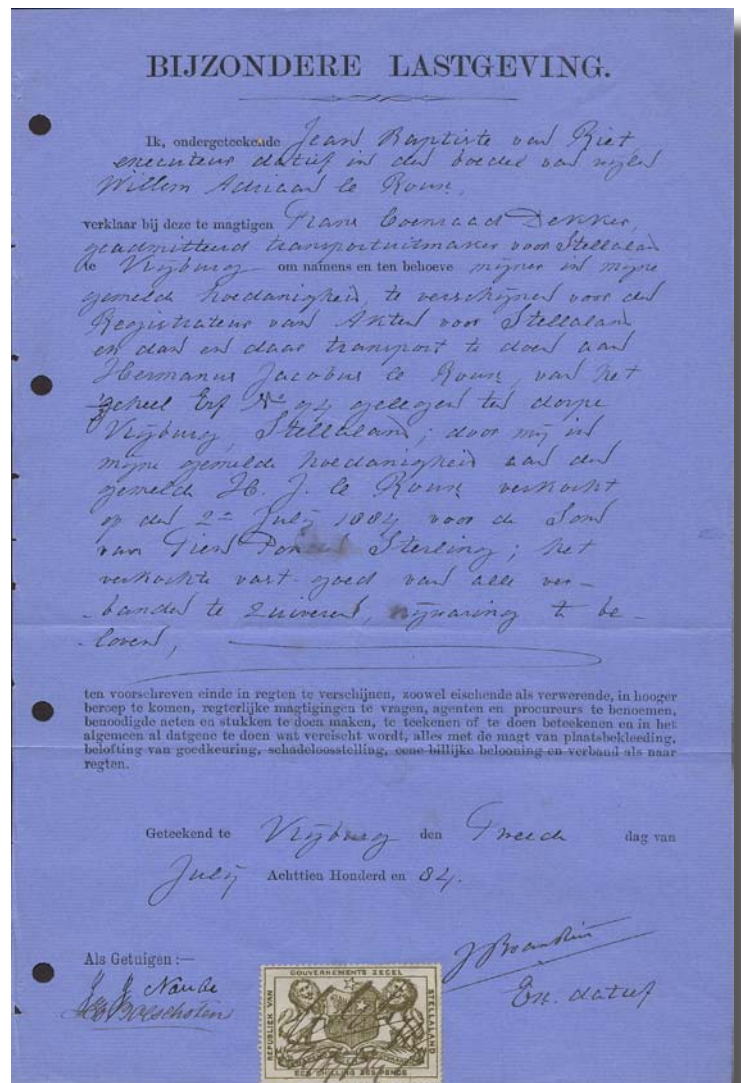


The Runner Post

THE BECHUANALANDS AND BOTSWANA SOCIETY



Issue 84 Contents

LIST OF OFFICERS □ DIARY 2089 • SUBSCRIPTION RATES □ PHILATEX CLOSES □ LEAMINGTON 2012 2090 • BECHUANALAND AND THE BOER WAR 2091 • BECHUANALAND POSTCARDS - PART 3 2104 • TATI CERTIFICATE 2109 • LUCKY BASUTOLAND FIND □ GACHASNEK IBC

ISSN No 0953-3354

Summer 2012

CROCKER & WIGMORE

PROFESSIONAL PHILATELISTS

**David Crocker & Michael Wigmore offer both
novice collector and experienced philatelist
a wide range of British Africa material.**

**Essays, proofs, stamps, postal stationery,
postal history, revenues and literature.**

All correspondence welcomed.

**P.O. Box 294, Montagu 6720
SOUTH AFRICA**

**Tel: (Int: + 27 23) (RSA: 023) 6141424
or e-mail: dcrocker@lando.co.za**

**Founder members SAPDA (RSA);
plus members PTS (UK) and APS (USA).**

Cover Image: Bijzondere Lastgeving (Special Mandate or Special Order) dated Vryburg, 3rd July 1884.

(The much improved Google Translate's Dutch to English helped - the handwriting didn't)

Jean Baptiste van Riet, Registrar of Deeds for Vryburg in Stellaland, authorising F.C.Dekker the transfer agent in regards of Erf (Plot) 78 in Vryburg owned by the late Willem Adriaan le Rouse.

It bears an Een Shilling Zes Pence Stellaland Revenue (T&M ST.1.3) without JPM handstamp

LIST OF OFFICERS

Chairman	Don Jeffreys Turret House, Station Road, Amersham, Bucks, HP7 0AB, UK. +44 1494 722098(Office) 722792(Home) gordon@gordonjeffreys.co.uk
Vice Chairman	Dennis Firth 28 Greenside Drive, Wortley, Leeds. LS12 4SF, UK.
Secretary	David Wall 8 Walkwood Rise, Beaconsfield, Bucks HP9 1TU, UK. +44 1494 681217 davidawall11@gmail.com
Treasurer/ Membership Secretary	Joe Taylor 5 North Street, Ashburton, Newton Abbott, Devon, TQ13 7QJ, UK +44 1626 852415 olchard@hotmail.com
Editor	Neville Midwood 69 Porlock Lane, Furzton, Milton Keynes, Bucks, MK4 1JY, UK. rp_editor@nevsoft.com
Auctioneer/ Archivist	Brian Hurst Field House, 54B Pease Hill Road, Ripley, Derbyshire, DE5 3JH, UK. +44 1773 742619 jbhurst@btinternet.com

OVERSEAS REPRESENTATIVES

Botswana	John Schaerer Private Bag BR 354, Broadhurst, Gaborone, BOTSWANA jsi@info.bw
South Africa	Alan MacGregor PO Box 515, Simon's Town, 7995, RSA alan@rhodesia.co.za
America	Peter Thy PO Box 73112, Davis, CA 95617-3112, USA thy@kronestamps.dk

STUDY COORDINATORS

Rarer Stamps	Steve Wallace Flat 11, Highbank, Bolton Road, Pendlebury, Lancs, M27 8UP, UK.
Postmarks	Bruce Warrender 66 Brodie Court, Stenton, Glenrothes, Fife KY7 4UD, UK.
Official Free Marks	Dennis Firth 28 Greenside Drive, Wortley, Leeds. LS12 4SF, UK.

©2012 The Bechuanalands and Botswana Society

DIARY OF EVENTS – 2012

9 th -11 th November	Leamington 2012 joint South African Societies weekend at Falstaff Hotel, Leamington
--	---

Subscription Rates

After much discussion the 2012/13 subscription rates were set as follows:

UK £12

Europe £15

South Africa £15 - equating to R195

Botswana £15 - equating to P185

Rest of the world £16 - for US/Canada this equates to US\$25

For anyone happy to receive their Runner Post in PDF format (ISO or US sizes) the rate is £5.

The overseas increases are in the main due to huge increases in Royal Mail overseas postage rates. There have also been increases in the cost of all consumables (paper/envelopes/toner). Investigation is being made into printing/mailling the US/Canada Runner Post, in Letter size, direct from the US - which may lead to a future change in said areas rate.

Overseas subscription reminder notices are with this issue for those members due them. UK members should have already received reminders.

Philatex closes / Society meetings

As you may be aware, the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) has sold the Lawrence Hall to Westminster School. Unfortunately, this means that we will no longer be able to hold Philatex at the hall.

We have considered moving to a new venue, but have come to the conclusion that Philatex is the Lawrence Hall. The hall has been the home of philately for decades. It was the reason that Philatex came into existence in the first place and is a familiar destination for both collectors and dealers.

For this reason, we have reluctantly come to the decision that Philatex April 2012 was the last show.

We would like to thank you for all your support over the years. Philatex could not have been the success that it has been without you.

Chris, Kate & Helen

The Society is still considering where to have future meetings. With the cost and numbers attending it may be cheaper to meet over a pint/pizza in a restaurant near Stampex - or at Leamington in November.

Leamington 2012 Conference

On Friday 9th to Sunday 11th November the Falstaff Hotel in Leamington Spa will again be the venue for the Annual Joint Southern Africa Societies weekend.

The 10th year will feature six main displays; Tony Stanford, will have a display which he describes as:

"the stamps & postal history of the Bechuanalands from the first Cape overprints up to 1932, when the issue of the Bechuanaland Protectorate cattle stamps superseded the GB Overprints. There will be some emphasis on overprint varieties and on the more unusual postmarks and a frame of revenues."

The other five Saturday displays will be:

- Alan Drysdall - CSAR
- Rob Lester - 1910 2½d Union Stamp
- Nick Arrow - South Africa Advertising Covers

- Tony Howgrave-Graham and John Shaw - South Africa London Pictorials
 - John Sussex - SWA Postal History 1918-28
- Dealers will include Otto Peetoom, the organiser Simon Peetoom and Paul van Zeyl.

Sunday is for attendees to bring along small displays or items of interest with a limit of two frame/ten minutes per presentation.

There is going to be a larger than usual (550+ lots) Postal Auction on the Sunday.

The room rate is the same as last year, so dinner, bed & breakfast is £60 per night or £90 for double occupancy. Further details from Simon Peetoom simon@africastamps.co.uk

Recent New Members

Jim Hudson

Interests: British Africa including the Boer Republics. Member of the Rhodesia Study Circle, the East Africa Study Circle, the West Africa Study Circle and the Royal Philatelic Society.

