

RHODESIAN JEWRY AND ITS STORY

PART 1

BY

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CHAPTER 1.

PRELUDE IN TATI

When, in 1868, the German explorer, Eduard Mohr, bound for the interior of Southern Africa from the Cape of Good Hope, made his way into the northern part of the territory now known as Bechuanaland, he found himself, on the morning of July 26, outside the Tati Settlement.

“This camp”, he said, “has come into being in consequence of the discoveries of gold made by the German traveler, Carl Mauch, which at the time created a stir, not only in Cape Colony and Natal, but also in England.....”

and now, as Mohr looked down upon “the and huts of the miners on the left bank of the Tati, tributary of the Shashi”, he noticed, immediately to the right “when one crosses the sandy river bed, a powder magazine half completed, and to the left, in a swamp, baked bone dry at this time of the year by the force of the sun’s rays, numberless elephant footprints..... Only a year earlier, when the virgin peace of Nature still prevailed, herds of these mighty animals had frequented the spot, where now stand the huts and tents.....”

Among the 30 or 40 whites toiling away, Herr Mohr came upon one of the most picturesque characters of Victorian South Africa, “the English nobleman, Sir John Swinburne. Enticing reports in the English newspapers had stirred in him visions of Australian and Californian treasures, until, without awaiting confirmation, he had succumbed to these Utopian temptations, bought a steam engine for rock crushing, engaged an engineer and, after purchasing a supply of foodstuffs, clothing, implements, powder, lead, arms, etc, sufficient to fill a whole magazine, trekked up to the Tati.....But now the same miners, led by the speculative Baronet, were confronted with shortages of food as well as with disappointing returns from the mine”

One of the lonely little band, battling for survival, was a young Jew named Daniel Montague Kisch, to whom goes the honour of being probably the first of his community to figure in the history of Rhodesia. Born in England in 1840, he had come to the Cape, where his uncle Daniel de Pass, through his pioneering work in the guano and other trades, had achieved wealth and importance. At his suggestion Kisch in 1860 moved to Natal, where De Pass figured among the earliest sugar growers, but had been unable to settle down there. From trying to make a living as a photographer, he presently turned to prospecting, and so came to join the expedition of diggers, mainly Australian, on the wearisome trek to a golden will-o`-the-wisp on the Tati Fields.

Thomas Baines, the famous explorer, recalls in his “Gold Regions of South Eastern Africa”, how “an arduous trek across the Doorstland (so spelt), crossing

several rivers, either quite dry or scantily supplied with water, kept cool and clear in reservoirs of rock beneath the broad, dry, sandy beds, brought us to the great Shasha (so spelt) and then to the Tati River, where we outspanned near the store of the London and Limpopo Mining Company, where we were warmly welcomed by my friend, D.M. Kisch, and by other miners.

By the time these early failures had been followed by more successful prospecting, Kisch had move to Pretoria, to become a prominent businessman under the old Republican regime, as well as Auditor-General of the Transvaal under the First British Occupation, from 1877 to 1881.

While in this narrative we are not concerned with that side of his career, Tati retains its place in what might be called the introductory phase of Rhodesian history. For Tati in due course gave birth to the Tati Concession, granted by Lobengula, and so the Tati Company was a forerunner of Rhodes's British South Africa Company.

Nor was this the only Jewish enterprise in these parts in the remote era that preceded the Pioneer Column. Writing at Pniel, on the River Diggings of the Vaal, on August 2, 1871, the German traveler, Ernst von Weber, in his excellent book, "Vier Jahre in Afrika", said: "Here I got to know a good-natured Viennese named Groeger, who had set up his tent close to the river, and was diligently digging for diamonds. Some years previously, on behalf of the large house of Lippert in Hamburg (with branches in Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, Port Natal and, unless I am mistaken, also in Melbourne or Sydney), he accompanied an exploring expedition as mining expert to the Zambezi River, whence, immediately after the discovery of the Diamond Fields, he had come here.

Thus the Lipperts, cousins of Alfred Beit and proprietors of one of the most famous Jewish firms in early South Africa, can claim the honour of having attempted the exploration of Rhodesia nearly 20 years before the arrival of Cecil John Rhodes.

CHAPTER 11.

PADDY COHEN AGAINST CECIL RHODES

During the year 1877, there was published by Edward Stanford of Charing Cross, London, and J.W.C. MacKay of Port Elizabeth, Cape Colony, a famous “Map of the Goldfields of South Eastern Africa”. Prepared by Thomas Baines, Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, and “issued under the supervision of Henry Hall, Esq., Fellow of the Geographical Society”, it showed for the first time with some degree of accuracy the features of the lands between the Limpopo River and the Zambezi.

Although the routes of travelers like Carl Mauch, Eduard Mohr and others had been carefully drawn in, the present-day student is startled by such entries as “Supposed Realm of Queen of Sheba”, or “Wochua Mountain, apparently the Highest Mountain Hereabouts”, or Wahta, Chief, now to the Mashonas, buys gold and sends it down to the Portuguese”, or “On the Mazura River, G. Phillips found some lemon and citrus trees growing here”.

On the vast emptiness such features are noted as “Jennings Camp”, while across a large section of the map lie the words “Matabele – Lo Bengula”. The only attempts at permanent white communities were the famous mission stations, Inyati, (founded 1859 by the Reverend Morgan Thomas), and Hope Fountain, further south, where the Reverend Helm sought to preach the gospel in close proximity to “Lobengula’s Village”.

Little if any changes had occurred when, early in the next decade, the first permanent Jewish settler reached these parts.

Moss Cohen, better known as Paddy Cohen, because of his alleged Irish associations, has left a personal account of his arrival. Like D.M.Kisch, he came from England. “In 1882”, he said, “I went to Matabeleland, and remained 13 months as a trader. The King Lobengula took a great fancy to me, and before I left asked me to come back. I told him I could not, unless he gave me a trading license. He agreed, so I gave him a horse for it. I wrote a document, which he signed before two white men, named Fairbairn and Phillips. Of course the concession I claimed was rather large, in fact it was the sole free trading rights in his territory. In 1884 I bothered him again, and asked for a gold concession, but he said he had no gold in his country. “White people will soon come and get the gold”, I told him, “and why should I be left out”? To this he gave me a promise that, as soon as he gave anybody prospecting rights, I should be the first to get one. He would not give this to me in writing, but I was satisfied and took his promise”.

Meanwhile a series of events had begun changing the entire political geography and economics of Southern Africa and, with them, the fortunes of Paddy Cohen. From his vantage point in Kimberly, Cecil John Rhodes, already the acknowledged magnate of the Diamond Fields, and about to commence his parliamentary career, urged that the authority of the Queen be extended North of the Orange River to balance that of the German Government, headed by Prince Bismarck, in South West Africa, and of President Kruger and his Boers in the South African Republic. In this famous “Scramble for Africa”, touched off by the recent Berlin Congress, Downing Street suddenly woke up to the fact that, if England were not to be encircled by outside powers, she must safeguard the “Suez Canal to the Interior”, the Bechuana country.

At the very moment when Paddy Cohen was renewing his representations to Lobengula in 1884, General Sir Charles Warren led his force of Cape Volunteers into Bechuanaland, so putting an end to any effort of the Germans to link up with the Transvaal, and to the establishment of any effective Boer Republics, large or small, in the area of the Kalahari Desert.

The discovery of gold in the Transvaal, particularly at Lydenburg, De Kaap and in the Lowveld, was responsible for endless stories about the alleged wealth of Matabeleland and Mashonaland. The handful of traders, of whom Paddy Cohen was one, who had settled at Gubulawayo, Lobengula’s capital (some miles distant from the present city), was reinforced by a steady flow of prospectors and concession seekers, who, better endowed both with funds and diplomatic influence, found little difficulty in outwitting the earlier comers. With his immense prestige, reinforced by his amalgamation of the diamond workings at Kimberley into De Beers Consolidated Mines, and his own wealth, supplemented by that of the Rothschilds overseas, Cecil John Rhodes systematically set about staking the British claim.

Early in 1888, in conjunction with Alfred Beit, he had sent J.Fry to secure the widest possible concession from Lobengula. Unhappily Fry developed cancer and died soon after his return to Kimberley in June of the same year.

The next link in the chain was a letter received by the famous Rhodesian pioneer, Francis R Thompson, better known because of his adventures as “Matabele” Thompson.

Luipard’s Vlei

7th May 1888

P.O.Box 67

Johannesburg, Z.A.R.

My Dear Thompson – What are you doing with yourself, and where are you? Your brother told me some time ago that he expected to hear, and again I heard you had gone to Kuruman. What I want to know is- are you likely to be “on” for a trip round the various Transvaal Gold Fields about August and September next? I am going in the interests of my Company, and there is no one I would sooner have with me than yourself, if you can see your way. Frank has gone off to Barberton and Zoutpansberg for a couple

of months. I expect to leave here about of June for Cape Town. Send me a line or wire here before that.

Yours very truly

(Signed) C.D.Rudd

Contacting Rhodes partner, Charles Dunell Rudd, Thompson discovered that the scheme for which his services were needed went far beyond the limits of the Transvaal, and at Cape Town a telegram from Rhodes was waiting, asking him to call that same evening at the Houses of Parliament. There he was greeted with the words “Now for our daydreams of securing the territory up to the Zambezi for the British nation”.

Matabele Thompson recalled: “Then Rhodes began to give details. His plan, in brief, was that Rudd and I should go to Bulawayo, where we should try to obtain from Lobengula, King of the Matabele, the sole concession for mining in that country”.

One the preliminaries had been settled, no less a person than the Governor of Cape Colony and High Commissioner for South Africa, issued a personal letter to ease their way.

O.H.M.S.

To King Lobengula, King of the Amandebele

I beg to introduce to you Messrs. Rudd and Thompson, two highly respectable gentlemen, who are visiting your country.

(Signed) Hercules Robinson

High Commissioner etc.

Further to safeguard the legal validity of any documents drawn up, Rhodes asked his Solicitor, Rochfort Maguire, to join the expedition, and on August 15th 1888, the party left Kimberley for the North.

Paddy Cohen, unluckily for him, had chosen that very moment to travel in the opposite direction. In 1888, he wrote “I left the country (Matabeleland) to get new goods. On the way I met Rudd, Maguire and Thompson, and conversed with them about the road and Lobengula etc. Rudd said he was going to Lobengula to obtain three or four weeks hunting, and asked me if Lobengula would grant them this. I said yes, and we parted.

After several weeks trek and repeated efforts to delay them, the negotiators reached Gubulawayo to begin that game of Patience, the prize of which was ultimate control of the land. Matabele Thompson says that, apart from a good number of undesirables, who had refuge beyond the limits of white settlement, “there were also other legitimate concession hunters, who had eventually to be bought out in the final settlement. All these influences combined at first in antagonism to our party”.

By a mixture of gifts, arguments and cajoleries, Rhodes Expedition achieved their aim on October 30th 1888, when Lobengula affixed his mark to the famous contract that opened Zambesia to white settlement. Thompson said “We at once returned to our camp, and Rudd gave his opinion that he should start on the return journey that

very day, as the sooner he was out of the country with the signed Concession, the better. Not one of the white men at Bulawayo had an inkling of our success, nor did we think fit to enlighten them. With the signed Concession, £5000 in gold and the six best mules, Rudd bade us goodbye and set out at 4'0'clock that afternoon. "For ten days", wrote Thompson, "he got on well enough, but then lost his road, and for two days was without water. At the end of that time he laid himself down to die, having first written a short account of how he had suffered, and where he had hidden the Concession. This letter he fastened to a tree. The native driver went off with the mules in search of water. During the night, in a delirious state, Rudd wandered for miles until, attracted by the barking of a dog, he came to a camp of Bushmen. Fortunately these little desert hunters had their usual supply of water hidden away in ostrich-egg shells, and managed to revive the dying man. He then asked the Bushmen to take him back to where he had buried the Concession. With great difficulty they followed his tracks back to the tree to which he had tied the letter, and then he unearthed the document and the money. On the following day, again with the assistance of the Bushmen, he found two of the mules near a water-hole, 40 miles away. The other four had disappeared. He brought the two mules back to the cart, inspanned and again traveled south, picking up his native driver and one mule five days later. With these three he arrived at Shoshong, where he bought a team of horses. He completed the journey to Mafeking by way of the Western Transvaal, thence taking the coach to Kimberley, where he handed the Concession to Rhodes.

Paddy Cohen meanwhile, was even longer on the road. "I had to travel slowly on account of heavy loads and a big troop of cattle and sheep, he said, so it took me two months to get to Kimberley. Rudd, traveling with mules and no load, got there before me, and to my surprise, on arrival at Kimberley; I heard that Rudd had obtained a Concession over all the minerals in Lobengula's country. At first I did not believe it, but when I read the papers and the wording of the Concession, I had to accept the fact. After I had been in Kimberley three weeks to rest my trek oxen and sell the cattle and sheep, as well as my produce, my Port Elizabeth goods arrived. I loaded my four wagons and started the return journey. Like a fool, I mentioned to a few of my friends that I must hurry back to Matabeleland to get my previous rights from Lobengula, and that if Rudd had obtained the right I would fight it.

Yet the happy-go-lucky atmosphere of the time still prevailed. "Although I traveled more quickly than usual", said Cohen, "at Mafeking I had to rest my cattle a few days, so I had a spree and told my friends of my intentions. I then traveled well, in fact almost killed my cattle, and got to the Tati in three weeks from the day I left Mafeking".

There on the banks of the Tati River was none other than Rochfort Maguire, who shouted to me that I must not come through. I asked him who he was, and he replied that he had been sent by Lobengula to prevent me entering his territory. I asked him to show me authority in writing, but received no reply. Having my horse saddled, I told my drivers to outspan, took my gun and plunged into the big river. I managed to get through and passed Maguire without exchanging a word, rode up to old Sam Edwards of the Tati Concession, and asked him if he knew the reason Maguire was sent by

Lobengula to stop me from coming into the country, when I held a free trading right, for which I had paid a horse. Edwards knew nothing about it, and at once said “don’t fear Maguire. He’s a liar. Here is an induna, sent by Lobengula, awaiting your arrival for the last two days”.

The induna told Paddy that he had been sent by the king to “open the road”, and to see him safely to the Royal Kraal. When Cohen thanked him and remarked: “There is a white man who has also come from the king, and will not allow me to bring my wagons through the river”, the old warrior laughed, and called him a liar. So Cohen returned to his wagons, which he inspanned and brought them through the stream. “Maguire and his two men did not say or do anything, but came up to the place where I stopped, and again asked me not to go. I told him to go to hell, and went on”.

After seven days Cohen reached Gubulawayo, but found Lobengula had gone to the Umguzu River. A mile outside the kraal there, he found a big camp, obviously set up by Europeans. At first he did not know who they were. All at once I observed two men, Maguire and Thompson, who asked me to halt. I told them to go to hell, and remained on the wagon. Thompson then said Cohen; you’ve come to fight the Concessionaires. It wont help you, but stick to us and you will be alright. We have paid every old pioneer £1,000, and we shall pay you £1,500 to uphold our rights in the country in peace. I only know one King in this country, and not dogs like you, Paddy replied, and drove on.

As soon as he reached Lobengula’s kraal, he recounted to the King what had happened. He replied the white men had come and told him that I had told everybody outside that he had given me a concession over all the wealth in his country, and that I was bringing in a hundred men, armed to fight him. I then told him he had given a big concession to Rudd, and he was no more King over his minerals. He called me a liar, saying he had given nothing, and had never signed anything. Then the trouble commenced. He called a meeting of all the white men in the country, and asked them if it was true that Rudd had obtained a concession over his wealth in the country. They all said no, that Cohen was a liar. I had the Kimberley papers with me, wherein the wording of the Concession spoke for itself. I handed it to the King, and asked the white men to read. They read, and still said I was a liar and could not read. The King then told me he would keep me in the country until I proved that I was right. So I asked him to send for educated natives. He did so, and they proved to him that he had granted to Rudd the whole mineral rights in his territory.

For the next episode we have Thompson’s own testimony. “Maguire had been gone for four days, when I was hastily summoned by a breathless messenger from Lobengula to attend immediately. “Don’t you hear that the King calls you?”, said the man. “How should I be able to hear him speak from here?” I replied. “Come quickly, and don’t stay talking here” he said. “I followed the man, trying to guess why I was called. I felt that I might be going to my doom. As I entered the King’s Kraal, I received an angry scowl from the natives, and to my salute the King ventured no reply. He gave me no sign to approach. I seated myself in the usual fashion, and awaited in silence a signal from

Lobengula to come nearer. The situation, I now knew, was serious. It seemed to me the longest hour I had ever passed in my life. Then the stillness was broken by the King saying “Get nearer Thompson” When I did so, he said: “Is not Maguire your brother?” I hardly knew how to reply. I decided to hedge, and answered “He is not my brother in the sense that he is my mother’s son. He is only my brother in the sense that he comes from the same kraal, and is of the same people. The great man frowned. After a moment’s pause he burst out: You are a liar, Thompson. You have two words. Did you not tell me that Maguire and Rudd were your brothers, and that of your three brothers, the eldest was at home, in charge of the homestead? I endeavoured to explain the difference between a brother by blood, and one by friendship, but the King would not listen. Fruit, he said, does not fall far the tree, and the calves of the same bull are much alike. Know that Rudd has taken the fly-blown paper to the Queen, and has told a lot of lies to her that I have sold you the country.

