

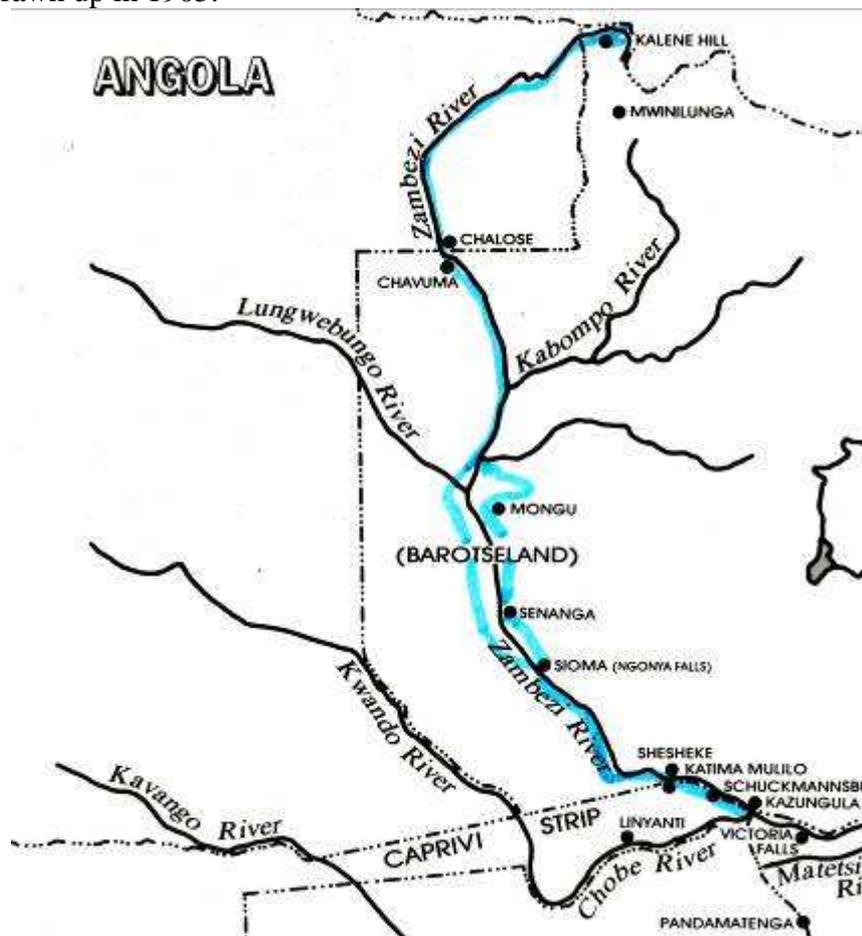
## “EARLY DAYS of FLYING to BAROTSELAND”

By David Lisle Whitehead\*

(This article is dedicated to the memory of Dave Morton)

