

Notes on the Mocloutsie Cemetery Near Bobonong, 1890s: A Re-Appraisal

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Abstract

The old colonial cemetery at Macloutsie near Bobonong in eastern Botswana contains the graves of policemen, military men and civilians. The cemetery was once close to a thriving settlement and on the famed 'road to the north' used by European missionaries, traders, explorers and others from the Cape Colony to the interior of Southern Africa in the pre-colonial period. Five of the graves are marked and identify the deceased. The remainder are not marked and we assess the likely identity of those who are buried in these graves. Earlier attempts are re-examined by going back to primary sources, in so doing discrepancies were found. This article puts on record the information gathered over a number of years about the place providing names and some details of those probably buried at the site.

Introduction

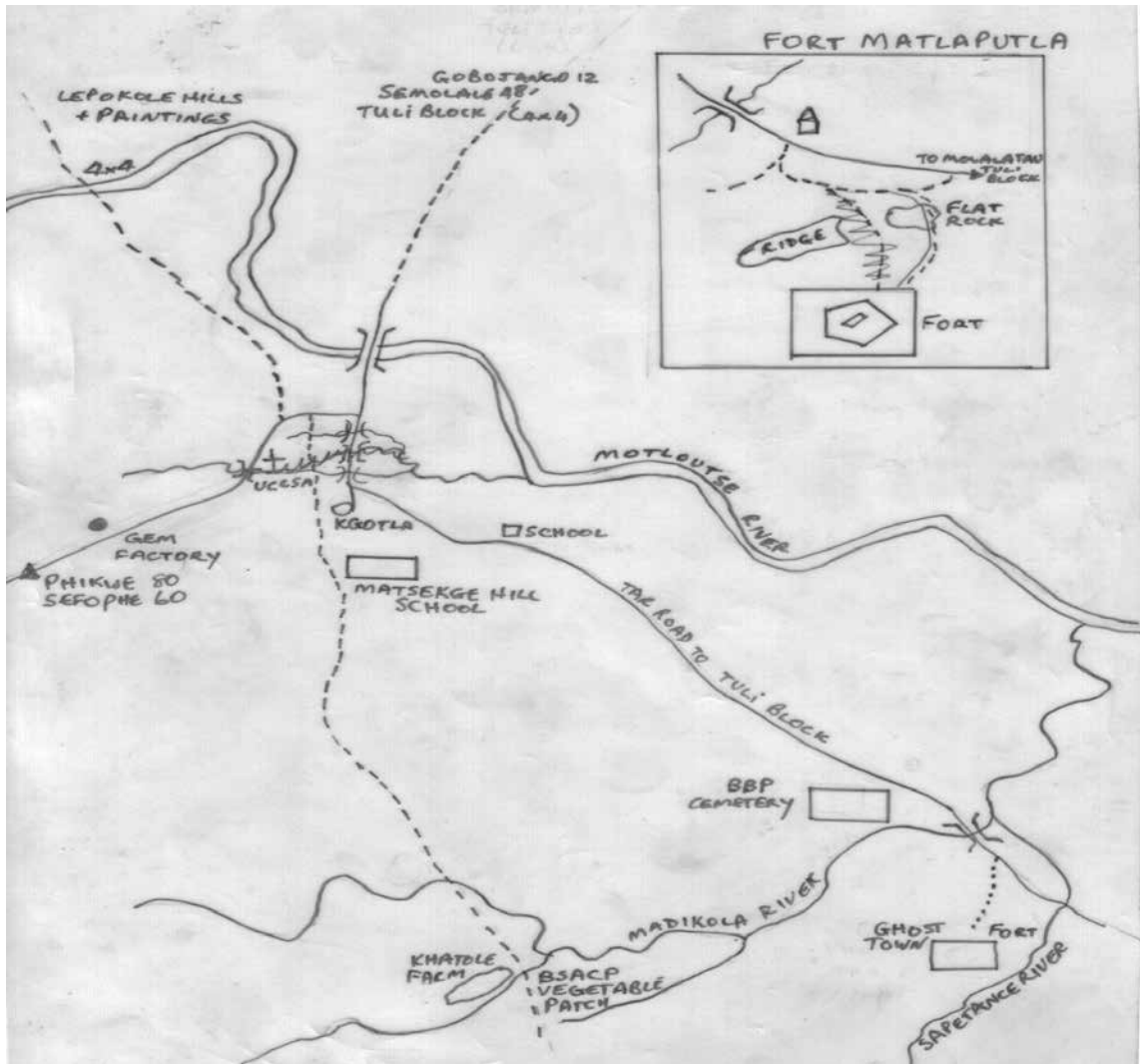
Near the abandoned village of Macloutsie, southeast of Bobonong, is a small cemetery containing the remains of 30 people who died between 1890 and 1899. Named after the Anglicised version of a nearby river (Motloutse), (Gibbs 1972:13) Macloutsie was established as a colonial outpost in 1890. At the time, the Motloutse River was the border of what was a disputed territory between the Bangwato and AmaNdebele states. The ruler of the Bangwato, Khama III and Lobengula of the AmaNdebele both claimed sovereignty over the area (de Waal 1974:54 and Main 1996:71). The river was, in effect, the northern frontier of the Bechuanaland Protectorate (colonial Botswana). Located to the east of traditional routes to the north and in a position to enable Matabeleland to be bypassed, Macloutsie became the gateway to Mashonaland for Rhodes' Pioneer Column in 1890. It was through here that many later white settlers passed on a lonely African bush track by ox-wagon, horseback or on foot as they made their way to a new life in the then Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe).