Thompson spoke in as conciliatory a fashion as he could. I perceived that my words took effect and, after one or two angry remarks, he bade me be gone. I was not sorry to get away, as his rage was beyond control. I felt that I had lost all favour with the King and with his people also.

Meanwhile, Paddy Cohen was also having his troubles. “When I started fighting the Matabele Concessionaires, I had a rough passage, as every white man in the country was bought over, and had to take the part of the Concessionaires. They worried the life out of me, and prevented the whites and blacks from trading with me. This lasted eight months. Once he had satisfied Lobengula, however, that he (Lobengula) had really signed a concession for all the mineral rights, Cohen was restored to favour. A great indaba was called, and I was appointed to speak on behalf of the King, who was not present. We were 26 white men and 48 Indunas. After fighting all day, I gave judgment in favour of the King. Thompson, who was at the indaba as a Matabele Concessionaire representative, and who came in with Rudd, had to remain in the country until the concession which Maguire had drafted was returned to the King. Thompson threatened to shoot me.

On this episode, Thompson writes: As time went on, the Matabele became more and more excited. Thousands came from all directions to ask the King if it were true that the white dog, Thompson, had bought the land. Among the Matabele, I was now the most notorious person in the country, and among the section of black and white schemers, the most hated. My main difficulty arose from the false interpretation of the Concession by the white men at Bulawayo. They told the King to study the word “land”. It was true that the word occurred in the Concession, but in a very different sense from that imparted to it by these men. In misrepresenting the Concession to the Matabele, they relied chiefly on the passage reading ‘Whereas I have been much molested of late by diverse persons seeking and desiring to obtain grants and concessions of land and mining rights in my territory.’ A copy of the document was produced in a council of 300 Indunas, and one of the whites asked me to interpret the word ‘land’. He covered up the other words of the paragraph. I asked the Indunas which of them could tell me whether a beast was male or female, when only part of the hide were shown. They answered ‘none,

unless he saw the remaining part of the body’ ‘I too’, I said, ‘cannot interpret that word, for you allow this man to cover up the rest of the sentence’. I stoutly refused to discuss the word out of its context.

This meeting lasted from seven in the morning until five in the afternoon. I was asked by every induna in turn from whom I had bought the country. My answer was: ‘Matabele, did I not tell you, when I first came into this country about a year ago, that we were not farmers, and wanted no land, cattle or grass, but that we wanted the gold in the stone?’ It had been my policy to deal only with the King himself. I took up the attitude with him that he alone was the judge of my conduct, and that I did not mind the opinion of others, as long as he approved of what I did.

Thus I sat from early morning till late in the afternoon in the broiling sun, most of the time on my haunches, not being allowed to move. I had a terrible headache, from which I was then suffering daily. It was caused by worry, anxiety and wretched food. I had covered my eyes with my soft felt hat, having determined not to answer another question, when I heard a general salute. I took no notice, thinking that from where the Indunas were sitting, they had caught sight of the King. Sure enough, it was Lobengula himself. “What are they asking you Thomoson” (so spelt), he inquired. “They asked me from whom I got the land?” “What have you told them?” “If they say I have the land, let the man stand before me and tell me from whom I got it”. “Pogee” said the King, meaning “very sound answer, what more is there to say?” He was apparently satisfied, as he walked away, and I felt much relieved. Thompson then took his departure from Bulawayo as quickly as he could, leaving Lobengula and the early Concessionaires equally dissatisfied. Over the heads of Cecil Rhodes’ party, Lobengula sent off the following letter through a special messenger:

“To Her Majesty Queen Victoria

From Lobengula, King of the Amandebele, Kings Kraal, Umgusa River.

April 23, 1889.

“Greeting:

Some time ago a party of men came into my country, the principal one appearing to be a man named Rudd. They asked me for a place to dig for gold, and said they would give me certain things for the right to do so. I told them to bring what they would give, and I would show them what I would give. A document was written and presented to me for signature. I asked what it contained, and was told in it were my words and the words of those men. I put my hand to it. About three months afterwards, I heard from other sources that I had given by that document the right over all the minerals in my country. I called a meeting of my Indunas, and also of the white men, and demanded a copy of the document. It was proved to me that I had signed away the mineral rights of my whole country to Rudd and his friends. I have since had a meeting with my Indunas, and they will not recognize the paper, as it contains neither my words nor the words of those who got it. After the meeting I demanded that the original document be returned to me. It has not come yet, although it is two months since, and they promised to bring it back soon. The men of the party who were in my country at the time were told to remain until the document was brought back. One of them, Maguire, has now left without my knowledge and against my orders.

I write to you, that you may know the truth about this thing, and may not be deceived.

With renewed and cordial greetings,

I am your friend,

Lo Bengula (his mark)

Signed as Witnesses:

G.A. Phillips

Moss Cohen

James Fairburn

Elephant Seal of Lobengula.

W.F. Usher (Interpreter)

This letter, reaching the High Commissioner in Cape Town, was forwarded to Lord Knutsford, Colonial Secretary in London, who in turn called upon Cecil Rhodes to explain what it was all about. He immediately consulted Maguire, and on June 21, 1889, in London, the latter prepared his comments.

“I have read the letter dated April 25, purporting to be written by LO Bengula, respecting our concession. It appears to be portion of the organized opposition offered by certain section of the white inhabitants of Matabeleland, to all attempts to promote the development of that country, of which opposition we have already had some experience. With reference to the specific allegations contained in that letter, I wish to observe:

1. That from the date of the signing of the Concession, Lobengula has never varied in his assurance to us that he intended to fulfill the obligations which he had undertaken towards us, nor do I gather that by his letter, even if Genuine, he expresses the intention of repudiating these obligations.
2. Statements have from time to time been made to Lobengula that the Concession signed by him was in substance different from the copy left in his custody. This is what would be meant by the statement in the letter on page 3, that neither the Chief nor the Indunas would recognize the copy of the Concession then in the country. In order to prove that the copy and the original are identical, the original was sent for by us, but Lobengula has assured Mr. Thompson, one of the Concessionaires, that if the documents are identical, he will be perfectly satisfied.
3. The Chief never ordered me to remain in the country until this document was brought back
4. When I resolved to come down-country, on the day before my departure, I obtained permission from Lobengula, in the usual course, to leave his kraal. “The statements therefore contained in the letter respecting myself are untrue, which fact, to my mind, throws grave doubt upon the credence to be attached to the document.
5. The Elephant Seal referred to is in the custody of Mr. Fairbairn, a local storekeeper, and is practically at his disposal.

6. Those acquainted with Matabeleland, as a rule attach little importance to a document stated to be signed by Lobengula, which is not witnessed by one of the missionaries, whom the Chief regards as his most independent advisers.
7. Previous statements, detrimental to our Concession, have been published, purporting to bear the Chief's signature, which have subsequently been proved not to have been signed by him.
8. The practical and, to my mind, conclusive answer to the statements contained in this letter, consists of the fact that, although the discussions based upon the representations of disappointed concession-seekers have been going on almost from the date of the signature of our Concession, still the Chief has throughout regularly continued to receive his payment of £100 per month, and that we have received a cable bringing news from Matabeleland a fortnight later than April 25, stating that the rifles, the principal remaining portion of our payments due to him, had been, by his order, brought to one of his royal kraals. This is being done, it must be remembered, after a prolonged and exhaustive series of explanations and discussions, which rendered it impossible for Lobengula to say that he is now unaware of the precise nature of the Concession which he acknowledges he has granted.

These facts afford to be the best proof possible that he intends to carry out his arrangements to us, as indeed he has always stated his intention of doing.

Yours etc.

(Signed) Rochfort Maguire.

Still not completely convinced, Sir Sydney Shippard, Deputy Commissioner in Bechuanaland and the nearest British diplomatic representative, asked John Smith Moffat, son of the famous missionary, the Reverend Robert Moffat and his own delegate, personally to interview Paddy Cohen, James Fairbairn and W.F.Usher (G.A.Phillips being away). On August 28, 1889, Moffat wrote to his chief: "Though in an ordinary way a man may sign as witness to another man's signature, without reference to the tenor or contents of the document, yet in the case of a letter written for an illiterate native, those who have penned their names can hardly escape a certain measure of responsibility for what is written, especially where interpretation comes into the case." Moffat further declared "As to this particular matter, without attempting to fix upon any specific charge, and without entering into any discussion of the questions raised in this letter, my advice to them would be in future to abstain from any controversy which might hereafter cause a stumbling block in the way of a fair and peaceful adjustment of relations between the Matabele and the power interests desirous of working minerals in that country. There is quite enough strong and respectable evidence that the Chief knew perfectly well what he was about when he signed that Concession to Mr. Rudd, that this repudiation of it is an afterthought, and that the assertions about Mr. Maguire having clandestinely left the country are untrue".

At this stage Cecil John Rhodes decided to apply the technique which he had successfully used in regard to the deadlock over the birth of De Beers Consolidated

Mines and the rivalry of Barney Barnato. If he could not beat down an opponent, he decided to make peace with him.

“Two weeks later”, wrote Paddy Cohen, “Dr. Jameson and Dr. Rutherford Harris came into this country to square me. At first I would not have anything to do with them, but Jameson, being clever, got round me, and asked my grievances. I told him that I had two promises from Lobengula, one in the form of a concession for mining rights in the North, and the other a free sole trading right in his territory, the latter in writing. He asked me what I expected to get for it, and I replied: ‘Doctor, before I enter into any business with you regarding my mineral rights in this country, I demand one thousand pounds damages for the injury they have done to my trading rights here, and if you grant me the thousand pounds, then I will tell you my price for my other rights’. Jameson proved surprisingly accommodating and said he would consider the matter, but in the meantime he told Cohen to “write him a letter demanding the £1,000 and stating the reasons”. The text of this document is still in existence and reads:

King’s Kraal
26th October 1889

To Dr. Jamieson (so spelt), Matabeleland

Dear Sir, - I perceive you represent the Matabeleland Concession, so I wish to state that the Matabeleland Concession’s representatives have injured part of my trading business in this country, and therefore I demand £1,000 as a recompense for the damage they have done.

Trusting you will grant me the above application before I enter into any further agreements.

I am
Yours faithfully,
(Signed) Moss Cohen

The answer came on December 8, 1889, again dated from King’s Kraal, and addressed rather vaguely to M.Cohen, Matabeleland.

“Dear Sir, - Enclosed I beg to hand you draft on Dr. R. Harris, Secretary of the Chartered Company, payable at Kimberley, for the sum of £1,000 (one thousand pounds sterling) as a recompense from the Matabele Concession, for any damage that their representatives may have done to your trading business. Please return acknowledgement of full settlement in favour of the Matabele Concession.

Yours faithfully,
(Signed) L.S. Jameson.

Apart from a receipt issued at Gubulawayo on the same date, there was a note from the Empire Builder himself:

M. Cohen, Esq.

Dear Sir, - I beg to hand you the £1,000 promised to you by Dr. Jameson, as to which he informed me.

Yours truly
(Signed) C.J. Rhodes
For the Matabele Concessionaires.

The terms of the arrangement were set out in a letter to Moss Cohen from Jameson on December 10, 1889, and dispatched from the King's Kraal. "You agree", he was told, to do all in your power to uphold the interests of the Matabeleland Concession, to be guided by instructions you may receive from the representatives of the Matabeleland Concession.

"In consideration of your so doing, the Matabeleland Concessionaires promise that you shall receive a sub-concession to dig minerals under the parent concession, which will be valued and floated for not less than £10,000 (ten thousand pounds sterling), and the disposal of which shall be as follows.

"After all reasonable expenses and working capital is considered, you are to share equally with the parent Matabeleland Concession. You will be guided by all circumstances and such arrangements as the Concessionaires have to make, but it is clearly understood that you receive, equally with the Matabeleland Concession, in your sub-concession. It is further understood that, for any services rendered beyond your actual influence, you will receive remuneration. The floatation of the sub-concession so granted will be entirely in the hands of the Matabeleland Concessionaires. At the same time the Concessionaires agree that the price or sale on floatation of your half of the above concession shall not be finally closed without your consent. Should you, before the Matabeleland Concessionaires have floated the above sub-concession, prefer to receive £5,000 (five thousand pounds sterling) in lieu of your half, the Matabeleland Concessionaires agree to grant the same.

I am

Yours faithfully

(Signed) L.S. Jameson

(On behalf of the Matabeleland Concessionaires)

Although an agreement had been reached, the authority of the Matabele King remained strong, and less than a fortnight later he was moved to complete a further document.

"I Lobengula certify that the bearer of this, Moss Cohen, who has spoken on my behalf during one of the meetings held about Mr. Thompson, has been proved to have spoken well, and therefore he may tell people outside that I have not given away my country.

"And whereas Mr. Moss Cohen has been one of my principal traders for several years without molesting me, I do hereby grant him full permission to travel in and out of my country without any interference within my territories, and to continue his rights as a free trader therein.

"This is given under my hand, in the presence of Her Majesty's representative, this 23rd day of December, 1889 at Emganeni.

Lobengula X His Mark

Before me: James Moffat

Assistant Commissioner

With all these negotiations going on, the British Government had granted the Charter to the British South Africa Company, which was to give them the title to the “Vacant North”, and in reply to another note from Rhodes, Moss Cohen, now returned to Kimberly, wrote on May 8, 1890:

“Acknowledging receipt of your letter of even date, I beg to answer you that in future I will cordially support your Charter. Having been present at many Indabas at the King’s Kraal held to discuss the Rudd Concession, and also having had many private interviews with the King on the same subject, I am convinced that the King thoroughly understood the terms of the Rudd Concession. At one time I certainly opposed you, and did my best to damage your Concession, because I considered you were damaging my interests in the country. But now that your position in the country is firmly established by Royal Charter, and I feel sure you will recognize my rights, which I hold from Dr. Jameson on behalf of the Matabeleland Concession, you may now count on my active and cordial co-operation.

(Signed) Moss Cohen

As Witness:

(Signed) F. Rutherford Harris.

Satisfactory as this letter appeared, within two years Cohen was complaining that the terms of the settlement were not being carried out. “The sub-concession granted by Jameson”, he wrote, “is at an end, although they took advantage of it. I did not get the full amount, nor at the proper time, when I demanded Charter shares”.

So on March 10, 1892, in Cape Town, the matter was reopened, and a letter written:

The Hon C.J. Rhodes,
Cape Town

Dear Sir, - Referring to our conversation this morning re sub-concession, granted by Dr Jameson on behalf of the Matabeleland Concessionaires, I now beg to state that the terms under which I will sell and cede to you one half of my full right and interest therein area: I agree to take £2,000 for one half, on the following conditions: £1,000 sterling within twelve months from date, and I further agree for you to act on my behalf for my remaining half share, in the sub-concession, and to realize it to the best advantage, paying the proceeds to my self, heirs, successors or assigns.

“It is further understood that my remaining interest in your hands shall not be disposed of for less than the amount mentioned in my agreement with Dr Jameson.

“I am, dear Sir,
Yours faithfully,
(Signed) Moss Cohen.”

To this Rhodes replied on the same day:

“I beg to say that I am prepared to purchase the one half from your under these conditions, and I herewith hand you a cheque to your order for £1,000, and agree to pay the remaining £1,000 to yourself or order within twelve months”

Cohen, however, still claimed his trading rights, and continued to fight for them for many years. Jameson tried his best to win him: “Cohen you have a good thing. Only work with us and you will become a big man” But Paddy remained, like so many Rhodesians man casing rainbows. He could not resist the lure of the bundu, the chance of making a fortune and the hope that the law would one day recognize the concession granted to him by Lobengula. Rhodes himself was long dead, he himself grown old and Rhodesia a populous colony in which only a handful of veterans remembered the name of Paddy Cohen. In the end he grew tired. Poor and forgotten, during the period of World War I, he put an end to his life.

CHAPTER 111

THE JEW WHO CROSSED AFRICA

How many Jews are aware that at least one South African explorer, a pioneer in crossing the Continent from East to West, was one of their own faith? Edouard Foa has been undeservedly forgotten, although he died in our own century, and although in 1934 a member of the same distinguished family of French Jews, Mr. Raoul Foa, a director of Barclays Bank, had occasion to visit the Union.

The Foas are amongst the oldest families, Jew or Gentile, in Southern Europe. Different versions of the name, such as Foi or Foy, have come about through the mediaeval method of transliterating Hebrew. Among the explorer's ancestors are scholars, rabbis, authors and officers in the French Revolutionary armies.

Edouard Foa (His name wrongly given as Edmond in the Jewish Encyclopedia), was born in Marseilles, a member of the prosperous Victorian – or rather Third Empire – middle class. Strong, high-spirited and fond of sports, he was popular both at school and university. His father's commercial interests first turned his attention to "Greater France", that huge expanse of colonies which the ambitious policy of Napoleon 111 had succeeded in bringing under the tricolor.

