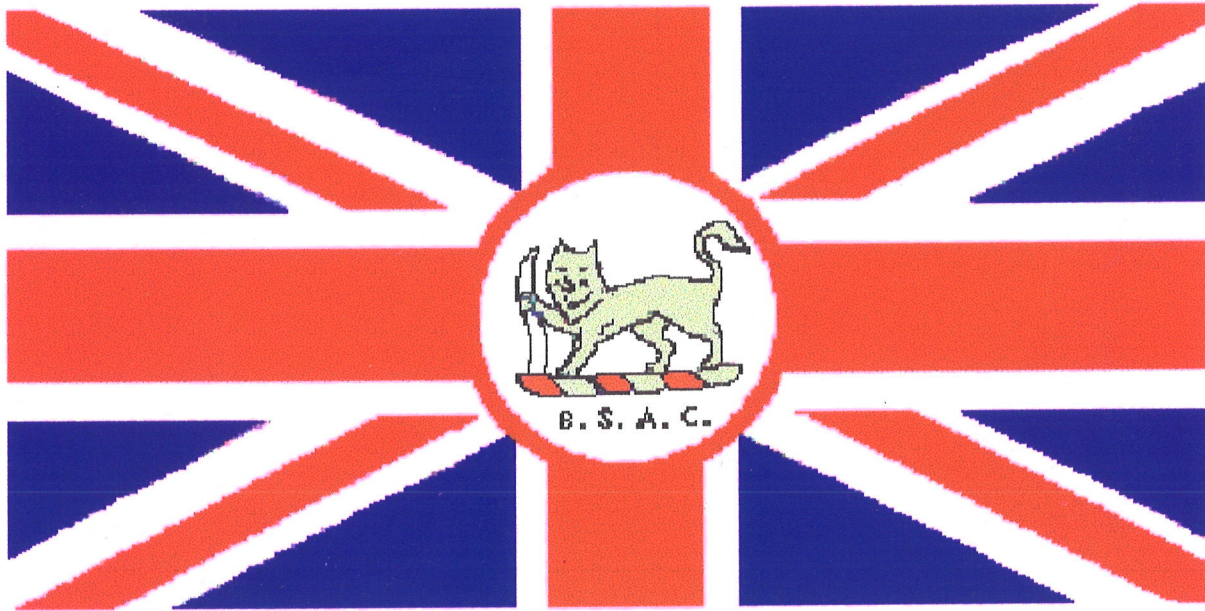


BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA COMPANY



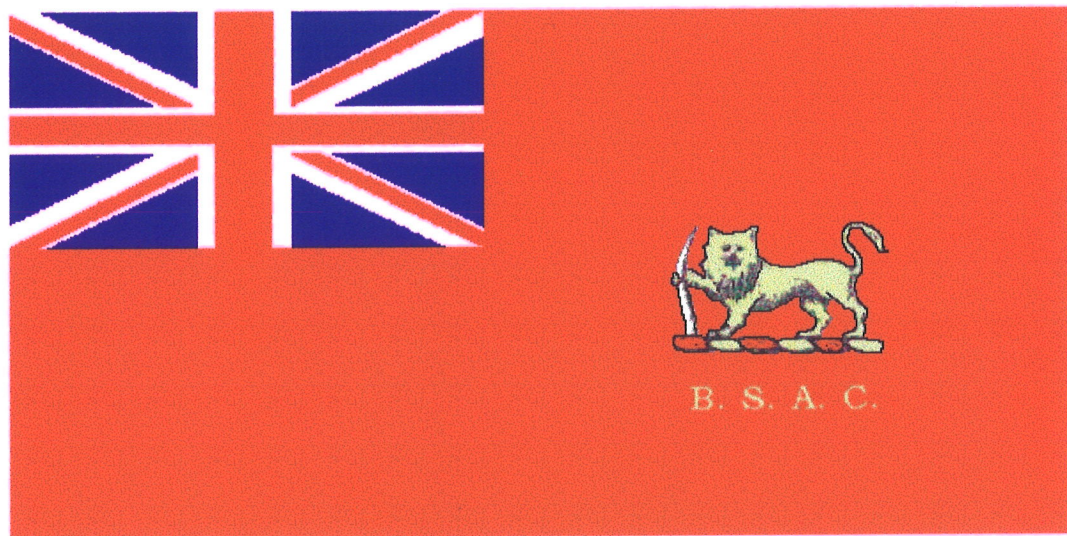
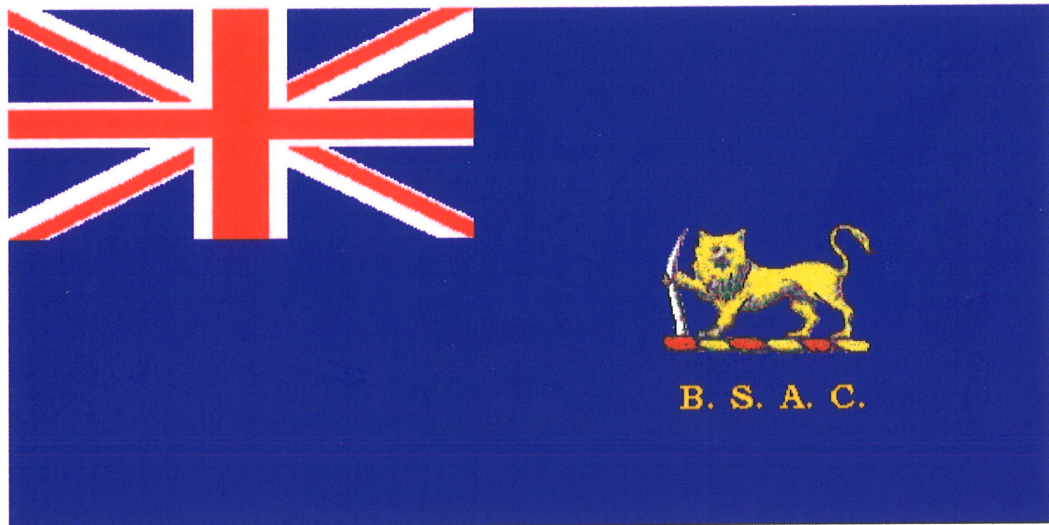
1890 - 12 SEPTEMBER 1923

The British South Africa Company was established by Royal Charter on 29 October 1889. The Charter gave the BSAC the authority to colonise and develop the area which was later to become the territories of Southern and Northern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe and Zambia respectively). The flag commonly used by the Company consisted of a British Union Flag charged in the centre on a white disc the crest of the Company, namely a yellow lion "guardant passant" supporting with its right forepaw an ivory tusk.

The Company flag ceased to be the official flag of Southern Rhodesia on 12 September 1923 with the granting of Responsible Government to the territory and Company administration ceased in Northern Rhodesia in April 1923 when it became a British Protectorate.

The flag was, however, still used as the house flag of the BSAC until its merger with the Anglo-American Corporation in 1965.

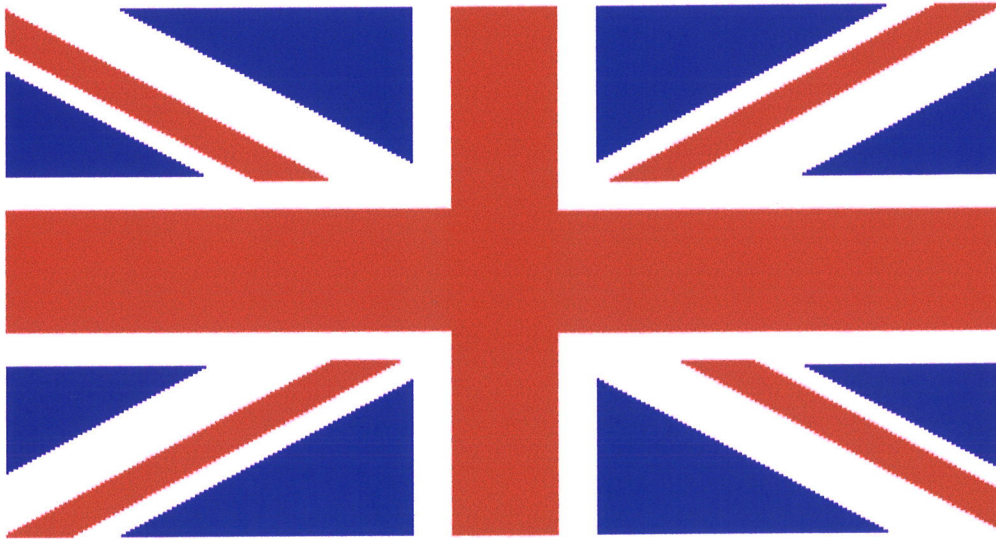
BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA COMPANY



The BSAC was empowered, in terms of its Charter, to own or charter ships. As such it was entitled to fly distinctive ensigns - the Blue Ensign being for vessels (not being trading ships) and the Red Ensign for merchant ships and trading vessels.

Although entitled to fly ensigns, it is unclear whether the Company actually chose to do so and no examples of BSAC ensigns are known to exist today.

UNION FLAG ("UNION JACK") OF GREAT BRITAIN

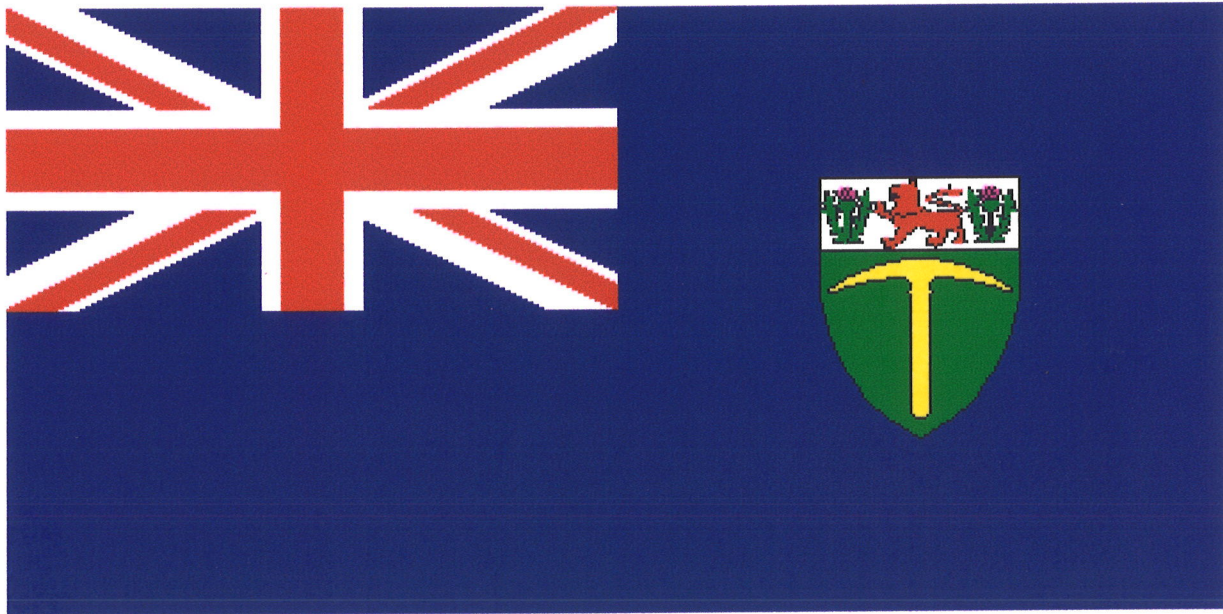


01 OCTOBER 1923 - 10 NOVEMBER 1968

This flag was used once Southern Rhodesia became a colony with Responsible Government in 1923. Initially Southern Rhodesia did not have a flag of its own and only the "Union Jack" was flown within the country. Permission was granted to use a dark blue ensign with the badge of the Colony imprinted in the fly by the British Admiralty somewhere between 1924 and 1927, although this flag was used to represent the Colony abroad and was not for use within the Colony.

Between 1953 and November 1968, the Union Jack was flown in conjunction with the Federation and Southern Rhodesia ensigns. When flown alongside these flags, the Union Jack was in the position of authority, namely on the left when looking at the flags.

SOUTHERN RHODESIA

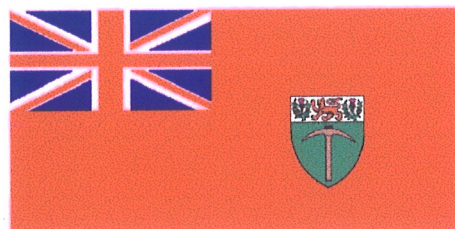


Circa 1927 - 07 SEPTEMBER 1953

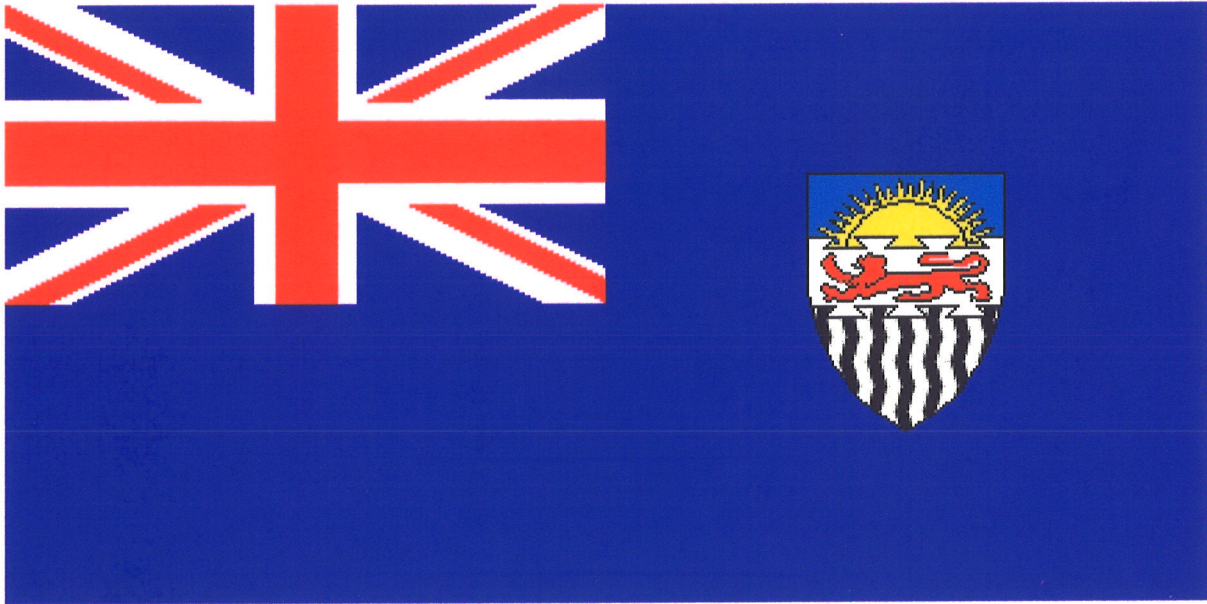
Although a Crown Colony with internal self-government, after 1931 Southern Rhodesia fell under the Dominions Office and not the Colonial Office in London. After the granting of Responsible Government in 1923, there was some confusion as to what the colonial flag of Southern Rhodesia should be and the “Union Jack” was used. The need for a distinctive flag for the colony was resolved just prior to the coronation of King George VI in 1937 when the Prime Minister requested a flag to represent the Colony for the occasion. The Dominions Office finally approved that the most appropriate flag for the Colony would be a Blue Ensign with the badge (shield) of Southern Rhodesia in the fly. The Union Jack was to remain the official flag within the Colony and the new flag was only to be used to represent the Colony abroad.

