

The Runner Post

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Contents

Membership News	1403
Editor's Corner	1404
News	1404
Michael Derek Hall (1935-2003)	
2004 Auction	
Spring Meeting	
Bechuanalands and Botswana Stationery Book	1405
Southern African Specialist Societies Conference 2003	
Southern African Specialist Societies Conference 2004	1406
Items of Interest	1406
Recent Botswana Issues	1406
Life of a Botswana Postage Stamp Designer - Chap. 2	1407
The Tati Gold-Rush	1408-1418

January 2004

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PROFESSIONAL PHILATELISTS

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Membership News

New Members

James Michael Grist c/o Grosvenor Auctions, 399-401 Strand, London. WC2R 0LT, UK.
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James is a member of the NPS, South Africa Collectors Soc. and the Boer War Phil. Soc.
 Hugh Jefferies Stanley Gibbons Ltd., 7 Parkside, Christchurch, Hampshire, BH24 3SH, UK.
hjefferies@stanleygibbons.co.uk

Hugh collects British Commonwealth and is a member of the Royal Philatelic Society,
 the KGVII Collectors Society and the Transvaal Study Circle.
 John-Peter Wharton-Hood 1 Collins Street, Windsor Glen, Johannesburg 2194, RSA
johnpwh@iafrica.com

JP is a well known South African dealer.

The Society's Web page URL has changed to <http://www.nevsoft.com/bbsoc.html>

Apologies to any member who has had problems e-mailing me articles or other items in the last month. There was a 'technical fault' with the nevsoft domain which is now corrected.

DIARY OF EVENTS

Date	Philatelic or Society Event
Wed. 25th February to Sun 29th February	Spring Stampex, Business Design Centre, Islington, London (Angel tube)
Thu. 26th February to Sat. 28th February	Spring Philatex, R.H.S. Hall, Greycoat Street, London (Victoria tube)
Sat. 28th February	Informal Spring meeting of the Society 10.30am to 12.30pm in Room 32 in the Conference Centre at Spring Philatex (see above) All members are welcome.
late April	Runner Post #59 due
30th April	Closing date for 14th Postal Bid Sale material.
late June	Runner Post #60 due
Wed. 15th September to Sun 19th September	Autumn Stampex, Business Design Centre, Islington, London (Angel tube)
Thu. 28th October to Sat. 30th October	Autumn Philatex, R.H.S. Hall, Greycoat Street, London (Victoria tube)
Sat 30th October	2004 AGM. 10.30am to 12.30pm in Room 22 in the Conference Centre at Autumn Philatex (see above). Biannual election of Society Officers.

Editor's Corner

Once again it's an apology for lateness - brought on by my working evenings and weekends. A *Runner Post* takes around 60 hours to produce, print, collate and distribute and I'm only finding a maximum of 10 hours a week free at the moment.

If you have sent in questions or items of interest they should appear in either *Runner Post* #59 or #60.

Runner Post #59, in April, will have the third chapter of Peter Lodoen's series of articles, and the second part of John Dickson and Alan Drysdall's Tati article.

Runner Post #60, in June, will have another chapter from Peter Lodoen and the first part of the new Postmark Study Report from Bruce Warrender.

News

Michael Derek Hall (1935-2003)

On the 28th November 2003 our Secretary, Mike Hall, died of cancer at Royal Berkshire Hospital, Reading. After national service Mike trained at Savill Gardens and Wisley in horticulture. He married Wendy in 1963 and had 3 children. He moved to Zambia in 1968 and then on to Rhodesia, before returning to England in 1977. He was also active with the local Camberley Stamp Club.

Malcolm Hodgson has kindly agreed to take up the position of Honorary Secretary.

2004 Auction

Our Auctioneer reports that he needs more material for the 14th Postal Bid Sale. The closing date for receipt of material has therefore been extended to 30th April 2004. Catalogues will be sent out with the June issue of *The Runner Post* and the sale closing date will be 21st July 2004.

Spring Meeting

There will be an informal meeting of the Society at Philatex from 10.30am to 12.30pm on Saturday 28th February in Room 32 in the Conference Centre at the Royal Horticultural Hall in London, where Philatex takes place. Any members who can make it to London will be most welcome.

The theme for the end of meeting philatelic display will be members' recent acquisitions of Bechuanaland/Botswana material.

Bechuanalands and Botswana Stationery book

The long awaited Bechuanalands and Botswana stationery book by Peter Thy and John Inglefield-Watson is to be published shortly.

The Postal Stationery of the Bechuanalands and Botswana

by Peter Thy and John Inglefield-Watson

The British Philatelic Trust, in conjunction with The Bechuanalands and Botswana Society, is proud to announce the forthcoming publication of a major new monograph, "The Postal Stationery of the Bechuanalands and Botswana". This hard-bound book of about 190 pages is the result of many years of research in existing collections, archives and other sources. It has long been awaited by specialist collectors and will fill the gap in existing literature. It will also appeal to general postal stationery collectors and to collectors of GB overprints, Southern Africa and the British Commonwealth. It is likely to become the standard Bechuanalands and Botswana stationery handbook for decades to come.

Following an overall introduction and a useful users' guide, the book is divided into seven chapters that describe in great detail the stamped and unstamped stationery of British Bechuanaland, Bechuanaland Protectorate and Botswana. The individual chapters that cover the postcards, newspaper wrappers, registration envelopes, aerogrammes and express envelopes each contain an extensive annotated catalogue of all stationery positively known to exist. Other chapters cover 'specimen' marked stationery and known essays and proofs. The book is comprehensively illustrated and lists a remarkably large amount of issued stationery in excess of 200 different items, including major varieties, about 45 different 'specimens' and 50 essays and proofs. Each listed item is given a 'BBS Number' and this new numbering system is cross-referenced to previous listings, revealing their inadequacies.

J.F.I-W Dec. 2003

Publication is expected in April, and the retail selling price will be £50. Advance copies of the book can be ordered by Bechuanaland and Botswana Society members at a discount of 20%, making the members price £40 post and packing paid. Orders can be placed with the Treasurer, Brian Hurst* - cheques made out to the Bechuanalands and Botswana Society. Members in Southern Africa can pay the equivalent to Alan MacGregor* or residents in the USA can pay the equivalent to Steve Schumann, FRPSL, 2417 Cabrillo Drive, Hayward, CA 94545, USA Tel.: (510) 785 4794.

For Southern African or USA payment, contact the respective people above regarding to whom the cheques should be made out.

*See List of Officers for addresses

Southern African Specialist Societies Conference 2003

This report was first published in the Natal and Zululand Post of December 2003:

'The first weekend conference of Southern African specialist societies was held in Leamington Spa on 22nd-23rd November, 2003. Organized by Brian Trotter and Eddie Bridges it proved a resounding success as both a philatelic and a social event. The programme (see over), which had to be adjusted to allow attendees to watch the final of the World Rugby Cup, gave little indication of the extent and depth of coverage of the displays, which were of a very high standard. The voting by those present showed that there were several front-runners for the Tony Chilton Cup, which was actually won by Tony Howgrave-Graham for his superb display of the first South African definitive issue. The close contenders included Richard Stroud, Peter Prime and Brian Trotter. The display of walking sticks carved by Boer prisoners of war in various camps must rank as the most unusual, and it certainly generated a lot of discussion. The formal programme, however, provides only part of the story, as the pre-lunch 'bring and tell' session on Sunday morning proved to be unexpectedly popular with at least eight different, very short, presentations. At the auction that afternoon there was some keen bidding, but also some bargains to be had.