In 1880, at 19 years old, he set out for the wilds of Algeria, where he spent three years mapping the unknown reaches of its rivers. When he came home in 1885, having also explored the French Congo, he found himself already a famous traveler, decorated with the highest award of the Paris Geographical Society, La Grande Medaille d'Or.

Edouard Foa's adventures in Southern Africa originated in an invitation by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and of Colonies to undertake a survey and to make a crossing, in the interests of French colonization, from the Indian to the Atlantic Ocean. Paris University and the Department of Public Instruction offered him help for this research.

Reaching the Cape in 1891, he first undertook a rather leisurely journey through South Africa, which he examined with shrewd and kindly attention, though his labours at this stage could scarcely be called those of an explorer. Amongst other places, he visited this youthfully booming Rand, concerning whose prospects he had glowing reports to send home to the Ministre d'Instruction Publique. Later however he visited Rhodesia. Passing from Transvaal to Natal, he left by sea for the East Coast ports and began his travels into Gazaland, as yet a very little-known part of Northern Mozambique.

Here was organized the great caravan, comprising no fewer than 380 members, with which Foa began his African crossing. But he did not always journey in such state. Again and again Foa made detours on his own account, often at considerable risk to his life. Various old gold workings north of the Zambezi attracted his attention and he was able, by his thorough survey methods, to put them accurately on the map for the first time.

He explored the region between the Chote and Zambezi Rivers and the Wemba country, south of Lake Tanganyika. The actual crossing of Africa began at Chinde, on the mouth of the Zambezi, in 1894.

With the French Jews were two countrymen, Monsieur Camille Bertrand and Monsieur E. de Borely, both experienced travelers in the Equatorial wilderness. Neither of them managed to see the trip through with Foa. Borely got as far as Lake Nyassa, while Bertrand turned back near Lake Tanganyika.

For several months the expedition, which included 25 armed men, made its way slowly up the unchartered lower reaches of the Zambezi. Camps were pitched and long halts made, while the white men went off shooting big game. Foa takes rank as one of the greatest hunters that have ever lived in Africa.

A tremendous enthusiast on the subject of firearms, he carried special weapons, including specially-made rifles by a famous French gunsmith, Galand. With a single gun he managed in two years, between 1891 and 1893, to kill 30 elephants. With another one he confessed having fired 1,000 cartridges. Altogether his expedition secured for the Paris Zoological Museum several hundred specimens of African animals, including a number of extreme rarity, the Inyala antelope in particular.

Let me quote his own words in the matter: “As I wanted a few fine specimens, I set to work in the region of Lake Nyassa called the Kirk Mountain, where in 1895 I had made a first unsuccessful attempt. I took more than ten days to find where these mysterious animals drank – a small pool completely hidden in the centre of the forest. “I took up my position there and, after two days’ waiting, saw an Inyala for the first time. This strange animal’s appearance no more resembles that of other antelopes than its habits resemble theirs.

“From the time of firing the first shot at the pool, a shot that cost the life of a male Inyala, these animals no longer appeared in the daytime; but they continued to come at night. I waited for them with the electric projector (Foa was probably the first man to use an electric torch in the African Bush), just as in the case of lions, and was thus able to obtain a few specimens of the ‘Boo’, as the natives call it”.

Nevertheless the travels were attended by considerable risk, not only from wild beasts, but also from the fevers lurking in the innumerable swamps.

More than a year was spent in big game hunting and trapping, as well as in collecting botanical and mineral specimens around the Lower Zambezi. De Borely kept the official diary of the expedition as well as its accounts, while Bertrand had charge of the stores and organized the carriers, who not only conveyed masses of arms and ammunition, medicines, etc, but also a couple of portable boats, which, in the later stages of the trek, proved exceedingly useful.

Stations were sited first at Chiromo and later in the proximity of the modern town of Blantyre. Foa, the only scientist in the expedition, showed that the existent maps, made by certain early Portuguese travelers about 1820 and 1930, were almost completely wrong.

Aboard a tiny gunboat, originally brought there in sections and bearing the name of the “Pioneer”, he explored Lake Nyassa on the South and, thanks to astronomical observations, found that the great sheet of water was wrongly marked on the charts.

From the ancient town of Tete they pressed on to Mount Chunta. The entire neighborhood was in a state of revolt and near Machena, which was visited by Foa, the Chief of the Makanga had lately massacred a number of Portuguese soldiers, but Edouard all alone took occasion to visit the Chief Undi, one of the local potentates. White concession hunters, who were currying favour with the dusky ruler, made mischief, with the result that Foa narrowly escaped with his life.

The journey was much delayed by the peculiarities of African rivers. Thus Foa crossed one of them dryshod in October, but when he returned a week or two later, in November, he found it several hundred yards wide. During the period of waiting Foa was drawn into local politics, and only with the greatest difficulty avoided participation in a local war.

Trekking through the region now known as Angoniland, Edouard not only managed to fill in missing details in the chartered course of the Zambezi, but he ultimately reached its source, concerning which geographers had argued for centuries. He trekked through the highlands behind Tanganyika and surveyed a tangle of rivers previously mistaken for the sources of the Congo.

Some of Foa’s trophies, more especially the shells, brought back from Lake Tanganyika, went to show that at some time in the dim past this was part of a real salt sea.

In the effort to reach the great tributary of the Congo, the Kasai, he encountered great difficulties, the bearers refusing to undergo further hardships in the mountain. Scarcely had Foa persuaded them to resume their loads, than he found himself in the thick of a tribal rebellion. Nonetheless, he decided to cross the heart of the warlike and untamed Wanyambezi country and the home of the Manyema cannibals. For no less than 20 days they trekked through the giant Congo Forest, taking a direction different

from the one followed a few years earlier by Henry Morton Stanley. Foa was the first white man to visit these particular regions.

Finally, after a five and a half months journey by canoe, the expedition succeeded in reaching Stanley Pool and went on to Libreville in Gabon, French Congo, where on December 12, 1897, Edouard Foa completed the first crossing of Africa by a Jew.

He was reported dead during his long absences in the bush, and the Royal Geographical Society in London announced, just before his reappearance, that it had had no news since he left Abercorn in Northern Rhodesia (then known as Zambezia) two years earlier: Meanwhile, however, they had made him first a member and in 1894 a Fellow.

Let me quote the words of an English writer, Frederic Lees, on the results of the crossing: “Eight hundred astronomical observations, with sextant, theodolite, chronometer; three years observation of magnetic declinations, meteorology and temperature; six thousand miles of mapping; the collection of many natural-history specimens, including large and small mammals, birds, fishes, insects, shells, etc., for French museums; the taking of ethnological notes on 150 different tribes; and the preparation of 40 vocabularies”. No wonder that learned societies of Europe vied to do honour to Edouard Foa.

He also prepared a standard work on hunting, full of excellent yarns. The Royal Geographical Society referred to him as an “ardent and indefatigable hunter, who has much to say on the habits of his game.....extremely lively and interesting”.

“Chasses aux Grands Fauves dans l’Afrique central” appeared in 1899 and was followed by “Traverse de l’Afrique, du Zambeze au Congo francais” both from the pen of Foa. Hardships, however, left their mark on Edouard Foa, as on all pioneers. He returned within a year or two to seek the sun in his old African haunts, but his health was broken and he died at the early age of 39 on June 29, 1901.

CHAPTER IV

THE ROTHSCHILDS AND RHODESIA

If Paddy Cohen was the Jewish rival of Cecil Rhodes for the original Concession and Charter on which the development of Rhodesia was to be built, another Jewish group who helped and supported the Empire-builder is no less noteworthy.

Long before Rhodes appeared on the scene, the same South African Goldfields Exploration Company which had taken up Lobengula's original concession in favour of Thomas Bain in 1871, sold its rights, through Jonas Bergtheil, a well-known Jewish pioneer of Natal, to a London syndicate, among whom was the Jewish capitalist, A.L. Ochs.

Bergtheil, born in 1819 in Germany, arrived in Cape Town in 1834, and nine years later moved to Durban, where he founded a company to establish cotton-growing and to bring out colonists. Although the settlement of New Germany, not far from Pietermaritzburg, did not prove a success, most of the immigrants remained in the country, where their descendants continue to flourish. Bergtheil himself served as a member of the original Natal Legislative Council, and as a director of the Natal Railway Company, which built the earliest line in South Africa. By 1866 he had moved to England, but he retained his business contacts with Southern Africa until his passing as recently as 1902.

As for A. L. Ochs, he was associated with the well-known Ochs Brothers, one of whose members, Siegmund, was a founder of the famous London and South African Exploration Company, which played so outstanding a part in the early days of Kimberley, as owners of the Du Toit's Pan and Bultfontein Mines, and later controlled the well-known Oceana Consolidated Group of Companies.

In due course Bain's Concession was transferred by A.L. Ochs and his associates to the Matabeleland Company, who disposed of it to the British South Africa Company. In founding this concern the most important Jewish personality was undoubtedly Alfred Beit. Descended from Isaac Beit, a Sephardic Jew, who appeared in Hamburg during the 18th Century, his family had been associated with the refining of gold and silver for generations. Marcus, Abraham and Raphael, Isaac's three sons, took up this specialty, Isaac becoming the great-grandfather of Alfred.

Strangely enough, the Beit Family established a double link with the founding of Rhodesia. Alfred's grandfather, Philip Raphael, had a second son, Siegfried Beit, (1818 – 1881), who married Laura Caroline Hahn, mother of Alfred. Laura's sister

married David Lippert, of a Jewish family from Mecklenburg, originally called Lipman, whose sons, in due course, also came to South Africa. David Lippert & Co. of Hamburg, traders in wool and other produce exported from this country, set up agencies during the 1860's in Cape Town, Port Elizabeth and Durban and after the discovery of the first

FOOTNOTE: In England Bergtheil changed his name to Barclay.

Diamonds near the Vaal River began, on an increasing scale, also to ship this precious cargo. So it came about that young Alfred Beit, having completed his training in the diamond business in Amsterdam and elsewhere on the Continent, was sent out in 1875, first to Port Elizabeth to his cousins' business, and then as their representative to Kimberley.

Exciting though the story may be of the rise to financial greatness of Alfred Beit, its importance from a Rhodesian point of view begins in 1879, with his meeting Cecil Rhodes and the formation of a friendship so fruitful that it led to a virtual merging of their respective assets and talents for the opening up of the North.

The partnership began in the complicated negotiations preceding the unification of the diamond producers, and further developed only a few months later, when events in Lobengula's country made British intervention there a question of "now or never". Against Rhodes stood yet another outstanding Jewish personality, Barney Barnato, whose hold on essential assets threatened to delay, if not to frustrate, the entire project.

Rhodes had in mind from the start only one purpose for the vast resources of his new diamond company, and that was as a means to "paint Africa red", - to place it under the jurisdiction of Queen Victoria. He also saw how hard it would be to convert Barnato to this point of view. The arguments were two-fold – partly verbal and partly financial. To strengthen the latter, Rhodes secured the backing of the House of Rothschild. In his private papers Sir S.F. Philpson-Stow, who was personally connected with the discussions, told how, when Rhodes arrived in London on July 27, 1887, he startled his friends with a bold scheme to capture the Compagnie Francaise des Mines de Diamant du Cap, (popularly referred to as the French Company), and by linking it with the original De Beers Company and the Kimberley Central, then in the hands of Barney Barnato, to stabilize the whole market and so control the diamond industry.

"Rhodes", says Stow, "made his proposal before Rothschild, and obtained an undertaking for the necessary assistance (£1,000,000, though only £750,000 was required), if he could arrange the purchase of the French Company in Paris. He decided to visit Paris at once, while I remained in London to act. Rhodes was able to assure the French Company that he was prepared to fulfill all obligations in every respect, immediately his shareholders had approved the contact. The financial guarantee submitted was acknowledged as sufficient. The date of the meeting of the French shareholders was fixed early in October, to confirm the agreement. Rhodes returned to London on August 4, 1887, and I think the details of the contract were subsequently elaborated by a more formal deed executed later in London. As the nature of the scheme

became known, the vested interests, in which Barney Barnato was powerful, were mobilized against Rhodes.

While he and his friends did battle in Kimberley, Stow waited in London. “All through the months of September to the middle of December 1887” he said, “I had been in constant communication with Messrs. N.M. Rothschild and Sons, who had taken a warm interest in the industry, and had used their influence to promote the general welfare of the mines by their advocacy of the principle of unification. Their assistance was invaluable to us”.

Each side tried to buy up every share available, and with seemingly unlimited purses. It was Beit who, when Rhodes told him that control of the Central Diamond Mining Company would cost another £2,000,000, and demanded: “Where is the money to come from?” replied; “We will get the money if we can only get the shares”.

Opposition then collapsed, and at the famous special meeting of De Beers shareholders in Kimberley, Rhodes declared: Mr. Barnato fought me tooth and nail. Wherever and whenever I bought shares, he bought also, until finally we bought together... Well, Mr. Barnato settled the matter at last. He yielded finally, getting the current rate of shares on the day we settled.....” Rhodes added: “There is one gentleman to whom thanks are due, perhaps more than to any, for the success of the company, and that is Mr. Beit. I can assure you that I could not have succeeded so well in my undertaking if it had not been for Mr. Beit: for at the present moment we owe the firm which he represents £250,000, which sum Mr. Beit has paid out of his own pocket for Central shares, although he declined to charge either commission or interest. Mr. Beit was inspired by the same loyal feeling to the company, and I would propose a vote of thanks to him”.

Now that the merger was through, everybody knew that De Beers Consolidated Mines would do many things apart from mining diamonds. On the very morning when Barnato finally yielded, he said: Some people have a fancy for this thing, and some for that thing, but you have a fancy for making an empire. You want the means to go North, if possible, so I suppose I must give it to you”.

Among the original subscribers to the British South Africa Company we find B. I. Barnato taking 30,000 shares, Alfred Beit 16,000 shares, the Beit Syndicate 32,500, Lord Rothschild 10,000 and H.H. Marks 500.

From a financial point of view the earlier years of the British South Africa Company were anything but prosperous, and indeed there were moments when the whole future of the enterprise hung in the balance. One instance was recorded by the famous Jewish pioneer of Kimberley, Sir David Harris, in 1892, when John Blades Currey, private secretary to Cecil Rhodes, reached the Diamond Fields with the news that the Company was on the verge of insolvency. Sir David was Barney Barnato’s alternate on the directorate of De Beers. “The object of his visit”, he wrote, “was to obtain financial assistance from the De Beers Company for the British South Africa Company. But this

would not be justified without the consent of the four Life Governors (Rhodes, Beit, Barnato and Phillipson Stow), who were specially interested in De Beers profits”.

Three out of the four – Rhodes, Beit and Stow – agreed to give extra facilities to the Chartered Company, but Barney Barnato could not be reached. Harris writes:

“Currey, with a solemn countenance, pondered for a moment, then dramatically explained: Mr. Mitchell, the General Manager of the Standard Bank, refuses positively to honour any more cheques of the Chartered Company, unless we can provide approved security by one o’ clock today. Failing this, the Bank will refuse payment of the last cheques drawn”. “How about Rhodes and Beit”, asked Harris. “Cannot they assist?” Currey answered that they had already done so on a very large scale, and for the moment were unable to do more.

Taking his courage in his hands, David Harris then declared that the worst that could happen was that he himself might lose his directorship. So he committed Barnato to the guarantee, and saved Rhodesia

CHAPTER V

JEWES AND THE CHARTER

As early as 1888 Alfred Beit had been associated with the “Exploring Company Limited”, which held a quarter interest in the Rudd-Rhodes Concession, starting with a capital of £12,000, later raised to £35,000 and then to £70,000. The Exploring Company Limited, registered in London on June 15, 1889, nearly five months before the birth of the British South Africa Company itself, had its offices with those of the Rothschilds, at No. 19, St. Swithin’s Lane, E.C... In addition to Alfred Beit, the board comprised Cecil Rhodes, George Cawston, J.O.Maund and Lord Gifford. Its objects were comprehensively given as “exploring and working mines in all parts of the world”.

Alfred Beit was one of those present at the historic interview with the Secretary of State for the Colonies, on April, 1889, at which there were submitted “the outlines of a scheme for the formation of a Company, having for this object the development of the Bechuanaland Protectorate and the countries lying to the North”.

The letter confirming the discussions, dispatched on April 30, 1889, clarified the objects of this enterprise:-

“To encourage immigration and colonization.

“To promote trade and commerce.

“To develop and work mineral and other concessions, under the management of one powerful organization, thereby obviating conflicts and complications between the various interests that have been acquired in those regions, and of securing to the native chiefs and their subjects the rights reserved to them under the several concessions”.

Writing on behalf of the “gentlemen who are willing to form this association”, (including Alfred Beit, Lord Gifford informed Lord Knutsford, Secretary of State for the Colonies: “They are prepared to proceed at once with the construction of the first section of the railway and the extension of the telegraph system from Mafeking, its present terminus, to Shoshong, and for this purpose a sum of £700,000 has already been privately subscribed.”