Bram Leeftang

Interests: Cape overprinted issues

Chris Palmer

Interests: Particularly interested in Bechuanaland/Botswana definitive printings and booklets

Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

Delft, Netherlands

Sunbury-on-Thames, UK

Bechuanaland and the Boer War

by Alan Drysdall

The Rhodesian Frontier Force and Plumer's Column in Bechuanaland

Hickman, whose account of Rhodesia's involvement in the Second Anglo-Boer War is by far the most detailed¹, records that in July 1899 Col. Robert Stephenson Smyth Baden-Powell, 5th Dragoons, was sent to South Africa with secret orders to take over command of the British South Africa Police (BSAP) and the Bechuanaland Border Police (BBP), and surreptitiously recruit men for the defence of Rhodesia and Mafeking in the event of war being declared. Hickman² further records that 20 Special Service officers, including Lt.-Col. H.C.O. Plumer (York and Lancaster Regiment) and Capt. S.P. Rolt (also York and Lancaster Regiment), whose signature appears on a number of covers, were also sent. Baden-Powell raised two regiments of mounted infantry - the Protectorate Regiment and the Rhodesia Regiment (RR)[†] under Lt.-Col. C.O. Hore, 2nd South Staffordshire Regiment, and Lt.-Col. Plumer respectively - each consisting of 450 men. The Protectorate Regiment was based at Ramathlabama, on the southern border of the Protectorate, 17 miles north of Mafeking, and the Rhodesia Regiment at Bulawayo. Baden-Powell's more startling orders were that "in the event of hostilities with the Transvaal you should endeavour to demonstrate with the largest force at your disposal, in a southerly direction from Tuli, as if making for Pretoria"³. It was to be a replay of the Jameson Raid, and could have proved equally suicidal. The object was to create a diversion, and thereby reduce the threat of Boer invasions into Natal and Cape Colony. In the event it was decided that it was more important to protect Mafeking; hence at the outbreak of the war on the 11th October, 1899, although the RR was moved to Tuli, the Protectorate Regiment occupied Mafeking, Baden-Powell assuming responsibility for the defence of the town; Plumer's orders were to defend the border, induce the Boers to detail a strong force to counter the threat of invasion, and create a diversion in collaboration with the main British force in the south, but not to invade the Transvaal until instructed to do so.

The Boers meanwhile were well aware of the vulnerability of the long border they shared with Rhodesia and Bechuanaland, and also that British reinforcements could be brought in via Beira. The Zoutpansberg and Waterberg Commandos, variously estimated at 1,500 to 2,000 men, under the command of Gen. F.A. Grobler, were therefore instructed to defend the border area and destroy the railway as far north as Bulawayo. However, the Zoutpansberg Commando proved largely ineffectual because of weak

leadership, and the Waterberg commando refused to become involved. The result was that the only damage done to the railway in Bechuanaland was done south of Gaborone by the commandos besieging Mafeking, and Plumer's Railway Construction and Maintenance Corps was able to effect repairs as he advanced. Moreover, as the Boer leaders had foreseen, British reinforcements - the Rhodesian Field Force - were later brought into the border area via Beira.

Mafeking, and nearby Pitsani, from where Jameson had set out for Johannesburg on his ill-fated raid, were irresistible targets as far as the Boers were concerned, and Mafeking was besieged by at least 6,000 Boers, a significant proportion of the available fighting men, under Gen. Cronje. A further large force was bogged down besieging Ladysmith. The strategic objective of the British was thus achieved courtesy of the enemy. The Boers did not commit themselves to invading Natal and Cape Colony to the extent they could have done, and, because they did not reach the coast, were unable to establish a line of communication with their sympathizers in mainland Europe. More importantly they lost the opportunity to provoke an insurrection by their fellow-countrymen in Cape Colony.

The troops available to Plumer consisted of the RR, most of whom had been recruited in Port Elizabeth but which included a squadron of Rhodesians - 'E' Squadron (Rhodesia Horse) - under Col. John Anthony Spreckley, CMG[‡], 980 BSAP under their Commandant, Col. J.S. Nicholson, some 800 Southern Rhodesia Volunteers (SRV) under Col. G.D. Holdsworth, 7th Hussars, and 250 other volunteers. Col. Nicholson played a particularly important role prior to the war. It was he who ensured that Rhodesia was well stocked with supplies, that an alternative supply route via Beira was assured and that the RR were well equipped and able to take the field after only two months training.

At the beginning of January 1900, Holdsworth was within four miles of Crocodile Pools Siding (now Notwani), nine miles south of Gaborone, where the

[†] The Times History consistently, and incorrectly, refers to the Rhodesian Regiment.

[‡] Spreckley entered Rhodesia as Paymaster-Sergeant with the Pioneer Column, and played a prominent role during the Matabele War and subsequent Rebellion. He married the sister - Beatrice - of another prominent pioneer, Harry Borrow. He was killed at Pienaar's River, north of Pretoria, on the 22nd August, 1900.



Figure 1 One of the trains fitted with armour in Bulawayo workshops (after Baxter and Turner, 1966)

Boers had taken up a strong position astride the railway. Two weeks later Plumer was at Gaberones, and on the 13th February established a base at Kanye. Hickman⁴ quotes Ellenberger's account of a visit made to Chief Bathoen of the Bangwaketse at Kanye to arrange for the passing of Col. Plumer's Column if he could not use the railway.

Here Ellenberger found an old friend, James Young, formerly of the Bechuanaland Border Police, who was in Mafeking when the siege began. He had been approached by Col. H. Goold-Adams (the Resident Commissioner, who had elected to remain in Mafeking) to see if he could get through the Boer lines in order to start a postal service between Mafeking and Kanye by means of native runners, and he succeeded.

On the 24th February the Boers, despite having been reinforced, fell back, and on the 6th March Plumer entered Lobatsi. However, the Boers counter-attacked, and he had to withdraw, and concentrated his mounted troops at Kanye. The remainder retreated to Crocodile Pools and Gaberones. The armoured trains and the Railway Corps played an important role despite the vulnerability of both track and trains. The trains, now under the command of Col. Spreckley, withdrew to Ootsi (see **Figures 1 to 4**). Ootsi was the site of a telegraph office and postal agency under Lobatsi; it was occupied by the Boers from the 23rd October, 1899 to early March(?) 1900⁵.

From Kanye Plumer moved 26 miles south to Sefetili (or Sefikile), 30 miles from Mafeking, where there were a few pans on the edge of the desert, and established posts at Mashupa, Kanye and Moshwane for the SRV Cyclist Corps[§], who acted as despatch riders (**Figures**

6 to 8).

From late October 1899 to late February 1900 Crocodile Pools was occupied by the Boers. The telegraph and post office staff retreated north and took with them the Crocodile Pools datestamp, which was probably used at the "Base Train (Military) P.O." at Ootsi. Proud⁶ records that the Boers evacuated Crocodile Pools on the 23rd February, 1900, and the cover shown as **Figure 7** is evidence that the office had reopened and the datestamp had been returned by the 14th April 1900.

The cover illustrated as **Figure 9** was forwarded via Ootsi (Army Telegraphs datestamp coded ('O - - S')). Mafeking had been relieved by the time it reached Bulawayo (Hoyte and Lashbrook type DCA 8L.1 datestamp set at '24.MEI. 00'), but the rail route south had not then been re-opened and this letter was therefore forwarded via the East Coast route; the transit time from Bulawayo was 33 days. It is evident from the covers illustrated and described above that transit times for mail addressed to the UK forwarded from Bulawayo via the East Coast route were very variable, ranging from 29 to 48 days.

Maj. Alistair Weston Jarvis, commanding D Squadron, RR (and subsequently Commissioner of the BSAP) records⁷:

We were entirely cut off from the world, except by a very roundabout route. Milner had put on a despatch boat for us from Durban to Beira, and all our mails and other information came in that way ... thence by train to Salisbury, by coach from that place to Bulawayo, and again by train to the point nearest

[§] Under Lt. Charles Duly, who owned a cycle shop in Bulawayo; after the war he graduated from bicycles to cars and started the chain of garages familiar to everyone who has lived in central Africa. He was awarded the DSO in 1901.