The exact details of the design of the colonial flag of Southern Rhodesia is somewhat confusing as examples with the shield placed within and without a white disc (roundel) have been illustrated, although an original version in the collection of the author has the shield without a disc as shown above.

A Red Ensign (without disc) was also used unofficially during the 1947 Royal Visit to the Colony and was even erroneously illustrated later in some flag reference books as being the official flag of the Colony.



FEDERATION OF RHODESIA AND NYASALAND



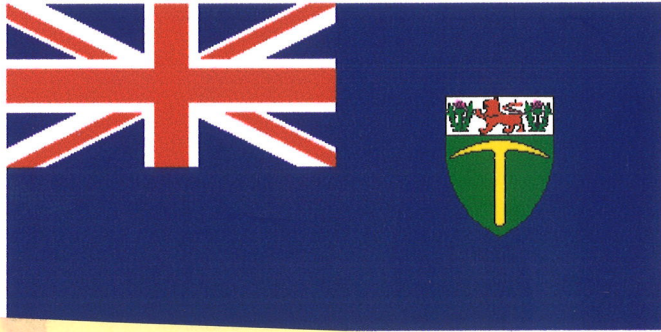
07 SEPTEMBER 1953 - 31 DECEMBER 1963

The Federation comprised the colony of Southern Rhodesia and the protectorates of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. The Federal ensign bears in the fly the shield of its Arms which represented all three territories. The rising sun was taken from the Arms of Nyasaland, the lion from Southern Rhodesia and the wavy palets (symbolising the Victoria Falls) from those of Northern Rhodesia. This flag was always flown together with the "Union Jack".

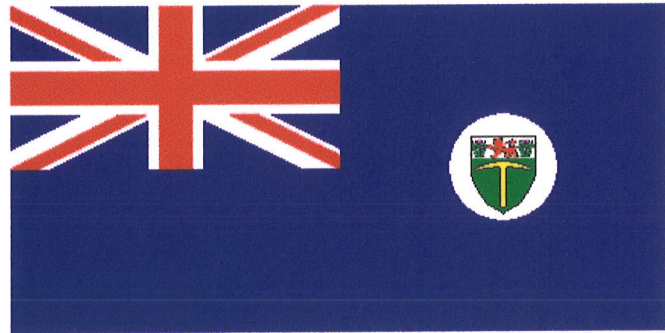
According to H. Gresham Carr, this flag differed from most other colonial ensigns in that it was officially approved in the proportion of 3:5. However the actual flags manufactured seem to have followed the usual British proportion of 1:2, as is shown in this illustration.

The Federation dissolved on 31 December 1963 following which all three territories resumed their individual identities.

SOUTHERN RHODESIA



I just updated this to include info on your flag.

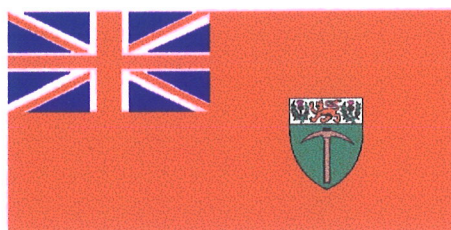


- 07 SEPTEMBER 1953

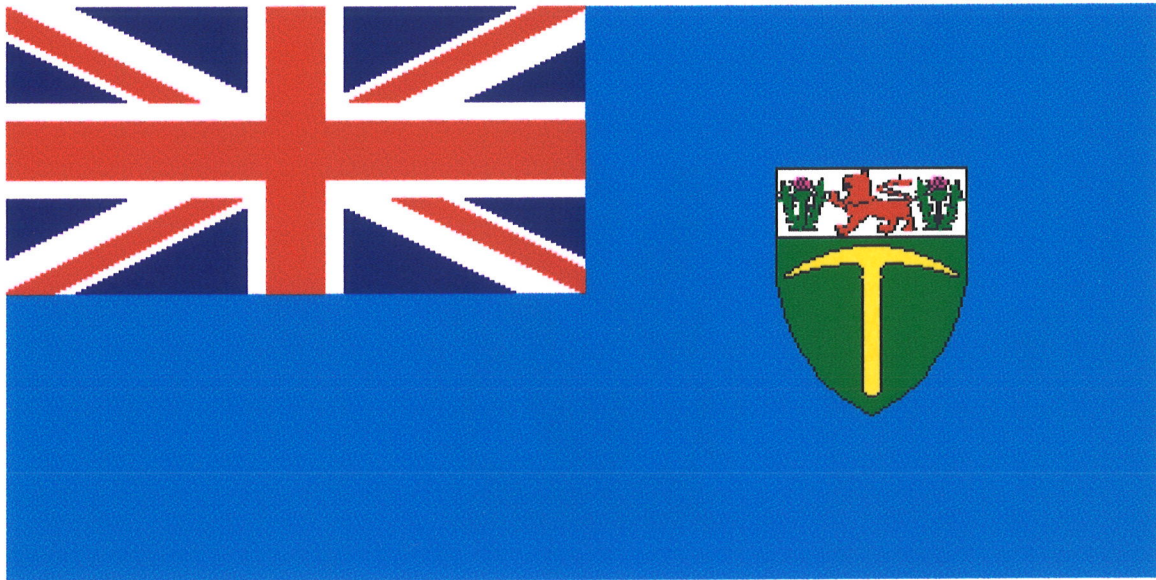
After self-government, after 1931 Southern Rhodesia fell under the Colonial Office in London. After the granting of Responsible Government, there was confusion as to what the colonial flag of Southern Rhodesia should be. The need for a distinctive flag for the colony was met by King George VI in 1937 when the Prime Minister requested the flag on that occasion. The Dominions Office finally approved that the flag should be a Blue Ensign with the badge (shield) of Southern Rhodesia. This was to remain the official flag within the Colony and the new flag was to be used by the Colony abroad.

The exact details of the design of the colonial flag of Southern Rhodesia is somewhat confusing as examples with the shield placed within and without a white disc (roundel) have been illustrated. An original example of each version are known to exist and are found in the private collections of Chris Whitehead and Bruce Berry.

A Red Ensign (without disc) was also used unofficially during the 1947 Royal Visit to the Colony and was even erroneously illustrated later in some flag reference books as being the official flag of the Colony.



SOUTHERN RHODESIA

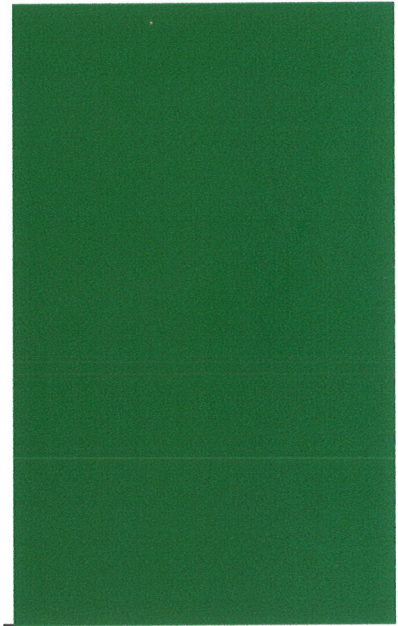
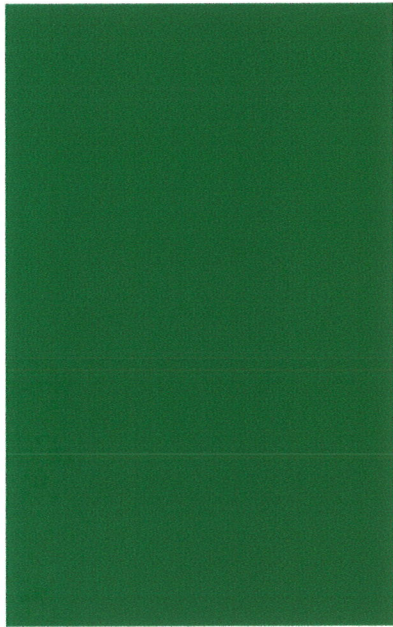


APRIL 1964 - 10 NOVEMBER 1968

Following the dissolution of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland on 31 December 1963, each of the territories adopted separate political identities. On 6 July 1964 Nyasaland gained independence as the Republic of Malawi and was followed on 24 October 1964 by Northern Rhodesia which became the Republic of Zambia. Southern Rhodesia simply became Rhodesia and adopted a new flag based on the colonial ensign pattern but with a light (airforce) blue field. The centre of the fly is charged with the shield from the Arms granted to the Colony on 11 August 1924 by Royal Warrant.

This flag flew in conjunction with the "Union Jack" and continued to be used for a short while after the country's Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) from Britain on 11 November 1968.

RHODESIA



11 NOVEMBER 1968 - 01 SEPTEMBER 1979

On the third anniversary of its Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI), Rhodesia adopted a new flag. This flag consisted of three vertical stripes of green, white and green. Superimposed centrally on the white stripe was the full Arms, originally granted to the country while a British Colony on 11 August 1924.

The gold pick symbolises the importance of mining in the early history and development of the country. The pick is set on a green field which represents agriculture. The bird which surmounts the Arms is a representation of the soapstone bird found at the Great Zimbabwe Ruins and serves as a reminder of the country's past. The lion and thistles are from the Arms of Cecil John Rhodes, whose British South Africa Company colonised the territory and founded the modern state. The motto: *Sit Nomine Digna* means "May she (Rhodesia) be worthy of the name".

UDI was not recognised by Britain and in December 1966 the United Nations imposed mandatory economic sanctions against Rhodesia. These remained in force until the country returned to its legal status as a British Colony in December 1979 following the Lancaster House constitutional conference.

ZIMBABWE RHODESIA



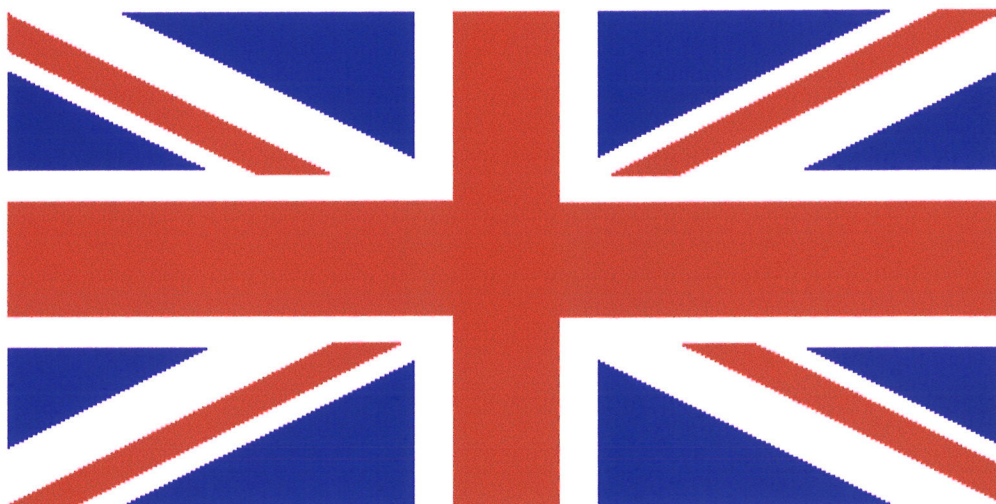
**02 SEPTEMBER 1979 - 12 DECEMBER 1979(de jure)
- 17 APRIL 1980 (de facto)**

Following the holding of the first universal suffrage elections in February 1979, Rhodesia became Zimbabwe Rhodesia on 01 June 1979 with an African dominated government.

A new flag reflecting the political changes in the country was hoisted on 02 September 1979 and consisted of a vertical black stripe with a white fimbriation at the hoist. The fly comprised three equal horizontal stripes of red, white and green. A yellow Zimbabwe Bird was placed on the black stripe in the canton. The black stripe symbolised the importance of majority rule in the country for the first time. The Zimbabwe Bird symbolised the country's identity and its colour that of the rich mineral resources in the country and the hope for continued economic development. The vertical white stripe represented European (and other minority) communities while the horizontal white stripe stood for peace and hope for the future. The green stripe symbolised the agricultural basis of the economy.

Despite the majority of Africans in government, Zimbabwe Rhodesia did not secure international recognition. The holding of a constitutional conference at Lancaster House in London resulted in the return of the country to legality under the British Crown and the holding of fresh elections in early 1980. Although the country technically became a British Colony under the "Union Jack" with the arrival of a Governor in December 1979, the Zimbabwe Rhodesia flag continued in *de facto* usage until the new, internationally recognised, government came to power in April 1980.

ZIMBABWE RHODESIA



12 DECEMBER 1979 - 17 APRIL 1980

The Lancaster House negotiations brought about the lifting of sanctions and Rhodesia's return to its former status as a British Colony when Lord Christopher Soames arrived as the new Governor on 12 December 1979. This was followed by a cease-fire on 28 December 1979 and the holding of internationally supervised elections in early 1980.

With the ending of the UDI political impasse and the return to legality, the "Union Jack" was reinstated as the official flag of the country, although in practice the Zimbabwe Rhodesia flag continued to be flown.

This is one of the few examples of a reversion to the use of the "Union Jack" in a country and is the reason why it was the "Union Jack" which was lowered at the Zimbabwe independence ceremonies held on 17/18 April 1980.

ZIMBABWE



18 APRIL 1980 - to date

The independent Republic of Zimbabwe was born on 18 April 1980 and a new flag was adopted. The flag of Zimbabwe consists of a white triangle at the hoist, fimbriated (on the two outer edges only) in black, in the centre of which is a red five-pointed star over which is superimposed a yellow Zimbabwe Bird. The fly comprises seven equal horizontal stripes of green, yellow, red, black, red, yellow and green which are taken from the flag of the ruling party, ZANU-PF.

The official explanation of the symbolism of the flag corresponds to the generally accepted meaning of the same colours found in other African flags. Black represents the African people, red is for the blood spilled in the struggle for liberation and independence, yellow is for the nation's mineral wealth and green for vegetation and agriculture. The white, outward pointing triangle represents peace and the desire for development and progress. The Zimbabwe Bird is the national emblem and the red star represents the nation's aspirations and Zimbabwe's place in the community of nations.

THE GENESIS OF A COLONIAL FLAG: SOUTHERN RHODESIA, 1890-1937

Michael Faul

The first flag ever of which documentary evidence exists to have been raised in the territory of modern Zimbabwe was the British Union Flag. In July 1890 a Pioneer Column organised by Cecil Rhodes began a march to occupy Mashonaland. When they reached Fort Salisbury (now Harare)¹ on 12 September 1890, they halted at what was to be the centre of the settlement. The following day the Union Flag was raised. Thereafter, on the anniversary of the arrival of the Pioneer Column the British Union Flag was hoisted at the same spot every year until 1978, and always by a member or descendant of a member of the Pioneer Column².

In fact the flag raised was incorrect. The territory was coming under the control of a chartered company, not the British crown. Technically it was wrong to raise the Union Flag. The Company flag should have been hoisted. There was as yet no company flag. The British South Africa Company had received its charter, and its arms, but the flag was not yet ready when the column departed. The first company flag arrived in Fort Salisbury early in 1891, and thenceforward replaced the Union Flag. It is doubtful whether people noticed any great difference. The company flag was the Union Flag with a badge in the centre (see B. Berry, 'The flags of the B.S.A.C. 1890-1923' in this Proceedings). This flag was used by the company thereafter, even after the country was annexed to Britain³, and examples were preserved in museums. Again there was a mistake. The warrant establishing the flag stated clearly that the flag was for the use of the 'Administrator when embarked in boats or other vessels of the Company'. It was not intended for the flag to be used on land at all. Of course, as the territories controlled by the company were entirely inland, with no navigable rivers, and not even a fair-sized lake, the chances of the Administrator ever being afloat (other than in the alcoholic sense) were at best limited. The badge was placed on a white circle, in the usual fashion of such flags. There was no wreath around the circle, and this would have an effect on a later flag.