On the same day, April 30, 1889, a letter likewise addressed to the Secretary of State, was signed by Alfred Beit, C.J. Rhodes and Thomas Rudd, Chairman of the Goldfield of South Africa Limited.

“My Lord – Having perused the letter of this date addressed to Your Lordship by the Chairman of the Exploring Company Limited, with regard to the development of the territories to the North of the Cape Colony, we beg to state that we are prepared, as representing the Matabeleland Concession, and having a very important stake in South Africa, to co-operate cordially, with the approval of Her Majesty’s Government, in carrying out the scheme proposed. Arrangements have already been made to that effect between the Exploring Company and ourselves.”

This letter satisfied all the remaining doubts in the mind of Lord Knutford and, while the final discussions took place, Alfred Beit joined the board of yet another company that played its part in the launching of Rhodesia, the Central Search Association Limited, registered on May 23, 1889, with a capital of £120,000. Its aims were “to prospect and explore in any part of the world, to work mines and execute public works of all kinds”, the board comprising the same members as those of the Exploring Company, with the addition of Charles Dunell Rudd, Cecil Rhodes partner.

After a very short existence, the Central Search Association was reconstructed as the United Concessions Company Limited, with the same directors, but a vastly increased capital of £4,000,000
er Ma

This was only preliminary to the most important transaction of all, recorded on October 15, 1889, in a document which began:
“Victoria, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Queen, Defender of the Faith.
To all whom these presence shall come, Greeting:
Whereas a Humble Petition has been presented to Us in Our Council”

Then are set out the names of the magnates and statement before we read:
“Alfred Beit of 29 Holborn Viaduct, London, Merchant”

The 35 succeeding paragraphs specify the conditions under which the British South Africa Company was called into existence, and granted the right of occupying the country which today forms Rhodesia.

One significant item of news communicated from Downing Street on November 14, 1889, by Lord Knutford to Sir Henry Loch, Governor of Cape Colony and High Commissioner of South Africa, was that while “the Company shall be British in Character, and its directors and principal representatives shall be natural-born British subjects, an exception is made in favour of any director nominated in the Charter itself, (Mr. Alfred Beit not being a British subject), and of any alien director whose future election may be approved by the Secretary of State.”

Among the members of the famous Pioneer column dispatched in 1890 to occupy Mashonaland, were several Jewish names, notably that of Conductor Solomon of Kimberley, of Trooper C.F. Mosenthal, of Trooper L.kronstein of Bulawayo and of

Trooper Leo Neumier, who was killed in action in the Orange Free State during the Boer War. ^x

^x Footnote. As late as May 12, 1926, Conductor Solomon was still living in Rhodesia, as was Trooper Mosenthal, whose address was given as P.O. Filabusi.

The last and best-known member of the partnership was born in 1862, reached the Diamond Fields at the age of 14. His big chance arrived in 1884, when the expedition under Sir Charles Warren acquired Bechuanaland for the British Crown and founded the town of Mafeking. There Julius Weil & Co, opened up its main establishment, and from there, six years later, when the occupation of Mashonaland was being planned, it played the largest part of any commercial house in supplying the needs of the venture. As the tide of colonization advanced, so did their activities and an advertisement from the early days carries all the flavour of frontier romance.

“JULIUS WEIL.

General Merchant and Government Contractor.
Receiving and Forwarding Agent,
Mafeking, British Bechuanaland
Parties for Mashonaland and the Interior fitted out
Completely, with Wagons, Oxen and Salted Horses.
Large Stock of Guns and Ammunition always on hand.
Letter of Credit can be arranged for any part of the Protectorate
or Mashonaland.
Branches at Ramoutsa, Gaborones, Sequani, Moshudi,
Notwani and Macloutsi (so spelt).
Mashonaland Branches: Tuli, Victoria and Salisbury.
“Other Offices: No. 2 Gresham Buildings, Basinghall Street,
London and Main Street, Port Elizabeth.

Consignments received and booked through from London or Port
Elizabeth Offices to any part of South Africa – a great convenience
for intending travelers to Mashonaland, who are thus saved the
trouble and loss of time of looking after heavy baggage.

Native Curious, Game Horns, Karosses and Feathers always on hand.
Cables and Telegraphic Address: ‘Winstree’”

Speaking of Tuli in “How WE made Rhodesia”, a Major Arthur Glynn
Leonard of the 2nd East Lancashire Regiment, and later of the B.S.A. Company’s Police,
makes reference to the firm:

“On this side of the river, and right under the guns of the Fort, we have
our own large corrugated iron stores, one for commissariat, the other for quartermasters”

stores. Between them and the river ... Homan Weil's agent, has another” He goes on: “I know that, in spite of the contract existing between the Chartered Company and the Tuli Trading Association, Tye has ordered most of the supplies from Julius Weil, and a small portion from Isaacs, of Mafeking, and that a great deal of the transport has been obtained through the former's agencies ...”

One of Weil's most important achievements was to establish the first regular postal service between Palapye and the North, preceding the activities of the Government Department in this direction by a long shot. More will be said in due course of the role which this remarkable firm played in various other episodes of Rhodesian history.

CHAPTER VI

ALFRED BEIT'S EARLY TREKKS

Always eager to see for himself, Alfred Beit very early decided to pay a personal visit to “Zambesia”, as the territory North of the Limpopo was still called, just as Lord Randolph Churchill father of Sir Winston Churchill, on a trip to South Africa, had arranged a similar trek. For this purpose Churchill had engaged the services of a young Colonist of Irish ancestry, Percy Fitzpatrick, later famous as the author of “Jock of the Bushveld”, and some vivid pictures of those early treks were embodied in a series of articles for the “Star”.

“Mr. Beit’s expedition”, Fitzpatrick wrote, “consists of three baggage wagons , a traveling spring wagon and a apider , all drawn by mules in the pink of condition –the pick of condition- the pick of Pretoria district...Mr. Rouilliot, formerly engineer of the Compagnie Franscaise, Kimberley, is accompanying Mr. Beit to Salisbury as his mining engineer...”

They left Pretoria in March, 1891, and on March 15 Major Leonard gave an indication of the hardships encountered. Horse-sickness had broken out, aggravated by the heavy rains.

“Nearly every transport rider” he wrote, “and everybody on the road between here, Tuli and Victoria, has found the greatest difficulty in getting to the latter place. Even Beit and Lord Randolph, whose outfits are specially well turned out, have only just managed to struggle in, the former having lost all of his horses and some mules, the latter half his horses (five or six) and a few mules, while all their oxen are frightly poor and knocked up, and quite unable to proceed beyond Victoria fro the “present”.

Four months later, on July 12, when the two rival expeditions had joined forces, Major Leonard, in command at Fort Tuli, had the pleasure of entertaining both. “In the evening”, he said, “Lord Randolph, Beit and party dined with us. After the dinner we adjourned to the camp fire that I had arranged on the previous day, to be held on the Parade Ground underneath the Fort”.

He shows us the Alfred Beit in a human setting. “This morning, in the early hours proceeding dawn, Beit, overcome by feeling- that greatest and most irresistible of all forces- his imagination fired by the fervid sympathy of his surroundings, the fire-glow, the songs, the ardor and the animation of the men, his enthusiasm raised to such a pitch of sublime excitement, sat up in bed and declared his intention to become a

trooper. This is the conversation overheard between him and his other self (Caldecott, partner of Cecil John Rhodes).

“What’s the use of being a millionaire?”

“None”.

“What good is money?”

“None”.

“A trooper’s life is the life for me. No care, no trouble. All the world before me. No life like a trooper’s; a millionaire-all suspense all anxiety. Not worth living. I shall enlist tomorrow”. That is the life for me. No care no trouble. No care, no care enlist tomorrow”.

“Caldecott was so tickled that he said: “But would you not sooner be an officer like Leonard, who commands Tuli?”

“No. Officers have ambition. He has ambition and wants to get on. “A trooper’s life is the life for me; a trooper, a trooper... “and then came sleep”.

Another eye-witness of Alfred Beit’s early travels, Dr. Hans Sauer, encountered him at Hartly. “We found here Lord Randolph Churchill, Alfred Beit, Percy Fitzpatrick, Frank Johnstone, Borrow and many others. On the night after our arrival Beit asked us to dine with him. We were camped about 300 yards from Beit’s wagon. From the top of our tent we had a large sail pegged to the ground slantwise, and the space so protected we used as a living-room. At about 7:30 we were brushing up, preparatory to dining with Beit, when there was a tremendous roar, and our small terrier, with a terrified howl, bolted out of the darkness in to the shelter of our wagon tent. We on the other hand, bolted into the wagon itself, and seized our rifles. The terrier had clearly been chased by a lion, and we could hear the short grunts that a lion makes when he is hunting. It was so dark, however, that we could see nothing of the animal. The plucky little terrier now and then advanced a yard or two outside the tent, and every time he did this, the lion would charge, and the terrier would bolt back into the shelter ...None of Beit’s guests turned up that night. Later the lion’s broke into a temporary stable belonging to Borrow, and killed two valuable horses. The roaring and fighting over the carcasses of the dead horses gave us a lively night”...

The Major was puzzled about Alfred Beit. “That he is a millionaire and great financier, I am informed on good authority, and take it for granted”, he says. “Had I, on the other hand, been in ignorance of his identity, I should, I must honestly confess, have taken him for a nonentity, and certainly not have given him credit for being either millionaire or financier. He is a most unassuming and altogether unostentatious man of wealth, and is kindly, courteous and quiet as it is possible to be. Very ordinary and meager in his ideas, and very commonplace in his conversation, he is one of the last men that I should have picked out of a crowd as able and capable!

“But there is no accounting for the entirely baffling nature of appearance and of social intercourse! Or can it be luck, in many instances, has much to say in the making of good fortune? Or yet again, is there some special group of opportunity and

power of retention in the Jewish character that succeeds where all else fails? Whatever it is Beit must be either so deep or so shallow, that in one case it is impossible to get to the bottom of him, or in the other, although it is possible to look through him, it is quite impossible to see anything”.

Rhodes had in mind from the start only one purpose for the vast resources of his new diamond company, and that was as a means to “paint Africa red”, - to place it under the jurisdiction of Queen Victoria. He also saw how hard it would be to convert Barnato to this point of view. The arguments were two-fold – partly verbal and partly financial. To strengthen the latter, Rhodes secured the backing of the House of Rothschild. In his private papers Sir S.F. Philpson-Stow, who was personally connected with the discussions, told how, when Rhodes arrived in London on July 27, 1887, he startled his friends with a bold scheme to capture the Compagnie Francaise des Mines de Diamant du Cap, (popularly referred to as the French Company), and by linking it with the original De Beers Company and the Kimberley Central, then in the hands of Barney Barnato, to stabilize the whole market and so control the diamond industry.

“Rhodes”, says Stow, “made his proposal before Rothschild, and obtained an undertaking for the necessary assistance (£1,000,000, though only £750,000 was required), if he could arrange the purchase of the French Company in Paris. He decided to visit Paris at once, while I remained in London to act. Rhodes was able to assure the French Company that he was prepared to fulfill all obligations in every respect, immediately his shareholders had approved the contact. The financial guarantee submitted was acknowledged as sufficient. The date of the meeting of the French shareholders was fixed early in October, to confirm the agreement. Rhodes returned to London on August 4, 1887, and I think the details of the contract were subsequently elaborated by a more formal deed executed later in London. As the nature of the scheme became known, the vested interests, in which Barney Barnato was powerful, were mobilized against Rhodes.

While he and his friends did battle in Kimberley, Stow waited in London. “All through the months of September to the middle of December 1887” he said, “I had been in constant communication with Messrs. N.M. Rothschild and Sons, who had taken a warm interest in the industry, and had used their influence to promote the general welfare of the mines by their advocacy of the principle of unification. Their assistance was invaluable to us”.

Sauer met Beit again camping on the Umsimgwani River, where he was overtaken by the party. At Fort Salisbury, which only a few months old, comprised “a few wooden shanties and mud and straw huts, run up for administrative and private use... Alfred Beit and many others lived comfortably in their wagons, after the manner of the old Boer Voortrekkers. The time of the year was August and as there is practically never a rain cloud from April to October in this favoured part of the world, the life is pleasant...”

Beit's dream of being a trooper, however, were no part of his daily life. He was there to study reports by his consulting engineers and to make his own investigations on the mineral possibilities of the country.

With only a few hundred white inhabitants in the entire country, it is not surprising that a visitor of such eminence attracted notice in the local press, such as it was. The "Mashonaland Herald", forerunner of the present "Rhodesia Herald", carried a report in 1891, headed "The New Goldfields".

"Mr. Beit has announced the discovery, at Fernspruit, a short distance South of Fort Victoria, of some very fine gold-bearing reefs. One of them, over 20 feet in width, has been traced a considerable distance. Every panning from it has yielded five pennyweights to seven ounces. Mr. Beit, who is no mean authority on such matter, regards the Field as a very promising one. Mr. Edward Lang has brought into camp some splendid specimens of visible.... (?) Representatives of most mining companies are on their way down to the find..."

When on September 25, 1899, at the Lanaka Pass, Major Leonard met Beit once more; the latter also mentioned a reef had been struck. "But this does not sound as hopeful as I had imagined", Leonard confessed, "and there appears to be a false ring about it, which is unmistakable. Up to the present, not one of the reports we have had has been practical- merely expressions of opinion, based on casual, hasty and imperfect surveys of some few of the old workings, much too sanguine to be worth much. In the fact, there has not been sufficient time in which to inspect the country properly or thoroughly. From the way Beit spoke, Perkins and Rolkers have reported unfavourably upon it".

An American pioneer of Rhodesia, William Harvey Brown, nicknamed "Curio Brown", on account of his fondness for African relics, blamed the engineers. "Two American "mining experts", in company with Dr. Jameson and Mr. Beit, while on tour through the country, came one day to inspect the Eiffel Reef. The experts seemed resolved to criticize adversely everything they observed in the way of gold..."

As against this, however, W.A. Willis, another early mining expert, said of Beit "He owned an immense fortune and, what is not so common a thing, reputation for being honourable to the verge of quixotism in all his dealings".

As an example, another pioneer told about a man who, "in the madness of a brief prosperity, had heaped insults on the ingratitude, and was met destitute in Mashonaland a few months later, an outcast from his own party, with whom he had quarreled. He had shame enough left not to ask for help, but Beit sent for one of the party and said : "Go and see So-and so, ask him if he wants aid, but don't let him think its from me. I've had a difference with him, and perhaps it would annoy him".

Together with Randolph Churchill, Beit established a syndicate which secured claims in several part of the country. There was the Heathfield Reef, acquired

on January 12, 1891, the Beatrice Extension North, comprising 100 claims pegged on November 24, 1892, the Lone Star, the Tip-top, the Defiance and the Beatrice North East, all dating from 1893. These investments by the Churchill Syndicate, as it was called, continued for another year or two, long after Lord Randolph had returned to Britain, but by January 1895 the last of them had lapsed, and future investments in the country took on an entirely different form....

Sir...

Sir Charles Metcalfe, the famous railway builder and early officer of the Chartered Company, said, some years later: “One day, when Mr. Rhodes and I were in the Matopos, we were discussing what was the best thing to do with wealth, and I suggested, as one of the best purposes to which it could be put, the financing of the railway lines through new countries, that might possibly not pay for two or three years, but which were necessary for opening it up. Rhodes thereupon produced a cable, and asked me to read it. It was to Mr. Beit, personally guaranteeing the interest on money required at that time for the Mashonaland Railway. The guarantee was not required, and the money was found in other terms, but Mr. Beit in a similar manner realized how money could be utilized for the best advantage of a new country...”

Another sidelight on Alfred Beit was furnished by Dr. Hans Sauer, who had been hesitating whether to accept a post in the new colony. His wife had persuaded him to say yes. “On the following morning I told Rhodes that I had changed my mind, and was prepared to go and look at Rhodesia. Before my arrival he had opened and read several letters, which, with their envelopes, were still laying on his table. On hearing what I had to say, he picked up one of the used envelopes, tore off a large corner, and wrote on it: “Dear Beit, please from syndicate for Sauer and Robert Williams to act in Rhodesia”...”

Meeting Williams in the foyer of his London hotel, they hailed a hansom cab and drove to Alfred Beit’s office. “He was much amused by the torn piece of envelope on which Rhodes had written. In a few minutes we agreed upon the size of the company and on our position and share therein. This done, Beit asked us to return the following day and sign the contract. The Zambezi Exploring Syndicate was the name selected for our new venture. This company is still in existence, and has been pretty successful. Through it, Williams acted in acquiring and developing the great Tanganyika Copper Belt, one of the most extensive deposits in the world”.

Endless stories of the closeness of the friendship between Rhodes and Beit are to be found in the early record, their innate harmony being such that one very often anticipated the thoughts of the other without ever having exchange a word.

Early in his career the fact became known that Beit’s health was precarious, and in 1899, seven years before it really happened, news went out from Bulawayo that he was dying.

To the intense grief of his old crony, then in England, Cecil Rhodes passed away in March 1902, shortly before the end of the South African War, and it was not until August 18, that Beit returned on what was to prove his last visit to South Africa.