Rhodes' Pioneer Column was escorted and given military protection by the new colony's recently formed British South Africa Company Police (BSACP). The BSACP used Macloutsie as a base camp and training area. The BSACP also participated in the construction of the adjacent Fort Matlaputla that gave military protection to the emerging village. With the departure of the Pioneer Column on 11 July 1890, the village and Fort Matlaputla remained under the command of the Bechuanaland Border Police (BBP). It became the northern headquarters of the force, while several civilian enterprises, such as trading stores and a hotel were soon established in the village (Map 1).

The BBP continued to occupy the fort until they were withdrawn in 1900 (Hickman 1961:35). By this time the village had ceased to be a place of importance as the line of rail and main road to the north had shifted to pass through Francistown, more than 120 kilometres to the west. In addition, the threat from Boer forces skirmishing along the Bechuanaland and Transvaal border, during the South African War, was no longer considered to be a danger to the area. Once the fort and village had been abandoned people stopped using the original wagon road and the bush slowly reclaimed the area.

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Map 1: Macloutsie and Fort Matlapula (Source: Somerset undated)

Background to the Source Material

Although others have mentioned the cemetery and listed the names of those purported to be buried there (Denyer National Archives of Zimbabwe, HI 5/23/3/21; Hickman 1961:60; Somerset nd:20), no comprehensive study of the site appears to have been undertaken. We have, therefore, turned to original sources of information in an effort to identify those buried in the cemetery. This is combined with a critical review of secondary sources, both published and archival. As part of his duties Major RNL Denyer of the Bechuanaland Protectorate Police (BPP) in Gaborone compiled a report dated 29 August 1966 entitled 'Military and Quasi-Military Graves in Bechuanaland From the Earliest Days to 3rd August 1914' (National Archive of Zimbabwe (NAZ), HI 5/23/3/21). (In verifying Denyer's material we had personal communication with former member of the BPP Mike Leach on 10 December 2000). Our observation is that Denyer's report contains a number of errors and omissions and should not, we believe, be accepted as being correct without confirmatory evidence. Colonel Arthur Selwyn Hickman attested as a member of the BSAP on 1 August 1924, and he retired as Commissioner of Police 31 years later in November 1955. He was a noted amateur historian on the early colonial era

of Zimbabwe. However, his 1961 report on the Macloutsie cemetery contains several errors. The late Ilona Somerset (1943–2002) was a resident of Selebi Phikwe from the late 1980's until the date of her passing in 2002. An enthusiastic amateur historian, she spent several years researching Botswana's early colonial past and took a particular interest in Macloutsie. Her work on the cemetery, however, seems to have followed Hickman's 1961 report, together with additional reports from the books written by Gelfand and Stevens.

An important source for the names of members of the BBP, who died at Macloutsie, is a memorial plaque in St John's Anglican Church in Mahikeng (formally Mafeking). This is a nominal roll of the officers and men of the BBP who died between 1889 and 1896 (Table 1).

Table 1: Numbers, Names, Dates of Death and Age of the Service men

No.	Rank	Name	Date of Death	Age
1037	Trooper	Thomas Garra	2 November 1890	31
830	Trooper	Isaac Mills	24 November 1890	35
960	Trooper	Jacob Theis	15 January 1891	40
802	Trooper	Harry Dawson	9 February 1891	23
885	Trooper	George Fluke	28 June 1891	37
2067	Trooper	Henry AS Seale	28 Januar1892	28
-	Veterinary Sub Lt	Walter Bodilly	21 April 1892	32
873	Trooper	Levison J Jesson	10 October 1893	27

Contemporary BBP Annual Reports provide confirmatory evidence of some of the names of members of the police who died in the area. We have also consulted various death and estate registers. Unfortunately, these are not fully comprehensive, because the settlement seemed to have been at the margins of colonial bureaucracy. The earliest attempt at documenting those buried in the cemetery dates to 1936-1937. One version of 10 November 1936 is in the National Archives of Zimbabwe (NAZ, S246/228). The Botswana National Archives and Records Services (BNARS, S110/1/1) holds a later consolidated version. This memorandum, by an unknown author, dated 18 April 1937 reports '31 or more graves in the Macloutsie Cemetery'. The memorandum lists five graves marked with memorials (Table 2).