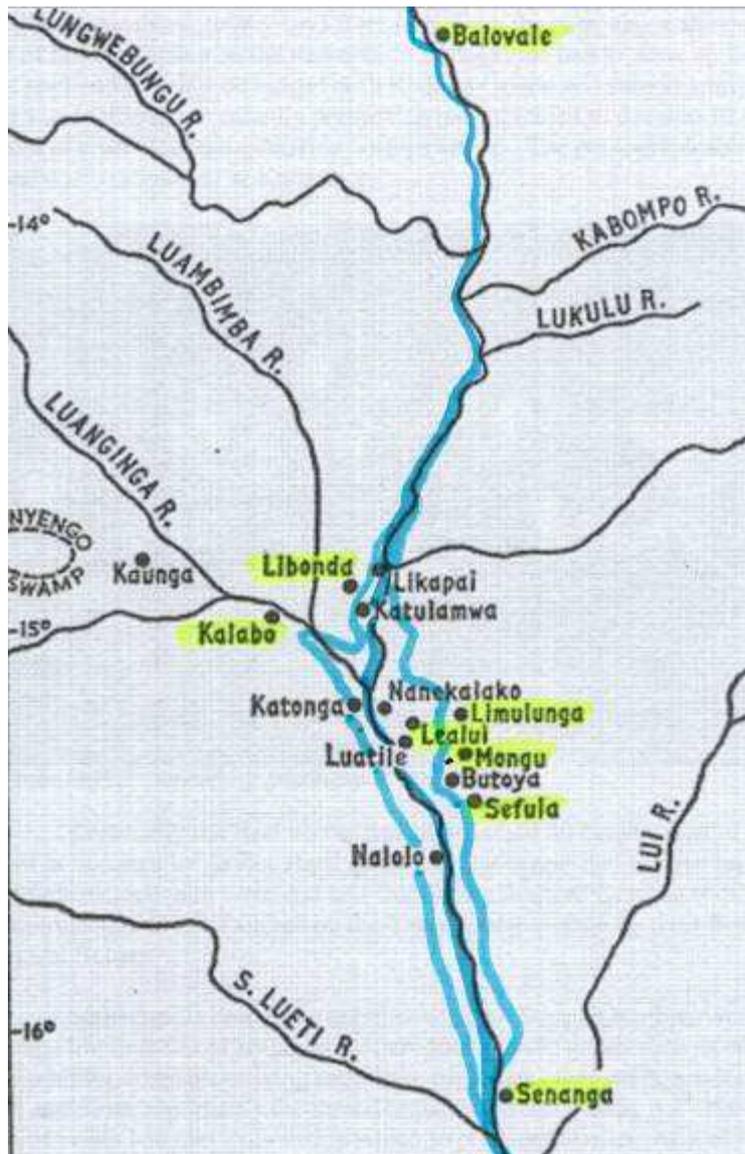
### Brief history of the Region

The Kingdom of Barotseland, in the North West of Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia), extends from the towns of Chavuma and Balovale (now called Zambezi) in the far north, near the present Angola border, all the way south to Sesheke and beyond (see Map). Part of eastern Portuguese West Africa (now Angola) and the Caprivi strip (now Namibia) from Katima Mulilo to Kazungula was also once part of the domain of Barotseland before the new borders, after arbitration by the King of Italy, were drawn up in 1905.



Main's (1) Map of Barotseland. Balovale (see 2<sup>nd</sup> Map) is just south of Chavuma

Michael Main (1) who wrote *“Zambezi - Journey of a River”* had this to say about Barotseland. *“Nowhere is there to be found along the entire length of the Zambezi River, a region quite as beautiful as Barotseland”*. *“...here among the Lozi people, one encounters some of the warmest and most friendly of riverside people. I am sure this is partly to do with their beautiful home...”*.



Map showing the Zambezi, major tributaries, and the outline of the Barotse flood plain (6). (N.B. Balovale is now called Zambezi)

The Luyi or Lozi living in Barotseland originally spoke Luyana but this Lunda-Luba language, Katangese in origin, has since evolved into Silozi (2) over the last 150 years. In the 1840s the Makololo, a Sotho tribe migrating northwards (3), had invaded the land and conquered the Luyi. The invaders were eventually overthrown in 1864 but their language, Sikololo, became embedded mainly because, after the Makololo men were massacred, their women inter-married with the Lozi. Of the many languages (3) spoken by tribes paying tribute to the King, Silozi was and is the lingua franca. Missionaries bearing books and bibles from Basutoland (now Lesotho) quickly learned the language and published a history and dictionary.

From 1897 the British South Africa Company, partly owned by Cecil Rhodes, administered the 48,000 square miles of the Kingdom of Barotseland by treaty drawn up with Lewanika, the Paramount Chief and King of the Barotse at his court the Kuta (4, 5). The King (6) had in 1889 originally petitioned Queen Victoria to proclaim his Kingdom a Protectorate but until 1900 no direct action was taken by Her Majesty's Imperial Government to grant his wish.