So many were the grievances among the settlers in Rhodesia that once he showed himself in that part of the world he was obliged to submit to a cascade of complaints that further affected his health. Yet he still enjoyed the freedom and the friendliness of life in the open. Already widely known for his liberality, he made gifts by the dozen. Thus in 1903 he gave to the Mayor of Fort Victoria £200 for a memorial to Queen Victoria, who had lately died, and another £100 towards one for Cecil Rhodes. Then there was £500 to the Alan Wilson Memorial Hospital, a cup for shooting for the Southern Rhodesian Volunteers in Bulawayo, a new set of ornamental gates for the Matopos Park, and many others.

Reports of Beit's illness had become constant newspaper copy. "He undertook", said the London Journal. "South Africa", "long and strenuous journey, not from any personal motives, but purely to carry out the work for which he and his dear friend, Mr. Rhodes, had so arduously toiled, and to help the Chartered Company, whose board he had so recently rejoined. It was understood that Mr. Beit would return to this country (Britain) before Christmas, 1903, but we have been aware for some time that he was remaining out in South Africa under medical advice. Mr. Beit has never been a strong man, but he has always insisted on doing work of three strong men. It would therefore not be surprising if he should occasionally break down physically. We are glad to be able to believe that the breakdown in this instance is of purely temporary character..."

The belief, however, was unfounded, and on March 26, 1905, Beit was unable to preside, as he had for years, at the Annual Meeting of the British South Africa Company. On July 16, 1906, the end came, at his famous estate, Tewin Water, in England, when at the early age of 53, and still unmarried, he joined the "Great Majority".

The will which he had made only a few months earlier was a document so remarkable that it warrants special treatment in these pages at a later stage.

CHAPTER VII

THE LIPPERTS MEET LOBENGULA.

Although Mashonaland was now safely under the authority of Queen Victoria, the rest of Rhodesia, known as Matabeleland, continued as an independent Black Kingdom, under rule of the mighty warrior chieftain, Lobengula. From his headquarters at the Gubulawayo he still exercised the power of life and death over a people trained only for conquest. Here traders and concessionaires still vied with each other to secure the favour of the King, and it was here that another Jewish pioneer helped to mould the history of the Colony.

Alfred Beit's cousin, Edward Amandus Lippert, son of the same David Lippert of whom mention has already been made, had emigrated to the Cape in the 1870's, and, after a spell in Kimberly, had made his home in the Transvaal. There he won the nickname of "Concession King", gaining from President Kruger the much-disputed privilege of the sole manufacture of dynamite.

Like others, he then turned further North, and within the realms of Lobengula performed the still more remarkable feat of outwitting Cecil John Rhodes. No sooner had C.D. Rudd and his friends gained the coveted concession for the exploitation of minerals, than Edward Lippert made his request for a similar monopoly in the disposition and sale of land! Too late Cecil John Rhodes realized that, without the necessary surface rights, his mining privileges were useless. Already he had come to know Edward Lippert's toughness. There was only one thing to do: Come to terms with him. And so, in 1891, a "Peace Treaty" was signed, under which Lippert, against adequate compensation, merged his surface concession with that already vested in the British South Africa Company. Satisfactory as was the business side, there remained the highly- important factor- Lobengula. Somebody had to explain to him that the deadly rivals of yesterday were now at peace, and that somebody could only be Lippert himself.

A short while before, the big, jovial, red-bearded giant from Hamburg had married Marie Hahn. As soon as she heard of Edward's plans to visit Gubulawayo, she decided to share the adventure, and in so doing, helped to provide a minor classic in South African travel literature. For not only was pretty Marie Lippert an exceptionally fluent letter writer, but a black and white artist of more than average ability. Years later her family had the whole series printed, albeit in a very limited edition, in German, under the title "Zur Erinnerung and Marie Lippert: Ihre Reisebriege und Skizzen aus Matabeleland, 21 September bis 23 Dezember, 1891". Marie Lippert died soon after, in 1893, and in the course of time the majority of the 50 copies were lost. Three of them, however, found their way to South Africa- one given by Edward Lippert to his relative Dr. Carl August Cohn, another to Senator Samuel Marks and a third to John X. Merriman, the last Cape Premier.

In 1960 the writer translated the German text into English, the resulting volume being published as "The Matabeleland Travel Letters of Marie Lippert", by the Friends of the South African Library in Cape Town.

Marie's first letter, dated from Johannesburg on September 22, 1891, is addressed to her mother:

“Dear Mama- Last Wednesday Edward returned from Cape Town highly satisfied- with a general signature of peace and an honourable settlement for Edward. At first he did not negotiate with Rhodes, but with another director of the Chartered Company, who said: 'Well, I suppose you will go bald-headed for the Queen next; you have gone for Rhodes and for the Chartered Company, and for the Governor, and for the whole Imperial Government; there is only the Queen left now! After making peace, he said: 'Rhodes is the most powerful man in this country, but you are certainly the most energetic'.....

Marie describes her preparations for the journey from Pretoria via Palla, Palapye, (then written Palapschwe), and Tati to Gubulawayo. The account of the trip, especially with its annotations by Mr. Douglas H. Varley, now Chief Librarian for the University College of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, gives a fascinating picture of the wildness of conditions on the route to the North.

"We in our little wagon", says Marie, "traveling fast, do the thing in a decidedly rough style, eating off the floor, cooking queerly, baking a kind of bread in the ashes, washing ourselves when and how we can; nevertheless it is most enjoyable... In three days we shall be at Tati, where we shall meet Alfred Beit...."

As often happens between relations, the two cousins met under armed neutrality. The travelers reached Gubulawayo on October 24, 1891, making their headquarters in the camp set up by Renny Tailyour, a young man in the employ of Rhodes.

"Bulawayo", she says, "is quite different from what i expected: we were are not even allowed into the native town without solemn permission from the King, and then one just passes through and visits the chief Queen of Gubulawayo: there is no question of sketching. Lobengula himself is at present living with his court at a new kraal five miles out, which he has had built for himself because he has gout, and it is more private. The whites at Bulawayo live in three separate little camps, with a crude fence and a few huts, tents and wagons inside".

In due course the Lipperts were admitted into the Presence. "There we sat: the King began to smoke, and made a few remarks from time to time: by degrees a crowd of people came and squatted around us, and had to tell him a lot of things. Two Queens seated themselves under the ox-wagon and listened: about 50 young men marched into the courtyard, singing very nicely. Each one carried a wooden pole, and they began building a new hut. Then a large piece of cold boiled beef was brought along and placed on the ground in front of Edward. Heavens, what on earth did it look like, coming straight from the ox-wagon and lying in a wooden trough! The King however, had a proper plate brought and even had the plate washed, and the meat put on it. Now Edward had to cut it with his pocket knife, and we all sat there eating, with our fingers of course, instead of with a knife and fork. Fortunately it was very tender, and the pieces of fat, which I secretly allowed to drop, were immediately snapped up by dogs. Three pieces I manfully ate, but the King continued to insist that women who look like wasps could not eat properly: native etiquette demands that everything one is given must be eaten; fortunately, however, one is allowed to give it to one's followers, and these are always available...."

The discussions with Lobengula lasted far longer than was ever expected. Weeks went by, and it was not until the end of November that the return journey could be commenced.

"The King has received his £1,000 sterling, and is to get £500 a year, which the Chartered Company pays: in return he leaves the country to the Whites, and his suzerainty is acknowledged after all. For the Chartered Company this settlement of the land question is of immeasurable value: hence they have been able to pay a high price for the Concession. Thank goodness the whole question is now settled and that you have the news before Christmas...."

In a few words Marie brings alive the closing scenes: "After an endless session with the King and the Indunas, arguing the same point over and over again, everything was signed and certified and sealed at last on Tuesday afternoon, and at two on Wednesday we departed. It is unbelievable what pleasure the Matabele find in endless discussions, something after Edward's own heart. Imagine, several times they sat on the ground from eight o'clock in the morning till five in the evening! I came along once more, to say goodbye. This time Lobengula was clad in a tiger skin, a kind of knitted cap upon his head, and with dirty socks on his feet; it was cool and he suffers from gout. Despite this get-up, he looks every inch a King. A crowd of Queens sat on mats around him, and a small boy knelt in front of him with a bit dish of meat, from which he consumed his breakfast. Nowadays he mostly sits in a big, open tent which somebody sent him. It is painted inside with large elephants, but he says contemptuously that they are drawn wrongly; how could one hit an elephant behind the ear when hunting, if the ear is so queerly fitted onto it, and its eyes have quite the wrong colour.

"When we departed, all the Whites gathered once more; the last champagne was drunk. Edward made a little speech, and a very amusing episode came to a glorious conclusion...."

CHAPTER V111.

SETTLERS IN MASHONALAND.

On the morning of September 13, 1890, Lieutenant Tyndale Biscoe, formerly of the Royal Navy, had the honour of hoisting the Union Jack, beside a koppie which had been wrongly identified as Mount Hampden, 10 miles further to the North. After three cheers had been given for Queen Victoria and a salute of 21 guns fired, work began on the construction of an emplacement to which, in honour of the British Prime Minister, was given the name of Fort Salisbury. From that moment, colonization of Rhodesia may be said to have commenced and, despite the primitive conditions, the achievements even then were impressive. Hugh Marshall Hole left an account of the town in its earliest months: "Just before leaving Cape Colony", he said, "we had seen a copy of 'South Africa', with a map, in which the name Fort Salisbury was printed in the thick type usually associated with flourishing capital cities. Nevertheless, it would have been easy, at the time of our arrival, to pass within a few hundred yards of the place itself, clothed with a dense growth of coarse grass, five feet or more in height. From this emerged a low, tree-covered hill, or 'kopje', at the foot of which were a couple score of thatched huts, hardly different from those of the native kraals. we had seen on the road. This was the business quarter of the township. A mile or so away were other groups of huts, in some of which Dr. Jameson and his new staff lived, messed and carried on the work of the 'Government'. The police headquarters looked like cowsheds, and were arranged round an earthwork - the fort - above which flew the Union Jack, charged with the Company's badge of a golden lion. Scattered here and there were canvas tents, wagons protected by bucksails, and the frameworks of more huts in the process of erection.

"The two main camps were separated by a dismal black swamp, the haunt of snipe and the noisy rendezvous of innumerable frogs. It was afterwards drained, and is now traversed by a fire roadway, on which stand the Town Hall and other substantial buildings, but in those days it was almost impassable in the rainy season, even on horseback. Four or five hundred sun burnt young men, clad, for the most part, in flannel shirts, corduroy breeches and broad - brimmed slouch hats - of the type beloved by lady novelists- constituted the population of Fort Salisbury. There was said to be a white woman somewhere in the camp, but she must have remained in Purdah, for we never saw her. The only local institutions were the English Church and the weekly newspaper".

"In that same newspaper, known as "The Mashonaland Herald and Zambesian Times". Which had been started by W.E. Fairbridge, but which had not yet attained the dignity of print, the names of Jewish settlers were already to be noticed. Speaking of the journal, Marshall Hole declared that the editor "employed some sort of cyclostyle process, which reproduced his actual handwriting, but his mechanical appliances, which included a tray of sticky jelly and an ink - roller, were not of the same high quality as his intellectual outfit. The ink, which he made himself, was generally to blame".

In this journal, on July 25, 1891, we read:

"THE LION DISPENSARY.

Lowenstein & Strachan.
Chemists and Dentists,
"The Causeway, Fort Salisbury".

Within another week Lowenstein and Strachan had expanded their activities sufficiently to add the words "wholesale Druggists", and they also featured "Special Preparations - Pick- me- up- Bitters, Fever Mixture, Dysentery Powders and Condition Powders for Preventing Horse Sickness", all of which give a useful indication of the prevailing troubles in the Camp.

On another page there is a notice:

"We, the Undersigned Stock and Sharebrokers, have agreed to charge the following brokerage from this date: Viz:

Share Transactions: 3 per cent on transactions of
£100 and under.
2 per cent on Transactions over
£100

Fort Salisbury,
20th July, 1891".

Five brokers signed the advertisement, among them S. Hyman.

Probably the first overseas item of Jewish interest is to be found on September 12, 1891, when a batch of miscellaneous cables mentions: "Jewish refugees from Russia are being driven back on the frontiers.

Of one early Jewish adventurer, whose name has not been preserved, Marshall Hole writes: "Jameson could rise to the occasion if necessary, and I have never forgotten the dignified way in which he conducted the trial of the first murder case heard in Rhodesia, the only one to this day which has resulted in the hanging of a European. The accused was a Jew from Holland, and the evidence against him was circumstantial, but conclusive. In sentencing the wretched man to death, Jameson, who was assisted by four assessors, spoke with great impressiveness and evident emotion and, in forwarding the record of the trial for confirmation by the High Commissioner in Cape Town, he gave a lucid and thoughtful summary of the evidence and of the reasons for his decision...."

By 1892 the Jewish community in the new territory was substantially reinforced. Of one of the newcomers, Louis Suzman, proprietor of the Masonic Hotel at Salisbury, the "Mashonaland Herald" wrote on July 2, 1892: "He may claim to be the first who has had his premises 'papered'. The Masonic Bar has now very handsome offices. There are no laggards about the Masonic Hotel. It is excellent".

An advertisement reads:

"MASONIC HOTEL,
Salisbury.
Good Accommodation.
Charges Moderate.

"Liquor of all kinds kept, of Best Brands only.
bottle Store on the Premises

L.SUZMAN & CO.

Proprietors"

This was followed by a further announcement:

"MASONIC HOTEL.

Dining Room is now open to Boarders, and Public

Meals are to be had at all hours.

Proprietor: L. Suzman,

to whom Personal Application for All particulars should be made

The Bottle Store is open from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily".

The fact that the proprietor now found it worth while employing a manager, in the person of G. Jacobs, is brought out in an advertisement for one of the first boxing tournaments in Rhodesia. between W. Marting and D. Hamilton, which also took place at the Masonic Hotel. On July 2 1892, the "Mashonaland Herald" also drew attention to the fact that "Mr. Jacobs can claim being the first man to ride a bicycle in Salisbury". This coincided with the world - wide vogue of the new "Safety " model, which had replaced the erratic and dangerous penny-farthing

The same Louis Suzman who started the Masonic Hotel in Salisbury was responsible for the Salisbury Reef, one of the first mines in Rhodesia, operations on which were inaugurated by Cecil Rhodes in person in March, 1893. To him also goes the honour of having begun the earliest brewery in the Colony.

The uses of a famous Jewish commercial house to the new territory were announced in the following terms:

"LANDING, SHIPPING AND FORWARDING.

Attention is drawn to the exceptional facilities for Forwarding Goods from Algoa Bay or London through

JULIUS WELL.

who has added to his numerous branches, between Mafeking and Salisbury, a Forwarding Office at Port Elizabeth.

Complete command of Carriage at Lowest Rates.

Practical Attention and Supervision along the entire Route

Delays prevented and Deliveries insured".

Meanwhile E.E. Homan of Salisbury, General Merchant, made it known that he had been officially appointed agent for Julius Weil of Mafeking.

The fact that Salisbury was now becoming a town, complete with roadways, is implied in the revised notices by the Lion dispensary, wherein Messrs. Lowenstein & Strachan, (who now also emphasized that they were qualified "by Examination in London", gave their address as **"Pioneer Street"**

One of the earliest accounts of the Chosen People as such, though not a especially sympathetic one, is to be found in "How We Made Rhodesia". by Major Leonard, who has already been mentioned in these pages. Writing in February 1891 from Tuli, he says:

"More prospectors arriving , this time Jews, two yesterday and four today" He also mentions that they are "either Polish or Russian, judging from their crackjaw names" Puzzled why they failed to avoid a penalty of five guineas by paying a shilling for a trade license, he adds: "Of course, specimens such as these are not a fair criterion of the Jews as whole....but there are Jews and Jews, as much as there are Christians and Christians, though perhaps, in not quite the same ratio. I have always failed to understand why they should be looked down upon at all around, and treated with such undisguised contempt and con-tumely. That this is the results, partly of an old-time narrow prejudice, intensified by religious fanaticism, and partly the outcome of iron circumstance, that as scattered as a nation, far and wide over the whole world, without crushing their individuality as a race, and that it is not due simply to any singular racial characteristics, is, I think admissible. When also we take into consideration that for the last 1,800 years or s, they have practically ceased to exist as a nation and that in whatever country they have found a refuge, their treatment in some, notably Russia and Poland, even to this day, has been inhuman, if not barbarous, every man's hand being against them, it is not surprising that a race possessing such marked characteristics should resent such treatment, in strict accord with the principles of the old Mosaic Law, "an eye for and eye and a tooth for a tooth".

"Nor is it surprising that, owing to isolation and numerical inferiority, consequently unable even to offer a massive resistance, their resentment has found an outlet in undying hatred and a relentless system of revenge, which is pursued in silence, and taken advantage of at every available opportunity. And there is no one on the face of this earth who can seize an opportunity to advantage, and stick to it through grim death and beyond, like a Jew, for their tenacity of purpose is as the breath of life to them, and ceases only with it".

