

THE NATIVE CATTLE OF SOUTHERN RHODESIA.

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INTRODUCTION.

The native tribes of Southern Rhodesia have been in possession of domesticated cattle as far back as any historic record of them goes, and there is every reason to believe that this was so from most remote periods, long even before South Africa was known to the civilised world. In this respect we differ from North and South America and Australia, as these continents received their domestic cattle from the Old World within historic times.

The word "native" as here used is to be understood in the sense of cattle owned by natives prior to the occupation of the country by Europeans. This includes cattle brought in from outside, amongst which some sprinkling of European blood was included. The term native, then, does not imply that the cattle of the country originated here and nowhere else, nor that they were here in a wild state.

Of the scores of native tribes in Southern Africa, only a few have given their names to recognised breeds of cattle. Thus we have Zulu, Barotse, Angoni, Mashukulombwe and in Southern Rhodesia, Mashona, Matabele and Mangwato breeds.

THE MASHONA CATTLE.

The Mashona cattle, sometimes termed Makalanga, are characteristic of Mashonaland, and it is indicative of their universality and uniformity and probably of their ancient origin that no name is given to them as a breed by the natives, who know them only as *Ngombe* or *Mombe*, that is, cattle, or at most, as *Ngombe dza Maswina*, cattle of the Mashonas, to distinguish them from other cattle. This breed the Matabele name the *Amanjanja* or *Njanja*, being the small cattle they raided from the Mashonas in contradistinction to the larger breeds they procured elsewhere. The term is really applied to any small-sized cattle. In Victoria, Ndanga, Gutu, Chilimanzi and Chibi they are spoken of as *Ngombe dza Vakaranga*, meaning simply the cattle of the Makalanga people corresponding to the Matabele designation, *Inkomo eza Makalanga*.

DISTRIBUTION.

These cattle are found as the predominant breed throughout Mashonaland and in parts of Matabeleland, particularly in Melsetter, Chipinga, Chimanimani, Macequece, Umtali, Inyanga, Mrewa, Makoni, Darwin, Mazoe, Lomagundi, Goromonzi.

Marandellas, Charter, Chilimanzi, Selukwe, Gwanda, parts of Insiza, Gwelo and even in Matobos. They occur in a state of purity still throughout Belingwe, Chibi, Victoria, Ndanga, Bikita, Gutu, Mangwendi and Mtoko, and, it will be noticed, are still common over a large part of Matabeleland, where they were the cattle of the country previous to the Matabele invasion.

It is noteworthy that the boundaries within which the Mashona type of cattle are found are distinct. The eastern border, though it embraces part of Portuguese East Africa, is formed by a mountain barrier between the inland plateaux and the low coastal plain with a totally distinct climate and flora. The northern limit is the edge of the Zambesi valley and the southern border approximates to the edge of the Limpopo valley and to the Devuli River, a line not crossed by giraffe, which is frequent south of the river, but is not found north of it. To the west of the Umvukwe hills, the steinbok is not found, though plentiful on their eastern slopes, and the Mashona cattle seem never to have been numerous there either, so much so that the foundation stock of European farmers in the Lomagundi district were largely of zebu type from across the Zambesi. Southwards the boundary is fixed by the edge of the Sebungwe fly belts and the Shangani and Insiza Rivers, till the latter reaches the Limpopo valley. The presence of Mashona cattle beyond these limits can readily be traced to recent interference, except that they have always been found in the Matopo hills. Matabele raiding, trade with Portuguese East Africa, and the spread of farming has widened these boundaries. The Mashona cattle seem to have inhabited a vast country and to have been bounded only by the limits set by tsetse on east, north, west and south-east, and by dry country and desert to the south-west.

HISTORY.

The Mashona breed of cattle, as known to-day, have certainly occupied the part of the world in which it is found from a very remote period. There is no direct or traditional evidence from native sources that it has been introduced from elsewhere, but it seems particularly to be associated with the Warozwi nation, who, under the first of the Mambo dynasty, came from north of the Zambesi and peopled the land for long centuries before the Matabele dispossessed them. Probably, therefore, it had a tropical origin, and this seems likely from the facts that it more closely resembles native breeds found north of the Zambesi and that the native breeds found to the south and south-west of it are of a totally different stamp and, by comparison, are large, long limbed and adapted to arid and even desert conditions.

Some very early writers refer to cattle in Mashonaland. Jesuit missionaries in previously untranslated letters dated from Inhambane in 1560 are quoted by the Hon. A. Willmot (in 1890), as saying that, in that region "there is much poultry, very many fine cows, but fewer goats and sheep."