It was evident from the groundswell of opinion that everyone had enjoyed the weekend and most were in favour of making it an annual event using the same venue, but possibly slightly earlier in the month. Alan Drysdall proposed a vote of thanks to the organizers - carried unanimously by acclaim - who had obviously devoted a great deal of time and effort to organizing the occasion, and who did everything possible to ensure that it ran according to schedule and to the general satisfaction of those participating.'

We were fortunate in having two well known South African stamp dealers (both Bechuanalands and Botswana Society members) in attendance for the entire meeting. Paul van Zyl and John-Peter Wharton-Hood had their stocks available for all to browse through whenever they wished.

PROGRAMME FOR THE 2003 CONFERENCE OF SOUTHERN AFRICAN SPECIALIST SOCIETIES		
Saturday 22nd November		
09.45 - 10:00	Opening Remarks	Brian Trotter
10.00 - 10.45	SA Kings Head issue	Tony Howgrave-Graham
10.45 - 11.15	Transvaal Tax marks	Chris Board
11.45 - 12.30	Boer War, it's impact on the OFS	Richard Stroud
12.30 - 13.00	Philatelic Research	Alan Drysdall
14.00 - 14.45	Union of SA Commemoratives	Godfrey Mellor
14.45 - 15.15	Boer War Carved Walking Sticks	Robin Woodruff
15.45 - 16.15	Rhodesian surcharged mail 1965-70	Richard Barnett
16.15 - 17.00	Natal Stationery	Keith Hanman
Sunday 23rd November		
09.30 - 10.15	Boer War, Army PO, Hospital and Medical Services	Peter Prime
10.15 - 10.45	OFS Stationery	Mike Smith
10.45 - 11.15	Bechuanaland Revenues	Brian Trotter
11.45 - 13.00	'Bring and tell'. Displays of whatever pages people had brought along	
14.00 - 15.30	Auction run by Eddie Bridges	
15.30	Close of conference	

Southern African Specialist Societies Conference 2004

The 2004 Conference will again take place at the Falstaff Hotel in Leamington Spa on 6th and 7th November 2004. For bookings contact Brian Trotter. (see List of Officers for contact details)

Items of Interest

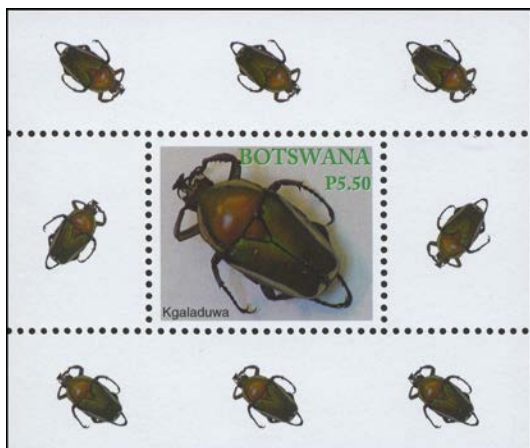
Tony Stanford sent in this image (right) of SG30 with a damaged "G" in "POSTAGE". With the help of Brian Hurst he has been able to position this flaw to row 5, column 8 (i.e. column 2 of the right hand pane)



Recent Botswana Issues

Beetles (12th Nov. 2003)

Consisting of five values 55t, P2.20, P2.75, P3.30 and the P5.50. The P5.50 is available as a mini sheet.



The Life of a Botswana Postage Stamp Designer - Chapter 2

Four to Naught: 25 Years of Railways in Botswana, 1991 by *Peter Lodoen*

For many years a steam locomotive numbered 256 stood at Gaborone Station. Though it was never fired up, No. 256 was well cared for and eventually fenced in by Botswana Railways authorities. A bronze-and-red plaque toward the forward end of the locos great boiler identified it as belonging to the motive stock of the former Rhodesia Railways. Upon conducting a bit of research, I turned up the information that No. 256 was a 12th class 4-8-2, which, along with its 'sister ship' No. 257, worked from 1940 to 1964 along the so-called southern line that ran through the Bechuanaland Protectorate. Bechuanaland, the home of the Chuana or Tswana people, became the independent Republic of Botswana in 1966.

Old No. 256, proud and ageless in its retirement, and highly visible to the public, seemed an obvious choice to be portrayed on a Botswana postage stamp. But the loco turned out to be the sticking point in the proposed issue of a 1991 "Trains" series.

Approached by postal authorities to design a four-stamp railway set, I began research, consultation and consideration. The Botswana Postal Services kindly sent me to the Raylton Museum in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, there to view the various locomotive types that had worked in Bechuanaland. The museum itself surpassed my expectations (though the Waverly Hotel, where I stayed, fell considerably short). But the real excitement of the trip was my early morning visit to the locomotive sheds, where an impressive row of steam-and-smoke breathing Beyer-Garratts were being stoked up for the day's work. Powered by two sets of drive wheels and watered by tenders front and rear, the Garratts were Africa's longest and strongest locomotives. The 15th class 4-6-4 numbered 421 was to haul the mid-day passenger train from Bulawayo to the Botswana border. This information I gathered from the station master, who suggested I ask the driver (or engineer as we say in America) for a lift. I did, and was warmly welcomed aboard by the driver and the fireman, who took me for a ride on the footplate that would surpass the greatest dream of any rail enthusiast. An identical 15th class, No. 352, still stands on display at the Francistown Station in Botswana.

Another type of old Rhodesia locomotive continues to work in Botswana, this the 19th class that hauls ore for the Bamangwato Concessions Ltd. mines. I took a further trip to Selebi-Phikwe to photograph the 4-8-2 steam engines, still painted in red-and-black livery with BCL in white on their long torpedo tenders.

Three choices for an up-coming stamp issue thus seemed set: a 12th class, a 15th class and a 19th class from the Rhodesia Railways days. In more recent times, two additional locomotive types were seen on Botswana rails. Diesels of the National Railways of Zimbabwe, in green-and-yellow livery, worked from 1980 to 1987, and were replaced by Botswana Railways own blue, black and white diesel-electric engines. The stamp issue designs were thus decided and seemingly on track: two steamers and two diesels, with the mile-long Garratt headed for the First Day Cover.

I worked many long hours painting piston valves and drive wheel spokes with tiny brushes and finally I submitted the designs to the Philatelic Advisory Committee. I added, by request of the committee, a miniature sheet worked out to the smallest detail, placing two stamps to the northwest of the long Mafeking-to-Bulawayo line, and two stamps to the southeast. I was pleased with my first full set of stamp designs.