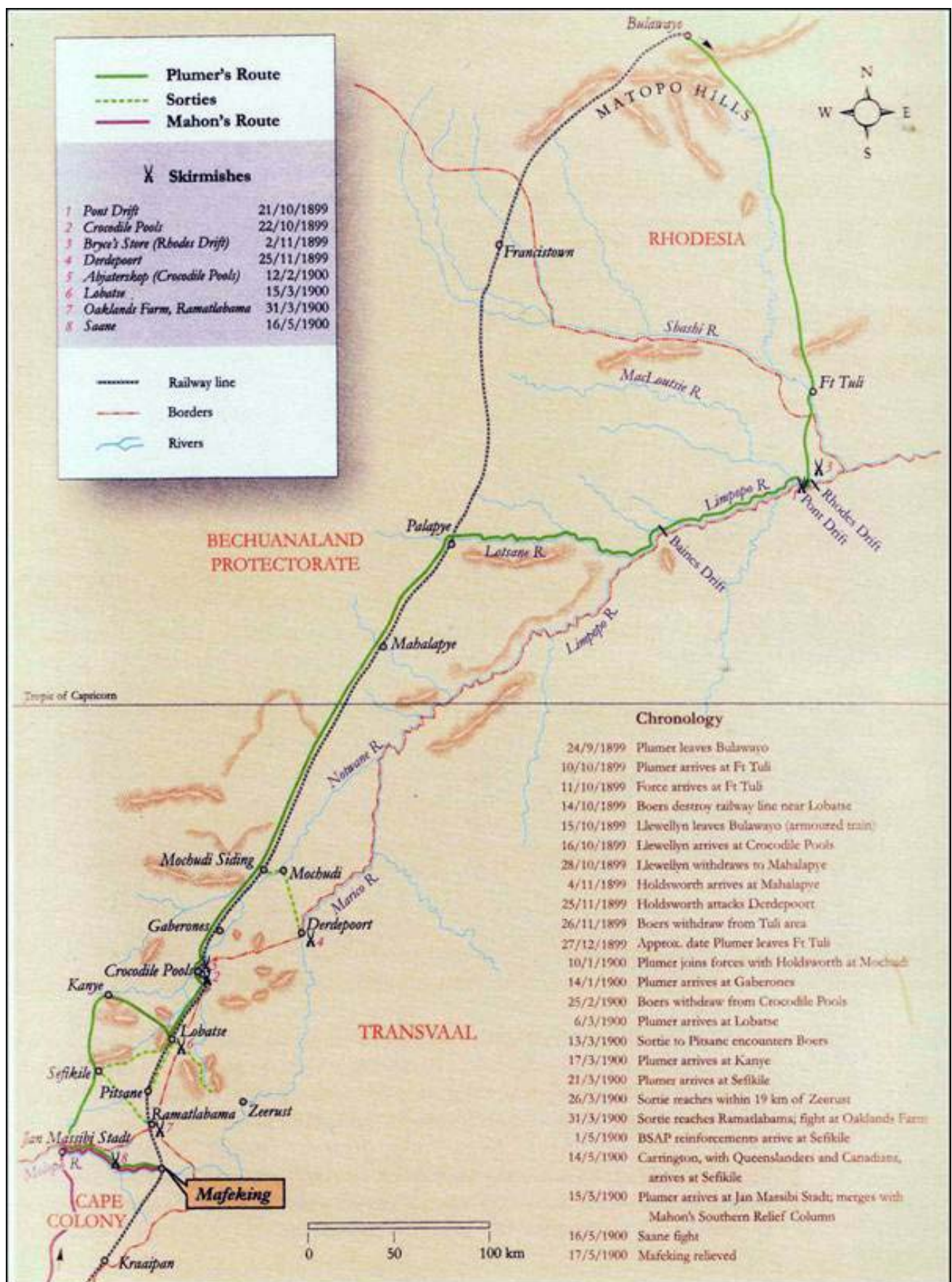


Figure 2 A map showing Plumer's route through Bechuanaland and a list of the principal engagements in which his force was involved (after Smith, 2001)



Figure 3 The sender of this cover was A.C. Brecknell, an SRV trooper serving with the armoured trains. The authorizing officer was Col. Spreckley the Officer Commanding the armoured trains, then based in Ootsi. The franking was cancelled with the Crocodile Pools datestamp on '16. APR. 00'. (Crocodile Pools probably opened as a telegraph office. The staff took the datestamp, and probably the equipment with them when it was occupied by the Boers in late October 1899, but it was back in use at Crocodile Pools by mid-April 1900.) Backstamps record that the letter was sent back to Bulawayo on the 23rd April, and was received in Chipping Norton on the 26th May, having been forwarded via Salisbury, Beira and Durban to Cape Town, from where it was carried by the Carisbrook Castle, sailing on the 9th May, calling at Madeira on the 22nd and reaching Southampton on the 26th. The transit time from Bulawayo was 33 days (courtesy of Nick Harris)

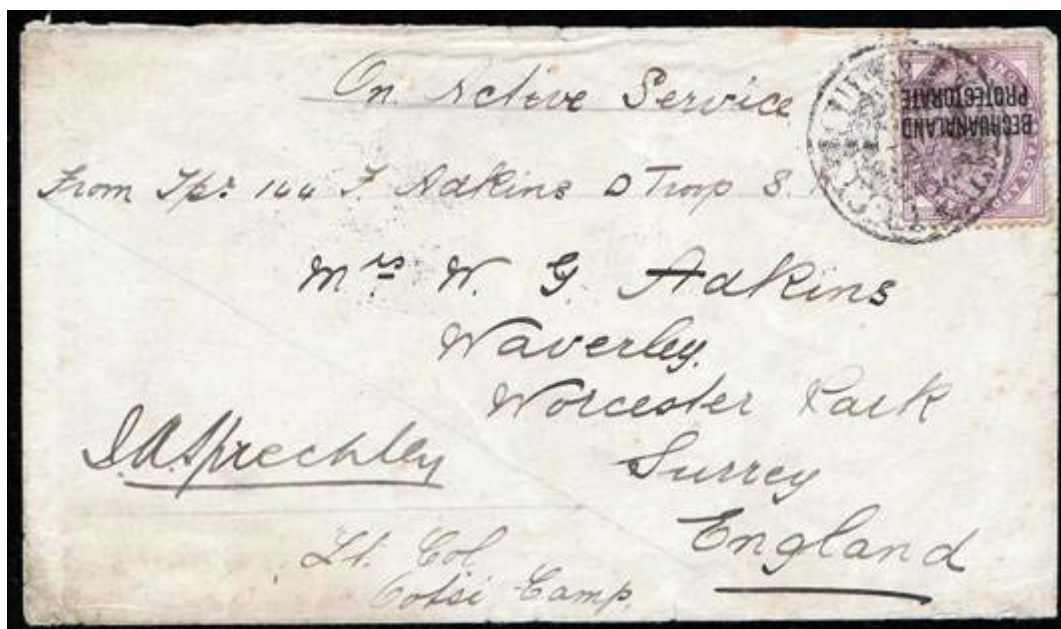


Figure 4 Cover sent from Ootsi by Trooper F. Adkins, D Troop, SRV, with the authorising signature of Lt.-Col. J.A. Spreckley, then the Officer Commanding the armoured trains based in Ootsi. The franking is cancelled with the Bulawayo bag seal. A backstamp records that the letter passed through Bulawayo on the 21st May, 1900. This must have been among the last letters sent north prior to the relief of Mafeking (courtesy of Nick Harris)

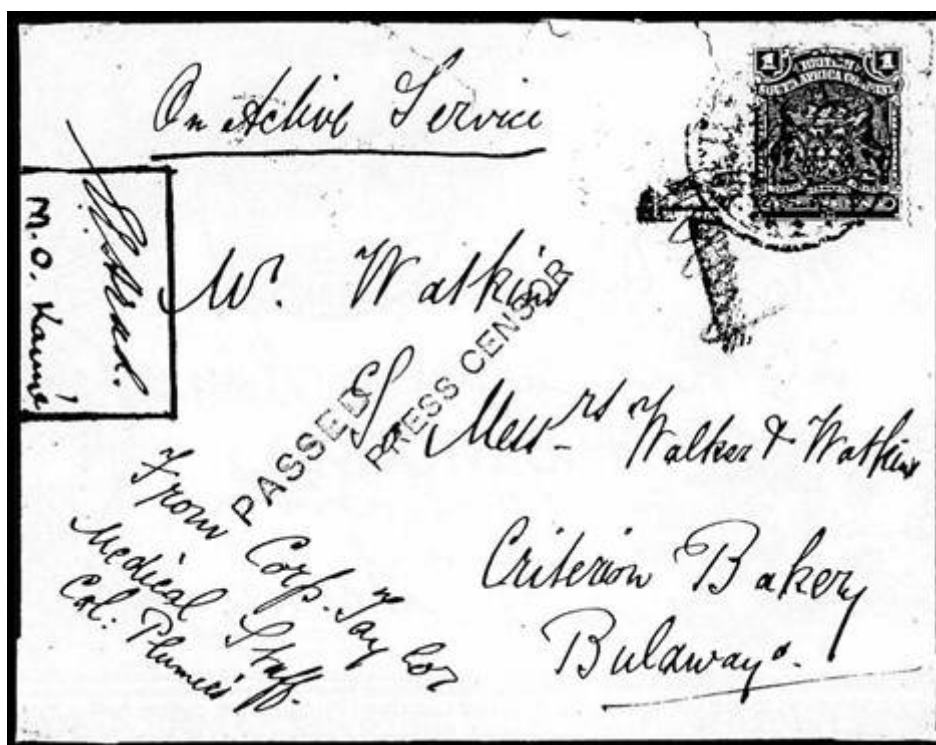


Figure 5 Cover from 'Corp. Taylor / Medical Staff / Col. Plumer's', countersigned by E.E. Head, medical officer in Kanye, addressed to Bulawayo and entered the mails there on the 2nd June, 1900 (backstamp). This cover proves that the tax mark must have been struck - and cancelled - in Bulawayo, where the 'PASSED / PRESS CENSOR' handstamp was struck in violet. The franking was cancelled with a Bulawayo bag seal (Drysdall, 2000)



Figure 6 The sender of this cover, which Lt. A.S. Chalmers signed on '3/5/00', was F.W. Say, a cyclist with D Troop, SRV. Although annotated 'No Stamps Procurable' it was franked with a 1d stamp, presumably at Crocodile Pools. Backstamps record that it passed through Bulawayo on the 6th May and was received in Birkenhead on the 23rd June, having been forwarded via Salisbury, Beira and Durban. It was therefore carried by the Dunvegan Castle, sailing from Cape Town on the 6th June and reaching Southampton on the 23rd. (courtesy of Nick Harris)



Figure 7 Another cover sent by an SRV Cyclist, Trooper W.A. Macdonald, bearing the signature of the Officer Commanding, Crocodile Pools, which proves that the Crocodile Pools datestamp was then in use there. It was posted on '14. APR. 00', passed through Bulawayo two days later and was received in Godalming on the 25th May. The transit time from Bulawayo via Salisbury, Beira, Durban and Cape Town was 29 days (courtesy of Nick Harris)