### **The Ku omboka (to come ashore) ceremony**

As the maps above show, the Zambezi floods the Barotse plain annually from late February or early March. Cattle and people have to move away to dry land. The Ku omboka occurs when the plain around the capital Lealui becomes inundated (2, 4). The huge *maoma* drums are sounded a day before the planned migration ashore – drumming, started by the King himself, commences before midnight and after a break is continued from 4 a.m. until dawn. They can be heard as far away as 15 km. From Katongo, where I lived, one could hear the biggest metre-wide drum *kanaono* sounding clearly all the way across the flooded plain from Lealui. After the King has boarded his barge, the vessel (Nalikwanda) is poled to a lagoon where it begins to circle, while a procession of other vessels forms behind it. Four of the King's body guards in a canoe clear a path before the Royal barge so it can proceed along the Mwayowamo canal (2, 3), dug by King Lewanika's regiments, to the winter palace at Limulunga. The move to escape the flood waters traditionally occurs only when the moon is waxing (3). The colourful ceremony, very popular with tourists, is still performed today and has been beautifully described by many including Michael Main (1). According to him "*The ceremony is a wonderful and exciting reminder of an Africa past and Barotseland as it always has been*". It is "*one of Africa's most colourful indigenous tribal ceremonies...*".

A unique 16 mm film, "*Plainsmen of the Barotse*", showing the *Ku omboka* during the reign of King Yeta III, was made in colour in 1943 by Louis Nell and the Colonial film unit. It can be viewed via <http://www.colonialfilm.org.uk/node/1914> on the internet. Because of recent interest in Barotseland affairs, on 29 March 2012 the BBC News Africa program also showed slides of the ceremony actually in progress.

### **Getting to Barotseland**

The most reliable and feasible way to reach the Kingdom of Barotseland was by barge or canoe paddled up the Zambezi River (2) from the harbour (A) at Katombora, some fifty miles above the Victoria Falls. Paddling (B) passed the confluence with the Chobe River at Kazungula, where four countries meet, barges then had to scale the many rapids on the river (1C). They also had to by-pass the large cataracts at Ngambwe, Lusu and Ngonye Falls near Sioma (2C-2D). This three-week journey up river to Mongu-Lealui, the capital of Barotseland, camping on islands or the bank each night, was arduous and not without several hazards like hippos, whirlpools, snakes and mosquitoes. The return journey, running with the current, took only two weeks. Barges carried mail, cargo and passengers in both directions.

About the hazards encountered on the river Gervas Clay, a District Commissioner (DC) in His Majesty's Colonial Service in Northern Rhodesia, wrote "*Let it not be thought that the mail barge had an easy trip to and fro. Far from it: there are innumerable rapids in the river, and in the dry season the water sinks considerably and a very accurate knowledge of the rapids is needed to get through them. Going up the river, the whole crew had to disembark and struggle waist deep in the water, pushing the heavy flat-bottomed barge against the current and between the rocks. There is also one waterfall which no barge could negotiate, and here the barge was run ashore and towed by a team of oxen through the sand for a mile or two to rejoin the river above the falls. I can remember more than one occasion when the mail was*

*lost owing to the barge being upset by an irate hippopotamus, and I have no recollection that the mails were ever recovered.”*

### **The Zambezi River Transport Syndicate**

Before World War I, trade with the Kingdom was conducted by a Scot, George Buchanan, using eight or nine barges. In 1916, he had a contract to supply goods to Lewanika's son Yeta III, after Lewanika died. When the contract lapsed, Buchanan was bought out in October 1917 by another Scot, Robert Forbes Sutherland, who set up the *Zambezi River Transport Syndicate* together with William Shelmerdine and the well established traders, the Susman Brothers (5). This syndicate had a virtual monopoly for carrying mail, freight and passengers paddled in wooden barges all the way to Barotseland (2). The Syndicate built up a fleet of some forty barges (A), thirty five to forty feet long and five feet wide. They were built in Senanga of mukwa wood by Arthur Harrington (2, 4), an Englishman (1). These vessels had to have replaceable false bottoms to withstand wear and tear from being dragged over rocks in the many rapids (1C, 2C) on the river.