The Philatelic Advisory Committee was also pleased, except for one important detail. Long-time Francistown resident and committee member, the Honourable Jimmy Haskins, was so enamoured of the Rhodesia Railways 10th class 4-8-2, for five decades the workhorse of the Bechuanaland rails, that he insisted it be included in the stamp set. The issue was thus delayed, and, before the matter could be resolved, Mr. Haskins had to undergo a serious operation in Johannesburg. As 1991 moved on towards 1992 his health continued to deteriorate until, at last, the great rail fan and philatelist, and provider of hardware and building materials to the nation, passed on.

The train issue was never to be printed as I had designed it, though the designs did not definitively die away. Four of the designs would eventually be resurrected and printed as postage stamps, but those are stories for another time.

[Editor: I have taken the liberty of splitting this article into two parts - what follows is Part 1. Part 2 - "The Potchefstroom - Tati Postal Service", and references for both parts will appear in *Runner Post* #59. This article also appeared in *The Transvaal Philatelist* v.38 no.4 (148) November 2003]

The Tati Gold-Rush

by John Dickson and Alan Drysdall

Introduction

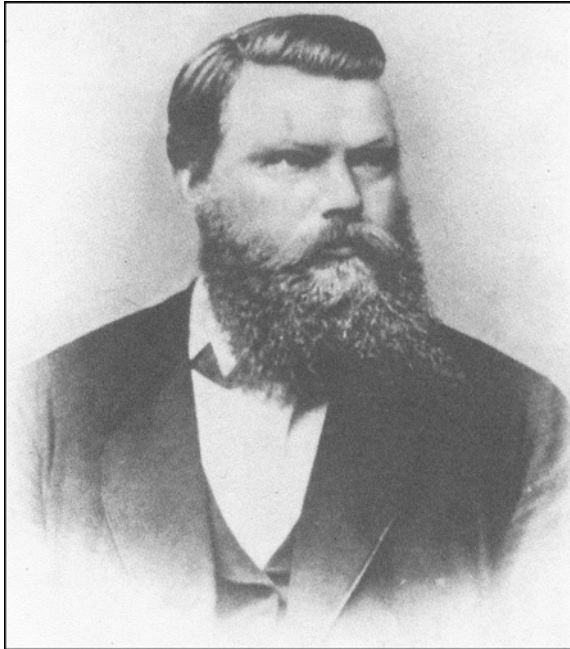


Figure 1 Karl Mauch
(National Archives of Zimbabwe)

The story of the Tati gold-rush in 1868, the first major gold-rush to involve the ZAR, begins in an unlikely way. The Transvaal Agricultural Society, with Marthinus Wessel Pretorius as its President, was formed in October 1866, and the following year, organised the republic's first agricultural show. Bulpin (1989, p.101) records that this most unusual and animated social event, which was held in Potchefstroom on the 20th March, 1867, included an extraordinary range of competitions - for the best collections of wild animals, best tame ostriches, displays of African ornaments, and stuffed birds as well as agricultural products. A prize of £5 for the best display of minerals was won by a young German by the name of Karl Mauch (**Figure 1**). Mauch was born into a poor family in Stettin in 1837, and became a schoolteacher. He was, however, eventually able to raise the money to visit the continent that had always intrigued him, and arrived in Durban in January 1865. He stayed for two and a half months in Pietermaritzburg, and then begged a lift with a transport rider to reach Rustenburg on the 22nd June, 1865. It was Fred Jeppe who gave him a lift to Potchefstroom. After fossicking* around the district he set out for the Limpopo on a hunting trip. It

was on his return that he met Henry Hartley, the most famous hunter and prospector of his day, and a remarkable partnership was born.

Between May 1866 and January 1867 they travelled together in Matabeleland. It was then that Mauch collected the minerals that he later exhibited in the Potchefstroom show. This may have helped to raise interest in the possibility of mineral wealth, but the real sensation occurred on the 28th November, 1867, with the return of Hartley and Mauch from their second expedition. Hartley, who had always been intrigued by the evidence of native mining activity ¹, had shown some of the diggings to Mauch, who was convinced that they had discovered enormous goldfields in what is now Botswana and Zimbabwe. His account was published in *The Transvaal Argus* on the 4th December, and was reprinted in Europe, America and Australasia under headlines proclaiming the rediscovery of King Solomon's Mines. A gold rush was inevitable, and the Transvaalers were determined to be at the fore.

Bulpin (1989, p.102) records that at a public meeting held in C. J. Oliver's store in Potchefstroom on the 15th February, 1868, plans were made to send a prospecting party immediately and £200 and many tools were subscribed. The government, which was in its normal chronic state of insolvency, was galvanised into action, and Commandant Jan Viljoen was despatched to establish agreements with Matsheng, chief of the Bamangwato, and his more aggressive neighbour, Mzilikazi, chief of the Matabele ². A prospecting party financed by the Potchefstroom merchants set out on the 11th

**Dictionary: fos-sick*

• To search for gold, especially by reworking washings or waste piles • To rummage or search around, especially for a possible profit.

¹ Selous (1893, p.337-8) was able to demonstrate very effectively that the so-called ancient mines, and specifically the mines at Tati, had been abandoned only a few decades previously (see also Mann, 1871, p.108).

² African names of people and places were, and in some cases still are, spelt differently by different authors. Thomas Baines, for example, who followed in Mauch's footsteps, referred to these two chiefs as Matjen and Umseligase.

March and travelled in his wake. They were led by Captain George Black, with Henry Hartley acting as guide.

The Natal Mercury of the 7th April, 1868, reported that:

The first party of gold-diggers, nine in number, left Potchefstroom on Wednesday last, the 11th inst... three flags on the backwagon ... the Transvaal, the British ensign, and a flag bearing the description "Nil desperandum".

Another report in the same paper quoted an article by J. T. Bisset, secretary to the expedition, published in *The Transvaal Argus*:

Seven men under the command of Mr. Geo. Black, viz., Messrs. Daly, Bush, Whitaker, Hay, Smidt, Merrick and Maddix departed last Wednesday with a well filled wagon ... their motto "Nil desperandum" flanked by the Union Jack and the Transvaal colours...

Yet a third report in the same issue, probably quoting an Eastern Province newspaper, advised the best route to the goldfields:

From Grahamstown via Aliwal North, through Smithfield, in the Orange Free State, leaving Bloemfontein to the westward through Cronstadt to Potchefstroom, thence to Rustenburg, along the left bank of the Limpopo to below Notwani, via Barmang water, to the goldfields in the neutral territory.

Bulpin (1989, p.103) describes the immediate dramatic effect of these events.

Behind the vanguard of the first rush in South Africa came an ever increasing stream of men: British, German, Australian and American. Most of them arrived in Potchefstroom somewhat nervous of hostility from the settlers; but if there was any prejudice amongst the Transvaalers towards the foreigners, the dislike certainly didn't extend as far as their money. Potchefstroom boomed on the gold fever, and every store carried advertisements for digger's clothing and utensils.

The country certainly could do with the hard cash the diggers brought. Financially the republic was now completely bankrupt. More and more paper money was being printed every time the exchequer became empty, while the books were in such a hopeless mess that only an accomplished embezzler could find his way through their confusion.