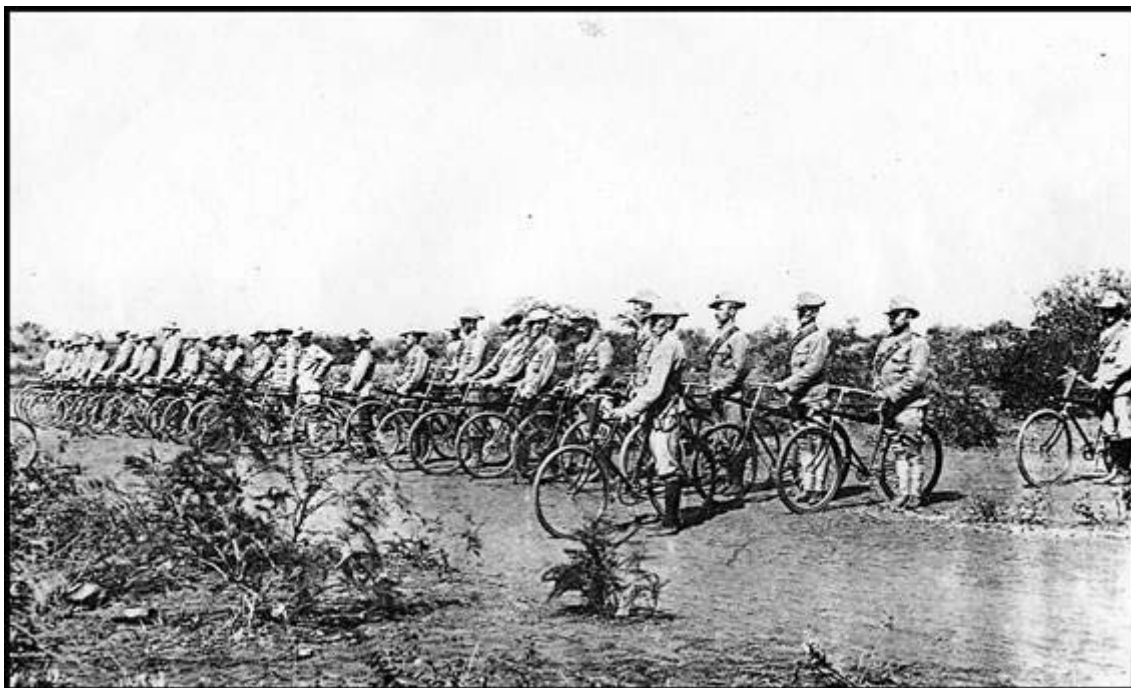


Figure 8 'E' Troop, SRV Cyclists (after Hickman, 1970, and National Archives of Zimbabwe)

on the railway to our camp, finishing up with native runners; but everything came along all right, and I am not aware of having failed to get any letters.

A cover sent by Weston Jarvis from Crocodile Pools on '16. APR. 00' has been illustrated in *The Anglo-Boer War Philatelist*⁹. The 'despatch boat' he refers to was the *Formosa* (4,045 tons), built for P & O at Barrow-in-Furness in 1892. Proud¹⁰ records that she operated

between Beira and Lourenço Marques rather than Durban, and that "the route to the south was restored on 31 May 1900 after the relief of Mafeking and the use of the *Formosa* discontinued".

From Sefetili Plumer made contact with Baden-Powell and offered to advance at once, but Baden-Powell considered this too risky an enterprise for such a small force. On the 26th March Plumer carried out a



Figure 9 A cover, presumably from an officer, franked at the Bechuanaland Protectorate half-ounce letter rate for mail addressed to the UK. The franking was cancelled at Ootsi with an Army Telegraph datestamp coded 'O - S' on '16. V.00', and backstamped in Bulawayo on '24 MEI 00'. (The month in the date in this Bulawayo datestamp, Hoyte and Lashbrook Type 8L.1, is in Dutch.) The sender was probably H.R. Evered, one of the postal clerks seconded from Bulawayo and responsible for checking the mail originating from Mafeking (courtesy of Nick Harris)

reconnaissance almost as far as Zeerust as a distraction, and on the 31st reconnoitred in strength southwards from Ramathlabama to within six miles of Mafeking. A counter attack forced him to retire to Sefetili. The losses were 12 killed, 29 wounded and 8 missing. The wounded included Plumer himself, and two officers who unbeknownst to themselves contributed to the postal history of the campaign, namely Maj. Jarvis and Capt. Rolt, Adjutant of the RR (subsequently Brigade Major). None of the three named was, however, severely wounded.

On the 1st May Plumer was reinforced at Sefeteli by 100 BSAP - the Mashonaland Division- and on the 14th by C Battery of the Royal Canadian Artillery under Maj. Hudson, with an escort of 100 Queenslanders. They had travelled by train from Beira via Umtali to Marandellas with the Rhodesian Field Force (see below).

Having received a message by runner with news of the approach from the south of a relief column under Col. Mahon, Plumer set out to join forces with it at Jan Massibi, 20 miles west of Mafeking. They met on the 15th May. Mahon assumed command of the combined force and divided it into two brigades under Col. Plumer and Lt.-Col. A.H.M. Edwards. Hickman¹¹ quotes Ellenberger:

... messages to and from Colonel Baden-Powell ... [were] exchanged at night by means of runners. One batch brought a small basket containing two pigeons, and towards sunset on May 15th Colonel

Plumer handed me a message to put into code and to affix to one of the pigeons, with instructions to release both birds at 6 a.m. on the 16th. The message read: "May 16th Southern and Northern Columns combined advance towards Mafeking at 6 a.m. today". I had no more gummed paper with which to affix the message to the bird's leg, but Colonel Nicholson ... happened to have on his person a 4d. Rhodesian stamp which he passed on to me, and it was from strips of this stamp that I secured the message to the pigeon's leg.

Both brigades advanced along the north bank of the Molopo and were in action against Gen. De La Rey's forces south of the River near Israel Molema's farm eight miles from Mafeking. However, De La Rey, who had assumed overall command in the western Transvaal, lost contact with his troops during the night. Large numbers withdrew north of the town, with the result that Mahon's columns were not only able to enter Mafeking in the small hours of the morning, but that same day attacked and overwhelmed the Boer laagers.

Plumer never did receive the full credit for what he achieved, and neither did his troops. Creswicke¹² quotes the following letter from a trooper who fought at Ramathlabama.

On the 31st ult. We got as far as six miles from Mafeking, but had to retire after four hours' heavy fighting... We have had a very tough time indeed,

always fighting against much superior odds armed with splendid artillery, living on short rations, without tents or any other shelter, wet through with the rain, and scorched with the sun, and yet the people at home never give us a thought. We have been so hard up for tobacco that men have been smoking tea-leaves. We have not had a thing from home, not even the Queen's chocolate, and yet we have done as much in our small way as the troops down south. Of course we have had no big battles, as we have not got the men or the guns, but we have had constant patrols or skirmishes, nearly always losing men killed or wounded or both. We have also suffered heavily with fever and dysentery, and all our hospitals are full.

On the 9th June Alfred Gould, one of the SRV cyclists wrote to his sister from Zeerust:

I'm taking this letter to Lobatsi where I hear that the first train from Bulawayo to Cape Town starts the mails instead of going round by Beira. I'll send you a Mafeking siege note by my next letter, they are very scarce now and worth something.

Gould was late with his news. On the 26th May The Times, quoting Reuters, reported that "Railway communication with Bulawayo is nearly restored. Vryburg is the temporary terminus, but trains will soon be running to Mafeking". Proud¹³ records that "the route south from Mafeking was restored on the 31st May, 1900.

The Mafeking Defence Force

During the siege, mail was carried out of Mafeking by native runners, hence the designation 'kaffirgram' used in the literature. Neil Snowden, in an article published in The Anglo-Boer War Philatelist in 1978, lists a number of examples¹⁴.

In the issue of The South African Philatelist dated July 1948 (p.122) reference is made by Dr. K. Freund to a letter from J.H. Powell, the Postmaster at Bulawayo, addressed to Stanley Gibbons, describing how mail from Mafeking was handled¹⁵. What



Figure 10 A cover posted in Mafeking on 'MY 10 / 1900' that did not reach Bulawayo until 18 days later ('28. MEI. 00') and was only delivered in the UK on the 7th July, having been forwarded via the East Coast route. The transit time from Bulawayo was 40 days (courtesy of Nick Harris)



Figure 11 A letter posted only nine days before Mafeking was relieved, forwarded via Ootsi, Bulawayo and the East Coast route (courtesy of Nick Harris)



Figure 12 This cover ticks all the boxes; it is franked with stamps totalling 1s and bears a strike, albeit faint, of the Bulawayo 'PASSED / PRESS CENSOR' handstamp together with the initials, again rather faint, of Thomas Glanville (a post office clerk) and J.H. Powell (the Bulawayo Postmaster). A back-stamp records that it was received in Bulawayo on '26. APR. 00' (courtesy of John Ineson)



Figure 13 Two covers sent from Mafeking on 'AP 26 / 00' that reached Bulawayo on '6-MEI. 00'. The cover addressed to London was received on 'JU 23 / 00', and was forwarded via the East Coast route and carried from Cape Town by the Dunvegan Castle, sailing on the 6th June. The third cover was despatched from Mafeking on 'MY 1 / 1900' (x 90%; courtesy of John Ineson and Nick Harris)

appears to be another letter from Powell was subsequently reproduced in The Anglo-Boer War Philatelist¹⁶.

With the first batch of letters received from Mafeking (in March) several were found to be minus stamps. The 'Base Train (Military) P.O.' to which all letters were sent from Mafeking was manned by chaps from my office and I immediately instructed them to examine closely every Mafeking letter, verify the postage and initial each letter. On arrival here the letters were again examined, verified and initialled. Most, if not all, of the Mafeking letters should therefore bear the initials 'T.G.' (Thomas Glanville), 'H.R.E.' (H.R. Evered) or 'J.H.N.' (John Nevett) (these were base train clerks) and 'G.H.W.' or 'J.H.P.' (my Supts. initials or my own). In addition to those initials the letters should have figures which represent the No. (of letters

passed at Mafeking) or the value of the postage attached.