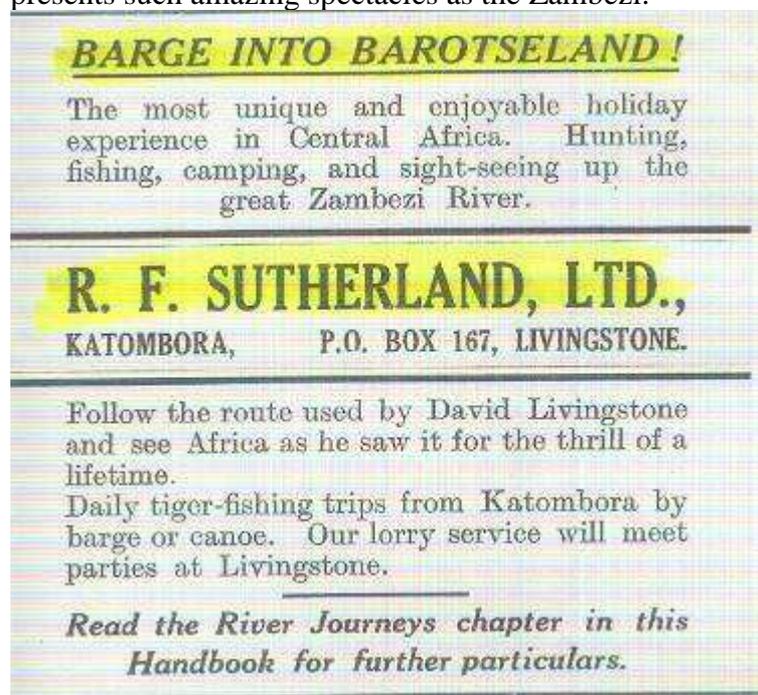
The rinderpest plague, which from 1880 swept south from Egypt, decimated wild animals and live stock throughout Africa. The disease had, in 1896, somehow bypassed the fertile plains of the Upper Zambezi. Barotseland was therefore a Mecca for cattle buyers (5) like the Susmans, although there were virtually no roads during the wet season. However, contagious Bovine pleuro-pneumonia, brought in after 1914 by infected cattle from Portuguese West Africa, alas, became a scourge throughout the Kingdom. Until the all clear given in June 1918 (5), export of cattle from Barotseland was therefore prohibited by the Government Veterinary Department.

Sutherland, the Susman Brothers and others opened stores throughout Barotseland. Lozi men were trained in book keeping and stock taking so they could help run the stores. It is fair to say that Sutherland's enterprise together with the Susman brothers revolutionised village life for the Lozi people (5). They introduced trade goods such as cotton cloth from Manchester, blankets, sewing machines, carpentry tools, nails, spades, hoes, ploughs, hurricane lamps, torches, candles, soap and most importantly the three-legged cast iron cooking pot and salt. Previously Lozi women only had clay pots within which to prepare the main meal of porridge *buhobe* accompanied with *busunso* the relish. These had to be watched carefully to prevent toppling over on the fire during cooking, whereas supervision of the iron pots could be left to children while wives busied themselves with other chores. Amazingly, Victorian bustles became all the rage for the Malozi – even the men wore them. I remember walking on a foot path behind one gentleman as his voluminous skirts or petticoats swayed from side to side, like a kilt.

The alternative to using barges or canoes for carrying mail was to employ runners travelling overland through lion and tsetse fly-infested forests. There were no roads, only footpaths. For heavy goods, transportation by ox wagon was so hazardous and time-consuming that few, other than some missionaries, ever attempted such a journey (2, 5). Transit through fly belts with oxen had to be done at night when the deadly tsetse were inactive.

### **Attracting tourists**

Sutherland not only relied on providing a freight and passenger service to Government, missionaries and traders up river to Barotseland but he also advertised the use of his barges and paddlers for tourists to use for fishing, hunting and sight-seeing. This can be learned from an advertisement which was placed in newspapers in 1938 and was accompanied by an article describing how no other river in the world presents such amazing spectacles as the Zambezi.



***BARGE INTO BAROTSELAND!***

The most unique and enjoyable holiday experience in Central Africa. Hunting, fishing, camping, and sight-seeing up the great Zambezi River.

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**R. F. SUTHERLAND, LTD.,**  
KATOMBORA, P.O. BOX 167, LIVINGSTONE.

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Follow the route used by David Livingstone and see Africa as he saw it for the thrill of a lifetime.  
Daily tiger-fishing trips from Katombora by barge or canoe. Our lorry service will meet parties at Livingstone.

---

*Read the River Journeys chapter in this Handbook for further particulars.*

Sutherland goes on to say “*here then is a river worth seeing and to do so in barges with paddlers and with excellent sport all round is an outstanding experience*”. One must remember how enthusiastic all Europeans were about sport and hunting before the war.