At the second Agricultural Show in April 1868 Karl Mauch again won a prize of £5 for his mineral exhibit. The two prizes, totalling £10, represented his entire reward for the part he had played in the discovery of the Tati and Matabeleland goldfields. Although he himself did not live to see it, his belief that there were fabulously rich gold deposits to be found in the Transvaal was to be proved more than justified.

The Natal Mercury of the 2nd May, 1868, quoted a report from "Your Occasional Correspondent" datelined Potchefstroom, 19th April, 1868.

I enclose an Extra published at the Argus office yesterday... Mr. H[artley] has ... got permission from the chief Machin for the people to dig for six months by paying £1 per man for the six months...

It was on Friday morning the kafir arrived, and within a couple of hours we had a mail made up, and dispatched, sending all available newspapers, and telling the pioneers that ... "Potchefstroom expects every man to do his duty".

This week there is to be a public meeting, to arrange for the starting of other parties.

An editorial in *The Natal Mercury* of the 7th May, 1868, read as follows:

... pushing on with a degree of rapidity which bespeaks enthusiasm and energy, the diggers had already reached Bamangwato ... the residence of chief Matjin [Matsheng], who now rules over Sekhomo's late tribe... The journey from Bamangwato to Ramokaban where the diggings are, was said to be about ten or twelve days, so that the party might be expected to arrive ... about the 12th May. We shall not have much longer to wait then, before we hear whether the goldseekers had really found the precious metal of which they went in quest...

... the Potchefstroom party intend to plant the British flag at the goldfields, and to proclaim the territory

British ... We hear ... that Chief Matjin has sent already to the High Commissioner begging to be annexed to the Crown...

The Staats Courant (ZAR Government Gazette) of the 29th April, 1868, carried a proclamation which was translated by the "Occasional Correspondent at Potchefstroom" for the benefit of readers of *The Natal Mercury* on the 2nd June, 1868, as follows:

I, Marthinus Wessel Pretorius, President of the South African Republic, acting with the advice and consent of the most noble and estimable Council of said republic:

Proclaim by these, that the boundary of the republic shall be as follows:

On the East, in one part, as per treaties between the republic and the kafir chief Umzwaas, dated 25th July, 1846, and 21st July, 1855, from the lowest kloof of the Comatie northward, along the mountains, to the lower side of the Olifants river valley.

North of Olifants river to the top of the Pokioenie; from there in a straight line northeastward to the Limpopo or Crocodile river, where the Pafories river joins it, and northward along that river to where the Spelonken mountains stretch towards the Crocodile river; along these mountains to where they turn northwards towards the Zouga River; from this western extremity or bend of the mountains in a straight line to the River Kuway, where the river Slangalie flows into it; then along the river Kuway to where this river flows into the Zouga river, along the Zouga to lake Ngami. West of said lake in a straight line to the northern end of the Langeberg, and along these mountains to the border between the republic and the ground belonging to Mahura, Gazibon, and Tantje, including the territory proclaimed the republic by the proclamation of 1858.

Furthermore it is proclaimed, from the lowest kloof of the Comatie, with the old boundary of Umzwaas, up to the river Umzutie, including the Pongola river and the Umzutie river, to where it flows into the sea on the East coast of Africa, and including one mile of ground on each side of the rivers.

(Signed) M. W. Pretorius, President.

By order, J. W. Spruyt, Government Secretary

An editorial in *The Natal Mercury* of the 4th June, 1868, referring to this Proclamation, speculated that:

... the rumours of Prussian acquisitions on the east coast; and the intention on the part of prospectors to hoist the British flag at the goldfields, must have called forth the startling proclamation...

Bulpin (1989, p.103) comments as follows:

... With one sweep of his pen, Pretorius claimed all the gold-fields as far as Matabeleland, all [what is now] Botswana as far as Lake Ngami, and in the east a strip of land 1.5 kilometres wide on either side of the Pongolo River all the way to the sea. With this done, Pretorius sat back to see what Britain, Portugal and the African tribes would do.

There was in fact surprisingly little reaction, perhaps because the colonial powers were well aware that the ZAR did not have either the means or the intention to put these territorial claims into effect. There were, nevertheless, repercussions. *The Natal Mercury* of the 13th August, 1868, quoted *The Transvaal Argus* of the 22nd July as follows:

Report of a letter from Berlin responding to Pretorius's proposal and suggesting the appointment of Consuls in the Transvaal and Prussia respectively.

... His Excellency the High Commissioner has addressed a communication to our President asking for an explanation [of his proclamation of boundaries of the ZAR] asking to be informed on what grounds that proclamation has been made. The Portuguese Consul in Capetown has also informed the President that by this proclamation he annexed Portuguese territory to the Transvaal Republic.

The Natal Mercury of the 30th June, 1868, included a further report from the "Occasional Correspondent, Potchefstroom", dated the 22nd June, 1868.

... [On 18th June] Mr. C. Solomon, a trader at Secheli's town arrived here, and brought a letter from Mr. H. Taylor, of the same place, dated 4th inst...

...Not less than from sixty to seventy men were, six weeks ago, successfully at work on the diggings between the Tatin [Tati] and Ramkhuoban...

On the 11th July the paper reported:

A mail, dated Ramakhuoban, 4th May, was received here [Potchefstroom] on 25th instant [June?]. Captain Black has christened the gold fields on the Tatin, the Victoria Diggings...

The Rev. Mr. McKenzie, with later news and specimens is daily expected.

... the diggers are perfectly unmolested by the natives, and news has reached them [by Mr. Hutchinson] that Moselekatse is willing to open up the northern gold fields to Europeans, on certain conditions.

... yesterday Mr. Forseman received two later letters from Secheli's, one from the chief acknowledging a present of clothes, and the other from Mr Taylor who was hourly expecting Mr. McKenzie...

The same issue contained information concerning the route to the goldfield from Wakkerstroom, which would have been of obvious interest to a resident of Natal contemplating a prospecting expedition.

Heidelberg	180 miles
Pretoria	60 miles
Nielstroom	72 miles
Crocodile River	60 miles
Mauch's Station	144 miles

Between Heidelberg and the Tatin there is a few hours trek through the "fly" which is ridden at night without injury to the cattle.

A week later *The Natal Mercury* of the 18th July, 1868, reported:

The Hopetown post brought us last Saturday (30th June) some news of importance. The Rev. Mr. Mckenzie, a missionary in the interior, has forwarded to Mr. Chalmers, the Civil Commissioner of Hopetown a specimen of gold in quartz from the diggings in Sekhomo's or Machuene's country, and Mr. Chalmers has sent it on to Capetown... There are, it seems, thirty wagons at the diggings... The specimen [comes from] the country of the Bamawangato, whose chief is Machuene ... sometimes spelt Matjen... The Transvaal Government has already annexed the gold country to their own, very much to Machuene's dissatisfaction... In round numbers the Machuene diggings are about ten weeks distant from Colesberg, travelling by a bullock-wagon. The road lies through Hopetown, on to Kuruman and due north or nearly so, keeping along a line not very far from the western boundary of the Transvaal.

The road north from Kuruman was of course the 'missionary road', which continued northwards from Tati to Msilikazi's capital in Matabeleland, and which in 1888 became the route of the Mafeking - Gubulawayo runner post.