Information supplied by Thomas Oxden Willows and A Giese shows that there are several other people believed to have been buried at Macloutsie (Table 3). Troop Sergeant Major Thomas Oxden Willows appears on the BBP 1893 Matabele War Medal Roll, (copy in authors' possession). In 1895-1896 he was still serving with the BBP and was one of those who took part in the Jameson Raid debacle of 1895 (Rogers 2002:36). His name also appears on the BSAP nominal roll for the period prior to 1903 and although no rank is indicated, his regimental number was 182 and he served from 29 November 1896 to 15 November 1897, when he was discharged as 'time expired'. Albert Giese (1865-1938) discovered and pegged the first coalfield in northwest Zimbabwe in 1893 (Baxter & Burke 1970:171).

Table 2: Grave Designation, Names, Dates of Birth and Age of Service men

Grave	Name	Date of Birth	Age
B	Trooper John Garra of BBP	2 November 1890	31
C	Trooper Isaac Mills of BBP	24 November 1890	36
D	Trooper Henry William Dawson BBP	9 February 1891	23
E	Henry Rich of Matabele Relief Force	May 1896	-
F	Trooper George Fluke of BBP	9 February 1891	-

Table 3: Names of People believed to be buried at Mocloutsue

Names
Sergeant 'Kit' Seale
Two un-named transport riders
Un-named Dutchman
Trooper Van Vyke

In the same BNARS file (S110/1/1) there is a copy of a letter dated 7 November 1937 from the District Commissioner's Office, Francistown. The letter confirms that there was very little information available, with the only clue being contained in an 'old Order Book', a copy of which the authors have not located. There is, however, mention of names of six members of the BBP, five of whom we know from other sources did not die at Macloutsie. The same letter names three civilians, the information having been found in some 'old letter books' (Table 4). Hickman (1961:60-1) repeats these same names. His primary source was presumably this report, although Hickman provides no references. He also cites the BBP Regimental Orders dated 17 September 1894 to 1 December 1894, a copy of which the authors have not found.

Table 4: Number, Rank and Name, Company, Date of Death and Cause

No	Rank and Name	BBP	Date of Death	Cause
1161	Trooper J Somers	‘A’ Troop	26 September 1894	Drowned
1336	Trooper Fitzgerald	‘A’ Troop	4 October 1894	?
2030	Trooper G Dewhurst	‘G’ Troop	4 November 1894	?
1324	Corporal T Thornton	‘F’ Troop	2 November 1894	?
1614	Trooper Jones	‘E’ Troop	2 September 1898	?
2450	Trooper Watson	‘E’ Troop	18 November 1898	?
Civilians				
	Mr AH Clackrie		3 September 1898	?
	Mr HG Spyron		18 April 1899	?
	Mr TJ Revell		24 July 1899	?

The Site

At the cemetery, a rough stonewall with an entrance gate on the eastern side encloses the main burial area. This may have been put up in the 1890s or erected later by the Bechuanaland authorities (Figure 1).

Figure 1: The Cemetery Site

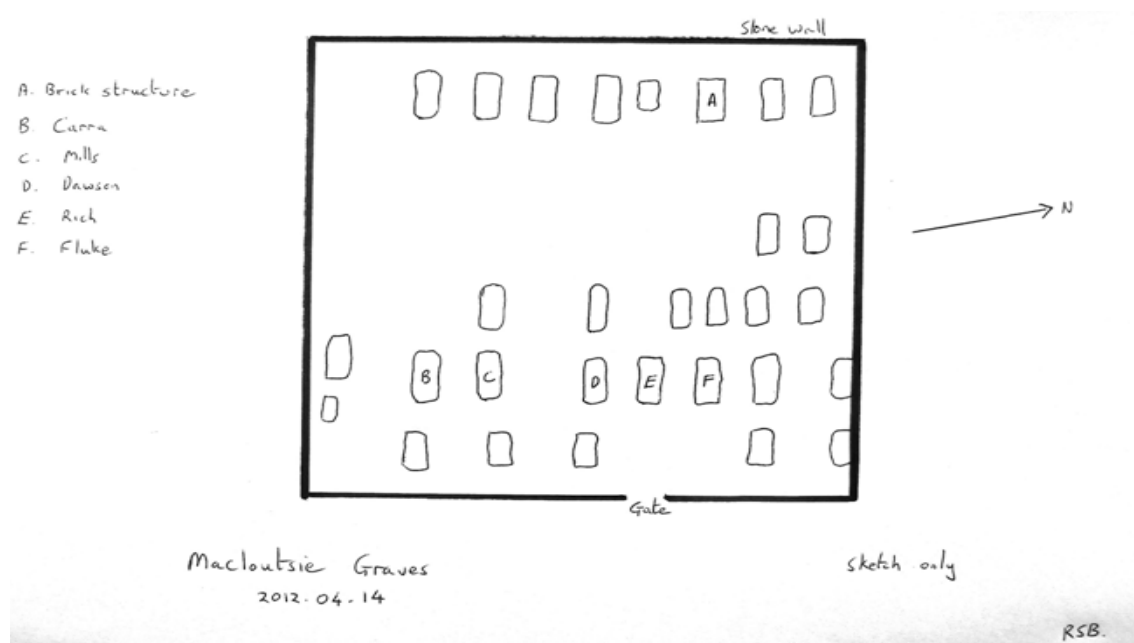


Source: Rob Burrett (2012)