### **Deployment of Government officials**

A letter written in 1936 by Gervas Clay, District Commissioner (DC) Mankoya, shows just how primitive and cut-off Barotseland was in the early days - he stated that:

*“In the 1930’s I was posted to Mankoya in Barotseland. To get there, I went up the Zambezi river for three weeks in a flat bottomed barge with a crew of paddlers, and then walked for five days, and at that time there was no quicker way of getting there. At Mankoya the mails were by runner as far as Mongu, where they were put onto mail barges for the journey down the Zambezi. .... From Mongu to Mankoya there was at that time no road, but only a mail path, and this ran through heavy sand till it reached the Luampa river, from which as far as Mankoya the path got steadily harder. Mankoya had its own three mailmen, who took it in turns to walk to Mongu and back, with a week’s rest at home in between each journey.”*

The Oxford graduate, Patrick Law wrote home (4) about his journey by Syndicate barge with sixteen paddlers up to Kalabo. There, in three years as a cadet, he was to learn from the DC, Mr Oliver, to administer the district and the language. Writing about his induction he wrote “*All outstations are sub-post offices, so we have to deal with all the mail, stamp-selling and everything else connected with a post office*”.

Bordering on Portuguese territory meant that customs duties had also to be collected, as well as hut tax from the indigenous peoples. Law's friend, cadet Gerry Curtis who accompanied him, had to proceed from Mongu all the way up river to Balovale (see map), which took another ten to twelve days.

### **Coping with life in Barotseland**

From 1923 my father Hubert Whitehead, an accountant who previously worked for Matabeleland Trading Association (5) and Zambezi Saw Mills, was appointed the Manager in Mongu for the Syndicate (2). He was an enterprising man as pioneers had to be. As there were no roads or cars at first, only brick paths, my father built two push-pull bush cars (I) for us to visit neighbours in comfort or attend a gathering at the tennis club. We had no refrigerators, therefore my father made a meat safe using charcoal held in an envelope of wire mesh down which dripped water to evaporate and cool the contents of the wooden contraption. After returning from England in 1937, father installed a Direct Current electric lighting system in our house, the first for Mongu – a Petter engine ran a dynamo and the charge generated was stored in 10 linked 12V truck batteries. He assembled crystal radio sets and operated a cinema (2, 5). Later he used a pump to bring water from the plain below our house that was piped to the bathroom. Ingeniously he even slowly built a 30 foot motor launch of mukwa (2), which was powered by a Ford Mercury engine.

### **The beginning of Air Travel to Barotseland**

The demand for a quicker means of communication with the outside world was the stimulus needed for aeroplanes carrying mail to begin flying into the Kingdom. Flying from Livingstone or Victoria Falls to Senanga and on to Mongu (see Map) and beyond soon became an attractive proposition. In those early days the fairway on the golf course at Mongu down on the soggy plain was used as an aerodrome. Patrick Law reports (4) that he flew to Kalabo from Mongu in September 1932 – the plane had probably been chartered by Government from the *Rhodesian Aviation Co.* Later a DH80 Puss Moth flown by Miles Bowker landed in Kalabo with Mrs Dempster as the passenger. It is amusing to note that the wife of the DC, Dick Oliver, who built the airstrip, gave a pair of her old panties to be used as the wind sock. Noel McGill and Wythe were other pilots mentioned by Law who flew to Kalabo.

Then in late 1934, the newly formed *Rhodesia and Nyasaland Airways Ltd.* (R.A.N.A.) showed the flag with their Fox Moth DH83 VP-YAD (E) which landed on the Mongu golf course. As the photograph shows the plane was soon surrounded by a huge crowd of curious Lozi. On 10th August 1935, *Spencer's Air Service*, owned by Edward H (Ted) Spencer, used a DH80A Puss Moth VP-YBC flown by Jack McAdam (F) to start a passenger and mail service (9) up the Zambezi. On 7th January 1936, Spencer acquired a DH83 Fox Moth biplane VP-YBD. Ted later qualified as a pilot and flew the new Fox Moth on 9th April 1936 (9). He soon earned a reputation as a dare devil by flying under the Victoria Falls bridge (10). A photograph reproduced in "*In Southern Skies*" (8) captures an image (G) of his Puss Moth monoplane (and its shadow) flying very low over the Devil's Cataract of the Falls.