In 1893 war broke out between the company and the Matabele. Bulawayo, the Matabele capital, was occupied on 4 November 1893. The company flag was hoisted in a tree over the royal residence of King Lobengula⁴. The whole of modern Zimbabwe was under company rule, and the company flag flew over all official buildings. At about the same time as the establishment of the Union Flag with the badge, two other flags were created. They were the British Blue and Red Ensigns, bearing the same badge in the fly⁵. As usual, on the Red Ensign the badge appeared on a circle which was omitted on the blue. In addition, when the badge appeared on the Blue Ensign, the lettering was in yellow rather than in black. The territory administered by the company was entirely inland, so neither of these ensigns was ever used, as the company had no ships. It is doubtful if they were ever made, but they do appear on flag charts then and later.

Under company rule, there was a regular influx of

white settlers to the country, by then named Rhodesia, after its founder. In 1910 the country divided into Southern Rhodesia, which remained under the company, and Northern Rhodesia, which became a British Protectorate. The majority of the white newcomers settled in Southern Rhodesia. By 1920, with the war over, the white population of Southern Rhodesia was strong enough to challenge the company, as there was no popular representation in the government of the country. Under this pressure, a referendum was held in 1922. Two options were given, to unite the territory with South Africa as a fifth province or for it to be annexed to Britain as a self-governing crown colony. The deciding factor was the rise of Afrikaner nationalism in South Africa. Most Rhodesian whites feared that, should they unite with the south, their prized British heritage might be submerged in a future Afrikaner republic⁶. A majority of the whites voted for self-government.

On Saturday, 29 September 1923, the company flag was lowered over the Administrator's office in Salisbury⁷. On Monday, 1st October, the British Union Flag was raised on the same flagpole, symbolising the change of administration⁸. Both flags were preserved in the Queen Victoria Memorial Museum in Salisbury. Since independence as Zimbabwe, matters of heraldry and vexillology are entrusted to the Mutare Museum, so it is likely that the flags are now preserved there. One would expect the flag of the colony to have been raised on this occasion. It could not have been. As there had been no company flag in 1890, so there was no colonial flag in 1923. The Southern Rhodesia coat-of-arms [Fig. 1] was granted by Royal Warrant on 11 August 1924, so no flag could have borne the arms prior to that date. The Zimbabwe bird above the shield's helmet was a representation of a stone carving found in the ruins of Great Zimbabwe, the centre of a major African culture which existed from the 12th century. The motto 'Sit Nomine Digna' meant 'May She (Rhodesia) be Worthy of the Name (Rhodes)'. On 28 March 1925, the Governor told the Colonial Office: 'My ministers inform me that they desire that the shield only should be used as a badge on flags'⁹.

In spring 1925 there was correspondence between the Rhodesian High Commission in London and the organisers of the British Empire Exhibition, who wanted to show a Southern Rhodesian flag. The High Commission contacted the Under-Secretary of State at the Colonial Office in London and asked to be informed 'what kind of ensign I am in liberty to provide'¹⁰. The reply from the Colonial Office noted that in 'following the course adopted by other colonies last year, it is thought that the Blue Ensign with the Arms (or Flag Badge) of Southern Rhodesia in the fly might be used for this purpose'. It then added that the Governor had 'recently reported that his Government had approved of the shield only' as the flag-badge. This was a reference to Chancellor's letter of 28 March. There is a pencilled note on this letter which reads: 'Shield and motto only, not supporters'. Clearly the officials had not read the letter properly. The High Commission replied on 6 May to the exhibition organisers that no flag was available, but enclosed a lithographed copy of the Arms and added: 'I understand ...that the Government of

Southern Rhodesia has approved of the shield only (without supporters) with presumably the motto ... of the Colony's Coat-of-Arms being used as a flag-badge». This was not what the Governor wrote, nor what the Colonial Office told the High Commission. The motto had not been mentioned except in the pencilled note, which thus became a self-fulfilling prophecy.

The Exhibition organisers answered that they had the «Ensign of Southern Rhodesia of a suitable size»¹¹. This caused some mystification in the High Commission, as the hand-written notations indicate that the staff there had never seen the flag. «You might be interested to see this flag» reads one of them. The next, in puzzled reply, asks «Yes. How did they get the badge?» They asked the Exhibition organisers: «The High Commissioner would be greatly obliged if this flag could be sent to him for examination as he was not previously aware of the fact that such a flag had been made». They also asked the name of the maker. The organisers replied, that the design had «a pick-axe, two roses and a dragon» and named a manufacturer, Messrs Adam Lane and Neave Ltd., «from whom I suggest you procure an example». The roses and a dragon are obvious misreadings of the thistles and lion. From the correspondence it is clear that the High Commission staff had no idea that there was a flag of the Colony. The Colonial Office had to tell them of the Governor's letter about the shield only being used, and then they still made a mistake by including the motto. These were not confused vexillologists, trying in vain to make out the pattern of a new flag of a hitherto unheard-of revolutionary movement from a glimpse on the television news. They were diplomatic representatives of a British colony in the capital of the mother country, and they were confused about their own colony's flag, and did not even know certainly whether such a flag existed. It may be hard to believe, but it is so.

In March 1928 the Rhodesian High Commission wrote to the Colonial Office in Salisbury asking what was the flag of Southern Rhodesia, and adding that they used «the Blue and Red ensigns with the Arms of the Colony in a circle» in the office and at some exhibitions. A reply a month later stated that «the Union Jack is the flag of Southern Rhodesia», and that the use of the Union Jack, or of the Red and Blue Ensigns with the flag-badge «would not be in order for the purposes mentioned in your letter»¹².

There was in existence a governor's flag. This was the Union Flag with the shield of the arms on a white circle in the centre [Fig. 2]. Unique among British colonies, this white circle was not surrounded by the usual wreath¹³. The special status of Southern Rhodesia as a self-governing colony would not alone explain this situation, as other colonies, then and later, which had a similar level of self-government, used flags for the governor with the wreath. The only parallel (and an inexact one at that) is British North Borneo. There too the central badge omitted the wreath. The badge in North Borneo was however not the territory's arms, but the flag badge used on the red and blue ensigns. It seems that the wreath was omitted because of the omission of a wreath on the flag of the British South Africa Company. The same situation had existed in North Borneo, the rule of a chartered company preceding

colonial rule. Even then a difference existed. North Borneo was not a self-governing colony as was Southern Rhodesia.

Throughout 1933 and 1934 there was correspondence between London and Salisbury. At one point the colony's flag was described as the Union Jack with the colony's badge in the centre. A letter from Salisbury to the High Commission stated that the Union Jack with the badge was for use only at sea, and that Colonial Office Regulations give the Union Jack as the flag of Southern Rhodesia. It was not clear that these regulations applied to Southern Rhodesia, and authority was wanted to adopt it as the colony's flag. The letter was referred to the Dominions Office (under which, rather than the Colonial Office, Southern Rhodesia came). A reply was sent on 26 November 1934. It stated that the Union Jack was the appropriate flag for use in any part of His Majesty's dominions. It went on to point out that the Union Flag with the badge in the centre was for the Governor when on board ship, and that the usual practice was «to adopt either the Blue Ensign or the Red Ensign with the badge». The procedure would be by legislation in Southern Rhodesia¹⁴.

Meanwhile, in November 1934 the High Commission bought some small Union Jacks, having green pennants below with «Southern Rhodesia» in white letters, to be used as car flags at a royal wedding. One such flag-pennant set is preserved in the Zimbabwe National Archives. In February 1935, the High Commission received a letter from the Department of Internal Affairs, Salisbury (formerly the Colonial Secretary), which included the words: «...it has been decided not to take any further steps in the matter of an official flag for this Colony»¹⁵. The correspondence makes it appear that the British Empire Exhibition incident had been forgotten, as had the Governor's letter of March 1925. There was confusion as to the flag to be used, hence the makeshift expedient of a Union Jack and pennant. Nor was there any indication that the correspondents knew of the existence of a Southern Rhodesian flag. The letters of the High Commission have a tone of mild bewilderment. That from the Dominions Office sounds puzzled, as if the writer wondered why the question had been asked, when the answer was obvious. What made matters worse was the lack of definition of the powers of the Southern Rhodesia Parliament. Although a Crown Colony with internal self-government, after 1931 it came under the Dominions Office, not the Colonial Office. So where South Africa had adopted a flag by Act of Parliament, this was not possible for Southern Rhodesia, because adoption of a flag was an act related to foreign affairs. Southern Rhodesia's foreign affairs were controlled from London. This dichotomy of being neither one thing nor the other would be a major factor leading to U.D.I. in 1965.

The forthcoming coronation of King Edward VIII brought matters to a head. R. C. Tredgold, Minister of Justice, wrote to Huggins, the Prime Minister, on 18 November 1936¹⁶. He stated that the two methods to obtain a flag were by Act of Parliament or Royal Proclamation. There was some question whether the Southern Rhodesia Parliament had the power to adopt a flag. Tredgold suggested that the question be referred to the Imperial authorities, but added that he thought it would be quite

in order for the Government of Southern Rhodesia to send the blue ensign with the arms of the Colony inset as a present to another government as representing the flag of the Colony. He added: «It seems that unless we are prepared to alter the position by Royal Proclamation, we are left with the Governor's flag and the Union Flag for local use, since it is unlikely, for the present at any rate, that we should have any use for a maritime flag». Thus Tredgold recognised the limitations on the powers of the Southern Rhodesia Government in respect of the flag. The remark about the maritime flag was because he had earlier referred to regulations dealing with maritime flags as used in the colonies. Ten days later Huggins wrote to the Rhodesian High Commission in London. He stated that every year there were applications for the Rhodesian flag, so the Government needed some sort of flag to present to those asking. He added «we are very anxious not to get away from the Union Jack», and «I do not want any flag-controversy here». The latter was a reference to the South African flag controversy, which still rankled.

On 12 December 1936, O'Keefe, of the High Commission in London wrote to Sir Henry Batterbee of the Dominions Office, stating that there was need for a flag of Southern Rhodesia, for use at the coronation, as Rhodesian troops would participate¹⁷. He enclosed copies of the letters of Tredgold and Huggins. He wrote: «I can only hope the matter is as simple as it appears from his [Tredgold's] opinion, and it strikes me that it would be if we decided upon a Red Ensign with the Colony's Coat of Arms, without supporters, in the appropriate place, because from all appearances it will be some time before we become a maritime nation». While the final phrase appears to be frivolous, it may not have been. As the Red Ensign was a maritime flag, its adoption by a land-locked country would not create confusion, as it would never be seen at sea. It is also possible that O'Keefe meant the Blue Ensign and the reference to the Red Ensign was a mistake. The reply was singularly unhelpful, and less than accurate. It stated that «the matter of a separate flag on land in a self-governing colony is a matter to be governed by local law or usage». This did not help O'Keefe at all in his quest for a flag. Nor was it correct. Australia and South Africa had adopted flags as dominions. Southern Rhodesia, while coming under the Dominions Office, did not have the same status, and could not adopt a flag under its own authority.

On 9 January 1937, a lengthy telegram was sent from the High Commission in London to the Prime Minister in Salisbury: «If there is to be no legislation on the matter, only courses appear to be (1) to begin using proposed new flag for such purposes as desired, without calling special attention to the innovation or (2) publish a Gazette notice indicating what may be decided as to use of such flag, making clear that official land flag Governor of Colony remains Union Jack stop. Dominions Office would be disposed to favour use of blue ensign with badge of S.R. emblazoned on fly stop. Am I authorised to proceed to obtain new flag accordingly? In view of Coronation matter is urgent.» The first suggestion was effectively to side-step regulations and hope that the flag would become accepted by usage. The second was an attempt to meet the limitations on

the Southern Rhodesia Government's powers, while still providing for a flag for the colony. Huggins wrote a reply dated 13 January: «Dominions Office suggestion No 1 appeals to me; that is to say we will have a flag which can be presented to countries, schools etc; it can also be used by the High Commissioner, visiting sports teams etc., and other countries; it would not necessarily be used here at all, except as bunting or in combination with the Union Jack.» He went on to approve the blue rather than the red ensign as the basis of the flag, but then criticised the coat of arms, «I must say when one comes to look at the shield apart from the rest of the Coat-of-Arms, it is singularly unattractive compared with say Canada. It seems to be all pick! However it is too late to consider that.»

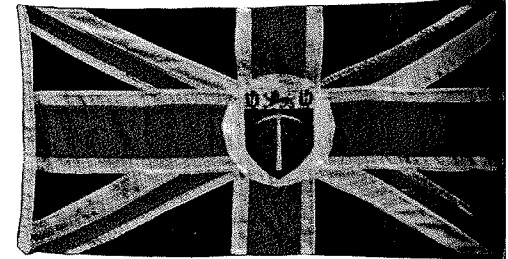
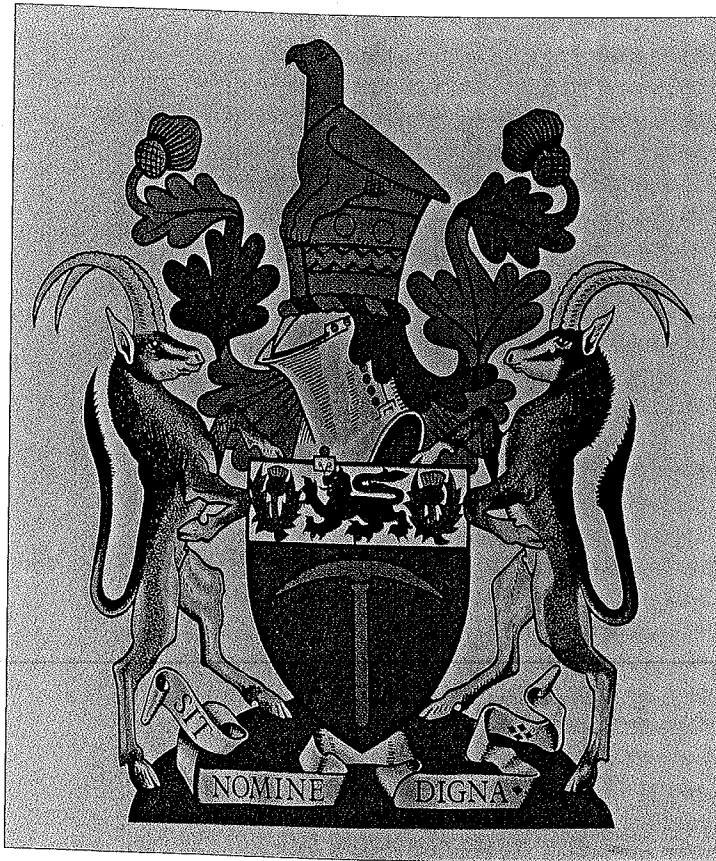
Five months later, B. F. Wright, the High Commissioner, wrote to Colonel Methuen (the former coordinator of the Southern Rhodesia Defence Force) to inform him that the flag of Southern Rhodesia was available from a London manufacturer. He continued: «I should mention, however, that the Official Flag of Southern Rhodesia is still the Union Jack, and the new flag has only been adopted for use outside the Colony. As you will readily realise, the Union Jack gave us no distinction from the Mother Country or the Colonial Empire, but the new Flag which is the Blue Ensign with the badge of the Colony's Coat-of-Arms emblazoned on the fly, does give us our own identity, which is valuable for publicity purposes on this side [Britain], but I feel it right to point out that I believe it to be the official intention that the new Flag, as above depicted, shall not come into general use in the Colony.»¹⁸ The idea that it should not be in general use within the colony is borne out by a letter from Mr C. Chikaura of the National Archives to Mr W. R. Haresign of Bulawayo in 1979, where it is stated that the Blue Ensign with the Southern Rhodesia shield is the Southern Rhodesian flag outside the Colony, and for vessels (other than trading vessels) in the service of the Government of the Colony from 1 October 1924 to 1953. He also states that the Red Ensign with the Colony's badge was used by merchant vessels belonging to the colony's government from 1 October 1923 to April 1964 and (unofficially) during the Royal Visit of 1947¹⁹.