In 1961 Hickman visited the site as leader of the Rhodesian Schools Exploration Society. A photograph taken at the time shows a neat and well-maintained area (Hickman 1961:38). In subsequent years the cemetery was neglected and at some point fell into disrepair and the original gate was removed (Somerset nd:24). In more recent times the cemetery has been secured and tidied up by the Botswana National Museum and Monuments. A larger area, which includes several additional graves outside of the stonewalls has been fenced and an information sign erected near the entrance (Figure 1). Sadly this is now faded and there is ample evidence of damage by both people and grazing animals.

Although the earliest documents found in the NAZ and BNARS, indicate 31 graves inside the walls, in 2012 only 30 were recognizable as graves. They are in five lines (Figure 2), all aligned east to west indicating Christian burials (Ayers 1987:13). Of these four are marked with iron headpieces, which are typical of BBP graves. The headpieces are identical to one on a police grave at Molotwane graveyard near Mochudi in the Kgatleng District and others in the military section of the Carrington Street Cemetery, Mahikeng. Unfortunately, the manufacturer of these iron grave markers is unknown.

Figure 2: Graves Inside the Stonewall



Source: Rob Burrett (2012)

It is of note that Hickman (1961:60-61) also reports only 30 graves in the cemetery. In addition he recognized seven others scattered outside the enclosure. Of the five identifiable graves located in the fourth line (Figure 2), four are marked with iron headpieces. These are fairly elaborate memorials and include the letters IHS. IHS is an acrostic from the Greek letters for fish, which is ICHTHYS, a symbol understood by the early church as the sign of Christ – Jesus (i), God’s (th) Son (y) and Saviour (s) (personal communication with W Cornell 26 August 2003). Two of these markers have in recent years been knocked down or fallen over and damaged. Botswana’s private Midweek Sun (14 June 2000:5) newspaper carried an article reporting the arrest of two men and a traditional doctor, who had dug up the ‘grave of a white colonial police officer at Bobonong’. They were facing charges for contravening the country’s Monuments and Relics Act. It has not been established which grave was disturbed or if others were similarly violated. Possibly it was this incident that damaged the headstones! A fifth grave is marked with a stone marker originally surmounted with a similar stone cross (Hickman 1961:61).

Somerset (nd:24) indicates that this sandstone cross was removed for repairs, although she is silent as to who had taken the cross away. Sadly it has not been returned.

In the first line of graves there is a large tomb constructed from burnt bricks. It has no identifiable marker and we are unable to speculate who may be buried in this grave. (Grave A in Figure 2 and Figure 3). All other graves are unmarked graves and are outlined with rocks or a few stones (Figure 4).

Figure 3



Source: Rob Burrett (2012)

Figure 4



Source: Mike Main (2011)

The graves outside of the stonewalls are probably the last resting places of non-whites who died at the settlement –those of mixed race, Cape Fingo, local tribesmen working at the garrison or itinerant Asian traders. Because of racial attitudes prevailing at the end of the nineteenth-century, details of the people, who occupy these seven graves, were not, as far as we are aware, recorded. One of these graves was described by Hickman (1961:61) as being small, possibly that of a child!

Identifiable Graves at the Macloutsie Cemetery

The following additional information relates to those people buried in the five marked graves (refer to Figure 2 for numbering).

Grave B: GARRA, John/Thomas (Trooper 1037 BBP)

The deceased's name appears as Thomas Garra on the memorial plaque in St John's Church, and as having died at Macloutsie on 2 November 1890. This conflicts with the name John Garra on the grave marker in Figure 5 below. We have been unable to establish which of the Christian names is correct.

Figure 5: John Garra's Tomb



Source: Mike Main (2011)

A report compiled by Major RNL Denyer in 1966 identified John Garra as a member of E Troop of the BBP, who died at Macloutsie on 2 November 1890 (NAZ, HI 5/23/3/21). Major Arthur Leonard (1896:114) records in his book the death from dysentery of an un-named BBP trooper sometime between 1 and 15 November 1890, at Macloutsie. Mother Patrick, a nursing sister in the local Macloutsie hospital wrote in her diary that 'just before the arrival of Lord Elphinstone's party (about this time) one man died of gastric fever – the second death since our arrival' (Gelfand 1964:44). Although no names are given, this may have been Garra.