After close scrutiny of the Log Books of the pilot Reg Bourlay (10), his son Chris reports that the first time his father flew for R.A.N.A. to Mongu was in a Fox Moth VP-YAD on October the first 1934. Then on 11th of November 1935, he piloted a DH85 Leopard Moth VP-YAY from Victoria Falls to Mongu. In the year thereafter, he regularly carried mail and passengers to Barotseland in this aircraft. He became

known (10) as the “*flying Uncle*” since he took orders from residents for various light-weight goods and medicines to be purchased and brought back to Barotseland. Later that year as the photo (H) shows, my Mother and I flew from Mongu to Livingstone possibly piloted by Reg Bourlay in the Fox Moth VP-YAD. This aircraft (E) was part of the fleet operated by R.A.N.A.

In competition with R.A.N.A. and *Southern Rhodesia Air Services*, *Spencer’s Air Service* Puss Moth monoplane VP-YBC or Fox Moth biplane VP-YBD operated from Victoria Falls aerodrome. Petrol was imported by river in 44 gallon drums. Smaller tins were used for refueling. As my father had the keys of the fuel store hut on the golf course at Mongu, incoming aircraft used to fly low over our house on the ridge above the flood plain. This was to alert him to ride his motor bike along brick paths the 5 miles to meet the pilot. On several occasions that I remember, the pilot would shout out “PETROL” from the open cockpit.

Ted Spencer was fond of showing off his prowess in the air by looping the loop over the plain. Thus, in the Lozi language, the adjective for anything superlative soon became “SPENSAAR”.

### **The history of a certain Fox Moth**

The photo (J) shows Mrs Jager (right) seeing off Betty Clay (née Baden Powell) and Nell Griffin, her companion, as they were about to board Ted Spencer’s Fox Moth VP-YBD. One month-old baby Gillian was carried on board in a basket. They flew on 17 July 1936 from Victoria Falls to Barotseland. Betty Clay’s diary records that at lunch the day before in Government house the Governor, Sir Hubert Young, started by saying “*So you’re flying off tomorrow over the uninhabited bush quite against the law, I hear*”. So I said “yes” and he said “*I hope you don’t expect to be looked for when you get lost*”. I replied “*Ha no, and my husband won’t think of it, he’ll say good riddance*”. “*And you’ll eat roots I ‘spose*” – “*Oh no, I’ve got the baby*”. “*Oh yes, I hadn’t thought of that.*” said Sir Hubert.

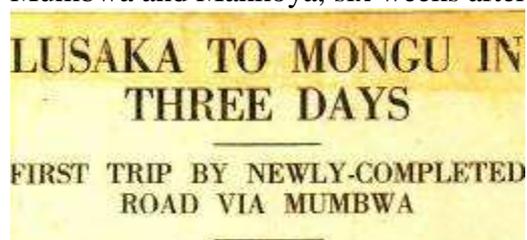
It is appropriate here to mention that Lady Young was herself a pilot. On 28 February 1935 she made history in her Gipsy Moth (10) G-ABND on a flight to Lusaka from Livingstone by getting lost for four days. Running short of fuel, she force landed, way off course, in a sorghum field 90 miles from Gokwe in Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). For the full story written by Lewis Walter please access : <http://rhodesianheritage.blogspot.com/2012/07/lady-young-and-her-gypsy-moth.html>.

Betty’s diary records that they flew over Sesheke and landed at Senanga. They carried on over Mongu but didn’t land before heading eastwards to Mankoya where her husband Gervas Clay had for a year been stationed. He had been busy making a road to Mongu but it was not yet officially open to traffic.

Betty Clay wrote “*We had lunch then we went to rest and Gervas saw Spencer off. I heard an engine start, and taxi, then a CRASH and silence*”. “*Nell came and we went following, and then saw Spencer, quite unhurt and unshaken, coming towards us with Gervas and thank God he wasn’t killed. He wanted the car and pushed off to drive into Mongu at 8 pm so as to get a wire off to Livingstone and stop planes coming searching*”. Ted was the first to use the new road to Mongu – he was able to send a telegram to Livingstone because the Government had by this time imported a transmitter and generator up river for the newly-built Post Office.