I suppose at least 80 per cent of the letters sent out of besieged Mafeking passed through my hands...

The initials 'G.H.W.' have since been identified as those of George H. Wolhunter¹⁷, but 'A.C.H.' and 'A.H.T.' remain unknown. Examples of initialled covers are shown in **Figures 12 and 13**.

The important points to note regarding Mafeking siege mail sent northwards are: a) the rate was 1s regardless of the destination; b) some covers, but by no means all, bear the initials of post office staff who were required to check that the correct postage had been paid; and c) mail addressed into Rhodesia usually, but again not invariably, bears a strike in violet of the Bulawayo 'PASSED / PRESS CENSOR' handstamp (see **Figures 12 and 13**).

The Rhodesian Field Force

The story of the Rhodesian Field Force (RFF) has been summarised by Bernard Livermore, Maj. Adrian Hopkins, Neil Snowden and George Stewart¹⁸. They are all quoting The Times History of the war in South Africa 1899-1917¹⁹. This account is based on Neil Snowden's excellent article, supplemented by extracts from Gilbert, Hickman and Wallace²⁰.

In the first week of December 1899, the BSA Co., concerned that Rhodesia was depleted of manpower as a result of some 1,700 settlers volunteering to fight in South Africa, wrote to the Colonial Secretary, Joseph Chamberlain, urging that a force, to be paid for by the Imperial Government, be raised specifically to counter the threat of a Boer invasion and the possibility of native uprisings. (The Matabele and Mashona uprisings of 1896-97 were painful memories as far as the Company was concerned.) On the 11th January, 1900, the board received a letter approving a scheme whereby the Company would undertake the enlisting and equipping of a force of about 5,000 mounted men, together with three field-gun and two pom-pom batteries, the UK Government meeting the cost. Some men were to be recruited in Rhodesia and all were to be recruited outside England. There were, however, few European men left in Rhodesia and the UK Government was therefore forced to send Yeomanry and Colonial volunteers.

The Company promptly purchased the necessary equipment, but there were obvious difficulties following the Boer invasions of Natal and the Cape in getting men and supplies to Rhodesia. The only practical possibility was to use the port of Beira, which would involve passage through some 200 miles of Portuguese territory and the use of the narrow-gauge railway between Beira and Salisbury. Portugal eventually agreed that the treaty signed in 1891

allowed the passage of troops and their equipment, and on the 8th March, 1900, informed the Transvaal Government accordingly. Despite Boer protests, approval of the British request was granted by the Portuguese on the 22nd March.

Command of the RFF was given to Lt.-Gen. Sir Frederick Carrington, KCB, KCMG, who had extensive experience of campaigning in Africa. Carrington and his staff - 45 officers are listed by Snowden - sailed on the Aurania in mid-March and reached Cape Town on the 9th April, 1900. It was intended that the RFF, in addition to protecting Rhodesia, would assist Plumer to relieve Mafeking. Plumer's most urgent need was artillery. C Battery of the Royal Canadian Artillery had arrived in South Africa aboard the Milwaukee on the 26th March, 1900, and was at Stellenbosch when Carrington reached Cape Town. Lord Roberts decided to send this Battery with him on the Colombian to Beira. They sailed on the 14th April and reached Beira on the 23rd. C Battery was then sent with an escort of Queenslanders by rail to Marandellas, arriving on the 27th April.

On the 5th May General Carrington detailed a squadron of the Third Queensland Mounted Infantry, under Capt. C.W. Kellie, to escort the Canadian Artillery, then about to set out to join Plumer's force attempting to relieve Mafeking. Because no horses were available for the first leg of journey to Bulawayo, the guns and the escort were hauled from Marandellas to Bulawayo by Zeederberg's mules and coaches. Relays of fresh mules were provided every 12 to 14 miles. The mail services operated by Zeederberg (Salisbury - Bulawayo, Salisbury - Hartley, Enkeldoorn - Victoria, Gwelo - Selukwe, Bulawayo - Gwanda and Bulawayo - Belingwe) having been suspended from "23 April until 9th-16th May 1900" to make this

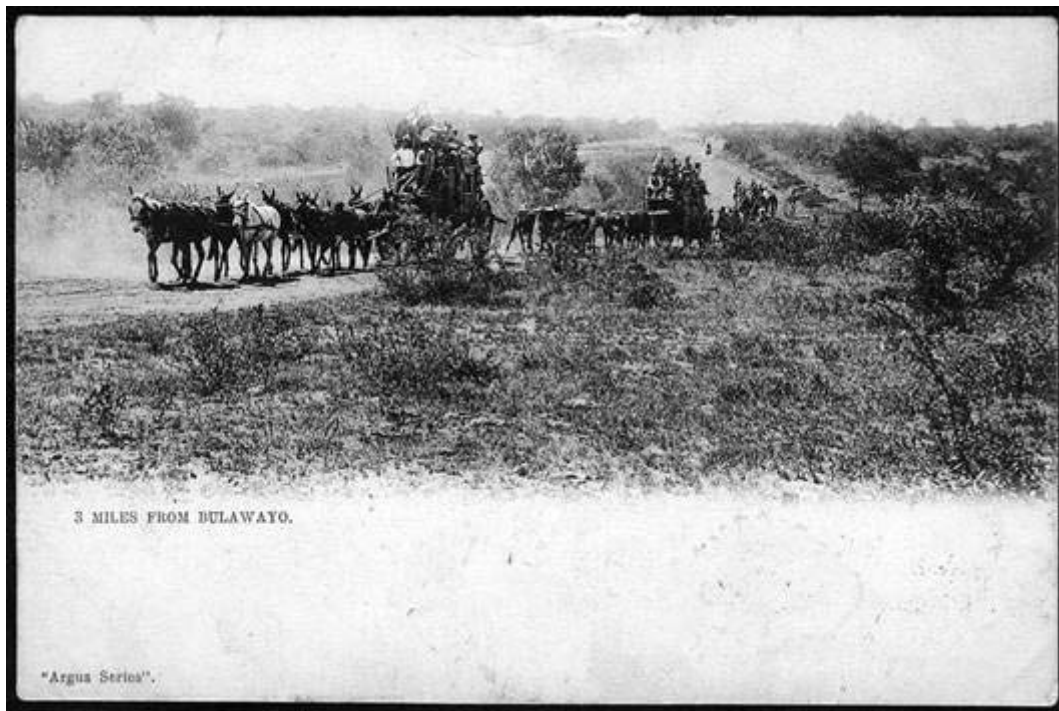


Figure 14 This postcard showing a convoy of mule-drawn coaches of the type used by Zeederberg may well record the Rhodesian Field Force en route to Bulawayo (courtesy of Cliff Wheatley)

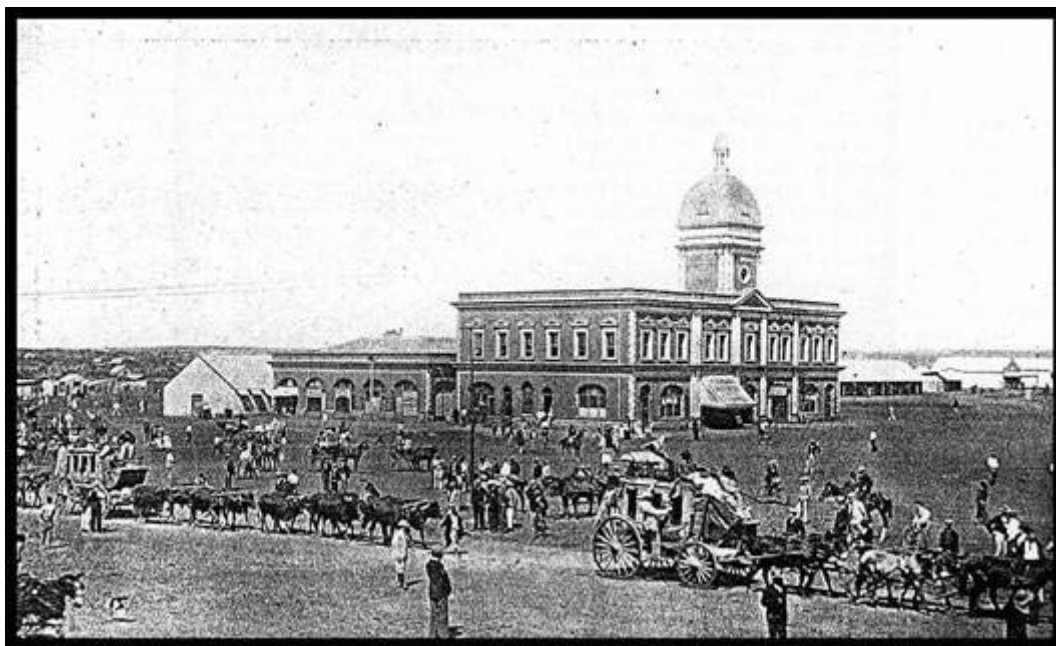


Figure 15 The arrival of 'C' Battery of the Royal Canadian Artillery and the escort of Queenslanders in Bulawayo on the 6th May, 1900 (anon, undated)

possible²¹. The escort for the guns was crammed inside and sitting on top of the coaches (see **Figures 14 and 15**). They left Bulawayo the day after their arrival, and continued by train for 460 miles to a point about four miles north of Mafeking where the Boers had torn up the line. Still without horses they then force-marched 40 miles on foot to join Plumer's column by daybreak on the 14th May, 1900.