Astley ("Travels and Voyages," Vol. III, p. 396), in 1745, quotes de Faria, who, referring to Barreto's voyage to the Indian Ocean in 1569 says of Monomotapa, "This land bears rice and Indian wheat, has Abundance of all sorts of Cattle, Fowls and Gardening. Their chief care is Pasturage and Tillage."

Father Silveira, the first Christian martyr of the country, was, on various occasions presented with cows and oxen by "the king of Monomotapa."

De Barros, in one of the earliest references to Monomotapa, speaks of the people drinking the blood of their cattle, presumably as religious ritual, not for food. Purchas, at the beginning of the 17th century, describes the inhabitants of Monomotapa as raising herds of cattle.

The Mashona cattle appear to be the direct descendants of the original cattle owned by the oldest remaining native inhabitants of Southern Rhodesia, the Warozwi, and they have undergone no recent change in character, colour and appearance, so far as can be ascertained. Nothing is known of their origin or history and their present owners declare, no doubt correctly, that they were as they now are long before all subsequent immigrant native races reached Rhodesia. The actual origin is lost in obscurity, but there are vague and uncertain traditions amongst the natives that their forefathers brought these cattle with them from beyond the Zambesi. The Manyika tribes round Umtali relate that they brought their cattle with them when they came down from north of the Zambesi River, whilst other tribes in that region state that they brought cattle from Victoria and Gutu districts, but this was probably a recent event.

Minor influences have, no doubt, been at work to alter and produce local modifications of these cattle. Thus, in Chilizmanzi, it is said that after the rinderpest some cattle were reintroduced both from Portuguese East Africa and from the Transvaal by natives. Earlier than this, the natives in Victoria and Ndanga procured cattle from Matabeleland by trading during lulls between raids.

Again, about 1850, after much Matabele raiding and a severe famine, Bekita district was restocked from the north, principally from Gutu and Myanga.

The Mashonas, who from time to time were taken by the Matabele into semi-slavery, sometimes returned afterwards and brought cattle from the south and west into Mashonaland, thereby influencing the local stock. This accounts, for instance, for Matabele and other cattle amongst the Mashonas in Belingwe. In 1896, rinderpest swept the whole African continent, but a few chance areas escaped, such as the northern part of Chibi district, where to this day a particularly pure type of Mashona cattle are to be found.

As recently as about 1900, parties of natives travelled from Melsetter to North-western Rhodesia, bought cattle from the Mashukulmbwe natives and brought them into the Melsetter district. Originally Melsetter had but few cattle and these were

mostly carried off by the Matabele. After rinderpest, many districts were restocked from Victoria and Belingwe districts, which had largely escaped. In the north-western areas, near to the tsetse fly, as round Gokwe, the natives are only now beginning to acquire cattle.

NUMBERS.

One often hears of the enormous numbers of cattle owned by the natives prior to European occupation. The impression that the whole country was teeming with cattle is due probably to the fact that the earliest visitors to the Matabele, traders and missionaries, were detained or located at the very places where cattle were chiefly concentrated, round Bulawayo, Inyati, Umzingwane and other of Lobengula's cattle posts. It is more than doubtful if there were many cattle in the rest of the country, owing to constant raiding of Mashonaland and Manicaland by the Matabele.

Official estimates at the time of the occupation put the number then at about half a million, which was reduced to about 5 per cent. of that figure or 25,000 by rinderpest between 1896 and 1898, but, as in those days, the natives were very averse to having their cattle counted, no reliable figures are available. Fourteen years later, in 1911, the figure was still under half a million, although, in addition to undisturbed natural increase, there had been considerable importations of breeding stock. By 1917, the figure had risen to upwards of one million and there are well over two million head to-day in Southern Rhodesia, half being still owned by the natives.

OWNERSHIP.

The chief tribes to-day owning Mashona cattle are the ancient Warozwis, Mashonas proper or Wazezuru, Makalanga, Makorikori, Shangaans and Vandau, as well as Amandebele (Matabele) and numerous unimportant small clans or septs. No native tribes are to-day without cattle, but those mentioned above are more especially rich in them. The Mashona breed has been distributed through the marriage custom known as *lobola* far beyond its earlier boundaries and has thus become mixed with other breeds. Purchase by and from ranchers and farmers has further tended to spread it and blend it with European breeds also. It is, therefore, true to say that, fundamentally, the two million head of cattle in Southern Rhodesia to-day are built up from an ancient breed of fixed type located here and famous long before the advent of Mziligazi and his Matabele hordes.