Thus, after all the trouble, enquiries and disagreements, lasting over eleven years, the flag of the Colony of Southern Rhodesia was finally established [Fig. 3]. It should be noted that, despite the reservations as to its use expressed by both Huggins and Wright, there was increasing use of the new flag in the Colony, until it became accepted usage, without any further legislation. It was used as Huggins suggested, by sports teams and the High Commissions of the Colony in various countries, but it also flew over the Southern Rhodesia Parliament, and was used by individuals too, though not by the Rhodesian Armed Forces. It remained the flag of the Colony until 8 April 1964, when it was replaced by the plumbago-blue ensign. During the period of the Federation, it remained in use, even though it was seldom seen, the Federal Flag having taken precedence.

Notes

- ¹ Johnson, Frank, D.S.O., «Great Days – The Autobiography of an Empire Pioneer», G. Bell and Sons Ltd., London, 1940, pp.134–164.
- ² Official Programme of the Flag-Raising 1978 and author's observation of ceremony 1974–1978.
- ³ Letter from C. Chikaura of National Archives of Zimbabwe to W.R. Haresign dated 29 August 1979. Further quoted as «Chikaura». Notes on the Flag of the B.S.A.C.. Chikaura is in error in one respect. He states that the B.S.A.C. flag was used «in and out of Southern Rhodesia as territory's flag 1890 to 1 October 1923». While it was the flag of the governing company, and was the most widely seen flag between those dates, it was never the territorial flag.
- ⁴ Rhodesian postage stamp issued 4 November 1968 to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Matabele War.
- ⁵ Chikaura, op. cit., he notes that the Red Ensign was for use by «merchant ships and trading vessels» of the Company 1890 – 1 October 1923, and that the Blue Ensign was for use by «vessels (not being trading vessels) belonging to, or in service of the Company, from 11 November 1922 to 1 October 1923».
- ⁶ Bromberger C., «The Referendum Campaign in Southern Rhodesia, 1922», Unpublished M. A. Thesis, Cape Town University, 1954, passim.
- ⁷ «Flags, High Commissioner, London S881169/4651, Southern Rhodesia, Design and Manufacture, 1925–1937». File of 7 December 1923, in National Archives of Zimbabwe. Further quoted as «Archives».
- ⁸ Ibid., inscription provided for the flag which replaced the company flag. N.B.: This describes it as the «Flag of the Colony of Southern Rhodesia».

- ⁹ Ibid., 28 March 1925, J. R. Chancellor (Governor) to Colonial Office.
- ¹⁰ Ibid., 24 April 1925, R.H.C. London to Under-Secretary of State, Colonial Office.
- ¹¹ Ibid., 7 May 1925, Furse to R.H.C. London.
- ¹² Ibid., 5 April 1928, Colonial Secretary, Salisbury to R.H.C. London.
- ¹³ Chikaura, op. cit., Chikaura records this flag in use from 1 October 1924 to 30 July 1951. There is no specific mention of the white circle. «Flags of the World» by H. Gresham Carr, published by Warne, London, 1953, p.57, states that the white circle was omitted. «Flaggenbuch», Berlin, 1939, p.XV of the Great Britain section, shows the flag with circle and states that it was used without the wreath.
- ¹⁴ Archives, op. cit., 26 November 1934, C.W. Dixon of the Dominions Office to Wright of R.H.C. London.
- ¹⁵ Ibid., 23 February 1935, Department of Internal Affairs, Salisbury to R.H.C. London.
- ¹⁶ Ibid., 18 November 1936, R. C. Tredgold (Minister of Justice) to Huggins (Prime Minister).
- ¹⁷ Ibid., 12 December 1936, O'Keefe to Sir Henry Batterbee, Dominions Office.
- ¹⁸ Ibid., 18 June 1937, B.F. Wright of R.H.C. London to Colonel J.A. Kethuen, Umtali.
- ¹⁹ Chikaura, op. cit., Notes on Southern Rhodesian Blue and Red Ensigns. His dating is curious. He states that the Blue Ensign was no longer used after 1953 (presumably from Federation), yet it remained the flag of Southern Rhodesia, even though seldom seen. But he gives the Red Ensign a life up to the adoption of the plumbago blue flag in 1964, covering the entire period of the Federation, and despite the fact that there were never any merchant vessels in the service of the Southern Rhodesia Government.



left: Fig. 1
Arms of Rhodesia.

right: Fig. 2
Flag of the governor of Southern Rhodesia.

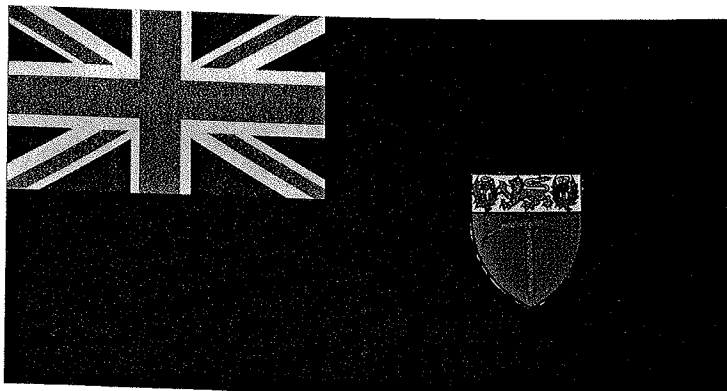


Fig. 3
The colonial flag (Blue Ensign) of Southern Rhodesia, approved by the colonial government in 1937, but in use as early as 1925.

**THE FLAGS OF THE BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA COMPANY
1890 - 1923**

**BY
BRUCE BERRY**

**PAPER PRESENTED AT THE 15TH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS
OF VEXILLOLOGY IN ZURICH, SWITZERLAND**

23-27 AUGUST 1993

THE FLAGS OF THE BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA COMPANY, 1890-1923

1. INTRODUCTION

The early vexillology of Central Africa is linked with the history of the British South Africa Company, which was responsible for the early colonization of the area by Europeans. The Company, in the British tradition, carried the "Union Jack" when claiming the African interior and later flew its own flag.

This paper reveals that based on some preliminary research done to date, there are a number of discrepancies and unresolved questions relating to just what exactly the design of the Company's flag was. The lack of conclusive evidence highlights the need for further, more intensive research on the subject. This presentation is not meant, therefore, to be an authoritative work on the topic, but rather the beginnings of an investigation into the rich vexillological history of Central Africa.

2. THE CHARTERED COMPANY

The European occupation of Central Africa began in earnest towards the end of the previous century. The colonial scramble for Africa was then at its height, and on 29 October 1889, Queen Victoria approved a Royal Charter establishing the British South Africa

Company (BSAC).¹ This was the brainchild of the British imperialist and financier, Cecil John Rhodes, who was living in the Cape Colony at the time. The Company was more than just a business enterprise. Its Charter gave it the power, *inter alia*, to make treaties, promulgate laws, prescribe the peace, maintain a police force, acquire new (mining) concessions and provide the infrastructure for a new Colony at Company expense. With these formidable powers and its wide range of interests, the Chartered Company (as it became known), established the foundations of the country that was later to become the state of Zimbabwe. Subsequently in 1900 the North Eastern Rhodesia "Order in Council" came into force which gave the BSA Company unlimited powers in the territory later to become Zambia.

The Company also obtained, as shown in Figure 1, a grant of Arms:

Blazon: Gules, the chief semee of besants, the base semee of ears of wheat Or, a fesse wavy Argent between two bulls passant in chief and an elephant passant in base all proper; the fesse charged with three galleys Sable.

Crest: A lion guardant passant Or, supporting with its dexter paw an ivory tusk erect proper.

Supporters: Two Springboks proper.

Motto: Justice, Commerce, Freedom.²



FIGURE 1: ARMS OF THE BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA COMPANY

The significance of the Arms is briefly as follows: The colour of the field, red, is the same as that in the arms of England. The besants (gold discs), in chief, refer to the gold abounding in Matabeleland, and the ears of wheat in the lower part of the shield refers to the rich agricultural potential of the area. The oxen refer to the beasts of burden employed there and to the abundance of cattle. The fesse wavy refers to the Zambezi, Limpopo and other rivers flowing through the territory administered by

the Company. The galleys refer to the shipping which can traverse the rivers. The supporters and the crest indicate the wild animals found in the area. The Lion also forms an allusion to the heraldic emblem of England, and the three galleys sable are from the arms of the second Duke of Abercorn, the first President of the Company.³

Article 19 of the Charter gave the Company the right to fly its own flag, stating:

"The Company may hoist and use on its buildings and elsewhere in the territories aforesaid, and on its vessels, such distinctive flags indicating the British Character of the Company as our Secretary of State and the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty shall from time to time approve".⁴

However, no detailed description of such a flag was provided.

The granting of the Charter prompted Rhodes to organise the "Pioneer Column", whose aim was to trek into Central Africa and colonize it. The Pioneer Column, consisting of 380 men and 200 South African policemen, left the Cape on 27 June 1890. While Rhodes was making arrangements for the Pioneer Column to leave the question arose as to what flag the Column should fly. In May 1890, Rutherford Harris, Secretary of the Kimberley offices of the Company wrote to the London office with the following recommendation:

"As we have had none of the Company's flags forwarded to us, Mr. Rhodes at the request of Col. Pennefather, Mr. Colquhoun, and Mr. Joseph Thompson, has sanctioned the use by these gentlemen of a white flag with the letters BSACo. in the foreground. Immediately on the receipt by us of the Company's flags, some will be forwarded to Col. Pennefather and Mr. Colquhoun".⁵

The response to this suggestion is not known. However, we do know that the Company's flags had not arrived before the Column set off, and despite Mr. Harris' recommendation, the suggested makeshift was not used. Instead a Union Flag of Great Britain was carried. The first flag to be flown in what is now Zimbabwe was thus the "Union Jack". It was raised by Lieutenant E.G Tyndale-Biscoe at 10am on 13 September 1890 at Fort Salisbury, the day after the Column reached its destination in Mashonaland.⁶ To this day a flag pole marks the spot where the Union Flag was first raised - this is on the edge of Unity Square in what is now the city of Harare, capital of Zimbabwe. The Square is designed in the pattern of a Union Flag which is further symbolic of the historical significance of this event. The actual flag hoisted in 1890 is on display at the National Archives of Zimbabwe.

Records do not show when the Company's flags eventually arrived in Mashonaland. What is clear, however, is that following the uprising in Matabeleland the area was annexed by the Company's

forces and on 4 November 1893, the BSA Company flag was raised at the tribal capital of the Matabele, Bulawayo. A contemporary drawing of the event (Figure 2) shows the flag quite clearly. This is one of the earliest records of the flag actually being used.

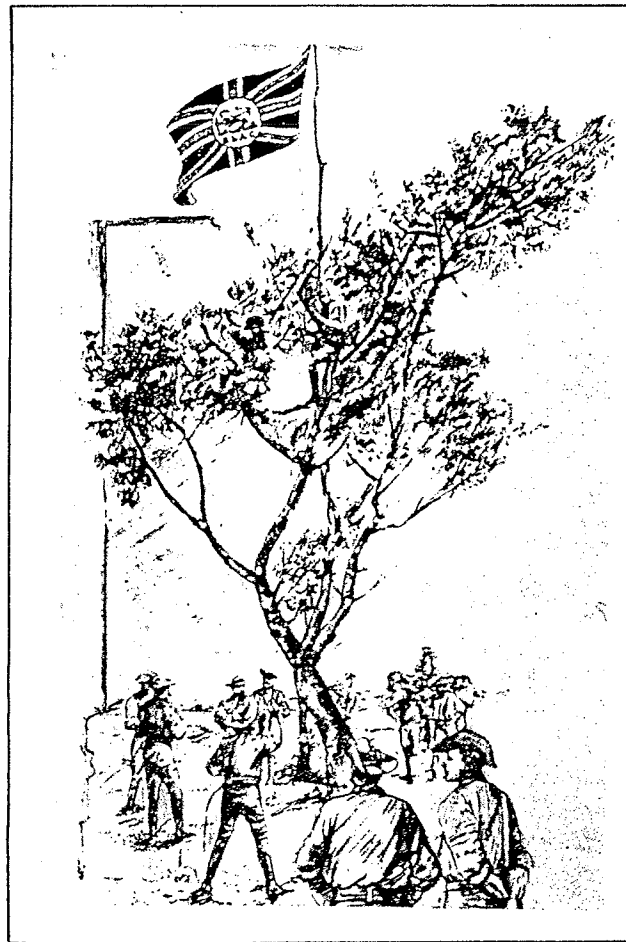


FIGURE 2: HOISTING THE COMPANY'S FLAG AT BULAWAYO ON
4 NOVEMBER 1893

3. FLAGS OF THE BSA COMPANY

3.1 The Company Flag

The Company flag hoisted at the occupation of Bulawayo, and presumably used elsewhere in the area under Company jurisdiction, was not described in detail in the Charter. The flag referred to (see

Figure 3) consisted of a British Union Flag charged in the centre, on a white roundel, with the crest of the Company, namely a yellow lion "guardant passant" supporting with its right forepaw an ivory tusk which was known to the irreverent as the "lion with the tooth-pick".⁷

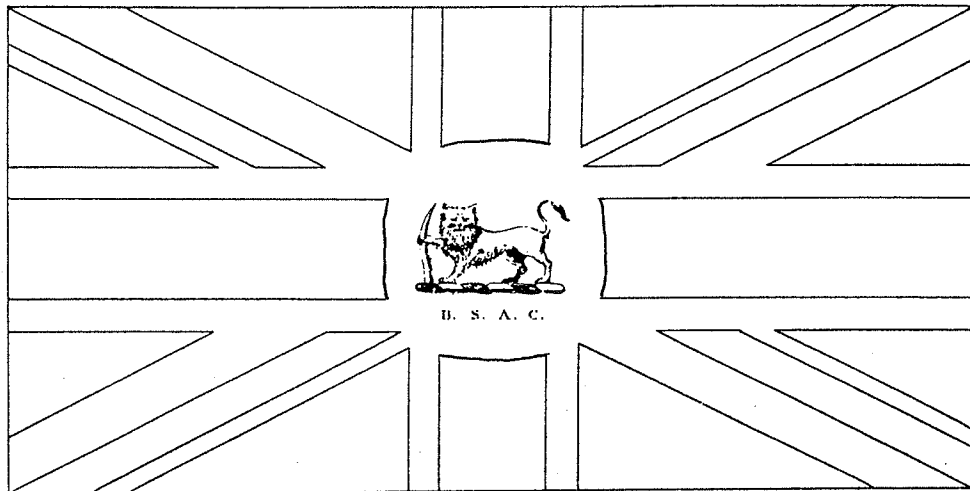


FIGURE 3: FLAG OF THE BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA COMPANY

3.2 Company Ensigns

On 11 November 1902, the Company's authority to fly flags was widened by Admiralty Warrant,⁸ which made provision for:

- i) The Union Flag (of Great Britain) with badge for use by the Administrator when embarking in boats or other vessels of the Company;
- ii) A blue ensign with badge for use by vessels (not being trading vessels) belonging to, or in the service of the Company; and
- iii) A red ensign with badge for use by merchant ships and trading vessels of the Company.