The Natal Mercury of the 21st July quoted a report datelined the Transvaal Argus Office, 6th July, recording the arrival of the Rev. McKenzie.

... the reverend gentleman had brought intelligence from the Victoria gold fields, [and] was the bearer of several letters from the diggers themselves... The British flag already flies above the Victoria Goldfields.

[He] was met by a deputation consisting of J. T. Bisset (Hon. Secretary of the P.P.P.), A. Forseman, T. M. de Toit, F. Jeppe (Postmaster General) and J. H. Roselt (Editor Transvaal Argus) and F. W. Reid. An address, with over sixty signatures, was read: You ... have been the means of their communicating with us by the establishment of a mail...

[McKenzie replied] ... my services in connection with your post have been by no means onerous... You are aware that chief Matchen has written to Sir P. E. Wodehouse, requesting advice and assistance in connection with the gold digging. The country in which the nearest mine is situated forms part of the Bamangwato territory. In the letter referred to, Matchen expresses his willingness to give over this country to the English Government on certain conditions.

The article included a letter from G. Black, of the Potchefstroom Prospecting Party, headed Victoria Gold Fields and dated the 3rd May, 1868.

... We arrived at the Tatin a fortnight ago... Address me via Secheli's to Shooshong, care of the Rev. Mr. McKenzie... There is one thing certain, there is gold here, but will it pay?

A postscript is headed Taté Diggings, care of the Rev. Mr. McKenzie, Shushong; a second is dated the 23rd May.

... The Rev. Mr. McKenzie has been very kind and obliging to send us the papers by kafirs the moment he received them. We have found very little gold as yet...

The article continued with a report from the "Occasional Correspondent":

I had the pleasure of a long conversation with the Rev. Mr. McKenzie ... who came to these parts ten years ago, with the first Zambesi mission...

Mr. McKenzie tells me that Moselekatze has voluntarily fixed his southern boundary on the N'Khuezi river ... fifty miles north of the Victoria diggings, acknowledging Matjen's claim to the country south of the N'Khuezi. So by virtue of Capt. Black's taking possession - nine points of the law - if you allow Matjen's petition to pass for point No. 10, not only the Victoria diggings, but the whole of Matjen's land, with the gold district extending ... down to the Gokwe and Seruli rivers, are now and henceforth British territory.

The article refers to the latest part of Dr. Petermann's *Geographische Mithellungen* and an article therein entitled "Carl Mauch's travels, and his discovery of goldfields in South Africa - Map of the Transvaal Republic". (see **Figure 2**). The following is a translation of the relevant part of the accompanying text:

The map ... has been compiled by C. Mauch, F. Jeppe, and A. Merenski, with the assistance of the Surveyor General M. Forseman, F. Hamman, and J. Brooks... But his diary, and the diagrams of his route, and of the two goldfields, are still mysteriously and unaccountably held back...

A notice in *The Natal Mercury* of the 27th July, 1868, read as follows:

... The distance to the goldfields seems to get "small by degrees and beautifully less", the better one becomes acquainted with it. The Rev. Mr. McKenzie stated that Black's headquarters on the Tatin are only eight easy days by wagon from Matchen's, at the rate of from 13 to 14 miles a day, the road being stony - say 110 miles. The distance from Potchefstroom, therefore, with a wagon not too heavily loaded and good cattle, can ... be done in 24 days...

The same issue quoted *The Transvaal Argus* as reporting that:

A private letter received in town from Germany states that a Mining Company for the Victoria Gold-fields is being organised in Berlin.

The Cape and Natal papers at this time frequently advertised or reported the departure of local parties for the goldfields. On the 29th July *The Natal Mercury* quoted a "placard which may be seen on the hoardings of London".

The
Gold Fields
of
South Africa
of Immense Extent and Richness, through
Natal

A party is now being formed and accommodation is provided
for
Two Hundred and Fifty
Passengers,
Including Tents, Wagons, and Provisions, from
Natal

Immediate application to be made to
Robert Babbas,
136, Fenchurch-street, E.C.