What happened was while attempting to take off in the mid-day heat Ted Spencer suddenly lost altitude and crashed between two trees. A newspaper article (K) attributed the mishap to a sudden down draft soon after Ted became airborne. He managed to steer the plane between trees at the end of the runway thus escaping injury. Gervas Clay's three dogs can be seen examining the wreckage (L) while month-old baby Gillian is in her mother's arms. (The damage must have only been superficial because the plane was afterwards sold and registered as VP-RCE; then later in 1954 as VP-YLS and finally in South Africa as ZS-CFP. Modified to spray crops, it sadly crashed on take off in the Free State in January 1958).

The Bulawayo Chronicle reported in late August 1937 that the Lusaka to Mongu road was now open, after a convoy of vehicles made the three day journey through Mumbwa and Mankoya, six weeks after Ted's spectacular crash.



Not long after this accident at Mankoya, a replacement Fox Moth VP-YBM was purchased by *Spencer's Air Service* (9). After my family returned in 1937 from a visit to England (2), my brother John was a passenger on several occasions in this aircraft as the photo (M) taken in Mongu shows. The Government had by this time taken over the rifle range to extend the initial runway on Mongu hill in order that bigger aircraft could land and take off safely. An aerial view of the two runways of the extended aerodrome (N) is shown.

### **Twin-engine aircraft introduced**

In January 1939, using DH89A Dragon Rapides, R.A.N.A. started a weekly Air Mail service from Lusaka, (the capital of Northern Rhodesia - now Zambia) to Mongu via Mumbwa and Mankoya. My brother and I used this service (O, P) to get to our boarding schools – several photos taken by my mother show us separately about to board the 7 seater Rapides on Mongu hill. I believe my brother was the first white child to be born (August 1928) in Mongu. To mark the occasion, King Yeta III presented my mother with a fly switch (2).

Once R.A.N.A had been taken over by the Southern Rhodesia Air Force, Ted Spencer flew the Dragon Rapides after his attempt to join the R.A.F. was rebuffed on account of his age. On one occasion in 1943, I was a passenger from Mongu in what must have been a DH90 Dragonfly with Ted as the pilot. After take off from Mankoya, he invited me into the cockpit and allowed me to sit beside him and, under his instruction, to take over (as the aircraft had dual controls) until we approached Mumbwa, where we landed. What a thrill that episode was for a schoolboy !!

To commemorate my fascination for the Dragon Rapide, I commissioned an oil painting of the aircraft circling the Victoria Falls (Q). It now hangs in the bar of the Royal Barotse Safari lodge at Mutemwa on the Zambezi.

### **Royal Mail**

In 1948, B.O.A.C. tested the practicality of alighting flying boats on the Nile, Lake Victoria and on the Zambezi River above the Victoria Falls. The service known as the Springbok Solent Service began in May 1948 and was operated three times a week in each direction from Southampton to the Vaal Dam south of Johannesburg. The fate of this service was however short lived as more economical and faster land planes were being introduced to take over the routes between South Africa and Britain via Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). In November 1950 the uneconomic flying boat service was discontinued. During the two years that the Solent aircraft (R) operated, they were able to moor on the Zambezi four miles above the Victoria Falls. Thirty passengers were carried in great comfort, even luxury, by today's standards. The terminal on the river was dubbed the "Jungle Junction" by the Bulawayo Chronicle as elephants, hippo and a flood had created problems in establishing it (2, 9).

The advent of these sea planes may have given Ted Spencer the idea that twin-engine Catalina flying boats could be used to serve Barotseland. Alas, the plan came to nothing when Ted was killed in late 1947 when his Dakota passenger plane crashed while taking off from Croydon airport.

In 1958 a new airport at Mongu was built away from the hill along the road to Mankoya such that larger planes such as a Douglas DC3 could land. Central African Airways (CAA), formed in 1945, introduced sturdy, single-engine de Havilland Beavers in 1951 (S) which could land on short air strips all over Barotseland. At up to 140 mph, Beavers with a payload of 1,250 pounds could carry 6 passengers.