The provision for the use of ensigns might appear strange in that the territories under the jurisdiction of the Company had no direct access to the coast, but it should be remembered that the Charter did provide for the Company to claim and occupy land as part of the colonization of Central Africa. The rationale for the Warrant could also be explained by the possibility of the Company operating vessels on the inland lakes such as Bengweulu, Mweru, Tanganyika or Nyasa in what was then Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia) or Nyasaland (now Malawi). This authority did not appear to be internationally recognized because of the land-locked nature of the Rhodesias. This was subsequently set right by a "Declaration recognizing the Right to a Flag of States having no Sea-coast" which was internationally agreed to and signed in Barcelona on 20 April, 1921.⁹

3.3 Flag of the Company Administrator

In terms of the Royal Charter, the Administrator was the Crown's representative in the territories under the control of the Company. As such, the Administrator had a distinctive flag for his personal use.

The principle for the design of such a flag was contained in a Circular from Downing Street dated 14 September 1869, which stated:

"Governors of all ranks and denominations, administering the Governments of British colonies and dependencies are authorized to fly the Union Jack with the Arms or Badge of the Colony emblazoned in the centre thereof".¹⁰

Attached to the Circular was an illustration of the British Union Flag showing a laurel wreath surrounding the roundel on which the device of the Colony or dependency was placed.

On this basis, therefore, the flag of the Administrator would have the Company crest in the centre of the Union Flag within a green laurel garland, as shown in Figure 4.

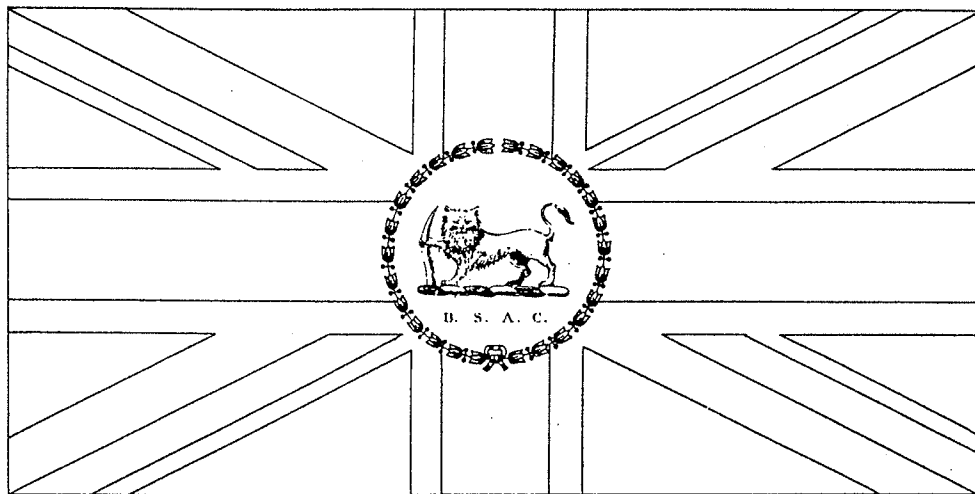


FIGURE 4: FLAG OF THE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE BSA COMPANY'S TERRITORIES

4. CONTROVERSIES AND QUERIES SURROUNDING THE BSA COMPANY FLAGS

No formalized description of the BSA Company flags has yet been found. The lack of such a description other than that contained in the Charter, probably

accounts for the discrepancies and different versions of these flags which have become evident in the research of this topic. The anomalies for each of the various Company flags are discussed below.

4.1 The Company Flag

Original examples of the first Company flag, that which has the Company crest in the centre of the British Union Flag as shown in Figure 3, are to be found in a number of museums in Zambia and Zimbabwe. Important differences in the design relate to the question of a red ring being found surrounding the crest in some cases as shown in Figure 5.

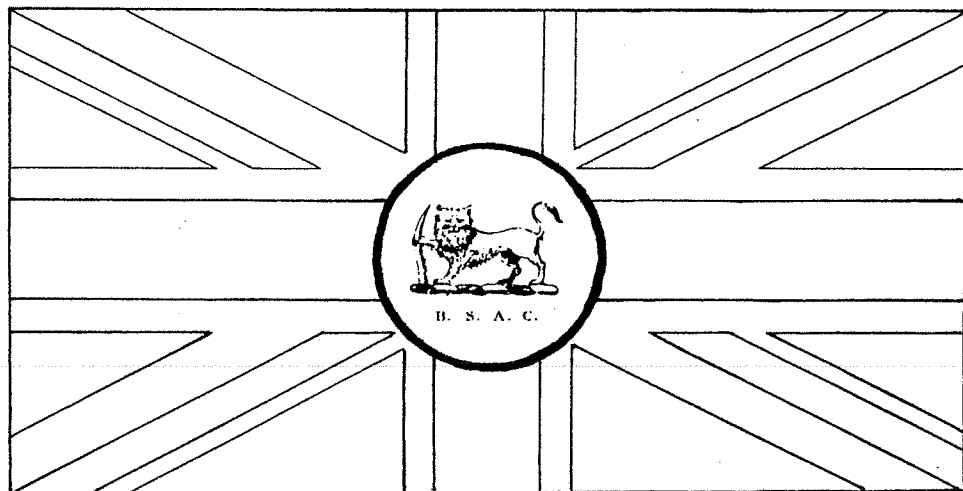


FIGURE 5: FLAG OF THE BSA COMPANY WITH RED RING SURROUNDING CREST

From the drawing of the hoisting of the Company flag in Bulawayo in 1893¹¹ (Figure 2), it is not clear

whether a red ring is present or not. However, the flag on display at the National Archives in Harare does not have such a ring, nor do the two flags on display at the Natural History Museum in Bulawayo, one of which was the flag last flown at the Magistrate's Court in Bulawayo on 11 September 1923.

A Company flag with a ring is to be found on display at the Livingstone Museum in Zambia, and the author has a flag used by the Company as a house flag which also has a ring around the crest.

Interestingly, early sources make no mention of a ring and where the device is shown in early Admiralty Books¹² no red ring is found, nor is there one in a photograph of the flag (on which the date 1891 is written) found in Time-Life's series entitled *The British Empire*.¹³ The Rhodesia Government booklet¹⁴ illustrating all the flags flown in the country does, however, show the Company flag featuring the red ring.

Why some flags have the ring and others not remains a mystery and is obviously an area for more detailed research.

Another interesting point is that in the drawing showing the occupation of Bulawayo, the lion is shown facing in the wrong direction. A possible explanation

for this could be that the Company Crest may have simply been sewn onto both sides of a "Union Jack", with the reverse side portraying the lion facing away from the hoist.

4.2 Company Ensigns

Ensigns were primarily intended for use as maritime flags, and although the Company's possessions never included a coastline, it was empowered in terms of its Charter to own or charter ships. In all probability these ensigns (if used at all), were therefore used on land. Since none of these Company ensigns have yet to be found in any museums in Central Africa, or elsewhere, and no record exists of their actual usage, it is doubtful whether they were in fact used at all.

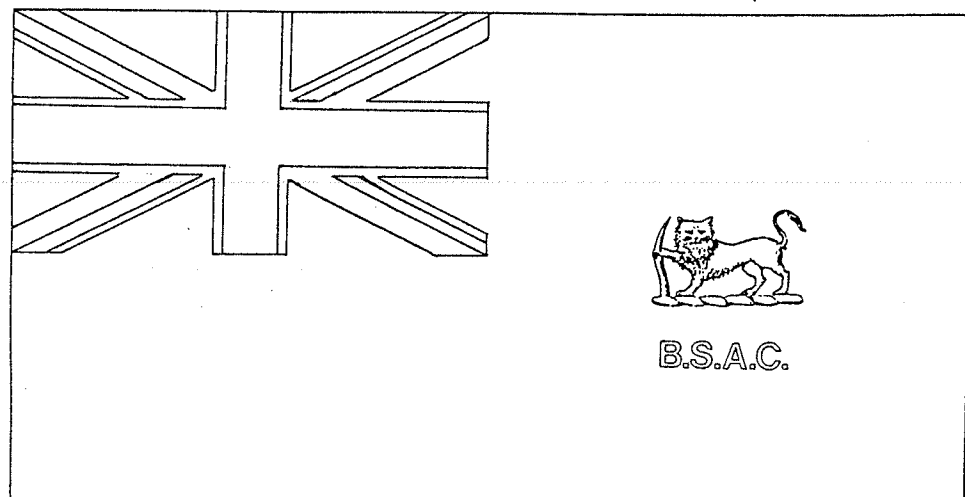


FIGURE 6: BSA COMPANY ENSIGN (WITHOUT ROUNDEL)

An illustration of the blue BSA Company ensign is found on a British flag chart reproduced in Dr. Whitney Smith's book, *Flags Through the Ages and Across the World*.¹⁵ This illustration shows the yellow lion crest under which are the letters BSAC in gold in the fly of a British Blue ensign. The crest is imprinted directly on the flag with no roundel (Figure 6).

In a German cigarette card flag series from the late 1920s,¹⁶ however, the BSA Company red ensign is depicted with the crest and black letters, in the centre of a white roundel in the fly (Figure 7).

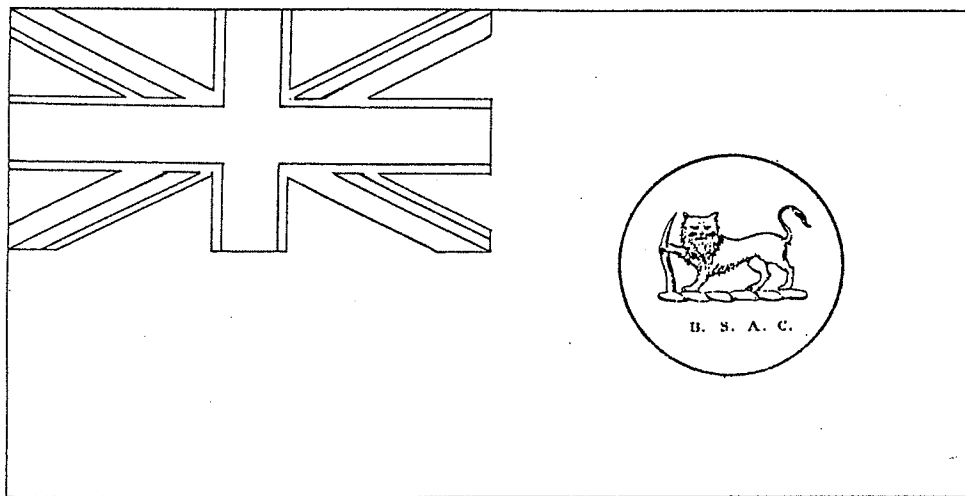


FIGURE 7: BSA COMPANY ENSIGN (WITH ROUNDEL)

The question to be asked, therefore, is whether the Company actually ever made use of the ensign version of the flag. A further issue is whether the Company crest emblazoned on the fly of such ensigns was superimposed on a white roundel. A simple explanation could be that the roundel was only used in the case of the red ensign and not with the blue and that the use of the roundel would then determine whether the acronym of the Company was in gold or black letters.

4.3 Flag of the BSA Company Administrator

There is no record of the Administrator's flag actually being used, nor are there any of these flags on display in the local museums, so the question arises as to whether this flag was ever in use as intended. Once again this issue should be further investigated.

5. THE END OF COMPANY ADMINISTRATION

The end of Company administration came following a referendum which had been held in Southern Rhodesia. The referendum was held in October 1922 to determine whether the European settlers wished to join the Union of South Africa or become a self-governing Colony with Responsible Government. The majority was in favour of self-government and consequently the administration of the BSA Company came to an end with the granting by the British Government of Responsible Government to Southern Rhodesia on 13 September 1923,

while in April 1924 Northern Rhodesia became a British Protectorate.

The formal transfer of government from the BSA Company to the newly elected Legislative Assembly in Southern Rhodesia took place at midday on 1 October 1923 when Sir John Chancellor was sworn in as the new Governor. At sunset the previous evening a retreat was sounded at the police depot and the Company flag was lowered for the last time by RSM Douglas, Sergeant Hughes-Halls and Sergeant Harmer of the British South Africa Police. The following day the British Union Flag was raised in its place.¹⁷

Despite being relieved of its political obligations, the Company continued to manage a wide range of agricultural, mining and commercial interests in both Southern and Northern Rhodesia until it amalgamated with the Anglo-American Corporation in 1965.

Between 1923 and 1965 the Company continued to fly as a house flag at its offices in London and in the Rhodesias, the Company flag comprising the Union Flag with the crest in the centre. Whether the house flag had the red ring or not is open to speculation, but the flag in the possession of the author does have the ring and came from the Company's office in Salisbury.

The Company flag seems to have been used by the new Governor of Southern Rhodesia until as late as 1931.¹⁸ Whether or not it was the Administrator's flag which was used in this instance is also not clear.

6. CONCLUSION

The flag commonly associated with the BSA Company is the Union Jack being charged in the centre with the crest of the Company. Provision was also made for the Company to fly ensigns and there was also possibly a separate flag for the Company Administrator. However, the lack of a precise description of the design of the Company's flag has resulted in a number of versions of these flags being found. Due to the nature of the Company, it is unlikely that the ensign versions were ever used and the use of the Administrator's flag is also doubtful. More perplexing are the variations within each of the versions, particularly the red ring around the crest on the Company flag and the incorporation of the roundel or otherwise on the ensigns.

Unfortunately no conclusive answers to these issues can be given at present and further research is required on the design and usage of the flags used by the Company when it was the administrative authority for the Rhodesias at the turn of the century.

NOTES:

1. The Charter was printed in Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, 1914-1916, XLV, Cd. 7645, pp.37-41. A copy is also reprinted in full as Annexure A in Di Perna, A., 1978: **A Right to be Proud**, Rhodesiana Reprint Library - Silver Series (Vol. 22), Books of Rhodesia, Bulawayo.
2. Baxter, R.W., undated: **Flags and Arms of Rhodesia**, unpublished mimeo, National Archives of Rhodesia, Salisbury and Encyclopaedia Rhodesia, 1970: College Press, Salisbury.
3. Illustration and description of the BSA Company Arms provided by the National Archives of Zimbabwe. See also Pama, C., 1965: **Lions and Virgins**, Human and Rosseau, Cape Town, p.112 and Fig.115.
4. Baxter, op. cit., p.4 and Di Perna, op. cit., p.218.
5. Baxter, op cit., p.6.
6. Ransford, O., 1971: **Rhodesian Tapestry - A History in Needlework**, Books of Rhodesia, Bulawayo.
7. Baxter, op. cit., p.4.
8. Secretary of State for Colonies to the High Commissioner for South Africa, 27 April 1904.
9. Great Britain, Treaty Series, No. 29 (1923), Cmd. 1994.
10. Correspondence in Cape Archives depot: GH 5/23 dated 14 September 1869.
11. This drawing by an artist whose surname was Taylor is depicted on a 3d stamp issued in Rhodesia in 1968 to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the occupation of Matabeleland and was also used on the dustcover of a book about the Company called **Charter Royal**, by Robert Cary, 1970, Timmins, Cape Town.
12. **Flags, Badges and Arms of the British Dominions beyond the Seas, Part I - Flags and Badges**, 1910: H.M.S.O., London; Plate 17.
13. **The British Empire** (Vol. 4), 1973: Time-Life International (Nederland) B.V., p.1352.
14. Ministry of Information, Immigration and Tourism, undated, **Flags of Rhodesia**, Government Printer, Salisbury.
15. Smith, W., 1975: **Flags Through the Ages and Across the World**, McGraw-Hill, Maidenhead, p.186.

