

**TOPIC : COLONISATION OF ZIMBABWE**  
**SUBTOPIC : THE COLONISATION OF ZIMBABWE**

## **OBJECTIVES**

**BY THE END OF THE SUBTOPIC LEARNERS SHOULD BE ABLE TO:**

- ✓ Identify countries which were involved in the scramble for Zimbabwe.
- ✓ Outline the reasons for the colonisation of Zimbabwe.
- ✓ Describe taken in the colonisation process of Zimbabwe.

## **Introduction**



Zimbabwe a British colony

- Zimbabwe was colonised by the British settlers in the late 1800s. The colonisation of Zimbabwe by Britain was part of the worldwide expansion of European imperialism.

- Many European countries had interest in Zimbabwe for example the Boers of Transvaal, Germany and Britain.
- Cecil John Rhodes was the greatest pioneer in the colonization of Zimbabwe and he sponsored the whole process of the occupation of Zimbabwe.
- He sent in different people to try and convince king Lobengula to sign away the country to the British.
- The colonisation of Zimbabwe was also part of the British plans way back in the scramble and partition of Africa in 1881.

### **Reasons for the colonisation of Zimbabwe**

- There are political, economic and social reasons that fuelled the colonisation of Zimbabwe by the British South Africa Company (BSAC).

#### **(a) Cape to Cairo dream**

- Zimbabwe was colonised so as to fulfil Cecil John Rhodes' project of Cape to Cairo.
- Cecil John Rhodes wanted to control vast lands from South Africa to Cairo so Zimbabwe was part of the project.



## Cecil John Rhodes

### (b) The need for raw materials

- Zimbabwe was colonised because the British colonisers wanted minerals such as gold.
- They regarded the country as the second rand so they occupied Zimbabwe in order to exploit minerals.
- The colonisers were looking for new markets to sell their goods.
- The colonisers were looking for cheap labour.
- The British wanted to encircle the Boers and their territory.
- Some of the colonisers were looking for places to invest their additional capital and expand their businesses and holdings.
- The farmers amongst the colonisers were drawn by the rich fertile Savannah soils.
- Some missionaries thought it would be easier to convert the locals if the country became a colony.

### **Events that led to the colonisation of Zimbabwe**

- There are several treaties which were signed between Lobengula king of the Ndebele state and the European settlers which marked the beginning of the colonisation of Zimbabwe.
- Some agreements that existed between the Europeans and the Africans before were verbal and these could not give adequate evidence to convince the ownership of the land by the Europeans.
- In an effort to colonise Zimbabwe, many countries and individuals from Europe competed to have an agreement with Lobengula.
- The Europeans wanted Lobengula to sign their concessions so as to prove ownership of the land. These included the Boers, Portuguese, Germans and the British.

- Getting a signed concession meant a lot of wealth to the Europeans and therefore they had to spend several weeks or months in king Lobengula's palace negotiating.



King Lobengula

#### A. Grobber treaty July (1887)

- This treaty was signed between Lobengula and Piet Grobber in 1887 (representing the Boer republic of the Transvaal).
- The treaty was "Friendship treaty" between the Boers and Lobengula.
- This agreement created an alliance between the Boer Republic and the Ndebele State.