Major Leonard goes on: "I for one have always admired the Chosen People. First of all, because of their early history, when, after a long and grievous enthrallment by the Pharaohs, under the leadership of the great Law-Giver, they burst asunder the bonds of an iron tyranny, and warring against enemies and elements for 40 years formed a country and a kingdom of their own, showing that in these early days they were a masterful nation in every sense, cultivating the arts of peace, yet strong in war - a nation of trained warriors, in fact, quick to pursue and strong to avenge. Also strong in the faith of Jehovah, their one and only God, and no on else's

"That it was their faith, selfish and individualistic to the very core, that gave them the peculiarly distinctive idiosyncrasies which distinguish the Jew, and singles him from among all the races of the earth, there can be little or no doubt. For the Jew, no one will deny, has an individuality of his own, physical and mental, that stamps his nationality with the hallmark of an identity which cannot be mistaken.

"It is sad to draw a comparison between their past greatness and persistent conditions of weakness, and yet there are not wanting many palpable and visible indications of a growth of power that is flourishing slowly, yet surely and steadily,

in our midst, that is a proof, if nothing else is, of their marvelous powers of recuperation, patience and tenacity, which despite the severest conditions - conditions that would have crushed and swamped any other race ever born - have left them, scattered and disunited as they are, an element that someday, in the not very distant future will have to be taken into serious consideration, and consulted.

"And a race which so recently has produced such men as Disraeli, Montefiore and Hirsh, men whom any nation would be proud to call its own, must be a race possessing, at least, strength of character and ability of tradition"

Despite occasional strong remarks, Leonard was by no means indiscriminately anti-Semitic, as shown in a diary entry on July 25, 1981. "On my return this evening from a long ride, I found Laurie in my hut. He had just ridden in from Rhodes' Drift with a man called Hassforth, for whom we have been on the look-out during the past few months. In company with a man called Oscar Dettlebach, they were attempting to pass the post, when they were stopped and brought before Laurie....They were both Germans; but while Hassforth's common, objectionable and of a decidedly low type, Dettlebach, who is a Jew, is far superior in every way, unobtrusive, and by no means offensive. True to his racial instincts, he is as sharp as a needle, under and assumption of dullness, shrewd and intelligent, and one of the quickest and smartest men at figures I have ever seen.

Dettlebach, a well - known figure in the early days of the Witwatersrand, later anglicized his name into Dereham.

Among the early Jews to hold public office was Joseph van Praagh, born in 1865, who, arriving from Beira on foot at Salisbury in 1891, successfully opened up a commercial business both there and in Mozambique. From 1899 to 1900 he was President of the Salisbury Chamber of Commerce, but during the South African War returned to the Cape, becoming prominent as a diamond buyer at Kimberly. In his later years, in 1925, he was one of those who opened up the famous coastal deposits at Kleinsee in Namaqualand. Mr. Van Praagh passes away as recently as 1946, at the age of 81.

Meanwhile Jews were also establishing themselves on the Eastern frontier of Rhodesia, where the region commonly referred to as Manicaland, to which the Portuguese in Mozambique had laid claim, definitely passed under British control. Almost simultaneously with the frontier of Fort Salisbury, the new settlement at the mouth of the Pungwe River, to which the Portuguese had given the name of Beira, had been established, one of its original inhabitants in the days when it ranked with the most fever-stricken and unhealthy places in the world, being Julius Lewis Altson, among the most important, though least known, Jewish pioneers of early Rhodesia.

For the information concerning him, the author has to thank his son, Mr. R. A. Altson, of Chelsea, London. The son of Isaac Alston of Stockton-on-Tees in Durham, Julius Altson was born at Hull in Yorkshire in June 1861 and, as a young man in his twenties, came to the Diamond Fields of Kimberly, where he did well. On December 21, 1887 he married in Cape Town Isabella Frances Alexander, daughter of a well-known Jewish citizen, Lewis Alexander.

Following the foundation of Beira three years later, and the occupation by the British of the disputed border region near Macequece, Altson founded the Manica Trading Company Limited, today the oldest commercial enterprise, and incidentally the

oldest limited company, in the Federation. Like his friend Van Praagh, he walked from the coast to Salisbury on foot.

With its base at Beira, the Manica Trading Company set up trading establishments in the new village of Umtali (not the present town of that name, but its forerunner, commonly referred to as Old Umtali, since it was removed bodily to the present site when the railway was laid").

In 1892 the original Manica Trading Company was floated with a capital of £10,000, and registered offices at 20 Eastcheap, London. Julius Altson, still living at Beira, became Managing Director, while the Board had as Chairman a well-known London business man with a very similar name, but who was no relation of his at all, namely Roland Alston, along with William Briscoe and G. van Praagh. Operations were carried on as "General Merchants, Importers and Agents". In addition to the warehouses at the coast and at Umtali, another was opened at Salisbury.

Having in the meantime also moved his own place of residence to Salisbury, Julius Altson maintained his connection with the firm until the time of the South African War, at the turn of the century. Meanwhile he had developed connections in Australia and, although a prominent and respected citizen, he suddenly decided to leave Rhodesia in 1903. He never came back, but died in Melbourne at the age of 78, on August 11, 1949. The Manica Trading Company, however, through its ordinary commercial activities continues to flourish, and it toady mainly concerned with forwarding, insurance and similar activities.

CHAPTER IX.

JEW IN THE MATABELE WAR.

While the colonization of Mashonaland forged ahead, through the taking up of farms, the cultivation of land, the erection of houses and the exploitation of mines, everybody knew that Matabeleland could not remain much longer in the grip of Lobengula.

The immediate cause of trouble was the claim of the Matabele, a proud race, directly descended from the warlike Zulus in the South, to exercise the power of life and death over their hereditary slaves, Mashonas, not only in their own territory, but across the border into the White Man's settlement. Undoubtedly the position of Lobengula, his fierce regiments straining at the leash, as the immediate neighbours of a modern commercial and industrial community, was as tragic as it was anomalous. While many people abroad saw him as the Noble Savage, steadily ringed in by the machinations of the stockbrokers and company promoters, the fact remains that, after a series of frontier raids during the years 1891 and 1892, there occurred yet another, near Fort Victoria, so ruthless that the White authorities could no longer connive at it. Although he had told his braves to abstain from killing the White men, Lobengula still demanded the right to wreak his will on any Mashonas when and where he chose.

The muster-rolls of the famous British South Africa Police contain a number of Jewish names, the first being that of Trooper A. Abrams, who attested on February 11, 1890, in "D" Troop, and was discharged on July 7 of the same year, while the Pioneer Column was still at Fort Tuli.

Trooper W. Fredman was also enrolled in "D" Troop. He is believed to have been identical with one of the same name who took part in the Jameson Raid in 1895, and was captured in the action against the Boers at Doornkop. Trooper S. Marcus attested on February 21, 1890 in "A" Troop of the Pioneer Column, and gained his discharge on August 15, 1891. Trooper W. Block enrolled on the same date and served as cook in the Corporal's Mess of "E" Troop at Maclouitsie Camp. He was a German draftsman, whose sketches were sufficiently good to be reproduced from time to time in the then well-known London illustrated paper, the "Daily Graphic". He did not survive the hard life, but died on January 24, 1891.

Trooper Nathaniel Davis attested on January 27, 1891, and took his discharge at Tuli in November of the same year, Trooper A. Myers signed on in March 1891 and was discharged at the same place on December 10, 1891. Mention must also be made of Assistant Conductor J. Schlachter, attached to the B.S.A. Police transport at Salisbury.

But the one who most deserves remembrance was Trooper Frank Leon Vogel, second son of Sir Julius Vogel, the famous early Jewish Prime Minister of New Zealand. Frank was born there at Auckland, on October 21, 1870, and was sent to England for his education at the famous public school, Charterhouse. His first contact with Rhodesia was his appointment, at the age of 20, in 1890, to the staff of the British

South Africa Company in London. Within a year, however, he had left his desk and having attested in the Police, on April 28, 1891, reached Fort Tuli as a recruit, and signed on there on June 15. His commanding Officer, Captain A.G. Leonard, noted his distinctly Jewish appearance and his "keen hawklike proboscis">

A few weeks after reaching Rhodesia, in August, Vogel was ordered down to Rhodes Drift on the Limpopo River where a group picture was taken. Colonel A.S. Hickman, the historian of the B.S.A, Police, says: "It portrays young fellow in his early twenties- long-faced and rather sad looking, with a thin moustache. He wears as smasher hat, dark tunic and breeches, top boots and bandolier, and holds a Martini-Henry rifle".

From the beginning of 1892 Vogel was transferred to the "Civil Department" of the Police, and operated one of the post carts on which the mails of Rhodesia still depended.

But his campaigning days still lay ahead and, as will be told later in these pages, he was destined for immortality in the gallery of Rhodesia's bravest men.

The exact number of warriors under Lobengula is difficult to determine, but certainly reached tens of thousands, while the total British force under Major P.W. Forbes, which invaded the Matabeleland in 1893, was barely 750, and even if the possession of superior weapons made good some of the discrepancy, it by no means bridged the gap. Once again enlistments included an impressive array of the Chosen People.

Among the most important units was the Salisbury Horse. under the gallant Captain Borrow, with whose volunteers was Trooper J. Behrmann, wounded in the Battle of Shangani on October 25, 1893, and Trooper Siebert wounded on November 1, 1893 in the Battle of Imbembesi, died two days later near Bulawayo. Trooper Alfred Cohen fought both at Shangani and Imbembesi and, like his comrades, gained the 1893 Campaign Medal. The same applied to Gunner Jacob Cohen, to Trooper Leonard Kronstein and to Gunner Jacob Palca.

The outbreak of war in 1893 found Trooper Frank Leon Vogel still in the Police. He immediately joined "B" Troop of the Salisbury Horse and, according to the record, "served the Maxim gun attached to his troop, under Lieutenant Llewellyn. He left Salisbury with the but returned alone two or three weeks afterwards on business. Rejoining his troop two or three days after they left Fort Charter, he marched with the column, and was in all the engagements on te way to Bulawayo, serving the Maxim gun, besides volunteering for the special scouting expeditions. He was one of the small party sent out in search of Captain C. Williams, and also one of the expedition on which Captain Campbell was killed. He served the Maxim at the engagement on the Shangani River on the 25th of October, and also at Imbembesi on the 1st of November, where he had a narrow escape, one bullet passing through his hat, He reached Bulawayo safe and sound on November 4, and on the 10th wrote his last letter to his relatives, being then evidently in high spirits and regarding the campaign as over. He left Bulawayo on the 14th and remained with Major Forbes throughout the patrol, which ended at Shiloh. Thence again, as a volunteer he accompanied the force under Major Forbes to the Shangani River, where, under Captain Borrow, he joined Major Wilson, with whom he was killed...." And that is why the name of this young Jew is on the Wilson Patrol Memorial.

The Victoria Rangers included Trooper Abe Levy, (also known as Walters), who, after being wounded in the Battle of Shangani, on October 25, died the following day. Trooper Charles Frederick Mosenthal was also in the Victoria Column, and saw action at Shangani and Imbembesi. Raaff's Column, which set out from Tuli, included Trooper Paul Weinthal, who was in action at Singwesi. In the same action were Trooper Max Cossell, Trooper Leon Gabriel, Lieutenant Harry Bernstein, Trooper William Henry and Trooper John Henry, Trooper Samuel Lipschitz and Transport Officer Isaac Sonnenberg.

The Bechuanaland Border Police had Trooper Jacob Marcus Rabi, Trooper Leon Ranson, Trooper Lewis Heilman, Trooper Edward Francis Abrahams, Trooper John Aaron of Mafeking, and Lance Corporal Maurice Trenscher.

No less important, if less heroic, was the part played in the campaign by the firm of Julius Weil & Co., more particularly through that for the energetic Samuel, who, we note, organized the transport for the campaign and supplied no fewer than 360,000 rations, besides large numbers from Mosenthal Brothers.

CHAPTER X

JEWES IN EARLY BULAWAYO

An immediate sequel to the conquest of Matabeleland and the destruction of Lobengula's military apparatus was the establishment of the new town of Bulawayo, some miles distant from the original kraal of the defeated monarch. Its initial growth was so spectacular that it soon surpassed in size both Fort Salisbury and Umtali a position it maintained until a few years ago. From every part of South Africa and from many places overseas, optimistic settlers, representatives of countless professions and many nations, streamed towards the incipient city. Jews were prominent from the beginning.

Four months after the Victoria and Salisbury Columns had reached the Matabele capital, in March 1894, appeared the first newspaper, "The Matabele Times and Mining Journal", of which a Jew, William Francis Wallenstein, was the proprietor and editor. Like all the early journals of the Colony, its issues were run off on a duplicating machine and are today exceedingly rare

Wallenstein, a colourful early character, had spent some exciting years on the East Coast of Africa, and was among the earliest settlers at Beira, afterwards spending some time in Umtali.

Two names formerly well known in Kimberley were associated with "The Australian Auction Mart".

"PAM AND JOEL"

Auctioneers and Brokers

Dealers in Stands, Claims, etc.

They also functioned as advertising agents for the "The Matabele Times and Mining Journal". The one partner seems to have been Jules Pam, one of the earliest and most successful of the diamond buyers.

Monday, July 30 1894, saw the first great stand sale in newly-founded Bulawayo, in the newly erected Charter Hotel, belonging to Messrs. Napier and Weir.

"When we Hear", wrote the "Matabele News", another paper that had meanwhile appeared, "that the prices realized double what was expected, that competition was keen throughout the whole, and that only about one quarter were sold, our readers can imagine the successful result". The reporter continues: "Punctually at 11 o'clock Mr. Napier began from the streets running across the South side of the Market Square, and by one o'clock he had sold 55 stands for a total of £10,700. After an hour's

adjournment, during which sandwiches and free drinks were the order of the day, Mr. E. Slater opened the ball again, and kept hard at it until nearly five o'clock, by which time another 68 stands had been knocked down for a total of £6,400, making altogether 123 for £17,100, no bad day's work. The lower stands, to the South of the town, went for higher than the upset price, namely £40, while many of the better situated business sites fetched over £400...

A list of purchasers, unfortunately in many cases without initials or first names, shows that one of the largest buyers was the firm of Joseph Brothers, who acquired a block of six stands, Nos. 64, 65, 67, 71, 105 and 137, the prices being respectively £40, £45, £40, £52.10s, £40 and £40. Stand No. 334 went for £230. Three plots – Nos. 659, 560 and 690 went to Mr. Pawelzig for £62-10, £57-10 and £45.

Israel Brothers purchased Stand No. 585 for £40, No. 299 for £200 and another for £175. V. Wolff paid £70 for No. 302 and £40 for No. 359. J. Boam bought No. 557 for £105, No. 704 for £50, No. 126 for £230, No. 535 for £67-10, No. 164 for £82-10 and No. 403 for £115.

C. Glass was also a good customer, for he secured Stand No. 694 for £55, No. 189 for £205, No. 495 for £420, No. 543 for £250, No. 332 for £200 and No. 331 for £135, while a namesake of his, D. Glass, bought Stand No. 702 for £95.

Then there were Messrs. Jacob Brothers, who gave £102-10 for No. 437, £167-10 for No. 191, £45 for No. 712 and No. 225 for £137-10, besides No. 597 for £190 to A. Jacobs personally. F.W. Wallenstein, the newspaper editor, bought two plots, Nos. 117 and 197, each for £40, while Julius Weil became responsible for No. 153 (£45), No. 193 (£62-10) and No. 339 at £200. As for Mr. Pawelzig, he bought No. 560 for £67-10 and No. 690 for £45, No. 659 for £62-10.

Smaller purchases were also made, one of them being by Richard Rosenthal, father of the present writer, who paid 47-10 for Stand No. 373. Mr. Lichtenstein bought Stand No. 716 for £40, Mr. Platnauer No. 328 for £110, Mr. Labinowitz (so spelt) No. 195 for £62-10 and Mr. Staelitsk No. 404 for £60. There were also purchases by Mr. Baumann, No. 533 for £52-10, Mr. Levy No. 384 for £225, Mr. Nathan No. 483 for £52-10, Mr. Hoffman No. 177 for £130, Mr. Hirschler No. 706 for £90, Mr. Lieberman No. 600 for £82-10, Mr. Lesser No. 609 for £60, and Messrs. Hyman & Co No. 608 for £62-10.

Sonnenberg, who purchased Stand No. 217, was none other than the legendary Ikey Sonnenberg, of Kimberley fame, of whom so many anecdotes were told. He spent some of his later years in the wilds of Rhodesia, before retiring to the Rand. Max Sonnenberg, his nephew, well-known as founder of the Woolworths Department Stores in the Union, as a Member of Parliament and as a charity worker, was also a Bulawayo pioneer.

Although not all these purchasers were actually resident at the time in Rhodesia, (several making their investments through agents), the majority were there in person, proof of the growth of the Jewish community beyond the Limpopo.

Casual remarks show the roughness of prevailing conditions. “Mr. Ikey Sonnenberg’s hut (sic) was plundered on Friday night last, and almost all of his kit stolen. He complains bitterly of the conduct of the Police in making no attempt to investigate matters, although approached time out of number on the subject”.