16. **Wer nennt die Länder-kennt die Fahnen?** (c.1928): Massary Zigarettenfabrik, Berlin, p.53. The same flag is also depicted in a South African cigarette card album namely the **Glider Flag Album**, 1934: Universal Tobacco Co., Cape Town, p.53. It is interesting that both show the BSA Company despite being published after the end of Company administration.
17. Gibbs, P., 1974: **The Right of the Line - The History of the BSAP** (Vol. 2 1903-1939), Kingstons, Salisbury, p.165.
18. Information supplied by Richard Allport, Oudeschip, Netherlands. Further details to be provided in due course.

SOME MUNICIPAL FLAGS IN ZIMBABWE

BY

BRUCE B BERRY

P O Box 836
PINEGOWRIE
2123
South Africa

Fax: (+27 11) 313-3409
e-mail: bruce@dbsa.org

Paper presented at the XVII International Congress of Vexillology, Cape Town,
10 - 15 August 1997.

SOME MUNICIPAL FLAGS IN ZIMBABWE

by Bruce Berry

1. INTRODUCTION

While a rich tradition of local and civic heraldry exists in Zimbabwe, the same cannot be said for local vexillology. Most municipal bodies in the country have arms dating from the colonial period when the country was first colonised by European settlers. In those cases where a flag followed, the flag was derived from the arms following in the British tradition. In fact, many of the earlier local arms were registered by the College of Arms in London. More recent changes since independence has seen some of the colonial arms (and flags by default!) being amended or changed to include more African-orientated designs.

This paper deals with the municipal flags of the major centres in Zimbabwe but as a strong link exists between heraldry and vexillology, considerable mention has to be made of the heraldic roots of many of the local flags. As the heraldic tradition is much older and stronger, information on the municipal arms is more readily available and considerable research in this field has been done by members of, firstly the Rhodesian, and now Zimbabwean, Heraldry and Genealogy Society.¹ No such similar work on local and civic vexillology exists and this paper is an attempt to overcome this shortcoming.

2. MUNICIPAL FLAGS (and arms) IN ZIMBABWE

2.1 SALISBURY/HARARE

Following the decision of Cecil John Rhodes' British South Africa Company (BSAC) to colonise the area now known as Zimbabwe, the first group of White settlers arrived at Mount Hampden, about 12 miles from where Fort Salisbury was eventually

sited, with the Pioneer Column on 12 September 1890. A Board of Management for the town was established in 1891 and a municipality was established in 1897. Salisbury became capital of Southern Rhodesia in 1923 and was made a city in 1935.²

The decision to design a coat of arms for Salisbury dates from the mid-1890s, only a few years after the arrival of the Pioneer Column and the founding of the town. After some debate the Salisbury Council adopted an emblem (**Figure 1**) in June 1888 and it was used officially for the first time in August 1889 - this in spite of the fact that the design had been rejected by the College of Arms as being too crowded and possessing "too many discrepancies from the rule of English heraldry".³

A flag was only chosen for the city after 1939 when the City Council, by then aware that the arms were not in accordance with heraldic custom, again approached the College of Arms and quickly reached agreement on a new design (**Figure 2**). The approach followed, as is the case in many British and American (and indeed South African) examples of municipal vexillology, was simply to place the shield from the new municipal arms in the centre of a plain white field, being classified as an armigerous flag with shield only (**Figure 3**).⁴ The new arms retained part of the arms of the Cape Colony of which Rhodes had been Premier (three roundels with *fleurs-de-lis*) and included a simple charge to represent agriculture. The supporters were two Sable antelopes - as in the Southern Rhodesia arms - while the lion in the crest was adopted from the arms of Cecil Rhodes. Unlike the arms which were formally registered, once the design of the flag was decided upon, it was simply taken into use and flown from the Town House and other municipal buildings.

On the second anniversary of Zimbabwe's independence in April 1982, Salisbury was renamed Harare and later adopted new municipal arms and a flag. As in the case of its predecessor, the design of the flag once again followed the adoption of the new municipal arms. The new arms (**Figure 4**) have a more indigenous flavour, having dispensed with the European shield in favour of an African one, as well as including traditional hunting and war spears.

The new municipal flag is an extension of the new shield in the proportion 1:2 (**Figure 5**). Some license has been used as there are seven golden sun rays on the shield of the arms but only six on the flag. On the flag these are off-set as the Zimbabwe Bird and tobacco leaves are placed on the centre line. This armorial flag or heraldic banner, argues Michael Faul, provides a good example of the pathological condition known as “dysproportionality” which William Crampton referred to in his lecture at the XVI ICV in Warsaw.⁵

The flag flies alongside the national flag at the Town House and at satellite municipal offices around the city.

2.2 BULAWAYO

Bulawayo is Zimbabwe's second largest city and stands on the site of the kraal of the Ndebele king Lobengula. Forces of the BSAC invaded Matabeleland in 1893 causing Lobengula and his people to flee from their kraal after razing it to the ground. White settlers moved into the area and Bulawayo was declared a town on 1 June 1894 and became a municipality in 1897. City status was granted in 1943.⁶

On attaining municipal status in 1897 Bulawayo also adopted arms which were heraldically incorrect and were based on designs sent in by members of the public. Nevertheless it was not until more than 40 years later that, following Salisbury's example, enquiries were made to the College of Arms in 1939 with a view to having a new, heraldically correct, design prepared. In 1943 a design by V.W. Hiller, the first Rhodesian Government Archivist, was accepted by the Town Council and sent off for approval to the College of Arms. On the eve of the City's 50th anniversary, the Town Clerk read out the Letters Patent of the Grant of Arms at a special meeting of the City Council on 4 November 1943.⁷

The charges on the shield are mainly African in origin, the rock rabbits being the totem animal of the royal family of the Matabele. The cross symbolises the influence of the early missionaries on the Matabele and the elephant crest comes from the

seal used by Lobengula, last Paramount Chief of the Matabele. The motto, *Si Ye Pambili* in Sindebele, means "Let us go Forward" ⁸ **(Figure 6)**.

Bulawayo has an armigerous flag with full achievement which was adopted following the granting of the municipal arms and comprises a royal blue field in the centre of which is a full-colour representation of the arms and motto of the City **(Figure 7)**.

Unlike some of the other towns and cities in Zimbabwe, Bulawayo did not change its name following independence and its original "colonial" Arms and flag have also been retained. The flag, in pennant form, is also used on the Mayoral car.⁹

2.3 GWELO/GWERU

Gweru (formerly Gwelo) is the third largest city in Zimbabwe and lies in the centre of the country. The town was established as a coaching station on the Bulawayo - Salisbury route in the late 1890s and became a municipality in 1917. City status was granted in 1971.¹⁰

Unlike the other major centres in the country the early development of Gwelo's municipal arms is not recorded. A seal for the municipality was only sent to the then Rhodesia Heraldry and Genealogy Society in 1973 **(Figure 8)**.¹¹ The seal is divided into three, the top left section depicts a stamp mill in gold on blue and the top right section a two share plough in gold on red. The lower section shows a brown ox with a "European" lady with fair hair in a white dress holding a white ribbon. The background is blue for the sky with a green base representing grass. Surrounding the seal is a scroll with black lettering bearing the words "City of Gwelo" on the sides and the motto "Forward" at the base.

In keeping with the tradition followed by the other major centres in the country, the city flew a flag which incorporated the full municipal arms which were registered in 1976 **(Figure 9)**. The Gwelo municipal flag comprised three vertical stripes of red, white and red with the full achievement of the city arms in the centre of the white

stripe (**Figure 10**). This design (armigerous with full achievement) followed the pattern of the Rhodesian national flag which was green, white and green with the national arms in the centre.

Gwelo was renamed Gweru in 1982 and in 1986 amended its municipal arms (**Figure 11**). The electric train was added to the shield to signify the historic launching of the first electric railway track in Zimbabwe between Gweru and Harare in October 1983 while the book represents the various educational institutions in the city. The helmet and mantling of the arms have been removed and the motto changed to "Progress".¹²

The municipal flag retains its basic design with the new arms being depicted in the centre (**Figure 12**).

2.4 UMTALI/MUTARE

The country's fourth city, originally called Umtali, is located in the east of the country on the border with Mozambique. The city was established as a fort in 1890 but was abandoned a year later when the settlement moved 14km to its present site. A municipality was proclaimed in 1914 and in 1971 it (along with Gwelo) was granted city status.¹³

Immediately after becoming a municipality the town council initiated a competition for the design of a coat of arms and seal. There were only two entries with the winning entry by a Mr. Fox being used by the council for the next 41 years. The shield was quartered containing firstly a fruit tree, secondly a stamp mill, thirdly three stalks of maize and fourthly a bull's head (**Figure 13**). These changes represented the main activities of the area, namely citrus farming, mining, agriculture and cattle ranching. Overall in the centre was an inescutcheon charged with an open gate alluding to the town's position as the eastern gateway to the country. The crest was identical to that of the BSAC - a lion supporting an elephant's tusk with the dexter (right) forepaw.

In 1954, Mr James Frere, then Bluemantle Pursuivant in the College of Arms while holidaying in Rhodesia, pointed out to the Umtali Council the errors in the municipal arms and the fact that they had never been legally granted. On further advice from Mr. Frere the Council submitted an amended design to the College of Arms in London where it was dealt with by the Chester Herald and was subsequently granted in 1955 (**Figure 14**).¹⁴

✕ There seems to be some controversy whether in fact Umtali followed its heraldic development with a vexillological one. Current civic officials deny the existence of a municipal flag for the city - both past and present - but Jim Croft has in his possession a picture taken in the mid-1970s of an armorial flag of the municipal shield. While its status is unclear, it is clear that a municipal flag did, therefore, exist.

Umtali, along with several other towns and cities in Zimbabwe, was renamed Mutare in April 1982. Subsequently, in 1985, the municipal arms were amended slightly. The shield and supporters from the earlier arms have been retained but the crest has changed to include a mountain range on which is perched a cockerel (**Figure 15**).¹⁵

✕ Mutare has no recognised "official" civic flag at present but it is understood that one is under consideration.¹⁶

2.5 FORT VICTORIA/MASVINGO

The town was founded in 1890 by the Pioneer Column as the first permanent settlement for Whites. A fort, , was built about 5km from the site of the present town and named in honour of Queen Victoria A Town Management Board was established in 1926 and municipal status was conferred in 1956.¹⁷

The arms of Fort Victoria (**Figure 16**), which were granted in 1954, had as the crest a representation of the old bell tower which was part of the original fort. The shield displays the Zimbabwe Bird in the first quarter, a maize plant in the second, a pick and shovel in the third, and the conical tower of the Great Zimbabwe Ruins in the

fourth. According to Richard Allport,¹⁸ who has a photograph in his possession, the flag of the town was divided horizontally red over white with the full achievement of the arms in the centre (**Figure 17**).

Fort Victoria was renamed Nyanda in April 1982 and a few months later this was changed to Masvingo. As with some of the other towns in the country, Masvingo has also made some amendments to its municipal arms (**Figure 18**). The Bell Tower of the fort, considered a relic from the colonial past has been replaced with the conical tower from Great Zimbabwe and in the fourth quarter to replace the conical tower is a pictorial view of Lake Mutirikwi (formerly Lake Kyle) which is the largest internal dam in the country (Kariba being shared with Zambia) and is situated 40km east of the town. These arms were registered on 17 October 1989.

While retaining its armigerous with full achievement design, the flag has been amended to include the new arms which appear in the centre of two horizontal stripes of blue over red (**Figure 19**). The reason for the change in the colour of the stripes is unclear.

2.6 CHITUNGWIZA

Chitungwiza is the youngest local authority in Zimbabwe and is located 9km south of Greater Harare. It was formed in 1978 by the amalgamation of three African townships to form a residential dormitory for the capital. Chitungwiza received full municipal status in 1981 and it is now the third largest and fastest growing urban centre in the country.¹⁹

As the youngest municipality in the country, Chitungwiza has not had the colonial influence which has been prevalent in the arms and flags of the other municipal centres in Zimbabwe. A more distinctively African-orientated municipal coat of arms have been chosen and this forms the basis of a municipal flag which was adopted on 30 September 1986 (**Figure 20**). The flag comprises three horizontal stripes of orange, white and orange, each of the orange stripes being one quarter the width of

the flag with the middle white stripe being one half the width of the flag. The municipal arms are in the centre of the flag on the white stripe (**Figure 21**). This is another example of an armigerous flag with full achievement. Orange is the corporate colour of the municipality while white is said to stand for peace and development. The Shona motto, *Pamberi Nekushandira Pamwe*, means (Marching) Forward in Co-operation.²⁰

3. CONCLUSION

Civic vexillology in Zimbabwe has its roots in heraldry with the municipal flags of the major centres being derived from the development and evolution of municipal arms. This trend is not unique to Zimbabwe and is followed in many other countries around the world.²¹ Furthermore, the process of establishing arms is more formal with municipalities registering their arms under the Armorial Bearings, Names, Uniforms and Badges Act of 1971 (Act No. 12 of 1971) whereas their flags do not enjoy similar status or protection. Municipal flags are often simply adjuncts to the municipal arms, the latter being regarded by the Councils and citizens alike as being the main symbol of a town or city.

Other observations with regard to municipal flags in Zimbabwe are that with the exception of the new flag of Harare, the flags of the major centres all incorporate the municipal shield or full arms. As such these are all examples of armigerous flags with either full achievement or shields. The Harare flag, while being an extension of the municipal shield, is the only attempt at an armorial flag or heraldic banner.

Furthermore, it would appear that despite the opportunities to design new municipal flags following the changes since independence, only Harare has done so. We hope that Mutare, and other civic authorities in Zimbabwe, will be more creative when designing new municipal flags in future.