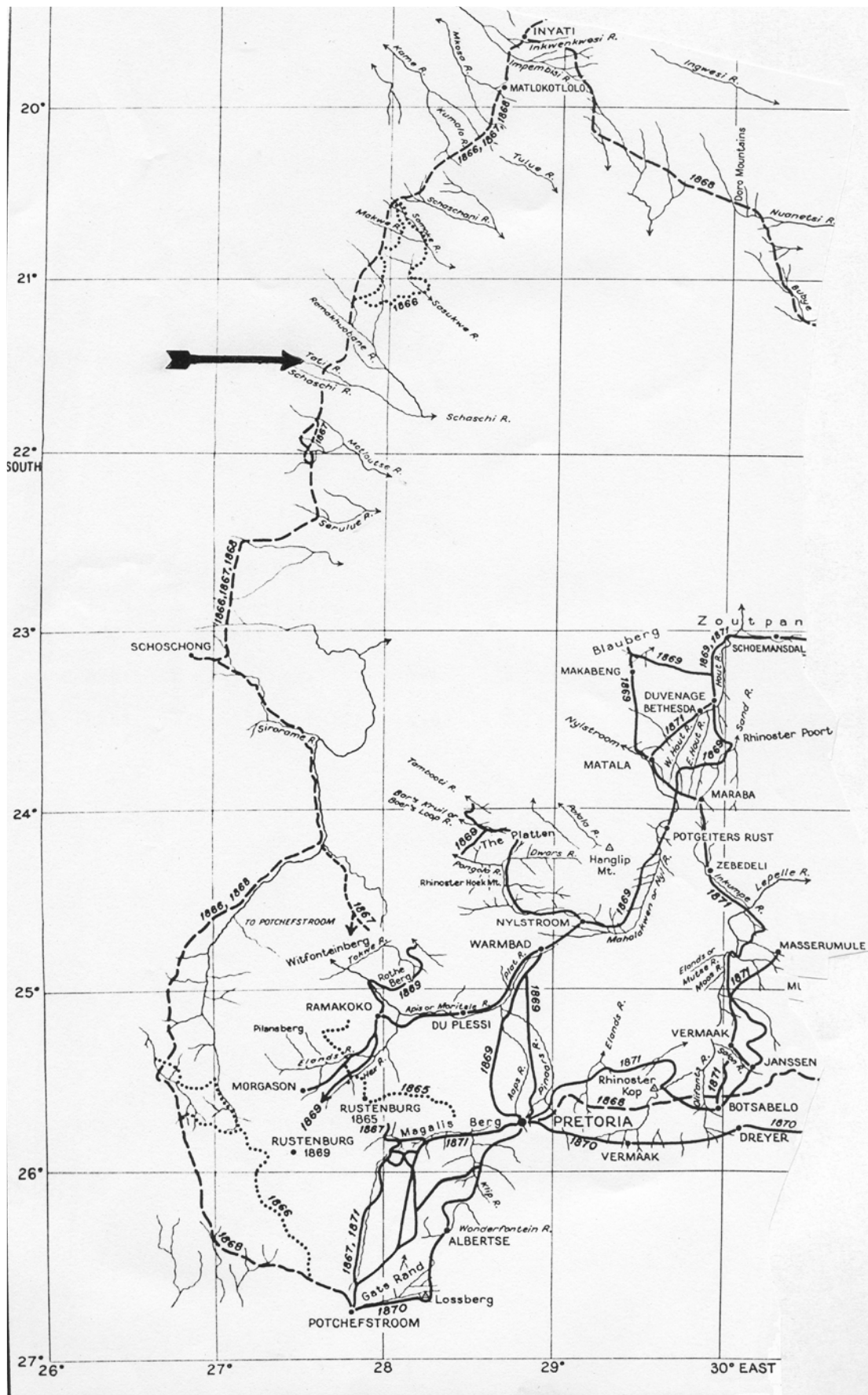


Figure 2 Portion of a map compiled by A.E. Phaup from various maps drafted by Mauch including the one published in Geographischen Mittheilungen in 1870, showing Mauch's route between Potchef-stroom and Inyati. No goldfields are marked, but the Tati River (arrowed) is shown (Reproduced x 75% from Burke, 1969, Map 1)

On the 4th August, 1868, the same paper reported:

A letter addressed to the Governor of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope, Sir P. Wodehouse, dated 29th March 1868 at Soshong, town of the Bamangwato and signed with a cross by Macen, Chief of the Bamangwato, and certified by John McKenzie, Missionary, L. M. Society... laid before the Cape House of Assembly...

... the districts in which gold ore is to be found in my own country are so extensive, and likely to be so productive, that large numbers of gold-diggers may be expected speedily to make their appearance. I am further informed that the majority if not the whole number of such gold-diggers, will be British subjects...

Now, I conceive it my duty, in circumstances of such importance, to seek the council and the aid of Her Majesty's Government. The Transvaal Government, through Commandant Jan Viljoen, desires me to hand over to the Republic the district in question, and assures me, in return, of the protection of the Republic, should the gold-diggers molest my people. I shall decline to consider this or any other overture until I hear from your Excellency...

... I feel utterly unqualified to govern such a community as that of gold-diggers is described to be. May it please your Excellency, these gold-diggers are your people; therefore I invite you, and beg you to come and occupy the gold-country, insofar as it is at my disposal, and to govern the gold-diggers in the name of the Queen of England...

Wodehouse replied to this on 2nd June 1868, admitting "the obligation resting on me to protect you as far as lies in my power from suffering wrongs at the hands of British subjects" and advising "you to adhere to your determination to avoid coming under any engagement in other quarters."

It was stated in the Natal Legislative Council on the 21st July, 1868, that Sir Philip Wodehouse "was awaiting the receipt of further and more authentic information, before deciding upon the necessity or desirability of any interference in the matter". The use of the phrase "more authentic information" is rather surprising. The letter would have been drafted by John MacKenzie, a convinced advocate of Imperial rule, and read to the Chief, who indicated his approval in what was then the traditional way. There may have been counter-claims, but they could hardly be more authentic.

The same issue reported that

We have seen a very neatly executed map of the goldfields, framed by the Postmaster General (F. Jeppe, Esq.)...

On the 18th August *The Natal Mercury* carried notice that maps of the route to the goldfields were available from Adams & Co., at 1s 6d. Two days later the paper published an article recounting their discovery.

... Last year Mr. Mauch, the German explorer ... of the Geographical Society of Gotha ... discovered both the northern and southern goldfields, while he was travelling in company with Mr. H. Hartley, one of the oldest hunters in those parts. Mr. Mauch's first discovery was to the northward of Moselekatse's place, and south of the Zambezi... On his return he made the best exploration he could of a district of auriferous quartz near the Tatin traversed by him on the way up ... and obtained specimens...

No further action was, however, taken until the 11th March [1868], when the Potchefstroom prospecting party left that town on their way to the southern goldfields... under the leadership of Captain Black...

... The central and best goldfields - not yet opened out - lie to the eastward of the Tatin or Victoria diggings, and almost due north of Natal...

Geography was certainly not the writer's strong point. Just where "the central and best goldfields were" must be a matter of some doubt, but the information given would suggest Mashonaland, i.e. the south-eastern portion of what is now Zimbabwe.

The same issue, dated the 22nd August carried a report from Potchefstroom dated ten days previously.

A post from Marico arrived this afternoon [Monday], but brought no news from the interior. The return mail

to Marico and the Victoria diggings will close tomorrow morning.

Commandant Viljoen had threatened the Kafirs with a Boer commando, if they didn't turn out the diggers.

An article in *The Natal Mercury* of the 25th August included an extract from a letter from Potchefstroom dated the 12th August.

Black has just come in... he has not found gold in nuggets... His party broke up owing to disagreements... a quartz crushing machine is necessary...

On the 12th September the paper published a second letter from Potchefstroom, dated the 17th August and signed by Herbert Wilson Merrick, describing the route followed by Black's party:

We left Potchefstroom on the 11th March; got to Mr. Hartley's on the 14th, started with three wagons from there, as Mr. H. was our guide. Passed Rustenburg on the 17th; crossed Eland's River on the 18th... arrived at Crocodile River on the 23rd. Crossed Marico River on 23rd with great difficulty, as the river is strong at the junction with the Crocodile. On the 26th we crossed Notweni ... on 29th (came) to Sand River; and 31st to Matchen's kraal - where we met four diggers from Waterberg. We stayed here five days to rest the oxen, as the wagons were heavy and the roads ditto.

We started again on 6th April and arrived at Millappy. On the 7th other wagons came and we trekked away with seven wagons. Crossed Sand River, Towani, Pilapsig, Gokwe, Zemi, Zerubi, Maklotzi, and came to Shashe [Shashi], where our licences were written for as every digger had to pay a licence to Matjen. We arrived at Shashe on 15th April, but intending to go to Thati [Tati], two hours further... We begun at the Thati on the 17th April...

On the 6th July we started back for Potchefstroom...

There are three roads from Potchefstroom to Matjen's - one via Rustenburg, one by Marico, and keeps all along it till it meets the other at the junction of the Marico and Crocodile, and the other goes past Secheli's. This road is the shortest, but is scarcer for water, and has heavy sand a great part of the way.

The Natal Mercury of the 19th September, 1868, included the following highly speculative editorial regarding the benefits that could accrue to Natal following the discovery of a major goldfield:

... we firmly believe many months will not elapse before the great richness of the quartz in the interior gold fields will be fully ascertained, speedy and regular communication with England and the East will become an absolute necessity - so far as time is concerned. If the Union Company do not resume the Mauritius and Ceylon route, Natal, from its commanding geographical position, will then have to join the weekly overland route in the Red Sea, at the port of Aden, by steamers calling at the British island of Inyack (Delagoa Bay), and the various ports in the Mozambique channel, on the East coast of Africa, so that we may then receive our mails within some twenty days or so from England. This route would open up an entirely new trade to Natal, and would, in time, pay as well as the line of mail steamers on the West coast of Africa. There should be no difficulty with the Portuguese authorities, and England should follow out her high mission on the African coast by insisting upon the freedom of the ports. If refused, it would be very desirable that some other European power would take the place of such obstructives as the Portuguese have proved, who have lamentably failed in improving their portion of this vast continent during the past three or four centuries. Were England alive to its paramount duty in reference to the freedom of trade on this coast, the suppression of slavery would inevitably follow in its train... To oblige our old friends at the Cape, who do not believe that Natal is the shortest route to the interior - they would receive via Natal the earliest and latest news from England, by telegraph, as Natal would carry the system further north, to the next coaling station. We urge Lieut.-Governor Keate to give this matter his earnest consideration, and act with promptitude when occasion demands it, as, if the discovery of ancient Ophir is verified ... there will doubtless be a vast rush of people to this part of the world, and Durban will become the modern Ophir.