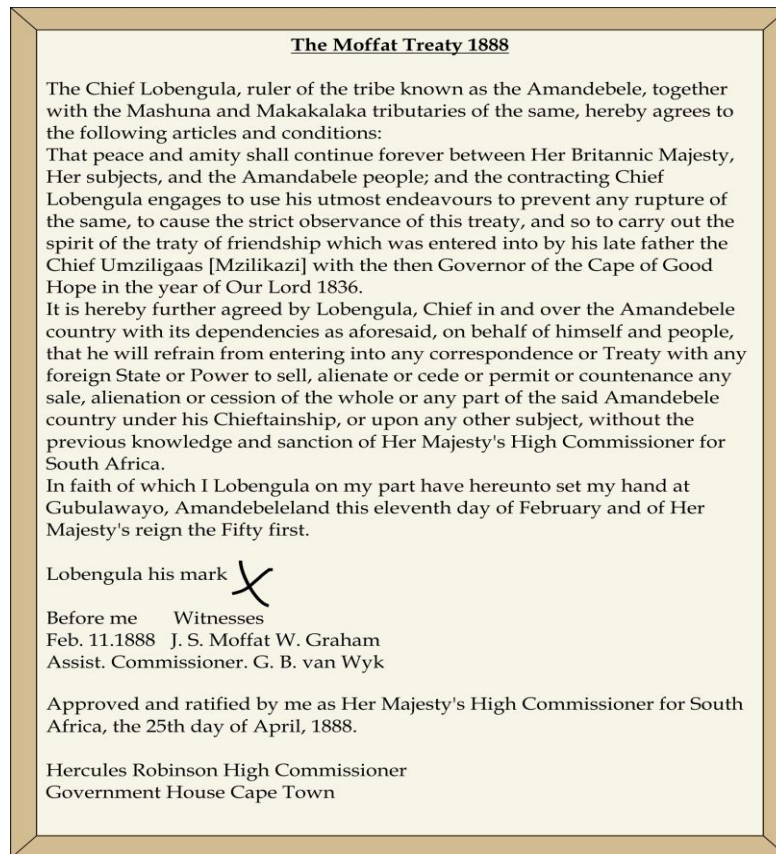
#### Terms of the Treaty

- The Boers promised the king of the Ndebele state military assistance.
- Boers were to have a permanent representative in the Ndebele kingdom.

- King Lobengula had to provide protection to Transvaal citizen who visited the Ndebele.
- Only Boers with South African Boer passports were to be allowed in the Ndebele state.
- Lobengula was to provide military assistance to the Boers against the British.
- The Transvaal hunters and traders were allowed to operate freely in Matabeleland.
- Lobengula was not permitted to administer the Boers.

#### B. Moffat treaty (11 February 1888)

- The main aim on the Moffat agreement was to reverse the Grobblers treaty.
- The Grobblers treaty was posted and circulated in newspapers of South Africa and this made Cecil John Rhodes jealous and felt defeated by the Boers since he had interests in colonising Zimbabwe.
- Rhodes decided to send a missionary by the name Rev. John Smith Moffat to go and ask Lobengula to cancel the Grobblers treaty.
- Rev. John Smith Moffat was aware of Rhodes' intentions of grabbing Zimbabwe.
- Lobengula entered a new agreement with the British and cancelled the Grobblers treaty.
- Moffat had a great advantage because he had worked among the Ndebele for a long time as a missionary and king Lobengula greatly trusted John Moffat as a friend and Umfundisi (missionary).
- His father was a close friend of Lobengula's father Mzilikazi.
- Cecil John Rhodes used the Moffat Treaty as a weapon to secure the position of the British in Matabeleland.



## Moffat treaty

### Terms of the Moffat treaty

- There was to be peace and friendship between the Ndebele people and the queen of Britain.
- Lobengula agreed to cancel the Globbler treaty.
- Lobengula also agreed not to sign any other treaty without the consent of the British Queen.

### C. The Rudd concession (13 October 1888)

- The Rudd concession was a written concession for exclusive mining rights in Matabeleland, Mashonaland and other territories.

- To secure the position of the British in Matabeleland Rhodes worked on his next step of introducing the Rudd concession which was signed in August 1888.
- The Moffat treaty was the first step towards the occupation of Zimbabwe.
- Rhodes and the British government used the Moffat treaty to keep other European powers out of Matabeleland and Mashonaland.
- Rhodes sent Charles Rudd, Francis Thompson and Rochford Maguire to persuade Lobengula to grant them a concession.
- Rhodes' agents were able to get support from the missionaries such as Rev. Charles D. Helm
- It took them almost five weeks to convince King Lobengula to sign the concession.
- Charles Helm persuaded king Lobengula to sign the Rudd concession promising factious or non-existent benefits.
- Not knowing Charles Helm was paid by Cecil John Rhodes Lobengula agreed to sign the Rudd concession.
- Rhodes' men also bribed Lotshe, Sikombo the important Ndebele Indunas into helping them in signing the Rudd concession.