According to Denyer, a second BBP Trooper (1037), John Garry appears on the memorial plaque in St John's Church and on the Long Roll is listed as a member of E Troop in the BBP, who died at Macloutsie on 2 November 1890 (NAZ HI 5/23/3/21). Denyer appears to have been mistaken; there is nobody named John Garry on the memorial. Unfortunately the Long Roll referred to has not been located. Denyer indicates that one of his sources was the 'Long Roll', whilst Hickman mentions BBP Regimental Orders (Hickman 1961:61). A South African amateur historian and researcher Otto Gysbert Reitz (1915-1994), who took an interest in the BBP, wrote: 'I have for years (unsuccessfully) attempted to locate the Regimental Order Books of the BBP, as well as the "Long Roll" I have heard reference to' (Reitz's personal communication to Somerset 13 February 1992). (Reitz's papers consisting of 32 boxes were bequeathed to the Public Library in Cape Town; MCS 79).

The Colonial Government Gazettes for British Bechuanaland volume vi, number 297 dated 23 September 1892 and volume ix, number 434 dated 3 May 1895 have a report for the Master's Office (Vryburg), which lists property belonging to deceased persons. It further confuses the issue by listing John Garry, late Trooper of the BBP, whose next of kin was named John Garry of Sheffield, England. Value of the estate was given as £23-9-2d. The gazette entries would appear to be clerical errors and this may be the source of Denyer's error.

Grave C: MILLS, Isaac (Trooper 830 BBP)

The name of Isaac Mills appears on the memorial plaque in St John's Church as having died at Macloutsie on 24 November 1890 aged 35. These details are in agreement with those on the grave marker (Figure 6), and Denyer's report also corroborates these facts. When and how the damage occurred to the upper section of the grave marker as shown below is unknown.

Figure 6: Isaac Mills Grave



Source: Rob Burrett (2012)

The nursing sister, Mother Patrick records in her diary that ‘from October to end of December (1890) two other men of the BBP died from the effects of alcohol (Gelfand 1964:44). The time frame suggests that one of the deceased would have been Mills, whilst the second person has not been identified. It is possible, therefore, this second person was an unnamed civilian, who is buried in one of the unmarked graves.

Grave D: DAWSON, Harry/Henry William (Trooper 802 BBP)

The name of Trooper 802 Harry Dawson appears on the memorial plaque in St John’s Church as having died at Macloutsie on 9 February 1891 at the age of 23. This is in conflict with the grave marker, which carries the name Henry William Dawson (Figure 7). We have been unable to establish the deceased’s correct Christian names.

Figure 7: Harry Dawson’s grave



Source: Rob Burrett (2012)

Denyer identified the deceased as Henry William Dawson, a member of E Troop in the BBP, who died at Macloutsie on 9 February 1891. According to Mother Patrick ‘Dr Vigne was greatly grieved by the first death under his care in the hospital, which took place in February [1891]. One of the men from an outstation was taken ill with dysentery [and] instead of sending a heliograph to that effect into camp, when the ambulance wagon would have been sent out for him; he rode the 25 miles in his weak state without off-saddling once. When he came he was utterly prostrate and after a week of suffering he died’ (Gelfand 1964: 45). The date suggests this would have been Dawson.

Grave E: RICH, Henry, Trooper Matabeleland Relief Force (MRF)

A Death Register entry held in the NAZ in Harare, records Henry Rich as having died from injuries sustained when he was run over by a wagon at Macloutsie in May 1896 (NAZ, JG 7/1/1/74). In his report on his visit to the site, Hickman (1961:61) said that the grave was marked at the base of sandstone cross: 'Henry RICH Trp. M.R.F. Died near Macloutsie May 1896'. Although the base is still there (Figure 8) the cross is missing (cf Somerset nd:24). Denyer also includes Rich's name in his report.

Figure 8: Henry Rich's grave



Source: Rob Burrett (2012)

The deceased's estate file held in Harare (NAZ JG 3/3/52/74) shows that Rich died on 4 June 1896, three miles from Macloutsie, having being run over by a wagon from which he fell off after it hit a stone, while travelling in the dark. His body was taken to the camp and buried there. The men of his troop had the grave marked. This date may be an error, reflecting when the report was made rather than the actual date of the death.

Grave F: FLUKE, George (Trooper 885 BBP)

George Fluke's name appears on the memorial plaque in St John's Church as having died on 28 June 1891 aged 37. The date of death conflicts with that of 9 February 1891 on the grave marker (Figure 9). The BBP Annual Report for 1891-92 includes a report on the death of Trooper Fluke at Macloutsie on 28 June 1891 from natural causes (National Archives in the United Kingdom (NAUK) C6829). We have been unable to establish the correct date of death, although we suggest that the marker is in error –the manufacturer mistakenly repeated the date of Trooper Dawson when casting the mould.

Figure 9: George Fluke's grave



Source: Mike Main (2011)

Other People Probably Buried in Unmarked Graves

Based on the evidence we have collected, we are confident that the following ten people died at Macloutsie and were buried in unmarked graves there.