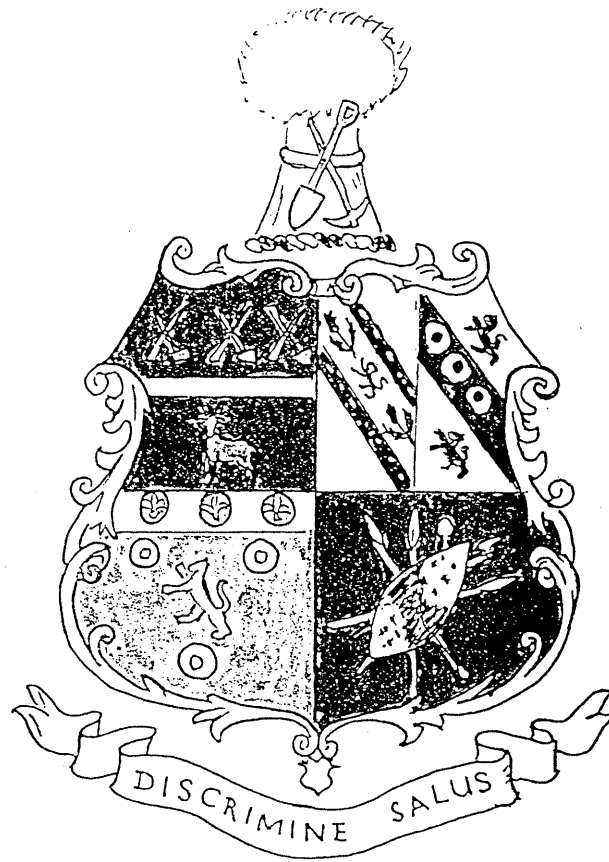


Figure 1: Original Seal of Salisbury



Figure 2: Salisbury Municipal Arms (1939 - 1986)

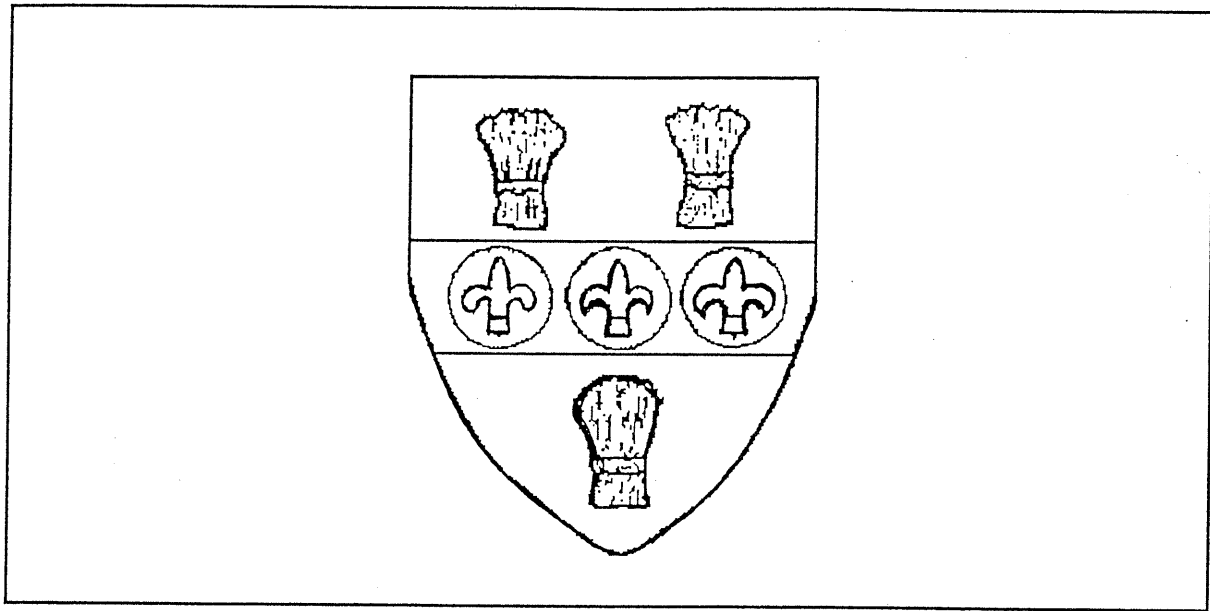


Figure 3: Municipal Flag of Salisbury



Figure 4: Harare Municipal Arms (1986 -)

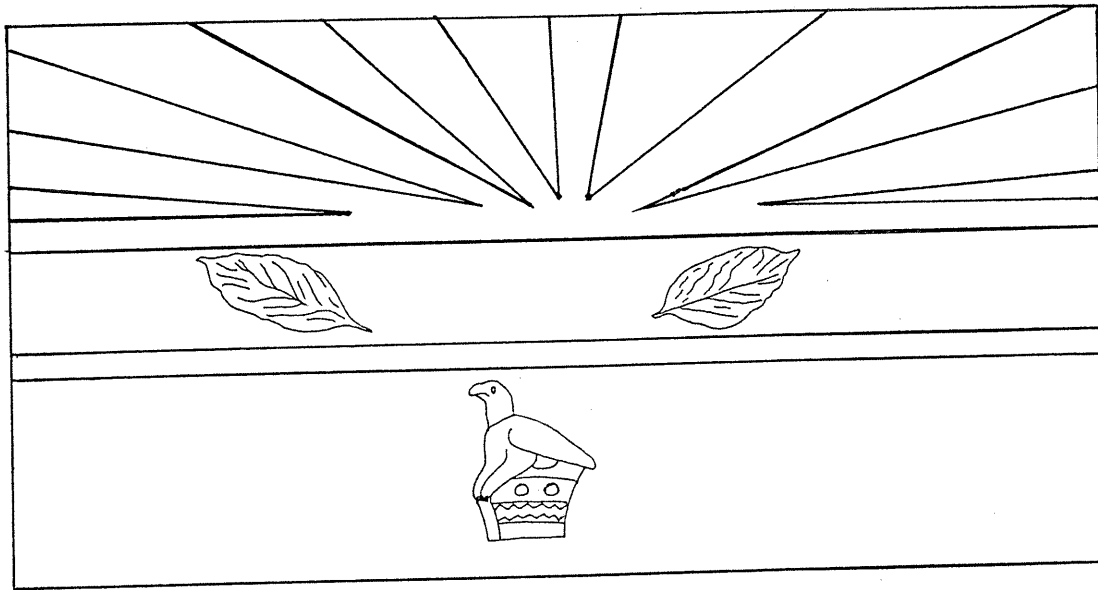


Figure 5: Municipal Flag of Harare

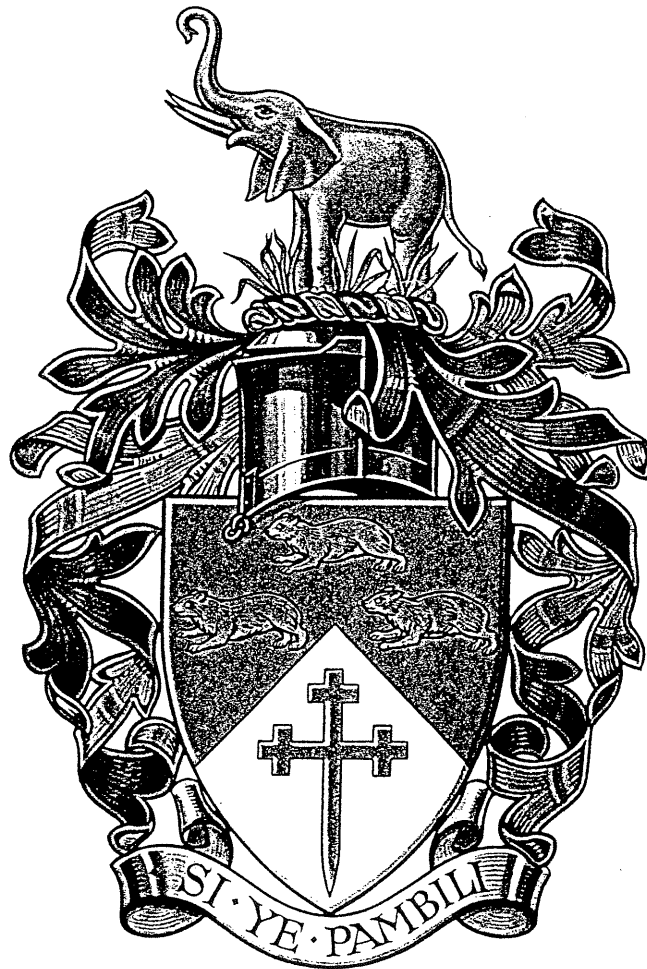


Figure 6: Bulawayo Municipal Arms (1943 -)

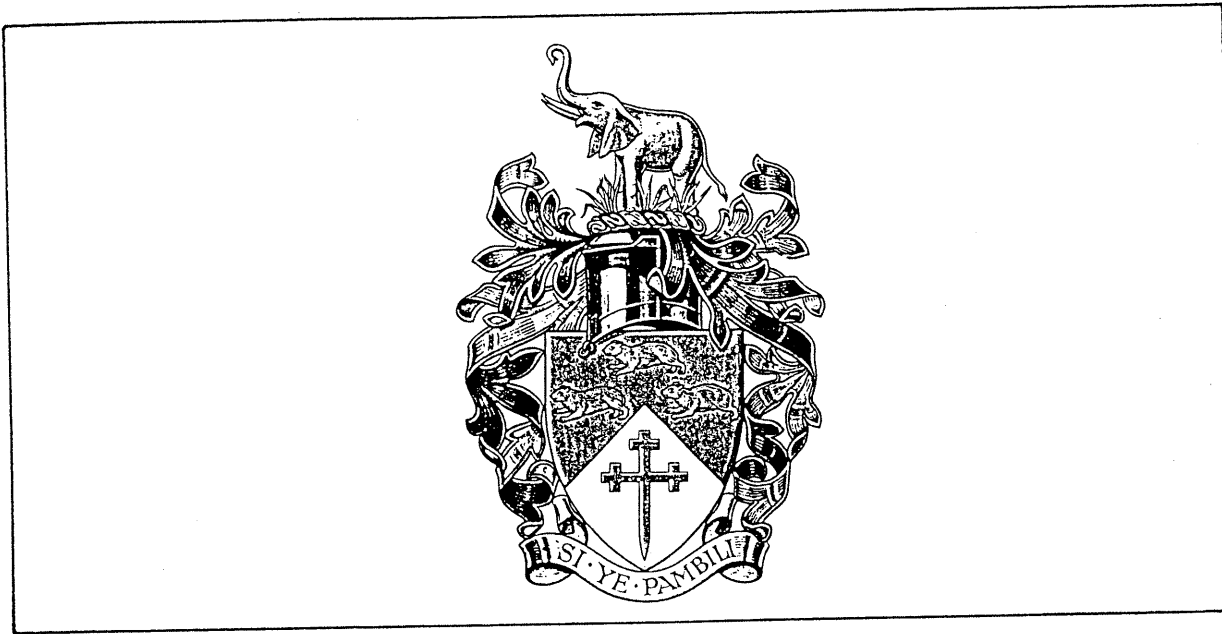


Figure 7: Municipal Flag of Bulawayo

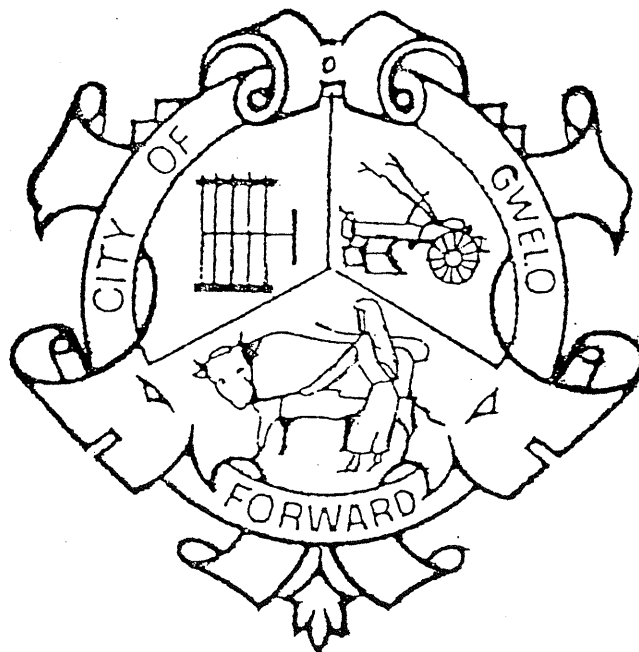


Figure 8: Municipal Seal of Gwelo



Figure 9: Gwelo Municipal Arms



Figure 10: Municipal Flag of Gwelo



Figure 11: Gweru Municipal Arms (1986 -)

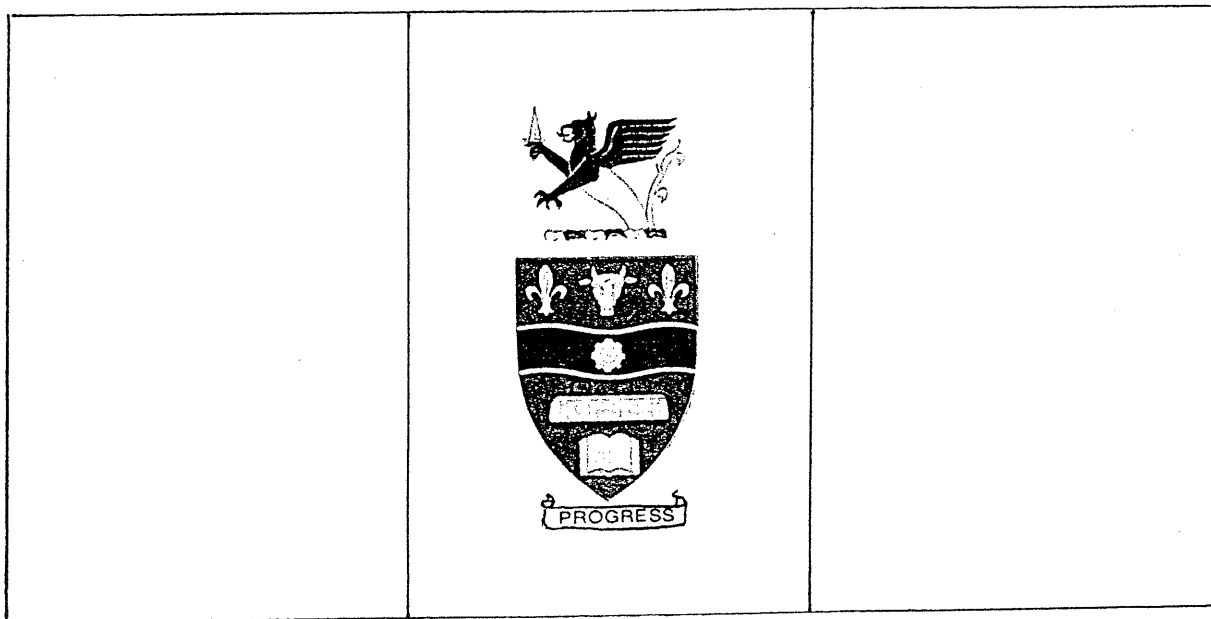


Figure 12: Municipal Flag of Gweru

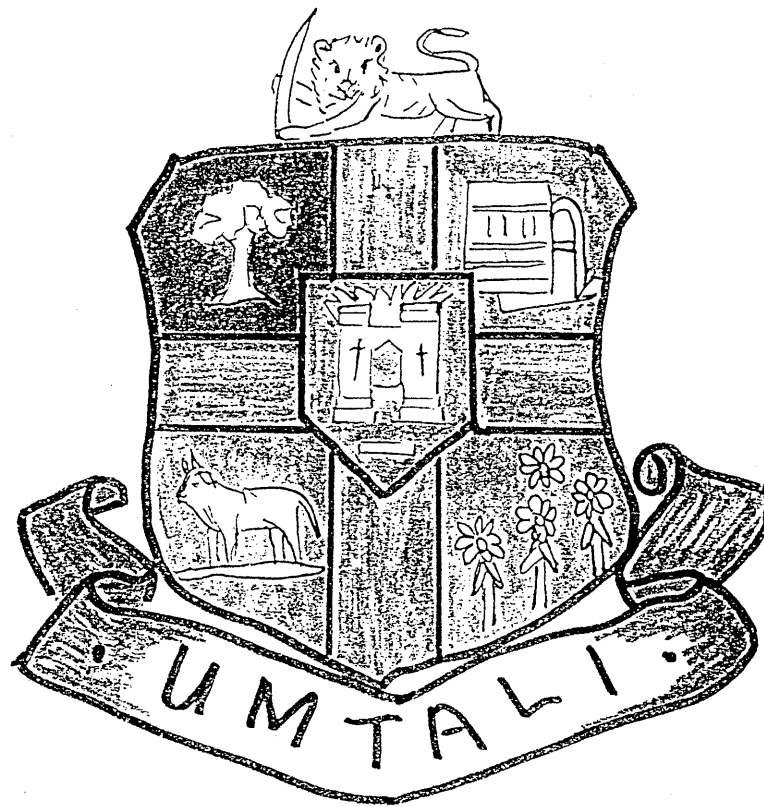


Figure 13: Original Umtali Arms



Figure 14: Umtali Municipal Arms (1955 - 1985)