The most unusual address in Bulawayo was that given by a member of a well-known Jewish family prominent in early Johannesburg.

FOOTE & CO.

Auctioneers, Accountants and Commission Agents.
Sales held every Wednesday and Saturday.
Money advanced from £5 to £500 on Security.
Gold Properties, Farms, etc, bought and sold on Commission.
Under the Big Tree near the Caledonian Hotel.

Again, on August 21 1894 we read:

UNITED RHODESIA

Matabeleland and Mashonaland One Country!!!

Hyman is taking Commissions for the Sale of Stands next September at Salisbury.

Hyman is the largest Dealer in Land in the Chartered Company Territories

Hyman can be seen at any time at the Masonic Hotel and has

FOR SALE

Two Matabeleland Farm Rights,
Stands Nos. 390 and 240 with Buildings.
One Native Land Right,
etc,etc, etc

N.B. Hyman is leaving next Mail

And again:

Mr. C. Marks, of the ‘Financial News’ is on a fortnight’s trip to Salisbury by coach, returning here to meet Mr. C. Grain of the ‘Financial Times’

There was also an important development in the realm of public health. Dr. H.E. Levy, M.D., London, arrived from the Cape and took charge of the Hospital

from Dr. Eaton of the Bechuanaland Border Police, who returns to his duties in Basutoland in a week or two.... Within a few days came a further reference

CONRATH AND DUNCAN

Chemists and Druggists

Established here in 1893

Prescriptions carefully prepared

Patent Medicines and Toilet Requisites always in Stock

Dr. Levy can be consulted at 11 am daily

Soon afterwards the Doctor made a move to No. 3 Willoughby's Chambers, where we are told: "Consulting Hours: 11 to 1 and 2 to 3.

As for Julius Weil, he advertised himself as "Wholesale Merchant and Direct Importer, Bulawayo. Has on hand and to arrive, a Large Stock of Groceries, Clothing, Kaffir Truck, Mining and Building Materials, also All Kinds of Liquor and Cigars of the Best Brands. General Quotations to the Trade".

With the Town rapidly taking shape, opportunities for business proportionately grew. Typical advertisements speak for themselves.

S. HESS

Bulawayo Bakery

The Cheapest and Best Bread in Camp

Only the Best Materials Used

B GOLDMAN

New and Second-hand Furniture of Every Description.

Tools, Crockery, etc.,

Rhodes Street, (Opposite Tattersall's)

Most of the pioneers carried on more than one occupation. Thus, apart from being a journalist and proprietor of the Forest Vale Hotel outside Bulawayo, N. Platnauer was also News Agent and Stationer, from which he drifted in to sporting journalism.

Joseph Baum, besides being agent for Israel Brothers of President Street, Johannesburg, "Wholesale Outfitters and Kaffir Truck Dealers", was printer and publisher of the "Bulawayo Sketch" in Fife Street, the first illustrated journal, which began publication in 1894, and soon enjoyed a circulation through most of the Colony. He also functioned as "Claim and General Commission Agent. All business executed strictly in confidence. Address: Next to Byrne, Chemist".

E.S. Newman, who started up on his own stand facing Market Square, offered not only “a fine lot of Furniture Beds, Crockery and Hardware”, but also “Lumber, at Prices to Suit the Times”.

In addition to a newspaper proprietor and editor, F.W. Wallenstein was a director of the Bulawayo Building Society, for which he received the substantial total of 26 votes.

Tempovsky Brothers of Market Square were described as “Bakers, Grocers and General Dealers”. Old Mr. Tempovsky was originally a transport driver, operating in partnership with Michael Welensky, father of the future Prime Minister, Sir Roy Welensky, of whom more will be said later.

One of the most remarkable early enterprises was recorded in the “Umtali Advertise” on December 11, 1894.

Messrs. Frank and Jacobs have 5,000 of Electric Plant on the way to Bulawayo, and are applying for positions in which to fix their poles in the Township”.

Unfortunately a 15-year concession to operate a Power Station and telephone system had already been granted by the Chartered Company to another firm, so that the importation was fruitless. Franks and Jacobs were more successful in the field of manufacture, being among the very first firms to import their own steam engine, of which a picture appeared in the press, accompanied by the announcement:

STEAM SAW AND MEALIE MILLS.

“Are prepared to supply Native Timber, cut to size.
Large Logs always on hand.
Address: Abercorn Street”

The earliest attempt at creating a heavy industry in Rhodesia is implied in a notice in the “Matabele Times” on August 31, 1894: “Mr. J.J. Jacobs, who was the Pioneer Moulder on the Rand, intends starting a Smelting Works in Bulawayo, with Native Ores”

Another branch of industry was represented by N. Rosenberg & Co.

AMERICAN TAILORS AND HABIT MAKERS

Abercorn Street
(Next to Dr. Sauer’s Buildings)
Just Arrived – Large Stock of Tweeds, Serges, etc.

Their competitors were Samuel Shapiro & Co., also pioneer tailors and habit makers of Fife Street (opposite Dawson’s) who had available a selection of tweeds, serges and trouserings.

Pioneer manufacturers, in field wherein Rhodesia later became famous, were Witt & Levin, of the Maxim Hairdressing Salon, Tobacconists and “Sole Manufacturers of Bulawayo Camp Cigarettes”. Within a year their business had been taken over by S. Jacoby, who renamed the enterprise the “Maxim Cigar Divan”, and moved it next to Maddocks, the auctioneers. He continued the making of “Camp Cigarettes”, but presently settled at Johannesburg, where he operated for many years in the Rand Club Building.

A competitor, S. Davies, was the proprietor of the Bulawayo Cigarette Factory. “All made by Hand from pure Three Castles Tobacco”.

Maddocks himself became the subject of a cartoon in the “Bulawayo Sketch”, which carried a drawing of a Sale Room scene, in the front of which a gentleman, of obviously Semitic appearance, dominated the proceedings.

Organized entertainments are announced in July 1894: “The first of a series of Smoking Concerts was given at Parson’s Maxim Hotel on Saturday Evening last, to a crowded room, by Messrs. Strelitzki and Levy...”

The beginning of another branch of Jewish enterprise was recorded in the “Bulawayo Chronicle” in 1895.

NOTICE.

“J. Lenson has secured the right from the Bulawayo Turf Club to work the Totalisator for the forthcoming Meetings. His Book is now open on the Johannesburg and Bulawayo Handicaps”.

Agencies of various kinds were popular among the early comers to Bulawayo. Thus Harry Jacobs of Fife Street described himself as the “Popular Broker”.

“Deals in Claims, Prospecting Licences, Shares,
Farms, Stands, etc, etc.,
Auctioneering Department: Produce bought and sol.
Wagons and Scotch Carts for Sale.
Prompt Settlements.....
Sole Agents for Port Elizabeth Wine and Spirit Association”

J. Saber & Co., Brokers, Mining and Commission Agents, who could trace their beginnings as far back as 1871 in Kimberley, were now established in Rhodes Street, Bulawayo. Old Mr. Saber, with his short grey beard, remained a very prominent figure in Bulawayo Jewry well into the 20th Century.

Captain H. Mortimer Zeffert was in business, first on his own account, and then in association with a variety of partners. We first encounter him as “Auctioneer, Licensed Share Broker and General Agent” in Fife Street. “Sales held on the Market Square on Wednesdays and Saturdays. All Accounts most promptly settled”. A few weeks later it was:

ZEFFERT AND WATKINS

Land and Estate Agents.
Agents for the Daydawn Reef, Coronet Reef and Sebakwe Properties.

Still later the firm appeared as “Styles & Zeffert, Brokers, Mining Agents, etc., Box 51, Abercorn Street”. Zeffert afterwards went to the Rand to establish the present well-known firm of Goldberg & Zeffert, Mineral Water manufacturers. He died a few years ago at the age of well over 90.

One unusual advertisement was issued by Max Haupt, Jeweler, in 1895:

WANTED!!!
Lion and Tiger Claws.

As tigers are known not to occur in Africa, Mr. Haupt is thought to have succumbed to the South African custom of confusing these animals with leopards. Many of the early pioneers remember the ornaments turned out in his workshop at Bulawayo.

In a similar line of business was A. Kienzler, “Practical Watchmaker”, whose address was at the back of the Bank of Africa. M. Basch & Co., “from Cheapside, London E.C.” were also “Chronometer, Watch and Clockmakers, Court Jewelers and Opticians. By Appointment of the Indian Government. Market Square, near the Maxim Hotel, Bulawayo”.

More will be said in due course of Maurice Basch’s brother, Emanuel, who arrived a little later.

Among the notable examples of Jewish enterprise in early Bulawayo was S. Margolius, “De Boeren Vriend”, Market Square, who supplied “Good Well Water at 10/- per Month. Payable in Advance”.

More usual branches of catering were featured in the “Bulawayo Chronicle” in 1895.

STANDARD GRILL ROOM.

“Messrs. Rabinowitz & Epstein, beg to give notice that they have taken over the Café lately carried on by Mr. Rau. Excellent Meals at Moderate Prices. Cleanliness and Attention Guaranteed”.

Rival caterers were R. Pawelzig of the Holborn Restaurant, 400 Rhodes Street, West, and J. Rosenblatt & Co., Grill Room, Markey Buildings.

Probably the first pictorial advertisement issued was that of D. Goldman, whose offer of new and second-hand furniture, tools, crockery, etc., was decorated with a picture of a chair.

Commercial activities still preponderated, one of the oldest firms being A. and J. Pieters, General Merchants, Wholesale and Retail. “Gents Clothing equal to Tailor-Made. Ladies and Gents Outfitters. Groceries and Kaffir Truck. Miners’ Outfitting”.

J. Tobias was in business as a general Merchant, both wholesale and retail, as were R. Aserman of 183 Abercorn Street West; Leopold Blum of 89 Main Street West; J. Epstein of 217 Abercorn Street East; Angel Heilbuth of 231 Abercorn Street; A. Hyman of the same address; Isaac & Co., Importers, 285 Fife Street West; J. Kempinski of 120 Main Street East; A. Kirschbaum of 390 Rhodes Street West; Lichenstatter & Ressler, I.X.L. Store, 185 Abercorn Street West; J. Levy of 191 Abercorn Street West; Samuel Nathan, “Speculator”, 336 Fife Street East; I. Palzerman of 346 Fife Street East; J. Flaks of 442 Market Square North; Solomon & Co., of 6th Avenue and 188 Abercorn Street West.

There were also a number of Jews of unspecified business, as for instance J. Cinamon of 386 Rhodesia Street West, S. Rabinowitz of 15 Fourth Street East, Bernard Lewis of 691 Barrow Street West and J. Lipman of 640 Wilson Street East.

In the course of this history further reference will be made to several of these personalities.

Even at this stage one famous overseas house was featured in the advertisements.

JACOB AND JOSEPH KOHN
of Vienna

“The world famous makers of Bentwood Furniture in the World have sent a small consignment of their noted Chairs to W.H. Haddon. Merely to look at them, compared with the ordinary chairs, is a pleasure, and to sit on them is a luxury.

W.H. Haddon
Fife Street.

While some of the early visitors stayed to short a time to be recorded in the normal directories or registers, they can be traced from the lists of unclaimed letters and telegrams advertised at the Bulawayo Post Office. Among these we find A. Hirschberg, Phil Levin, and Johann Leichterkost.

Almost from its start, Bulawayo’s position as the mining centre of Rhodesia attracted a stream of eminent visitors from the more settled regions down South. A typical announcement tells us: Messrs. Barnato Brothers are intending to send up Mr. S. Joel and Mr. J. Hammond, their Chief Engineer, who leaves the Rand next week...” And again “Yesterday’s coach took away Messrs. Marks and C. Cowan Junior”.

A playful comment on Johannesburg opinion comes from the “Matabeleland News and Mining Record” on September 25, 1894: “Mr. C. Glass has

returned from the Randt (so spelt) by the last coach, looking all the better for his trip, and full of pleasant news of the skepticism and facetiousness of the Johannesburgers, men who are still of the opinion that Bulawayo contains only two classes of people, viz: born fools and clever rogues. Nevertheless, Mr. Glass was able to convince a few of the actual reality of affairs, and declined vigorously to be interviewed by any newspaper men, not wishing to be misrepresented, or to have his statements twisted and turned...”

Parisian Jewry made its debut in Rhodesia in 1892, when the French South Africa Company sent out as its representative Messieurs Amede and Mack.

A particularly active member of the Jewish mining world was I. Hirschler, who, having been on business on the Rand in the very earliest days as a Stockbroker and Company Director, made his appearance in Rhodesia immediately after the Occupation, and invested heavily on behalf of his wealthy associate, H. B. Marshall, after whom the central area Marshalltown in Johannesburg is called. Thus in 1894 it was reported: “Mr. Hirschler has visited the Bembezi, Shangani, Mavene, Sebakwe, Selukwe and Gwelo mining districts; where lots of good ground is still available, and where a large amount of individual work has been done....” When, shortly after, he left Bulawayo for the Transvaal, the ‘South African Mining Journal’ mentioned how greatly he had been regretted by his numerous friends. But he soon came back, and was again in the news, as for instance when he secured “the extension of the well-known Queen’s Reef”. A few months later the Press told of a strike on the Lovemore property, near Hope Fountain outside Bulawayo, where, on 40 claims, he had identified “marvelously rich rock, which may prove it one of the three best gold-producing properties in Matabeleland”.

He was a Director of the Bulawayo Ice and Cold Storage Company Limited, the Bulawayo Stock Exchange, the Criterion Development Company, the Eastern Queen’s Gold Mining Company Limited, the Matabele Timber Trust Limited, the Nellie Reef (Insiza) Development Company Limited, and Rhodesia Limited, and in 1897 was elected the first Mayor of Bulawayo.

Jewish Directors of the early Rhodesian gold companies are legion – Felix Bruch, who was on the Board of British West Charterland Ltd; Baron E.B. Erlanger, close associate of Cecil Rhodes, who, amongst others, was on the board of the Premier Tati Monarch Reef Company Ltd., the Rhodesian Exploration and Development Company Ltd., the Shashi and Maclouitsie Exploration and Mining Company Ltd., and sundry others; Louis Floorsheim of Tati Concessions Ltd., Carl Hanau of British West Charterland Ltd., A. Heilbronn of the French Ayrshire and Lomagundi Development Company Limited; Jules Hellman of the same concern and of the French South African Development Company Limited; Henry Hirsch of Warnford Exploration Company Limited; Anton Horkheimer of United Excelsior Mine; Gustav Imroth of Andrew’s Rhodesia Syndicate; E.S. Marcus of Fleming’s Matabeleland Exploration Company Limited; C. L. Marks of Matabeleland Adventurers Limited; Max Michaelis (Later Sir Max) of Tati Concessions Limited; E. C. Mocatta of Anglo-French Matabeleland Company Limited and of Penhalonga Pty. Mines Limited; Ludwig Neumann of

Consolidated Exploration and Development (Rhodesia) Company Limited and White's Consolidated Limited; L. Ochs of Anglo-French Exploration Company Limited and Anglo-French Matabeleland Company Limited; H. Rosenheim of Anglo-French Matabeleland Company Limited; Bento Y. Viera of Colenbrander's Matabeleland Development Company Limited and Vaughan Williams Rhodesia Development Company Limited; Julius Weil and Samuel Weil of the Enterprise Gold Mining and Estate Company Limited; T. Zaffere of the Great B. Syndicate Limited; and countless others.

Most of these concerns have again lapsed into obscurity, but the attention and optimism of both Britain and of Southern Africa were focused upon them for years.

Throughout the length and breadth of Matabeleland, and in some cases even North of the Zambezi, they held claims and operated small workings and, although most of the investors lost their money, they provided the advance guard for successful concerns of our own day.

One of the most romantic stories was that of Robert Aserman, who, along with his co-religionist, Teddy Palca, was responsible for pegging the famous Lonely Mine. In its day described as "one of the most valuable and promising in Rhodesia", it turned out a steady 1,000 ounces a month, yielding a correspondingly substantial profit. The partners made over £250,000 from this venture, before selling it to the well-known Lonrho Group. Aserman, however, died penniless, and was buried at the expense of the Government.

In addition to his activities as a Stockbroker, H. Mortimer Zeffertt was one of the first Jews in Rhodesia to advertise: Every description of mining work undertaken and reported on by an efficient engineer".

Progress meanwhile was also being made in both Mashonaland and Manicaland. S. Hyman of Salisbury offered a new specialty. "Now being in Europe, he is prepared to take over Stands, Farms, Gold Properties for Floatation. All communications should be addressed to 959 Jameson Avenue, Salisbury. Cable Address: 'Lammass,' London".

At Gwelo, established only a few weeks after Bulawayo, the original stand purchasers included Julius Weil, Isidore Kempinski, Joseph Brothers, Joseph von Pragh, Leo Lehmann, S. Jacoby, P. Falk, William Sonnenberg and Richard Rosenthal (the present writer's father).