BODILLY, Walter (Veterinary Sub-Lieutenant BBP)

His name appears on the memorial plaque in St John's Church as having died on 21 April 1892 at the age of 32. The BBP Annual Report for year 1892-93 includes the death of Veterinary Sub-Lieutenant Walter Bodilly, who died at Macloutsie on 21 April 1892 (NAUK: C6857).

GIBSON, David William (Armoury Sergeant 1478 BBP)

His name is included on the memorial plaque in St John's Church as having been killed in action on the Shangani River in Matabeleland on 10 December 1893 aged 29. Gibson's details are confirmed in the BBP's 1893 Matabele War Medal Roll. Main (1996:119), citing contemporary sources, reports that at the conclusion of hostilities, Gibson's remains were taken back to Macloutsie and buried with full military honours. A stone was later erected in the cemetery, although no marker is now evident.

HOLMES, Sydney E (Trooper 164 BSACP)

The Death Register held in Harare records Trooper H Holmes of the BSACP, as having died at Macloutsie Camp on 15 May 1890 (NAZ, JG 7/1/1/118). The deceased's initial has been recorded incorrectly. The associated Deceased's Estate File correctly records Sydney Edward Holmes as having died of dysentery at Macloutsie on 17 May 1890. His estate was valued at £42.9.9d (NAZ, JG 3/3/7/118). We are unable to explain the different dates of death in the two files. A fairly common cause of death was dysentery. This is a bacterial infection of the bowels, the symptoms of which are severe diarrhoea with blood and mucus (National Health Service 2011). At the time in the Macloutsie area, this was probably caused by poor sanitation and a contaminated water supply.

Leonard identified Holmes as the first person to die at Macloutsie on Sunday evening of 17 May 1890. He writes, 'Some poor fellow, who had just completed life's endless struggle, was being laid to his last earthly rest. Above the shouts and whip-cracks of the driver, we heard the shrill bugles sounding the point of war and the sharp rattle of musketry being fired over the grave' (Leonard 1896:25). Mother Patrick recorded in her diary: 'The first death at Macloutsie occurred on 22nd May. It was a case of fever and dysentery together. He had been here about four days in hospital when he died' (Gelfand 1964:43-44). The different date of death suggests that Mother Patrick may not have compiled her diary at the time.

Hickman identified the deceased as Trooper 164 SE Holmes of the BSACP who died at Macloutsie on 17 May 1890 (Hickman 1961:62; Sutton nd:14).

JESSON, Levison James (Trooper 873 BBP)

Jesson's name is included on the memorial plaque in St John's Church as Trooper 873, Levison J Jesson who died at Macloutsie on 10 October 1893 aged 27. The deceased is identified by Denyer as a member of 'E' Troop, of the BBP who died aged 27 at Macloutsie on 10 October 1893. The report indicates that details were obtained from the memorial plaque in St John's Church and the 'missing' Long Roll.

Stevens (1927:185) described the death in a wagon accident of BBP Trooper O'Connor, who was buried at Macloutsie. The time and place of death indicates that O'Connor was probably Jesson and it is presumed that Stevens had changed the name of the deceased in his book to protect the family from the unhappy circumstances of his death. The name O'Connor does not appear on the memorial plaque in St John's Church.

JONES, Henry (Trooper 1614 BSAP No. 1 Bechuanaland Division)

The BSAP No. 1 Division's Annual Report for 1898-99 included death at Macloutsie of Trooper H Jones on 23 August 1898 (BNARS: RC 4/20). The circumstances of his death are unknown. The BBP was established in 1885 and renamed the Bechuanaland Mounted Police (BMP) in 1896. The BMP became the BSAP No. 1 Division in 1897, but ceased to exist in 1903, when it was renamed as the Bechuanaland Protectorate Police (BPP). The name of Trooper 1614 Henry Jones appears on the 1893 BBP Matabele War Medal Roll. Denyer reports that Jones was a member of 'E' Troop of the BBP who died on 23 August 1898 and was buried at Macloutsie. Although Jones had served with the BBP, Denyer was incorrect in identifying him as a member of the unit when he died. Hickman is more correct in noting that Jones was a member of 'E' Troop of Bechuanaland Division of the BSAP, who died 23 August 1898 at Macloutsie.

In the 1961 report on his visit to Macloutsie, Hickman quotes from a list of 'Graves of Members of the Bechuanaland and Rhodesian Forces' that had been given to him by long-standing Bechuanaland colonial government official, Vivian Ellenberger. Under an entry for Macloutsie there is Trp 1614 H Jones 'E' Troop Bechuanaland Division BSAP who died on 23 August 1898 (Hickman 1961:61-62). Unfortunately we have not found this Ellenberger list. Vivien Frederic Ellenberger (-1977) was a civil servant in Botswana from 1915 to 1951, when he retired as the First Assistant

Secretary and Establishment Officer (Rey 1988:237). His father, Jules Ellenberger had been Resident Commissioner in Botswana in the 1920s.