In the same issue it was reported that:

Only a few of the new maps [showing the routes to the goldfields] on cartridge paper remain unsold, and may be had at one shilling and sixpence each. Can go free by post as an extra to the Mercury.

On the 22nd September the following advertisement appeared:

The Gold Fields

Intending Gold Diggers and others going to the Victoria Gold Fields, can obtain supplies, and replenish their outfit, at reasonable prices, for "Hard Cash", at the stores of

F. W. Reid

Potchefstroom, Transvaal.

N.B. - A Transport Company has been established at Potchefstroom for the conveyance of Travellers to the Victoria Gold Fields.

More than a month then passed without any further news regarding the Tati goldfield being published in *The Natal Mercury*. Then on the 29th October, 1868, a report of a new map, originally published in the European Mail, was quoted.

Through the courtesy of Dr. Petermann, president of the Geographical Society of Gotha, we have been favoured with an excellent and most opportune map of Southern Africa, as far as the equator, showing the exact position of goldfields recently discovered by Herr Mauch in 1866-7 ... there is also marked the several routes followed by various explorers ... up to Herr Mauch, whose latest discovery promises not only to open up an almost unlimited source of wealth to Southern Africa, but to confer lasting benefits on those colonies of the British Crown adjoining... The first goldfield lies immediately to the north-west of the Transvaal Republic, in Sechomosland, now ruled by Matchen under the suzerainty of Moselekatse... The field is accessible via Potchefstroom or Hopetown ... The second and third goldfields lie to the north and north-east of Moselekatse's country, and to the immediate south of the Zambesi river. They are more difficult of access...

Matchen would certainly have disputed any claim to suzerainty by Msilikazi over the Tati District, which lay within territory claimed by both paramount chiefs, and which only much later became part of Bechuanaland Protectorate.

By the end of 1868 the initial enthusiasm regarding the Tati goldfield in particular was flagging, but there were some surprising developments. Bulpin (1989, p.104 and 107) summarises as follows:

After seven week's hard work at the bottom of an old 10-metre shaft, Captain Black's pioneer party had recovered only 14 grams of gold... it was rapidly becoming apparent that Mauch's predictions about thousands of people finding fortunes in the area were slightly premature. Although the flow of men to the north continued, an increasing number of disgruntled fortune-seekers started to walk back.

So far the only place to have made any money from the rush was Potchefstroom. The stores were all doing a fair business from the stream of diggers, and the Transvaal Conveyance Company had been organised to carry goods and passengers to the fields at £10 a head... The few samples to reach Potchefstroom all caused excitement.

There was one particularly unforeseeable outcome.

The optimism even attracted a real circus to the place, the first commercial public entertainment ever to visit the Transvaal... As people paid for their seats in bluebacks ³, the circus made some money but little profit from the venture.

Bulpin also records that one of the more substantial companies formed to investigate Mauch's claims was the London & Limpopo Mining Company, whose manager, Sir John Swinburne, reached Potchefstroom on the 18th February 1869. He had three wagon-loads of baggage with him and a portable 12-horsepower engine mounted on wheels and drawn by oxen. "This wonder was the first engine ever to reach the Transvaal."

Rosenthal and Blum (1969. p.65) provide further information.

Sir John, accompanied by Captain Arthur Lionel Levert ... arriving at the Tati on 27 April 1869 ... started a settlement, reinforced soon after by a group of thirty-four Australian prospectors. A small village developed on the north bank of the Tati River where nine parties of miners were at work. On 29 April 1870, Lobengula King of the Matabele, who still claimed sovereignty over the region [hence the sobriquet 'disputed territory'], made a formal grant to Captain Levert, known as the Tati Concession No. 12.

Swinburne evidently had ambitions beyond a speculative mining venture as he proposed to the

³ Transvaal £1 notes were selling for 2s in coin in Durban at this time.

government that his company should take over the whole blueback issue - the national debt - at 10s in the pound as well as every unsold farm in the Republic, and administer the country as if it were a chartered company. Needless to say, the Volksraad rejected the proposal.

A very brief mention in the *Standard Encyclopaedia of Southern Africa* (v. 5, p. 224) reads:

The London and Limpopo Gold Mining Company, formed in 1868, succeeded by 1871 in erecting its first stamp battery at Tati. Returns were encouraging and about 56 kgs of gold were recovered within a year.

Another arrival in Potchefstroom in 1869 - Bulpin (1989, p.108) records that he actually reached there on the 27th April - was the artist and explorer Thomas Baines. Bulpin states that he teamed up with Hartley, and set out for the north, crossing the Magaliesburg by the pass named Oliphant's Nek, south of Rustenburg. The road followed the left bank of the Limpopo, crossing the Groot Marico at Groot Marico Drift and continuing northwards via Shoshong and the Tati goldfields. However, Bulpin, very unusually, would appear to be wrong in one respect. An account of Baines' travels compiled from his journals read by R.J. Mann to the Royal Geographical Society on the 13th March, 1871, and published in their journal (Mann, 1871) records that, financed by "a small association of gentlemen in London" - the South African Gold Fields Exploration Co. - Baines had led a party of four Europeans to investigate the potential of the goldfields in what is now the western portion of Zimbabwe. Hartley is not recorded as a member of the party, but appears to have offered advice and information before they set out and it is possible that he travelled with them part of the way. The southern portion of the map published with Mann's article, showing Baines' route north from Potchefstroom as far as Tati and the border with - "Umseligase's" territory - is reproduced as **Figure 3**.

Baines himself wrote a detailed description of his travels through the goldfields which was published posthumously in 1877 as *The Gold Regions of South Eastern Africa*. Part of the "large and expensive map", published with the book, is reproduced as **Figure 4**. It shows the area between Pretoria and Lobengula's kraal (Gubulawayo), and the location of Hartley's farm west-southwest of Pretoria, 'Seerust', Molepolole, Shoshong, the Tati goldfield, the mission station at Hope Fountain, and the missionary road south from there as far south as Kanye.

It is evident from Baines' description of the mineralisation at Tati that, although some high assay values were recorded, these were very sporadic and that mining the quartz reefs and recovering the gold was proving to be very difficult. Not surprisingly, the London and Limpopo Gold Mining Company failed within a few years, and with the discovery of the diamond fields in what became Griqualand West and the gold occurrences of the Lydenburg district, interest in the mineral resources of the Tati district faded. However, mining on a small scale, particularly at the Monarch Mine, continued sporadically under various ownerships, and only finally ceased, following dwindling production for some years, in 1964.