A 1d reply card sent by a bombardier with 'C' Battery of the Royal Canadian Artillery is illustrated as **Figure 16**. It was written in Bulawayo on the day they arrived there with their escort of Queenslanders - "rattling fine chaps". The writer records that they would be leaving to join Plumer's relief column two days later. He was under no illusions and ended his message with the sentence, "The war will last some time"

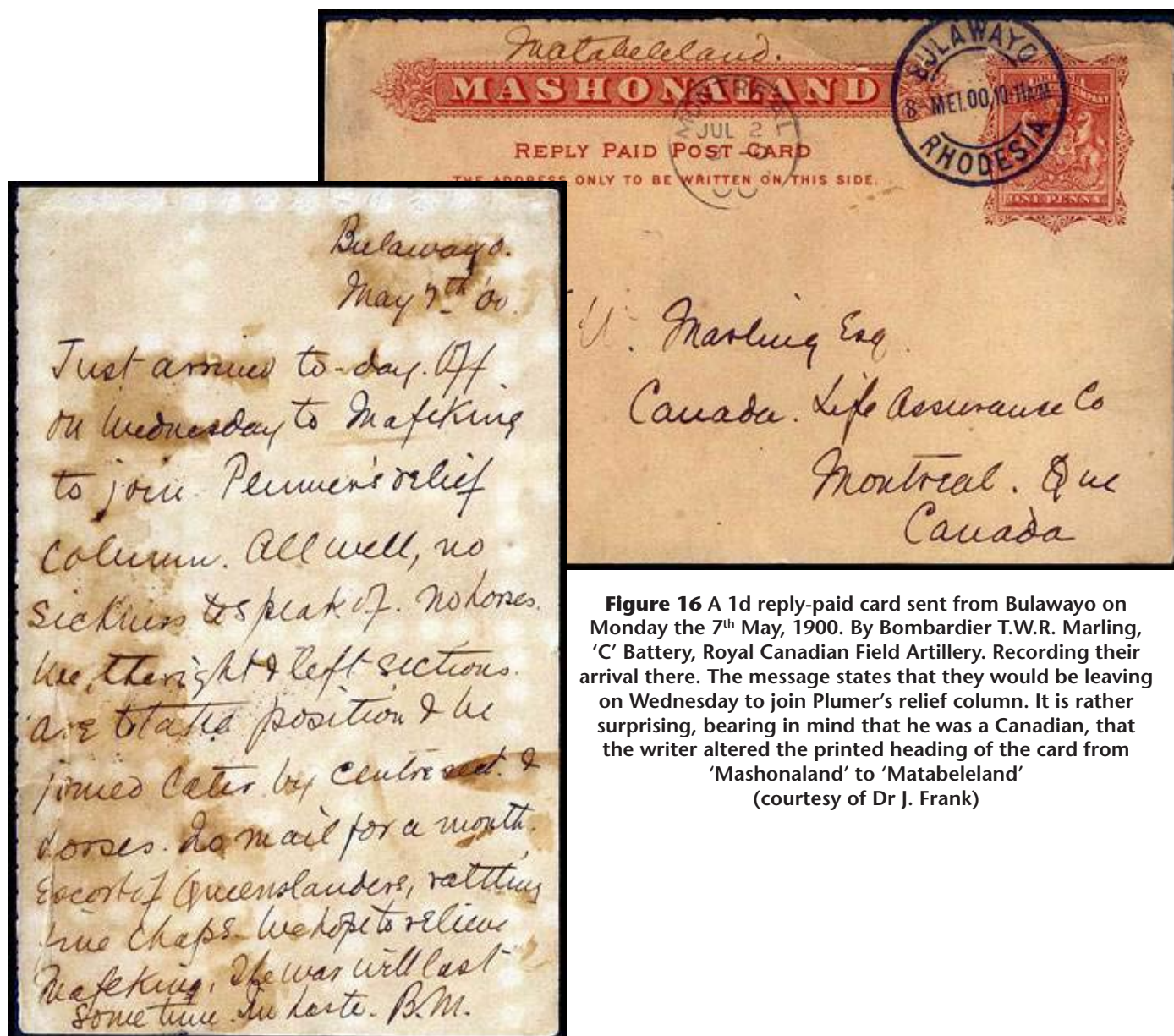


Figure 16 A 1d reply-paid card sent from Bulawayo on Monday the 7th May, 1900. By Bombardier T.W.R. Marling, 'C' Battery, Royal Canadian Field Artillery. Recording their arrival there. The message states that they would be leaving on Wednesday to join Plumer's relief column. It is rather surprising, bearing in mind that he was a Canadian, that the writer altered the printed heading of the card from 'Mashonaland' to 'Matabeleland' (courtesy of Dr J. Frank)

References

- | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|
| 1 Hickman, 1970; see also Holdeman, 1984 | 9 Hutterer, 1989 | Philatelist, v. 6, no. 4, p.88-9 | 19 The Times History of the war in South Africa 1899-1902 (v. 4, p.363-79) |
| 2 Hickman, 1970, p.60 | 10 Proud, 1997, p.81 | 17 The Anglo-Boer War Philatelist, Dec. 1972, p.104 | 20 Gilbert, 1901, Hickman, 1975 and Wallace, 1976 |
| 3 Pakenham, 1979, p.399 | 11 Hickman, 1970, p.355 | 18 The Journal of the Rhodesian Study Circle, no. 69, p.9-10; Hopkins, 1970; Snowden, 1978; and Stewart, 1998 | 21 Proud, 1997, p.81 |
| 4 Hickman, 1970, p.291 | 12 Creswicke, undated, v. 4, p.212 | | |
| 5 Proud, 1996, p.331 | 13 Proud, 1997, p.81 | | |
| 6 Proud, 1996, p.289 | 14 Snowden, 1978 | | |
| 7 Weston Jarvis, 1928, p.128 | 15 Stanley Gibbons Monthly Journal, November 1900, p.96-7 | | |
| 8 Peetoom, 1995, p.102 | 16 The Anglo-Boer War | | |

Baxter, T.W., and Turner, R.W.S., 1966, Rhodesian Epic: Howard Timmins, Cape Town

Creswicke, L, (undated), South Africa and the Transvaal War, v. 2: The Caxton Publishing Co., London

Drysdall, A.R., 2000, Rhodesia's Role in the Second-Anglo-Boer War: Publication no. 9, Anglo-Boer War Philatelic Society

Gilbert, S.H., 1901, Rhodesia - and after; being the Story of the 17th and 18th Battalions of Imperial Yeomanry in South Africa: Simpkin Marshall, Hamilton, Kent & Co., London

Hickman, Col. A.S., 1970 and 1975, Rhodesia Served the Queen; Rhodesian Forces in the Boer War, 1899-1902, v. 1 and 2: The Government Printer, Salisbury

Holderman, R., 1984, The British South Africa Police - Anglo-Boer War: The Journal of the Rhodesian Study Circle,

v. 34, no. 2 (126), p.66-8

Hoyte, H., and Lashbrook, J., 2003, South of the Zambesi; the Post Offices and Agencies of Southern Rhodesia (later Rhodesia) and Zimbabwe) from 1888 to 2001 and their Postmarks: The Rhodesian Study Circle

Hutterer, P., 1989, With Plumer's Column; Crocodile Pools April 1900: The Anglo-Boer War Philatelist, v. 32, no. 2, p.48

Pakenham, T., 1979, The Boer War: Weidenfeld and Nicolson

Peetoom, O., 1995, Rhodesian Connections with Crocodile Pools: The Rhodesian Philatelist, no. 7, p. 102-4 and front cover

Proud, E.B., 1996, The Postal History of Basutoland and Bechuanaland Protectorate: Proud-Bailey, Heathfield

Proud, E.B., 1997, The Postal History of Southern Rhodesia: Proud-Bailey, Heathfield

Smith, I.R. (Ed.), 2001, The Siege of Mafeking: The Brenthurst Press, Johannesburg

Snowden, N., 1978, Rhodesia and the Boer War: The Anglo-Boer War Philatelist, v. 15, no. 4, p.85-105; The Journal of the Rhodesian Study Circle, v. 28, no. 2 (102), p.102-8, v. 28, no. 4 (104), p.182-3 & 197-201; v. 29, no. 1 (105), p.35-42

Weston Jarvis, A., 1928, Jottings from an Active Life: Heath Cranton, London

Wallace, R.L., 1976, The Australians at the Boer War: The Australian War Memorial and the Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra

Bechuanaland Postcards - Part 3

by Brian Fenemore

Runner Post #82 detailed the known Townshend's Vignette Postcards. Runner Post #83 had series of H.E.Sargent and T.D.Ravenscroft cards. This issue Brian Fenemore has provide us with an assortment of pre-1920 cards - more next issue.

Ploughing - Doornbult

Card DRN-1 [80%]

(front)

The photograph simply has the word "PLOUGHING".

The text says "Doornbult, BB. 17/4/1905.

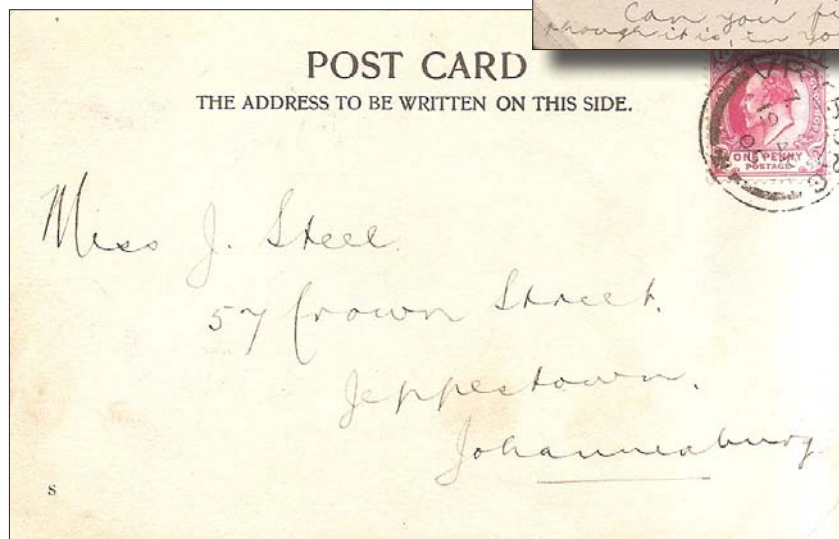
/ Can you find room for this one, uncommon though it is, in your album.