The Barotseland Beaver service (10) started in Lusaka on Monday morning, only returning there on Friday after visiting Livingstone once. During its round trip it called at least twice at the outlying stations (D) along the Zambezi valley. Jack Dahn of CAA wrote "*there are many communities in the protectorate which, but for the Beavers, would be isolated for months every year when the Zambezi river floods the low-lying land and makes all roads, tracks and paths impassable. Even in the dry season, travel in Barotseland has always been difficult. The Zambezi has always been, and still is a highway ..... now the Beaver service is changing a way of life. The outside world is on the door step of the people. Places like Mongu, Kalabo and Balovale are no longer merely names on maps; they are at the end of a few hours of comfortable and relatively inexpensive travel* "..... "*Airstrips are hacked from the bush, with a one-room-and-counter building made from locally-burned bricks and roofed with thatch or corrugated iron. No uniformed staff greet the incoming aircraft; usually the station agent is the wife of a local official doing the job in her spare time. Any sophistication that may be lacking is more than made up for.... by the warmth with which the local residents welcome the aircraft. For them the Beaver 'bus service' means mail brought in and their own letters taken out; the arrival of goods ordered by post from stores in main towns; and for anyone sick, medicines....*".

### **The Royal visit**



Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother Official State visit to the Kingdom of Barotseland

The British Queen Mother paid a historic visit to Barotseland in May 1960 (2, 6), thus completing the circle, begun in 1889, when Lewanika first sought the protection of Queen Victoria for his kingdom. Lewanika and his sons Yeta III and Mwanawina III had all been invited in succession to attend the coronations of the Kings of the Empire or Queen of the Commonwealth. The Mother of Queen Elizabeth II arrived in a scarlet DH114 Heron of the Queen's flight. King Mwanamina III was presented to her



at the airport by Gervas Clay.

© Barotseland Government

Next day she exchanged gifts with the Lozi Royal family at the Limulunga winter palace. The climax of her visit saw her board the Royal barge (T) with the King, which was then paddled in style along the Malile river flowing passed Lealui.

After her visit, in a letter written to Princess Margaret from Government House in Lusaka the Queen Mother described her experiences thus : *“I went to Barotseland, which is quite delightful. Everyone falls on their knees when they see one - not grovelling but enormously natural & polite. No roads, and a vast plain, which every year is inundated by the mighty Zambesi, too beautiful for words, because the water is just going down now, & the tall grass is growing through the water, & this endless vista of shimmer & light is really fascinating. The old Paramount Chief is a good ruler, & nobody can approach him except on their knees! I think we might introduce this at Clarence House, it might be an excellent idea!”*

My mother was invited to attend the celebrations by the Resident Commissioner (2) who was none other than Gervas Clay. Letters posted by my mother at the Mongu post office that day were franked thus:-



to commemorate what was for the Lozi nation a most momentous occasion. It is interesting for philatelists (7) to note that the original franking of mail or postal designation was changed from the combined capitals Mongu-Lealui to just Mongu on 17 August 1954.



D5 (10.1.32)-(18.7.49)

Val x 10



D6 (26.4.50)-(1.8.50)

Val x 15



D7 State 2 (9.10.51)-(12.5.61)

In 1953 used on the counter, position No.2



D8 State 2 (15.5.52)-(9.8.62)

In 1953 used in the circulation branch



D9 (17.8.53)-(29.8.62)

In 1953 used on the counter, position No.1



D10 (17.8.53)-(10.4.62)

In 1953 used in the telegraph office

### Conclusion

Sadly today there is no air service operating into Barotseland; only charter flights. The Lozi people, I am told, naturally feel very badly done by and long for the good old days. The territory and its outstations are as cut off as they ever were before air travel came to their land. It used to take 3 days to drive from Lusaka to Mongu in the dry season. When the rains came in November the road became impassable. The M9 highway to Lusaka, with a bridge over the Kafue River is, however, now an all-weather affair so that mail and goods can be brought in by road. The outstations along the river can nowadays only be reached by barge, motor launch or canoe as the roads, even in the dry season, leave much to be desired.

### Acknowledgements :

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\* footnote page 1 - Contact address : whitehead@new.co.za