#### Terms of the Rudd concession

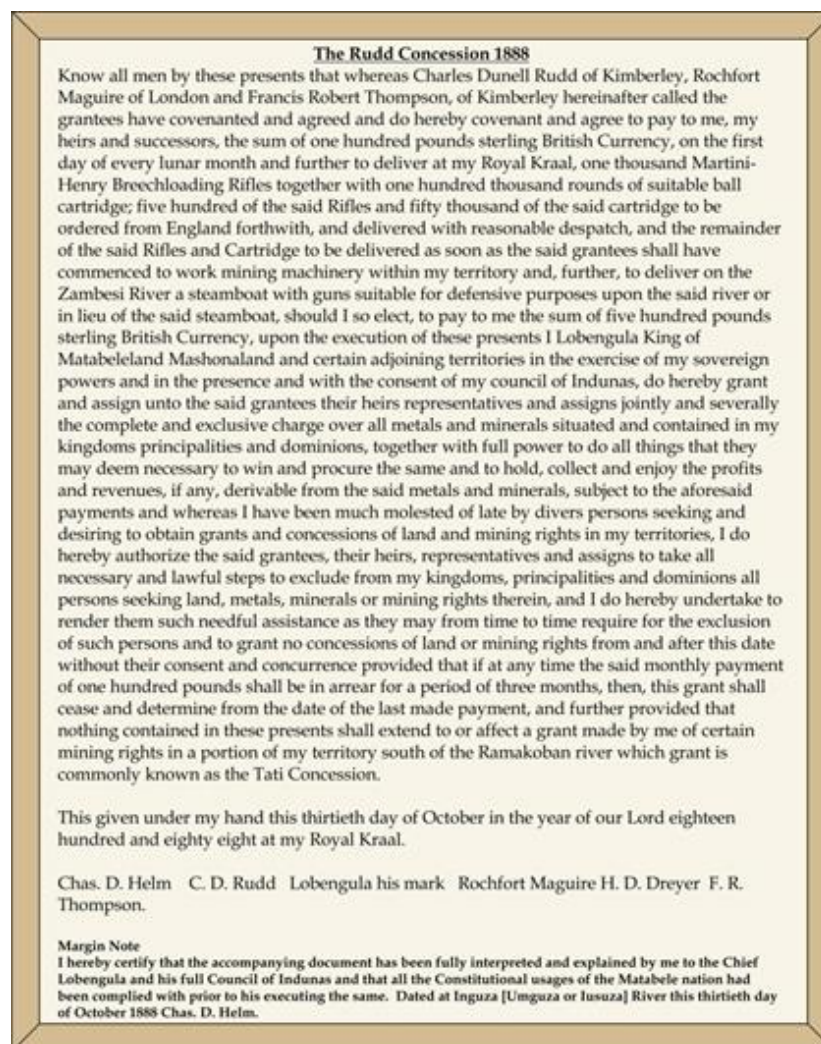
Lobengula was granted the following:

- a) Lobengula, his heirs and successors were to be paid a monthly sum of 100 pounds per month.
- b) 1000 rifles and 10 000 rounds of ammunition.
- c) A gun boat that would sail on the Zambezi River.
- d) No more than 10 men would come to Matabeleland and these were to leave their weapons in the king's court.

- e) Lobengula was not to grant land and mineral rights without the knowledge of Rhodes.

In return Lobengula agreed to:

- a) Grant Rhodes and his group control over metals and minerals.
- b) The concession gave legal rights to Cecil John Rhodes to exclude from Lobengula's kingdom, other fortune seekers such as Boers.
- c) As an illiterate man King Lobengula signed the document by putting an **X**.