As early as August 1894 there was a notice in the "Matabeleland News and Mining Record":

LEO LEHMANN
General Merchant,

Gwelo

“Begg to announce that, having acquired the business lately lately carried on by Messrs. Harris & Wynstanley, operating in this new Town, he has under order large consignments of General Goods, Merchandise and Mining Tools, an early delivery of which is anticipated. The Business will henceforth be carried on in conformance with the requirements of the Mining and Agricultural Industries, rapidly assuming gigantic proportions in this District. He has therefore every confidence in soliciting a continuance of the patronage of the late firm’s customers, and the support of the new community.

The Gwelo Hotel is undergoing a thorough renovation and will be restocked with the very best of Liquors, Cigars, etc. Every effort will be made to render the accommodation second to none in the country”.

Even more impressive was the news from the East. The Jewish population of Umtali grew, and in 1894 a Voter’s Roll for the local Sanitary Board showed the following names, each accompanied by the value of his landed property. Henry & Co. (£150), C. Golding (£300), A. L. Lazarus (£75), E. Platnauer (£100), L. Weissenborn (£200). The firm of Henry & Co. incidentally takes its place in the journalistic history of Rhodesia, being responsible for the foundation of the “Umtali Advertiser”, which, despite many vicissitudes, still exists.

In other ways too Messrs. Henry & Co. dominated the picture. Besides describing themselves as the “Oldest Established Auctioneers and Valuers, Estate, Mining, Forwarding and General Commission Agents”, they undertook to arrange sales “at any time, place or date”. They were agents for Bratby & Hinchcliffe Ltd., Aerated Water Engineers of Manchester, London and Glasgow, also for Gordon & Gotch of London, Melbourne, Sydney and Cape Town. (Gordon & Gotch soon after became associated with the Central News Agency Limited, and are still major shareholders in this great Southern African publishing and newspaper concern).

An example of Maurice Henry’s style of humour is furnished in an advertisement signed “K.H.”, “Knight of the Hammer”. On March 24, 1894 Henry & Co. offered for sale at Umtali, amongst other items, “a Tennis Racket and Press, a First Class Cricket Bat and a Magnificent Gasogene”, the latter a forerunner of the syphon. Simultaneously appeared the item; “The order for the Piano for the Dramatic Club has been placed with Messrs. Henry & Co., who intend to import one direct from Messrs. John Broadwood & Sons of London”. A few more weeks brought the tidings that, through the same channel, Umtali was also to secure its first church organ. Cattle, stationary, machinery and an endless variety of other commodities passed through the salerooms of the firm, whose versatility was again brought home on November 28, 1894.

DISSOLUTION

Notice is hereby given that I have this day ceased my connection with the firm of Henry & Co., Umtali. All accounts owing to the above firm up to October 31, 1894 must be paid to the undersigned to whom all accounts may be rendered.

The businesses of Auctioneers, etc., and Mineral Water Manufacturers will be continued by M. Henry. Publication of the “Umtali Advertiser”, with the Stationary and Printing Business will be continued by me as from November 1, in the offices of Messrs. G.B. Mitchell & Co.

(Signed) Charles Hancock”.

The establishment of the Manica Labour Bureau was accompanied by the invitation: “Applications may now be made to the undersigned for Native Servants. All information will be supplied by M. Henry, Manager”. Business for this enterprise proved so satisfactory that in April 1895 the first consignment of 100 boys was already delivered.

Another Umtali Celebrity was Mr. A Lazarus, joint owner, with Messrs. Harris, Hillary and Finch, of the Albion Mine, and a leading prospector and auctioneer. Frequent items of news bring him to light as a popular fellow, known as A.L. or (on account of his girth), as Mufuta. At a performance by the Umtali Minstrels, we read that “Mr. A. Lazarus, as Miss Betty Lind, in a skirt dance, was indescribably funny”.

“Mafuta is about to leave for the North”, we hear. And again, “Poor old Mar, Selous’ famous and favourite hunting horse, was shot this week by his owner, Mr. Lazarus. For two days the old horse could not get up, and he was humanely put out of his misery”. A fine performer on the cricket field, he was batting on one occasion when the wind carried away his wig and brought his innings to an unhappy conclusion.

A.L.’s younger brother, Kaduka Lazarus, was in the same line, and is still remembered by some of the older pioneers.

Successfully Operating at Umtali were Weissenborn and Co., Butchers and Cattle Dealers; R. Marks (generally referred to as Dicky), contractor, who put up the local public buildings, and the manager for the Manica Trading Company, E Platnauer, a leading figure in the affairs of the Township, who had come from Beira in 1891.

An instance of the hazards of contemporary travel is furnished in an item in the “Advertiser”. “Mr. Wallenstein of the firm of H. Cohn of Beira, arrived by coach, having to walk in from Six Miles Spruit. The passengers, to use their own expression, had a very rough time of it”.

Yet in spite of everything, there was a glorious element of the schoolboy and the picnic in the earlier days of Rhodesia, which brings a misty look to the eyes of

those few who can still think back, and a memory of something that has passed away, as irrevocably as the Mail Coach or the Assegai.

CHAPTER X1

STARTING A CONGREGATION

Nothing shows more effectively how early and how thoroughly the Jewish Community became established in the new town of Bulawayo than the fact that the first woman and the first child both belonged to the Chosen People. In her Book “Experiences of Rhodesia’s Pioneer Women”, Jeannie M. Boggie wrote: “Almost at once there sprang up a small settlement of huts, wagon homes and tin shanties, about a mile a way from Lobengula’s deserted Kraal, near to where the Bulawayo Cemetery stands today. It was known as the Old Camp...and it was at first an Eveless paradise. But the fair sex began to trickle in. Mrs. Bernstein is the name given as having been the historical first-comer”. Of the other pioneer, information is fortunately more detailed, and Mrs. Boggie wrote: Lily Tempofsky (Mrs. Elliot) of Johannesburg has the honour to be Bulawayo’s first baby. Born on April 4, 1894, this historical wee person was promised a farm, but never bothered to get it. Her mother was presented with a bit of ground in the Town. The ‘Matabele Times’ announced that prospectors for miles around came specially to bestow congratulations upon Mr. and Mrs. Moses Tempofsky.

“it must have been about this time that a certain Scotsman strolled into the Butcher’s shop and exclaimed: “Man! D’ye ken what I saw on the road just now? A white woman carrying’ a wee baby in her arms”. “Most extraordinary, said the butcher, who could she be? This was probably Mrs. Tempofsky carrying little Lilly...”

The ‘Matabele Times and Mining Record’ had further news on April 22. “Last week we referred to the arrival of two bicyclists; and now we have to record that sure proof of civilization – the perambulator – which went up Redrup Street on Monday, with one passenger...”

“Mrs. Tempofsky used to go around with little Lilly in her arms to see how Mrs. Peter’ little Albert was getting on”, said Mrs. Boggie. “Then a return call would be paid, and perhaps in would pop Mrs. Colenbrander to inquire about the babies. “ Just look at the wee darlings” Molly Colenbrander would remark. Of course when they grow up they must marry each other” Of course they didn’t.

At this stage there appeared in Bulawayo the bearer of a name destined for permanent fame in the history of Rhodesia, Michael Welensky, father of the future Prime Minister.

Coming from a part of the world which had given Southern Africa so many other immigrants, he was born in a village outside Vilna in Lithuania. According to Garry Allingham's biography of the Premier, Welensky Senior was only Jewish on his mother's side, which, however, does not seem to agree with Rhodesian tradition. Be that as it may, he had spent his youth, like countless other young Jews, as a peddler and, like so many others, left Russia to escape military service. He first moved to Sweden and then to Germany, where he developed an odd specialty, going from door to door, buying women's hair and selling it to the makers of toupees and wigs.

During the Franco-German War in 1870, he smuggled horses into France, but, following the victory of the newly-established Reich, he thought it better to sail on to the United States.

After ten years, largely passed in the West, Michael Welensky, having heard of the Diamond Fields at Kimberley, took ship for the Cape. He arrived in 1881, having lately become an American Citizen and, discovering that the diamond market had slumped, became a successful trader in ostrich feathers. He found his way to Willowmore, not far from Oudtshoorn, and there met his fate. Aletta Ferreira became his wife at the age of 17 and, since her husband regarded himself as Jewish, herself became converted and took the name of Leah.

Life was hard with a fast-growing family that ultimately numbered nine, and newly-established Johannesburg offered a sparse livelihood. In 1894 Michael Welensky, having learnt of the foundation of Bulawayo, decided to try his fortune there. Already Leah's aunt, who had married Moses Tempofsky, was living in the new town, the mother of Lily. Early in 1895, after two months trek by ox-wagon, Michael Welensky first set eyes on his future home. With him was Leah, with her first six small children. They found a tiny wooden house somewhere on the veld, and Michael began the precarious task of seeking a livelihood.

As in Kimberley and Johannesburg, it was the need for Jewish burial facilities, combined with the approach of the High Festivals that led to the establishment of the first organized Congregation, not only in Bulawayo, but in Southern Rhodesia.

Unfortunately the loss of the minute books and other records have rendered the earliest communal archives of Rhodesian Jewry incomplete, but we know that on August 12, 1894, the Bulawayo Hebrew Congregation was formed, not in a house, but in a tent, belonging to Messrs. Moss and Rosenblatt. Twenty-one persons attended, J. Boam, J. Cinamon, S. Goldring, D. Goldman, E. Granger, S. Heyman, R.D. Hanson, J. Jacobson, S. Jacobs, I. Levi, J. Moss, M.S. Levin, S. Nathan, I. Rosenblatt, S. Rabinowitz, J. Saber, E. Saber, E. Tertis, V. Wolf, J. Wolffe, and H. M. Zeffert. These pioneers elected a Committee comprising J. Cinamon, M.S. Levin, S. Nathan, and J. Wolffe, with J. Boam as Honorary Secretary and Treasurer.

When, a few weeks later, the first High Holiday approached, the following notice appeared, first of its kind in Rhodesian history:

JEWISH FESTIVAL.

“M.L. Levin, Jeweler, Fife Street Bulawayo will close his establishment on Monday and Tuesday next, October 1st and 2nd .

Those two days’ services were held in Messrs. Napier and Weir’s Charter Hotel, at 131 and 132 Main Street East, the incomplete dining-room of which was the first temporary Synagogue North of the Limpopo. While we are not told who actually performed the ceremonies, it is recorded that, in 1895, Meikle’s Store, at the corner of 7th Avenue and Abercorn Street, served the same purpose, and in 1896 the Bulawayo Stock Exchange at 81 Main Street West.

Joseph Boam, the Honorary Secretary of the Congregation, who was also a leading stockbroker, was part owner of the “Bulawayo Sketch”, edited by Alexander Davis, another co-religionist, which makes all the more surprising the fact that the first anti-Semitic attack to appear in Rhodesia should have figured in that journal.

The issue of September 15, 1894, carried an article under Davis’ name, headed, “The South African Capitalist”, which mentions: The religion of the common or garden Capitalist (C.Africanus), is nondescript. Some are Jews by birth, and as they prosper they generally assimilate all the vices of the Gentiles, without retaining the Orthodox Jew’s virtues. Others are born Christians, but gradually become adept in all the vices and customs of low-type Judaism”.

Some weeks later, on October 27, the “Bulawayo Sketch”, dealing with some local amateur dramatics, adopted an equally unsympathetic tone. “The first part of the performance was varied. Singing, recitations, amateur performances by a Jew gentleman in the front row of the stalls....”

In a rough community there were also incidents which did not specially rebound to the glory of Jewry, such as the prosecution of Barnett Cohen, described as a hairdresser from London, who pleaded being drunk on being charged with assault at the local athletic sports. He was found guilty under provocation and fined £5.

The inauguration of the first local Jewish graveyard in Bulawayo was the result of an unfortunate accident. David Adler, a jockey, exercising some horses at the new race-course on December 21, 1894, was thrown by his horse as it stumbled on ground softening as the result of the rain. At first it seemed he had only broken a collar-bone, and the “Bulawayo Sketch” even reported: “He is getting on well and hopes to be able to ride in the races on Boxing Day”. He did so, but the results were disastrous, for he had a relapse, and passed away on January 10, 1895.

The small Jewish Congregation had already applied for and been granted two stands for a Synagogue, as well as for a burial-ground, and now the first Jewish grave had to be dug there.

Moreover, on January 23, 1895, the “Rhodesia Weekly Review” mentioned: “We have been asked to state that Adler, the jockey, who died last Sunday, and was accorded a splendid funeral by the Jewish Congregation, followed very largely, leaves a widow and three children totally unprovided for. A subscription is to be got up for their benefit, Messrs. Harold C. Smith and J. Broughton kindly acting in the matter, and we have no doubt all our numerous sportsmen will contribute their mite to such a worthy object”.

After this improvised step, on January 27, 1895, there is reference in the “Bulawayo Chronicle”, to the holding of a gathering at which the first steps were taken to set up a Jewish charitable organization.

The first Annual Meeting of the Bulawayo Hebrew Congregation took place in the Boardroom of the Sanitary Board, there being as yet no municipality, and the attendance included.

“We unfortunately buried three of our co-religionists”, said the report, one a pauper, the cost being defrayed by the Chartered Company. On this occasion the first Life Member was elected, in the person of Mr. C. Joseph of London. Saber also received from the Government the appointment as the first Jewish Marriage Officer in Rhodesia.

Operations were still on a very minute scale, the total donations announced by Mr. Saber, as President, being only £15.12s. besides subscriptions of £41.10.6. From the previous year there was, however, still £24.6s. so that the total revenue came to £81.8.6., and so economical were operations that a mere £62.13.9. had been spent, leaving at any rate a credit balance of £18.14.9.

Tangible additions to the Community’s assets were the fence erected round the Burial Ground, and a Sepher Torah, provided by the Reverend Dr. Harris, along with a Shofar, some prayer-books and some Talisim, to a total value of £30. Plans were drawn for a temporary building as a Synagogue, but had to be held over for lack of funds.

Encouraging support, however, was later received not only from Jewish circles, but from the two leading men in the country, Cecil Rhodes and Dr. L.S. Jameson, each of whom contributed £100 towards a fund which, by the time of the High Holidays in 1895, had already passed £500.

Joseph Boam, one of the most valuable members of the Congregation, now decided to leave the country and handed in his resignation on July 21, receiving in return a letter of appreciation:

Dear Sir, - In view of your departure for England, we, the President and Committee of this Congregation, have been unanimously requested by its members to

present you with an Address recording our high appreciation of the painstaking and conscientious manner in which you have carried out the duties of the Honorary Secretary and Treasurer during the natal year of the Congregation, which you so prominently assisted in forming., We wish to assure you that the valuable support you have given to this Congregation from its earliest stages will always remain green in our memories, and will be a bright example and guide to us in furthering our desire to make this town, although far from the world's civilization, - a pride to Judaism.

In taking leave of you, we, from our hearts, wish you every happiness and prosperity in all your undertakings, and that the Almighty may, in his unbounded mercy, shower his blessings on yourself, wife, and children.

We are, dear Sir,
Your loving friends and brethren.
(Signed) Joseph Saber (President)
Emanuel Frank (Hon. Secretary & Treasurer)
Coleman Joseph
J. Cinamon
Samuel Nathan
M.S. Leven
V. Woolf
J. Tobias
S.Goldring

Festival services for 1895 were held by Samuel Margolius under Messrs. Miller, Saber and Frank, before what the "Bulawayo Sketch" described as a fair audience".

Mr. Saber, having received the necessary instruction from the distinguished Jewish Minister, the Reverend A.P. Bender of Cape Town, commenced his duties as Marriage Officer in December 1895, an account of the event appearing in the "Bulawayo Chronicle" of December 7th.

"Wednesday last was a day of events, for scarcely was the polling for the election of the candidate was over, before the first Jewish wedding in Bulawayo took place: the contracting parties being Mr. Aaron Jacobs and Miss Rose Frank, (sister of Jacob's partner). Miss Frank only arrived here a few days ago, having made the journey here to meet her future husband. At half past two a large number of guests had gathered at the residence of Mr. Frank, the bride's brother, and immediately afterwards the ceremony took place; Mr. Joseph Saber, assisted by Mr. Margolius, officiated. The bride looked exceedingly nice in a long dress of white satin, with an enormous train, and her figure suited the wedding dress admirably. As is usual on these occasions, the bride attracted all the attention, and indeed deserved it.

To anyone not accustomed to Jewish Ceremony, the Jewish wedding is a most picturesque affair. The bride and bridegroom stand under a handsome awning,

which is supported by four stalwart members of the community, and the service is recited in full-toned language, three thousand years old, which leads one back to the days when the world was young. One could not help being impressed by the fact that the service, centuries old, was being used in a town not two years old.

After the ceremony the happy pair received the congratulations of their numerous friends in the dining-room, and here their health was drunk in right good fashion, while a prettily-adorned table was covered with the good things of the confectioner's art.

The presents were next inspected, and showed an assortment of expensive and handsome items, which were difficult to believe, could have been procured in Bulawayo. At four o' clock the newly-married couple left for their honeymoon, amidst showers of rice and sundry old shoes, the time immemorial emblems of good wishes".