

MISSIONARY DEVELOPMENT OF SOUTHERN RHODESIA, 1896 - 1978

Purpose: This seven frame “*Social History*” exhibit tells the story of the missionary development in So Rhodesia (present day Zimbabwe) through the display of missionary mail and other materials.

Scope: Following a background to missionary involvement in So Rhodesia, the exhibit begins with administration of the British South Africa Co. (Rhodesia). The earliest covers presented date from 1896, following end of the Matabele/Shona uprising and the beginning of effective missionary development. Although a few mission were established earlier, none flourished until after this date when colonial rule firmly established. The exhibit concludes with the post-Independence indigenous church. Nearly all missionaries withdrawn by 1978 after the murder of missionaries during the “war of liberation.” As of Zimbabwean independence in 1980, missions were under local control. Foreign “religious workers” continue to provide support.

Covers shown are missionary mail, often identified only by researching the name of sender on return address. Excerpts from enclosed letters, picture postcards and ephemera bring to life the missions, individual missionaries and missionary development, which was accomplished through “preaching, teaching and healing.”

Exhibit Plan:

- **Background** (frame 1)
 - The missionary movement; territory and peoples; colonial expansion and mission mail routes.
- **BSACo/Rhodesia (1891-1923)** (frames 1-2)
 - Within each time period: new missions; outreach through preaching, teaching and healing; and women missionaries
- **So Rhodesia (1923-1953)** (frames 3-5)
- **Federation to Independence (1953-1980)** (frames 6-7)
 - Also including political turmoil
- **Post-Independence/Epilogue** (frame 7)

Exhibit Guidance:

- Social history/missionary bio's in blue font
- *Excerpts from missionary mail italic* framed in blue
- Mission facts – when first mentioned – framed in gray
- Details of scarcity in Times New Roman font, item framed in red

Rates: 2½d and 3d Universal Postal Union (UPU) foreign surface letter rates in effect 1902-1921 and 1922-1950 respectively. Noted with first example only. Other rates indicated.

Divided Back used Vicenza, Italy, 19.10.21. B/W collotype. “**The most important job of the missionary: catechism**” (translated from Italian). Published by “*Missioni Africane*” (Society of African Missions), Verona, Italy. No VI in series. Photograph no. 21141.

Missionary Postcards – published by mission societies beginning early 1900's to promote mission work and raise funds