Love to all. Bob!

(reverse)

There's a small "S" lower left corner. Addressed to Miss J Steel in Jeppestown, Johannesburg.

Postmarked VRYBURG, • 7. • 19 AP • 05.



A web search for "Doornbult" found a PDF (URL below) which includes a history of the farm and area and even includes an image of the Post Office in 1899 - worth a read. A small extract - "standing in the veld at the eastern edge of Doornbult, a farm in the Hopetown district. This is no ordinary farm where pastoral activities are focussed solely on cattle, ostriches, sheep or cash crops."... "the site of Lieutenant-General Lord Methuen's headquarters prior to his march north along the railway line to

relieve Kimberley and also one of Field Marshall Lord Robert's many concentration camps."

http://www.pelteret.co.za/pdf/research_notes/doornbult_at_oranjerivierstasie.pdf

Grand Hotel Vryburg

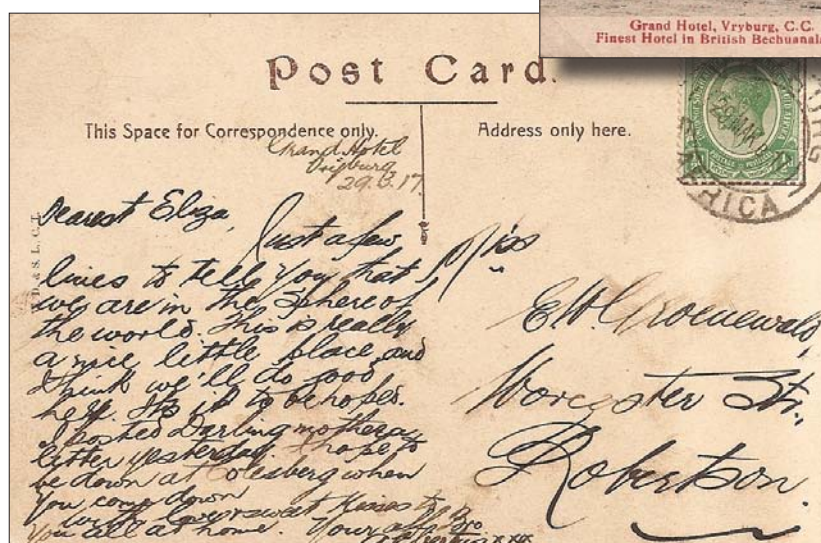
Card GHV-1 [80%]
(front)

"Grand Hotel, Vryburg, C.C. / Finest Hotel in British Bechuanaland." "Carts meet all Trains. / J & S Smollan, Proprietors."

(reverse)

There's a small "W. D. & S. L., C.T." vertical on the left.

The card is from Albertus Groenewald to his sister Eliza in Robertson. it's dated 29.3.17, postmarked VRYBURG, S.AFRICA • 29 MAR 17



Note that the photographs for the two Grand Hotel cards include the same people (only slightly moved) wearing the same clothes; it's the same cart - hence the same day, same photographer, though not the same issue date or printer. In fact they were posted about 26 years apart.

Card GHV-2 [80%]
(front)

"Grand Hotel, Vryburg, C.C. / Finest Hotel in British Bechuanaland. / Carts meet all trains. / J & S Smollan, Proprietors."



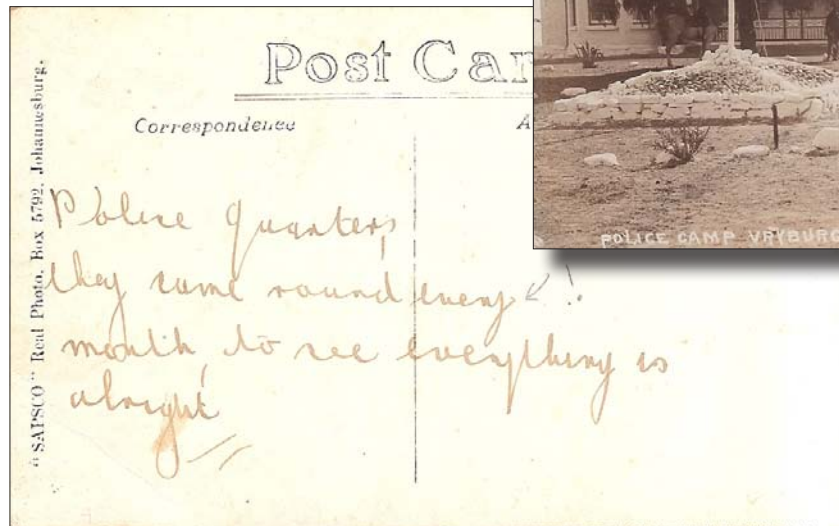
(reverse)

Stamp removed - postmark unreadable. Card dated 24.8.43. Postmark JOHANNESBURG C • 25 VIII 43 Birthday greetings to Mrs A R Sunifield. Vertical on the left "Central News Agency Ltd., Cape Town."

SAPSCO X949

Another in the SAPSCO (South African Photo & Stereo Company) series
This one is X949 POLICE CAMP VRYBURG.

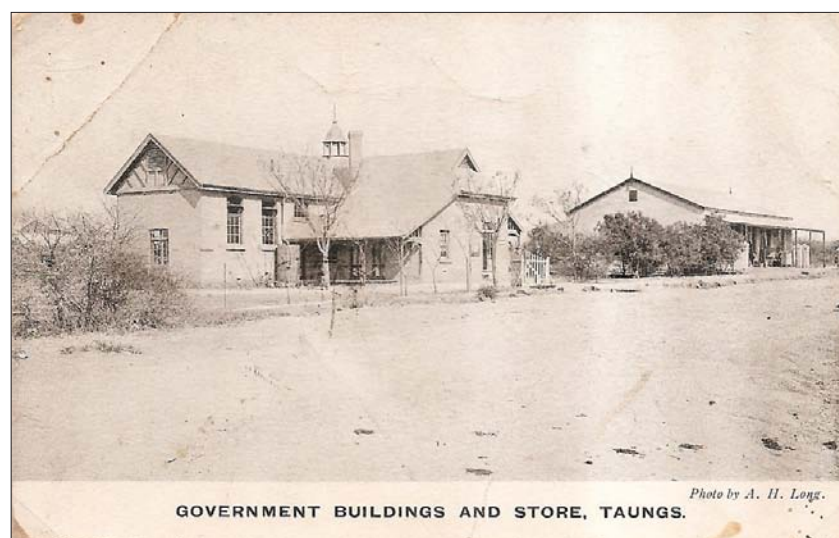
For info: A list of many of the SAPSCO
cards was found online at
[http://www.postcard.co.uk/
research/lists/sa10.htm](http://www.postcard.co.uk/research/lists/sa10.htm)



(reverse)

Text on the back (no stamp or address)
says "Police Quarters They come round
every month to see everything is alright"
Card has "SAPSCO" Real Photo, Box
5792. Johannesburg". vertical on left.

Taungs



Card TNG-1 [80%]

(front)

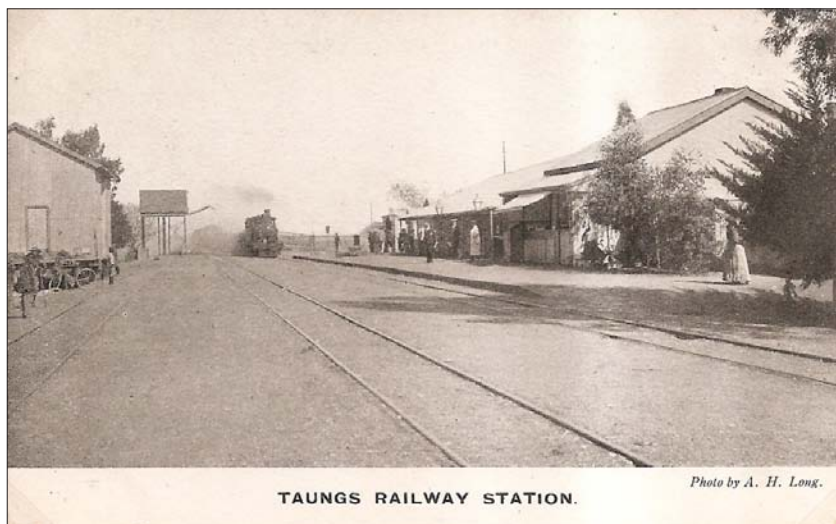
"GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS AND STORE,
TAUNGS." Photo by A. H. Long.