McCLURG, JJH (Telegraphist)

The Death Register (NAZ JG 8/1/2/188) and Deceased Estate File (NAZ JG 3/3/12) entries held in Harare record the death of JJH McClurg a telegraphist, who died on 10 June 1892 at Macloutsie Hospital. In a letter written on 8 July 1892, Fr HS Kerr (SJ) of the Zambezi Mission wrote: 'The death of poor McClurg was sad enough. He had accomplished a long journey... half an hour before death the doctor left him well.... He seems to have died of simple exhaustion' (Letters & Notices CX11, July 1893).

There was a Trooper 743 McClurg in the BSACP who attested on 20 May 1891 as a telegraphist and was discharged on 30 November 1891. He transferred to the civil establishment on 1 January 1892. His occupation suggests that he was the same person who died at Macloutsie (Sutton nd:61).

SEALE, Henry AS 'Kit' (Trooper 2067 BBP)

Seale's name appears on the memorial plaque in St John's Church as having died at Macloutsie on 28 January 1892 aged 28. The BBP Annual Report for 1891-1892 includes a report on the death of Trooper Seale, who committed suicide at Macloutsie on 27 January 1892 (NAUK C6829). We are unable to explain the two different dates of death.

Many tombs have a large slab of rock positioned at the western end of the grave. Although unmarked, the slabs indicate the head of the grave. In a normal Christian burial, individuals are positioned on their backs east-west, with the head in the west facing the rising sun (Ayers 1987:13). Two of the graves, however, have this marker reversed, with the slab at the eastern end of the grave. We believe this reflects a reversal of the usual Christian tradition, so that the head of the deceased, on these two graves, is in the east. Such an alignment in that day and age was highly symbolic. Suicide was considered a sin, a breach of the natural way of things. Seale is likely to occupy one of these reversed graves.

THEIS, Jacob (Trooper 960 BBP)

Theis' name appears on the memorial plaque in St John's Church as having died at Macloutsie on 15 January 1891 at the age of 40. Theis' name was not included in any of the BBP's Annual Reports. This is not unusual however, for although the number of deaths of those serving was recorded, their names were not always given. The Colonial Government Gazettes for British Bechuanaland volume ix, number 434 dated 3 May 1895 lists property belonging to the late Trooper J Theis, BBP. This gave his next of kin as Jacob Theis 75 Old Kent Road, London. The value of the estate was £20-11-5d (NAUK, CO 451/1).

VAN WYK, George Borsina

The Death Register in Harare records the name of George Borsina Van Wyk who died on 4 June 1898 on the Marapary River although the certificate was signed at Macloutsie (NAZ, JG 7/1/5/263). There is some confusion as to the identity of this man. Based on the list of graves in Bechuanaland given to him by Ellenberger, Hickman includes an entry in his Macloutsie report for Trooper Van Wyk (BBP), who died between 1889 and 1893. Hickman speculates this could have been Trooper Van Wyk, who served in the BSACP (Hickman 1961:62). There was indeed a Trooper 188 NL Van Wyk in the BSACP. He attested on 28 January 1890 and was discharged on 10 February 1891 (Sutton nd:16). However, not only are the initials different, but there is no indication in the Death Register that Van Wyk was a policeman and there is also the major time variation (NAZ, JG 7/1/5/263). This suggests that they are two different people.

It is possible that Ellenberger based his list on an undated report by A Giese who said that he remembered the funeral of a 'Trooper Van Wyk' at Macloutsie (NAZ, S246/288). We believe that Geise may have been confused, making his statement many years after the event. The issue is further confused by Denyer who also suggests that Van Wyk was a policeman, basing his information on entries in the 'Long Roll' and 'Order Books' (NAZ, HI 5/23/3/21). We disagree and believe that Van Wyk was actually a civilian, possibly a transport rider, when he died and any suggestions that he was a policeman can be precluded.

PEACOCK, William

A person whose name has not featured in any previous reports is William Peacock, a prospector who was a member of John Willoughby's party. Peacock was found dead from a bullet wound in his wagon at Macloutsie on 19 May 1891. The only information we have is from the death register entry held in Harare (NAZ, JG 7/1/1/229). Given that this may have been suicide, Peacock may occupy the other reversed grave (see the discussion under Seale).

Additional Unconfirmed Reports, Possibly Macloutsie

Evidence regarding the names of other people said to have been buried at Macloutsie is fragmentary at best. In the absence of any corroborative reports, we have been unable to confirm any previously recorded accounts as being correct. Those that fall into this category include the following three people:

1. *CLACKRIE, AH*, a civilian male who died 3 September 1898.
2. *REVELL, TJ*, formally a Trooper (number 2427) of the BSAP No.1 (Bechuanaland) Division who died on 24 July 1899.
3. *SPYRON, HG* a civilian male who died 18 April 1899.

These three names appear in the letter compiled by the District Commissioner's Office, Francistown in 1937 (see Table 4 above) as well as in Hickman's report (1961:61-62) as a result of evidence supplied by Ellenberger. Hickman adds that Revell was a former policeman. We have been unable to find a BSAP No.1 Division nominal roll, if one indeed still exists, for the period prior to the South African War (1899-1902), so are unable to confirm the deceased's police service.