Figure 15: Mutare Municipal Arms (1985 -)

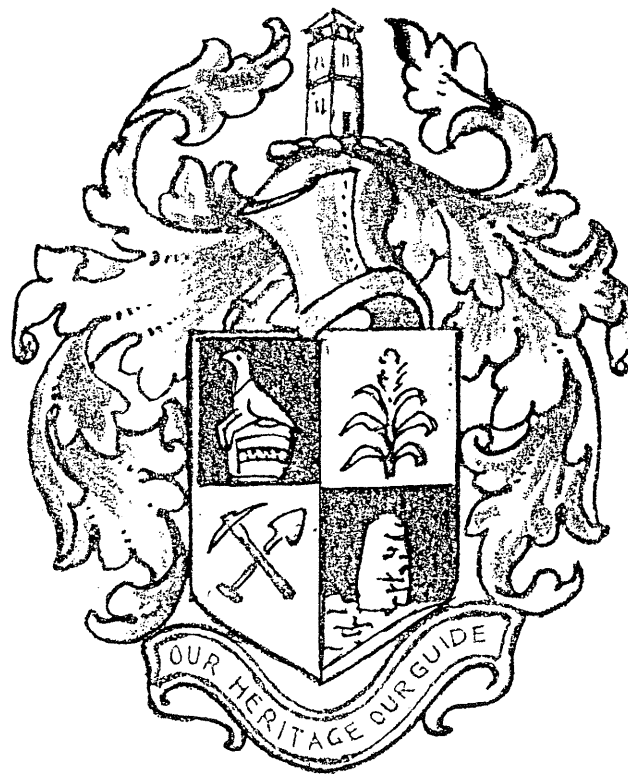


Figure 16: Fort Victoria Municipal Arms (1954 - 1989)

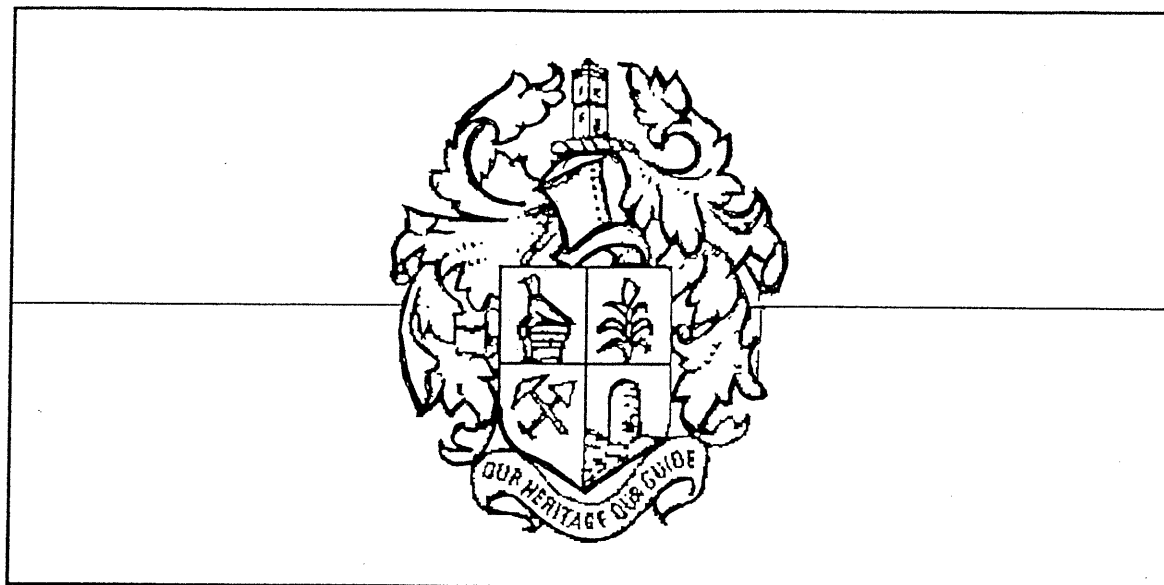


Figure 17: Municipal Flag of Fort Victoria

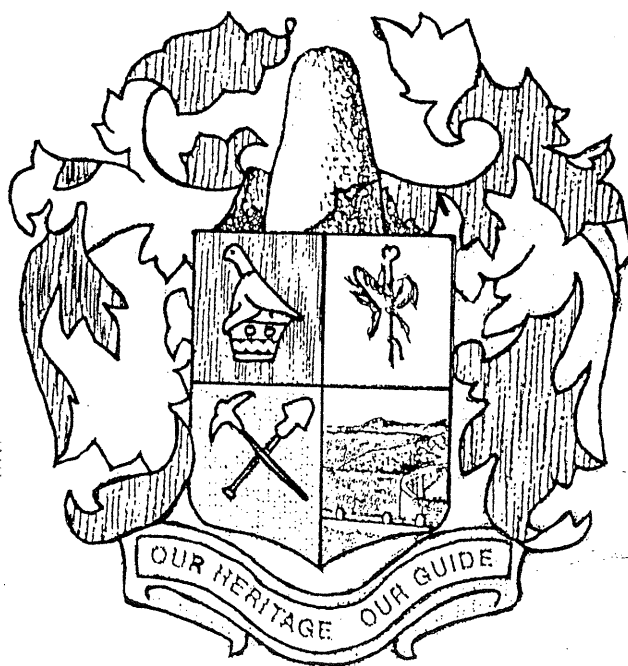


Figure 18: Masvingo Municipal Arms (1989 -)

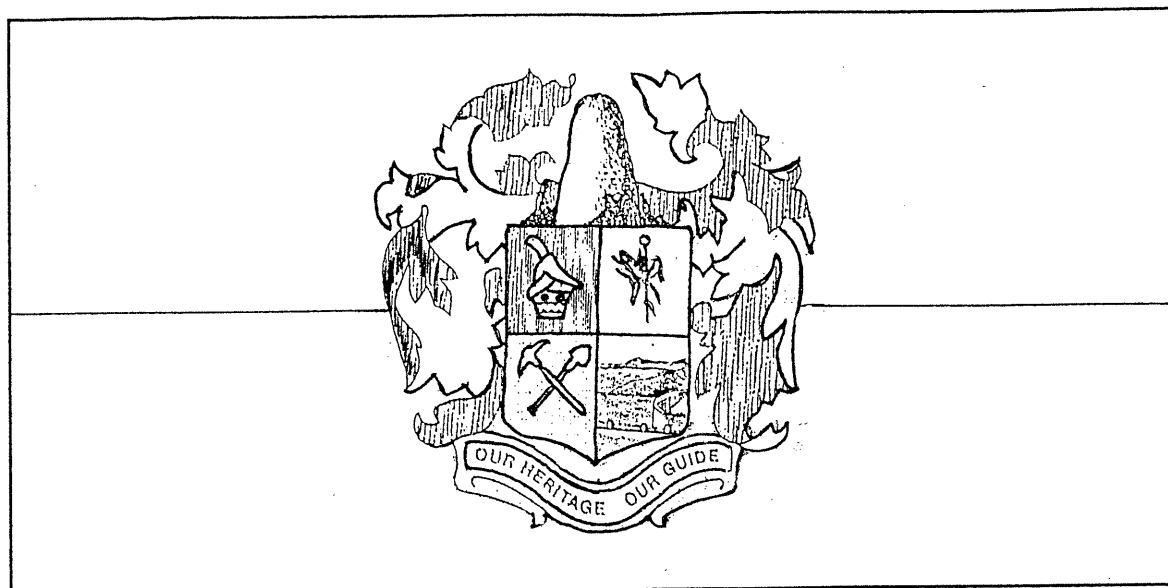


Figure 19: Municipal Flag of Masvingo

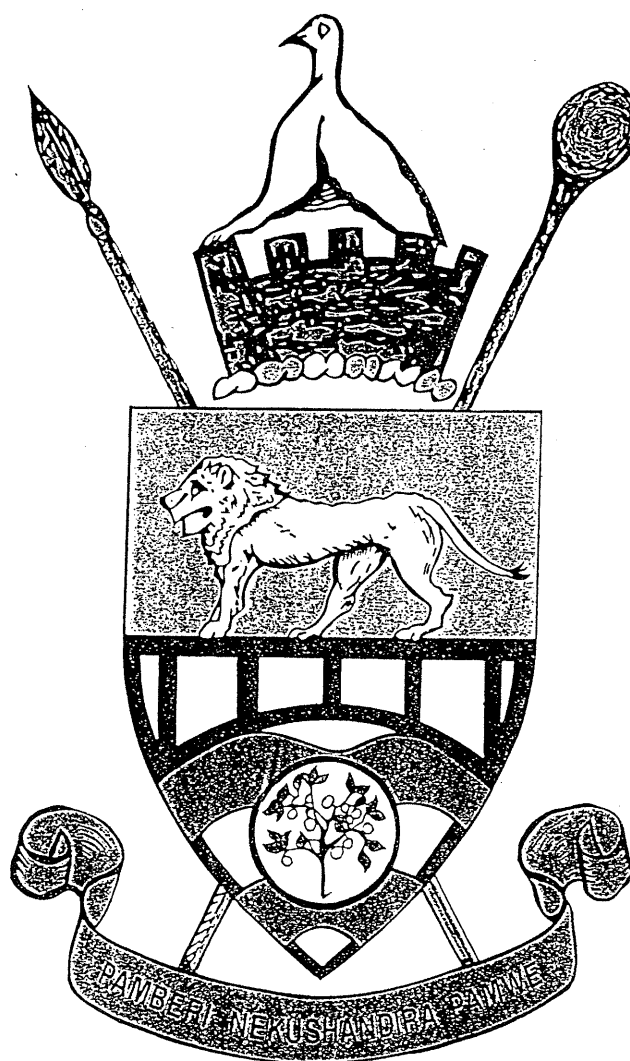


Figure 20: Chitungwiza Arms (1986 -)

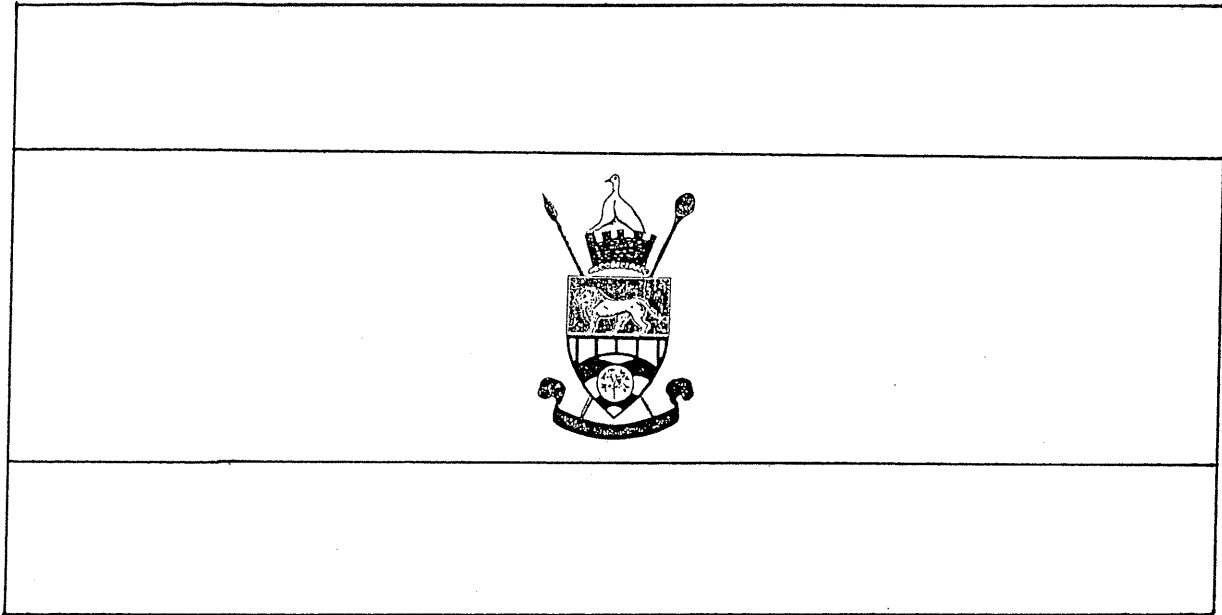


Figure 21: Municipal Flag of Chitungwiza

ENDNOTES:

- ¹ See Jones, M.W., *Heraldry in Rhodesia*, paper presented at the 12th International Congress for Genealogy and Heraldry, Munich, 1974.
- ² *Tabex Encyclopedia Zimbabwe*, Quest Publishing, Harare, 1987, p.172.
- ³ Jones, op cit., p. H212.
- ⁴ This typology for heraldic flags (armorial; armigerous flag with shield only; armigerous with full achievement; and badge flag) is used by James Croft in his article on South African Civic Flags in *The Flag Bulletin*, No. 173, 1997, pp. 7 - 17.
- ⁵ Faul, M., Vexillo-safari: Zimbabwe - Hon. Sec. Visits old haunts, *Flagmaster*, 083, pp. 3-5, 1996.
- ⁶ *Tabex Encyclopedia Zimbabwe*, op. Cit., p. 53.
- ⁷ Jones, op. Cit., p. H213.
- ⁸ Harris, A., *Arms of the City of Bulawayo*
- ⁹ Letter from the Town Clerk of Bulawayo, 15 May 1996.
- ¹⁰ *Tabex Encyclopedia Zimbabwe*, op cit., p. 170.
- ¹¹ Letter from Mrs. B. Lindsay, Secretary of the Zimbabwe Heraldry and Genealogy Society, 12 June 1997.
- ¹² Letter from the Town Clerk of Gweru, 19 April 1995.
- ¹³ *Tabex Encyclopedia Zimbabwe*, op cit., p. 269.
- ¹⁴ Jones, op. cit, p. H215
- ¹⁵ Letters from Mrs. B. Lindsay, 4 December 1996 and 12 June 1997.
- ¹⁶ Faul, op. cit., p. 5.
- ¹⁷ *Tabex Encyclopedia Zimbabwe*, op cit., p. 240.
- ¹⁸ Allport, R., Flags and Symbols of Rhodesia, *SAVA Journal SJ: 5/96*, in preparation.
- ¹⁹ *Tabex Encyclopedia Zimbabwe*, op cit., p. 72.
- ²⁰ Letter from the Town Clerk of Chitungwiza, 4 October 1996.
- ²¹ See *The Flag Bulletin*, No. 173, 1997 which is devoted entirely to Civic Flags.