Baxter and Burke (1970, p.458-9) provide useful further background information and a summary of these events.

The area between the Shashi and the Ramaquabane [Rivers], known today as the Tati District, was worked extensively for gold in prehistoric times. The first discovery of gold there by Europeans was made in 1866 when Henry Hartley, ivory hunter and trader, and Carl Mauch, German mineralogist, found traces of the metal near the Tati River. As the area was claimed by Msilikazi, who prohibited gold mining on his domains, it was not until after his death in 1868 that this discovery was properly investigated. During the interregnum between Msilikazi's death and the installation of Lobengula as King of the Matabele in February 1870, a number of prospecting parties took advantage of the decline in Matabele authority to visit the territory. Among the expeditions to arrive in 1869 was that of the London and Limpopo Gold Mining Company led by Sir John Swinburne, the only expedition adequately equipped and with sufficient capital at its disposal to undertake the costly operation of extracting gold from quartz. Disappointed in their hope of finding alluvial gold, most of the other diggers left for the Vaal River when diamonds were discovered there and by the middle of 1871 fewer than a dozen prospectors remained. The first "Tati Concession" was granted by Lobengula in 1870 to Captain A.L. Levert, a representative of the London and Limpopo Gold Mining Company. Swinburne, however, was unable to obtain sufficient financial support in England and although the Company worked the Blue Jacket and New Zealand reefs for some time it was forced to abandon the concession when its funds became exhausted.

(continued in Runner Post #59)

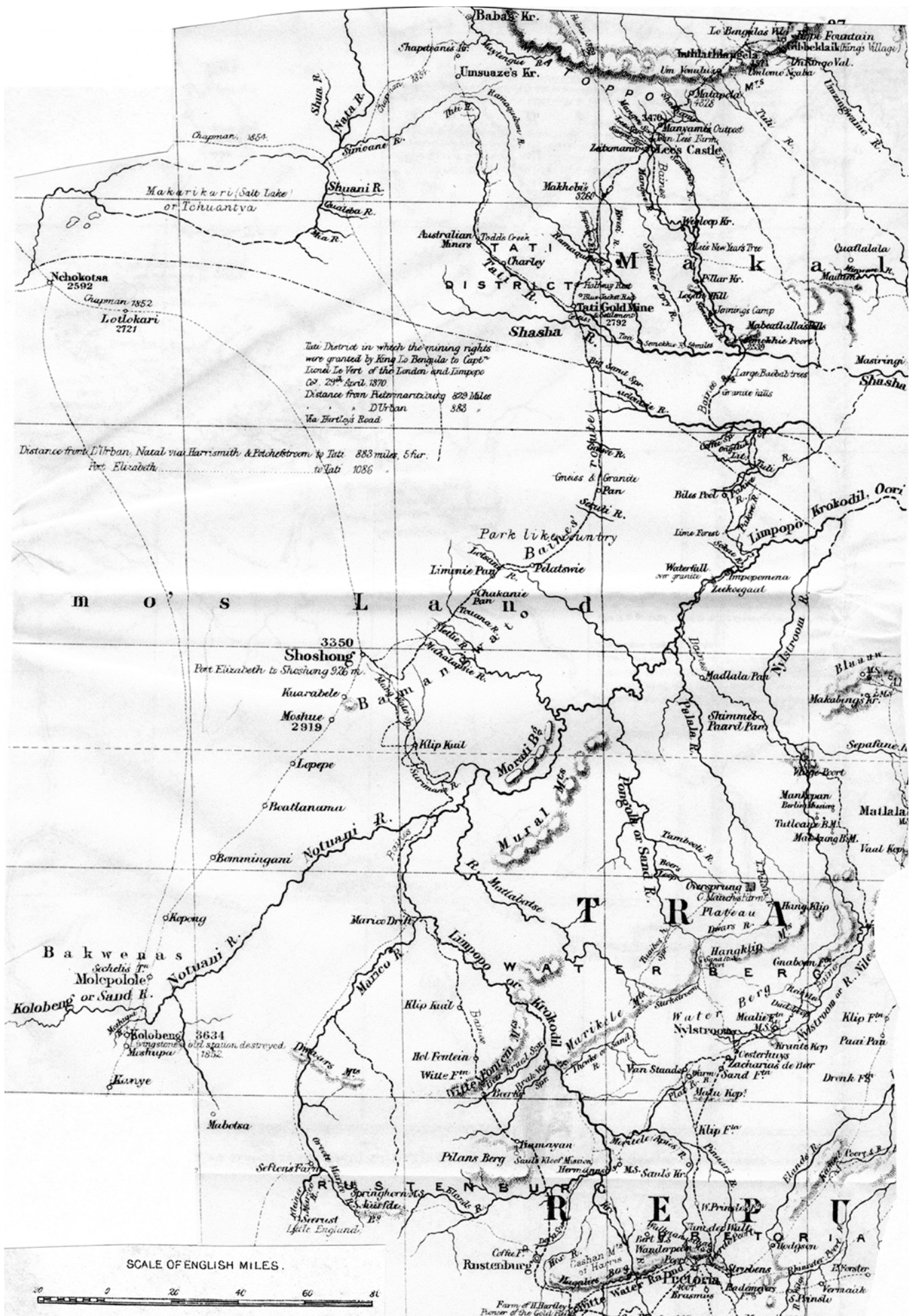


Figure 4 A portion of Thomas Baines' map published posthumously in 1877 showing the area between Pretoria and Lobengula's kraal (Gubulwayo), and the location of Hartley's farm, 'Seerust', Shoshong, Tati goldfield, etc.

BECHUANALAND



BECHUANALAND / RHODESIA 1888 (Sep) cover from F.R. 'Matabele' Thompson to his wife in Cape Town, posted at Tati while en-route with C.D. Rudd to see Lobengula in Gubulawayo. One stamp removed and bearing two Protectorate 2d. on 2d lilac and black (SG 42) cancelled with manuscript 'Tati 15/9/(88)'. This matches the cancellation of 15/8/88 illustrated in Dann's *The Romance of the Posts of Rhodesia*. It was applied by postal agent Samuel Edwards as he had not yet received the Tati datestamp. Each stamp additionally cancelled and tied by MAFEKING (OC ?) single circle datestamps with an additional strike alongside, applied in transit. Rosebank (OC 10) and Cape Town (OC 10) transit / arrival datestamps on reverse. Some staining though the only recorded example of this manuscript cancellation on cover. Illustrated page 2 of *The Postmarks, Postal Routes and Principal Postage Rates of Southern Rhodesia to 1924* by Knight and Mitchell. The postage rate was 6d per half ounce (4d Protectorate rate plus 2d for letters from the Trans-Protectorate); the missing stamp was therefore probably a third 2d. Unique, and a major item of both Bechuanaland and Rhodesian philately. £2650

The Bechuanaland section of <http://www.rhodesia.co.za> has recently been updated and now lists over 450 items, the majority of which are illustrated.

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