(reverse)

Torn stamp over TAUNGS C.G.H.
postmark plus VICTORIA WEST • 10 M •
17 OC • 10

Card is from Francis to 'Ma' Burger -
"little rain" ... "bike missing littlecup" ...
"try and get one please"

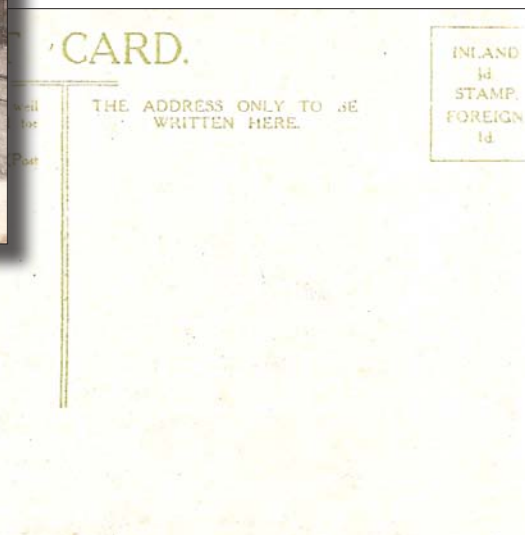




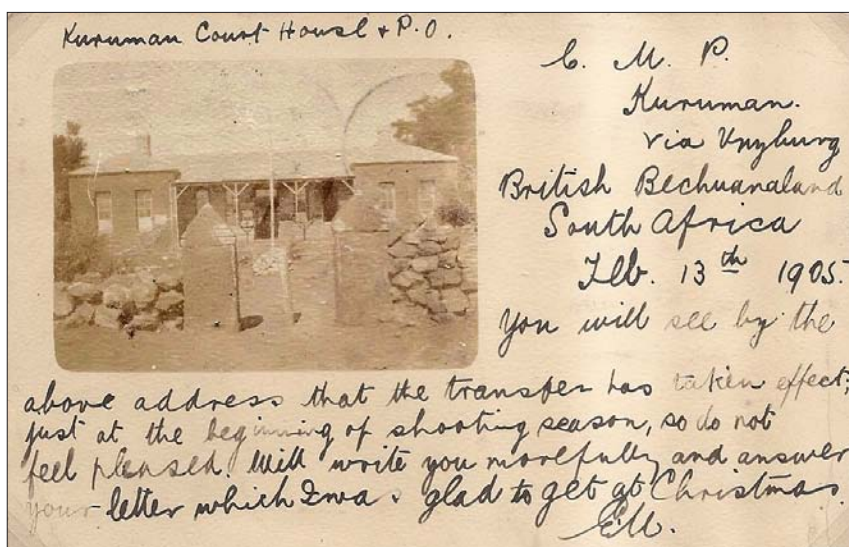
TAUNGS RAILWAY STATION.

Photo by A. H. Long.

Card TNG-2 [80%]
(front)
"TAUNGS RAILWAY STATION." Photo by
A. H. Long.
(reverse)
No distinguishing marks

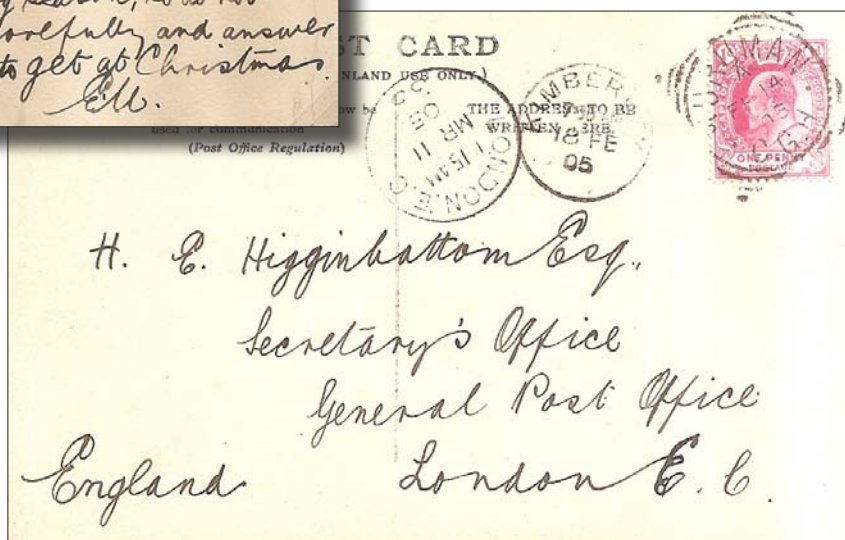


Kuruman



Card KRM-1 [80%]
(front)
Text says "Kuruman Court House & P.O."
"C.M.P. Kuruman via Vryburg / British
Bechuanaland / South Africa / Feb 13th
1905" "You will see by the above
address that the transfer has taken
effect; just at the beginning of
shooting season, so do not feel
pleased. Will write you more fully and
answer your letter which I was glad to
get at Christmas. Ell."

(reverse)
Postmarks KURUMAN C.G.H. • A • FE 14
• 05 / KIMBERLEY • 7-30 AM • 18 FE • 05
/ LONDON E.C. 33 • 1.15AM • MR 11 •
05.
To H. E. Higginbottom Esq., /Secretary's
Office /General Post Office / London E.C.
/ England



Tati Protection Certificate

from John Taylor, Chris Cooksey

Received via email from Alan Drysdall - *Memoir 11 reference is to the RSC publication.



Tati "Certificate of Protection" [prob at 95%] bearing 8 x 10/- Tati Green (T&M TC.1.4) 24 SEP 1897
- to cover 8 months protection (1st Jan to 31st Aug) on the grounds of "Scarcity of Labour"

Re: Protection Certificates Chris Cooksey, quoting Memoir 11* (p.30), writes as under. (He is assuming that the relevant regulations would be virtually if not actually the same as in Rhodesia, though it would seem that the rate was 10s per month rather than two months per block of 10 claims.)

Protection Certificate delayed the need to apply for an Inspection Certificate. Initially they were issued at no cost for a period of two months, or in the case of alluvial claims 42 days, but a fee of 10/- to cover a two month period was introduced on 10th April 1891. The holder of a mining location could apply for a certificate prior to the expiry of his current Inspection Certificate on any of the following grounds:

- Incapacitated by illness.
- Unavoidably absent from his property due to either burgher service or detained elsewhere on urgent and sufficient private reasons.
- The property was temporarily unworkable due to causes beyond the owner's control.

- Any other good and sufficient ground.

The 1895 Ordinance allowed certificates to be issued for multiple periods of two months up to a maximum of six months. This could be further extended with the express permission of the Administrator. The period for which it was valid was stated on the certificate. During its validity the certificate absolved the holder from the need to obtain an Inspection Certificate. The 1898 Ordinance clarified this fee as 10/- per two months or part thereof.

Most recorded Protection Certificates bear a £1 stamp to cover a period of four months, strangely none are recorded with a 10/- stamp for the minimum period of two months. Protection Certificates could cover a number of locations and were charged pro rata. The greatest number recorded being six for a period of four months thus bearing £6 in stamps, in this instance details of the locations are listed on the reverse of the certificate.

A Lucky Basutoland Find

by Dennis Firth



A few years ago, at York Stamp Fair, I purchased the postcard illustrated [above].

From 1913 to 1933 Basutoland used South African postage stamps and postal stationery. The postcard was issued in 1917. This card was written at Quthing and posted at MOUNT MOROSI on 8 MAY 27.

A.H. Scott in his book *"The Cancellations and Postal Markings of Basutoland/Lesotho Post Offices"* states that this office was shown on Post Office lists of 1922-29 (closed 1929, reopened 1952), but that *"Union Post Office Circular"* dated 1st August 1918 records the earlier opening of the office. He stated that no cancellation of the first opening has yet been seen. Proud's book *"The Postal History of Basutoland and Bechuanaland Protectorate"* illustrated one (identical) example so this card is the likely source of said illustration.

Morosi (also spelt Moorosi/Moroisi) was the name of the chief of the Baphuthi tribe. In the 1870s he began to cause trouble. He had dug himself into the impregnable Mount Morosi, which rises to 1500ft above the upper reaches of

the Orange River in the district of Quthing. Morosi refused to pay taxes and in other ways defied the administration. An expedition was sent against him which consisted of troops from the Cape Yeomanry, the Cape Mounted Rifles and other local units from Kingwilliamstown and Tarkastad. Morosi's kraal was taken in February 1879. After months of siege, and repeated attempts to storm the stronghold, Chief Morosi was finally brought to bay in November 1879. Scaling ladders had to be used, and under a shower of boulders and bullets, the Cape Mounted Rifles, supported by detachments of loyal Basuto and Tambookies, finally gained the summit.

The campaign against Morosi was quite a small affair, but it provided an occasion for the winning of three V.C.s. It gave an unpleasant reminder to the colonial authorities in Cape Town that not only was the pacification of Basutoland very precarious, but that it's people had not forgotten their former prowess as warriors.

REFERENCE: AFRICAN SWITZERLAND - BASUTOLAND OF TODAY, BY ERIC ROSENTHAL (1948)

Gachasnek/Qacha's Nek question

from Alan Drysdall

Alan sent in the scan [top] of the 1d Basutoland 1935 Silver Jubilee stamp as it was cancelled with a place/datestamp he did not recognise, "GACHASNEK", and which neither Putzel or Proud list.

Through the internet I found a number of Basutoland covers, one [lower left] from 1945 clearly showing BAS at the bottom. A 1953 cover [lower right] on Alan MacGregor's site suggested that it might have become QACHAKSNEK (Qacha's Nek).

Does any member know more on PO dates or name change of this place just north of the border with RSA?



BECHUANALAND

c1890 TRIAL OVERPRINTS



1890 1/2d vermilion with 'Protectorate' 15mm long. Variety OVERPRINT INVERTED. Corner marginal blocks of six from each corner of the pane. Superb fresh mint, the majority being unmounted. A spectacular and undoubtedly unique group of multiples. Ex Ernest Hunt. SG 54a

ALAN MACGREGOR

Member: PTS, SAPDA, APS

P O BOX 515, SIMON'S TOWN 7995, SOUTH AFRICA

Tel (+27 21): 786 1931 Fax: (+27 21) 786 1925

alan@rhodesia.co.za www.rhodesia.co.za