Translated copy of the Rudd Concession



#### D. Lippert treaty 1889

- After Lobengula was informed by E.A Maund that he has been cheated on the Rudd concession agreement, Lobengula went on to sign the Lippert treaty.
- It was signed between Eduard Lippert and Lobengula in 1889 after the Rudd Concession.
- This treaty actual marked the colonisation of Zimbabwe by the British settlers and it also enabled settlers to acquire land rights from the indigenous people.
- Realising that he had granted Rhodes too much rights in the Ndebele state, Lobengula granted Lippert land and mineral rights as a way of weakening the Rudd concession.
- Lobengula gave the concession to Lippert.
- Lippert was to make an annual payment to Lobengula for a lease which gave him the right to grant, lease, or rent parts of Ndebele land in his name for 100 years.
- This attempt to play the Boers against the British was Lobengula's undoing.
- Lippert turned around and sold the concession to the very company Lobengula had expelled.

#### The Royal Charter

- After signing of the Rudd concession, Rhodes quickly rushed to Britain in order to get the Royal Charter from the Queen that would give him permission to colonize Zimbabwe.
- Rhodes created a colonizing company, the British South African Company (BSAC).
- The colonial Government gave the BSAC Company the right to take over and rule the area.

- The news of the Rudd concession signed by Lobengula which allowed Cecil John Rhodes to colonise Zimbabwe reached the king's ears in Matabeleland.
- Lobengula did not have a clue as to the meaning of this clause when he signed the Rudd concession.
- When Lobengula heard that Cecil John Rhodes had been granted a charter on the basis of the Rudd concession sent his two Indunas Babajani and Mshete to Britain to renounce the Rudd concession to the British Government.
- The two indunas were delayed by the Queen until the charter was granted.

#### Provisions of the Royal charter

- The Royal Charter which was granted to Rhodes had the following provisions:
  - (1) Rhodes was to establish banks and to make railway lines, and telegraph lines.
  - (2) He was to promote tranquillity and order in Zimbabwe.
  - (3) Rhodes was to promote trade and commerce.
  - (4) Rhodes was to go on and end slavery in Zimbabwe.
  - (5) He was to establish a police force.
  - (6) Rhodes was to respect the religious customs of the local people.
  - (7) Use of liquor was banned for local people.

## The pioneer column and the colonisation process



Route of the pioneer column

- It was after obtaining the charter from the British Queen, Rhodes recruited the pioneer group that was to occupy Zimbabwe.
- Out of the 2 000 applications only 200 men were considered and an additional of 500 men who were recruited from the British South Africa Police (BSAP) who were heavily armed to enforce the laws and security of the company.
- The group was also made up of different people (farmers, builders, miners, doctors, police) recruited from Britain, Australia and New Zealand.
- Its leaders included Colonel Pannefather, Major Frank Johnson and Fredrick Courtney Soleus.
- These were to be highly paid, with each officer or leader to be granted 20 gold claims and 80 000 acres that they were to share among themselves.

- Members of the pioneer column were promised large tracts of land of about 3 000 acres and 15 gold claims each and cheap labour.

### The movement of the Pioneer Column

- They grouped in Botswana to start their journey.
- The pioneer column crossed the Motloutse River and Shashi River.
- On their way to Zimbabwe, the pioneer column set up forts with the police stationed at these forts: - Fort Tuli, Fort Victoria, Fort Charter, and Fort Salisbury.
- The pioneer column arrived at fort Salisbury kopje where, on 12 September 1890, they raised the British flag called the Union Jack to show that they had finally occupied Zimbabwe.
- The union jack was raised by Edward Tyndale Biscoe.



Raising of the Union Jack

- The Shona received the settlers peacefully.
- They also sold the settlers food such as maize and cattle.
- The Shona allowed them to mine and trade in their area.
- Missionaries were sent to convert Africans to Christianity, hunters and mineral prospectors were also sent over.
- The first phase of colonization was the occupation of Mashonaland in 1890 while the second phase was the occupation of Matabeleland.
- Each of the pioneers was armed and had been given military training.
- There was the piling of arms, wagons, ammunition, pounders, guns etc.
- Goods were carried by ox wagons.