BRANCHES OF THE BREED.

The Matabele name Amanjanja or 'Njanja, signifying small cattle, seems to have given rise to some confusion. The term has been applied to cattle, especially from Chibi, where a very pure type of Mashona cattle is still to be found, and, further, it has been referred to the cattle of the Wajanja,

a tribe of traditionally recent origin, inhabiting the south of Marandellas and east of Charter districts and Buhera, and the cattle kept by them, described by the same name, are, according to information received, slightly—if at all—different from the usual Mashona type, but, if obtained from that tribe, called by their name. There seems to be no ground for regarding them as a distinct breed or branch of the breed, and their want of size and substance corresponds with the poorness of the veld on which they run. The Mtoko district probably produces the smallest class of Mashona cattle, though the first crosses from them are an immense advance on the dams. In Marandellas district, there are a few small cattle termed Kasiri, now almost extinct, which may have been a distinct breed. It is a well authenticated fact that, at the time of the British occupation, the Mashonas, then systematically making their huts amongst the rocks as a defence against their enemies, used to keep their cattle in caves on the kopjes and frequently within their huts at night, the animals being, as a rule, so small as to be able easily to get in at entrances no larger than those of to-day, though to do so some of the bigger oxen had to get down on their knees and put one horn through at a time, having learnt the way gradually from the time they were calves.

This is mentioned by Oates in his description of the country in 1873. Once inside they were tied by the leg to prevent them from interfering with the other stock or treading on the family. From this it is clear that the herds were not large or numerous. Mashonaland was kept short of cattle by periodic raiding by Matabele and Shangaans. The Mashona cattle of to-day are apparently unchanged in form and type except in so far that, with freer interchange in peaceful modern times, size has perhaps increased.

The cattle kept by the Shangaans in the south-east of Gutu and Ndanga districts are indistinguishable from the Mashona in form and colour, but are considered to be a larger stamp. These natives are, like the Matabele, a branch from the Zulus who left Zululand at the same time as Mziligazi, but independently of him, and, passing through what is now the eastern Transvaal, ultimately occupied, under Gungunyana, the Sabi Valley below the confluence of the Sabi and Devuli Rivers. Much of this region was infested with tsetse fly until rinderpest in 1896, and has only since that date been populated by cattle. The Shangaans have long maintained intercourse with the south and are believed to have used bulls, probably grade Frieslands and Afrikanders obtained from the Northern Transvaal and stolen from early hunters, whereby they have somewhat improved the type of cattle they obtained from the neighbouring Makalanga tribes.

FORM.

If small, the so-called Mashona breed is generally well-shaped and stocky in its better examples, but, from lack of

systematic selection, is variable, and weedy specimens are not infrequent. Characteristically, the Mashona is well proportioned with fine bones, shapely head, moderately long neck and rather rough sloping shoulders, fine withers and a prominent chine, goose rump and narrow quarters. The barrel is relatively round and roomy though lacking in beef qualities, the limbs clean and flat, as in Jerseys. The leg is short in good specimens but long in the weedy and light ones. The head is short, triangular and cleanly chiselled, broad in the face, neat in the muzzle and lean in the cheek, the eye prominent, large and intelligent, placid in expression but not dull, and very different from the small, sunken protected eye of the desert breeds, such as the Africander.

The goose rump, as a rule, disappears in the first cross, which is generally the greatest step of any towards the European breed. The tail is long and the skin is covered with smooth short, glossy hair. The carriage is gay, the walk free and active, and the breed has a characteristically alert appearance. Of course, there is a considerable range in form due to lack of any standard or ideal. Indeed, considering the conditions of breeding and rearing and frequent change of ownership, it is surprising to what extent a distinct type is apparent, although this uniformity is tending to disappear through intermingling of cattle of European and other extraneous origin. In describing their cattle the Makalanga apply the term *Rusiri* to any long-legged, thin, flat-sided cattle; and the word *Sinyanguru* to any big-framed animal. These words are not names of breeds.

WEIGHTS.