People Buried Outside the Walled Area

Although not always obvious as graves, Hickman reported that he saw seven graves outside of the walled cemetery area (Hickman 1961:60-61). We assume that the division was a racial one, reflecting the prevailing bias of the time. Given their separation from the others we believe that these may be the graves of various non-white people. Sadly we have been unable to establish the names of any of these people, but have located reports that may relate to two of these seven graves. The first record of these deaths is dated 20 May 1891. Mother Jacoba a Dominican Sister working as a nurse at the Macloutsie Hospital wrote in a letter addressed to a fellow Sister at Fort Salisbury in Mashonaland: 'This morning a native died here, (having) been brought here last Sunday night. He fell from a wagon and was run over by it. It had 5000 lbs weight on. He suffered most fearfully. He was once with our Bishop and Father Fanning in Grahamstown. On Monday he asked for a Crucifix that he may bear his pain better' (Gelfand 1964:61).

In another letter Mother Jacoba, while still working at the Macloutsie Hospital on 17 November 1892, and again writing to a Sister at Fort Salisbury, noted that 'We have some very bad cases of dysentery in hospital now. One man is dying, he has been thatching the hospital roof and just as he had finished, he got sick and now he is bad' (Gelfand 1964:120).

Those Not Buried at Macloutsie

We reject the following, previously listed as being buried at Macloutsie (see Table 4):

SOMERS, John (Trooper 1161 BBP)

His name appears on the BBP Memorial in St John's Church as having drowned in the Dry Hartz River on 26 September 1894. The BBP Annual Report for the year 1894-1895 reported that Trooper J Somers drowned in the Hartz River on 26 September 1894 (NAUK, C7944). The Hartz River is some 600 km south of Macloutsie, in what was then British Bechuanaland and is now part of the Northern Cape Province in South Africa. We have no reason to believe that Somers' body was moved north to a grave in the Macloutsie cemetery. Although the location of his final resting place is currently unknown, the most likely scenario is that he was buried not far from the place where he died.

FITZGERALD, Edward Charles (Trooper 1336 BBP)

His name appears on the BBP Memorial Plaque in John's Church which indicates that he died at Mahikeng on 4 October 1894 aged 31. There is a grave marker in the Carrington Street Cemetery, Mahikeng which reads: 'Trp Fitzgerald B.B.P. Died 4.10.1894'. It appears certain that Trp. Fitzgerald died at Mahikeng and is buried in the local cemetery and not at Macloutsie.

DEWHURST, Herbert (Trooper 2030 BBP)

His name is included on the BBP Memorial Plaque in St John's Church as having died in Gaborone (written Gaberones during the colonial period) on 4 November 1894. The BBP Annual Report for the year 1894-1895 shows that Dewhurst died in Gaborone on 4 November 1894 (NAUK, C7944). Dewhurst was identified by Denyer as a member of the BBP as being buried in Grave No. 20 in the Gaborone Cemetery (situated in the Village area). The grave is not marked with a memorial.

THORNTON, John (Lance-Corporal 1324 BBP)

His name appears on the BBP Memorial Plaque in St John's Church as having died at Mahikeng on 21 November 1894 aged 40. His name is also included in the BBP Annual Report for 1894-1895 as having died in Mahikeng on 21 November 1894 (NAUK, C7944). An entry in the Cemetery Register with the Mahikeng Museum records that Trooper Thornton died on 6 November 1894. We have been unable to resolve the conflict in the dates shown on the memorial plaque in the church and the cemetery register. There is a grave marker in the Carrington Street Cemetery which reads: 'Trp. Thornton BBP died 6.11.1894'.

In spite of the suggestion made by the Francistown District Commissioner's Office on 7 November 1937 and again by Hickman in 1961, we have no reason to believe that Thornton was buried at Macloutsie.

WATSON, Andrew (Trooper 2450 BBP)

Watson's name appears in the 1898 BSAP No.1 (Bechuanaland) Division's Annual Report (BNARS: RC 4/20) as having been killed in an accident in Francistown on 3 November 1898. In the old cemetery in Francistown opposite the Botswana Defence Forces (BDF) Camp there are two BBP memorials, of the same type used to mark the police graves at Macloutsie. Neither of these two markers bears a name and the identities of the people buried there have not been established. It is reasonable to believe, in view of the 1898 annual report, that one of them could be Trooper Watson.

Conclusion

In all we think that 37 people are buried in the cemetery at Macloutsie, 30 of European origin buried within the stone walled enclosure. This includes at least eleven policemen, one member of the Matabeleland Relief Force (MRF), three named civilians (one of whom has not previously been reported) and other civilians, as well as those outside the walled area. We suggest that previous reports available on the subject are not accurate in several respects, and should always be treated with caution. Our work is incomplete and further research is required to identify other people who may have been buried at the site.

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