The Mashona, though of good conformation, is not a pronounced beef type. The carcass is small, the full-grown fat ox weighs about 300 to 400, averaging 350 pounds; dressed weight rarely exceeds 450 but may achieve a maximum of 500, or very exceptionally 550 pounds, and cows average 300 to 350 and may attain 400 up to 450 pounds, but in some districts only 250 to 275 pounds is usual. Larger frames are found on richer land or where some infiltration of blood of larger breeds has occurred, and such impure animals may run up to 650 and even 700 pounds dressed weight, when fat and of an advanced age. The breed is very slow in coming to full maturity. Oxen are generally not regarded as mature till six or seven years, and go on growing until 10 years old, and the weights given above are much influenced by age. Thus, up to five years old the ox will hardly give more than 300 pounds dressed weight, and higher weights are only reached at greater age. The forequarters are particularly light and lacking in flesh.

COLOURS.

The Mashona cattle are, and apparently always have been, of every colour, except roans and brindles. Many peculiar markings are characteristic, and, in this respect, they are strik-

ingly different from European breeds with their fixed and limited range. The Mashona is not by nature a cattle man and he describes his cattle by the colour only and not with the wealth of detail used by the Matabele. Cattle are not bred for any particular colour or marking. The preponderating colour certainly is black, but red is also very common, also mixed black or white, red and white in various combinations, while black and tan merging into each other with a mealy mouth is a very frequent and characteristic colour. Occasionally white, dun, fawn, grey, blue-grey, yellow and slate, also black and white speckled, and red and white speckled are met with. The spirit bulls or oxen, reserved in honour of the dead and for sacrificial purposes, are invariably black, as also are cattle consulted as oracles for family matters and rain making. Nowadays such animals are no longer excluded from sale, but, if sold, are replaced by other black cattle. The colour of mucous membranes, such as those of the nose and eyes, varies with the colour of the hair, but is more frequently slate or black than of a flesh pink, and may also be mottled. The colour of the skin under the hair varies similarly. The coat is always short and, in health, glossy, never long, curly or wavy.

HORN.

The horn of the Mashona is, within certain limits, of characteristic form. It is circular in section, not oval, and varies from perhaps 18 inches to 24 inches in length in the female, usually of a uniform curve, erect, elegant and stylish, sweeping upwards and tapering continuously to a very sharp point. The curve is generally symmetrical and graceful. In old cows it may develop a backward turn and incline to be wide but never like the Africander or European breeds, except, perhaps, somewhat reminiscent of the Ayrshire horn. In the bull and ox the horn is thick at the base, often several inches in diameter, coarser and shorter, stronger and less curved than in the female, but with a useful curve for defence or offence. Usually the horn is white or waxy at the base, but the points are black and shiny. Polled, that is hornless cattle, termed "*Izuma*," are frequent, and there is an impression that such animals are particularly inclined to maintain their condition and to fatten better than others; but these hornless cattle are not a distinct breed or strain and often have horned offspring, or vice versa.

MEAT.

The carcass, if small, is fairly compact and neat. There is little depth of flesh especially on the forequarters, and the rump is often deficient, also there is a marked want in the rounds and undercut of the loin. The bone is light, and normal carcasses dress from 50 to 55 per cent. The meat tends to be somewhat dark or dry and the fat, which has a yellowish tinge, is not well distributed through the flesh, but is laid on outside the muscles and in the caul. The grain of the meat is fine and the flavour

excellent. The beef is not equal to that of European breeds or of grades and can only be described as of medium quality.

MILK.

The milk of the Mashona cattle is small in quantity, but generally adequate for the rearing of the calf, and not much—if any—more. Milking by hand is a process involving much effort and little result, and is practised amongst the Mashonas only for domestic requirements. It is constantly averred that the milk of native cattle, both Mashona and Matabele, though scanty, is extremely rich. This impression, though universal, is, curiously enough, not borne out by such analyses as have been made. Thus, the milk of nine native cows examined in January, 1922, by the Government Dairy Expert, near Plumtree, showed an average of barely 3 per cent. butterfat and only one-third of a gallon of milk for each. Another herd in Marandellas, European owned, but chiefly native cattle, examined in January, 1921, on three consecutive days gave no test above 3.1 per cent. Individual cows will, no doubt, vary, but the fair test is the mixed milk derived from a number of cases. The point cannot be regarded as finally settled and further investigations should be conducted.

DRAUGHT.

The Mashona ox is a splendid draught animal. From ancient times he has been much handled by natives in the kraals and kept in small lots with always a native looking after him. He was originally, and is still, used for pack and as a riding animal, also for pulling small native sledges, but has only been used in wheeled vehicles within the past thirty years. The Mashona ox is characteristically docile and tractable, and, therefore, quiet to train, whilst the small size makes him easy to handle. They have hard hooves and, though short in the leg, they are active and quick in all their movements and possess great powers of endurance under arduous or adverse circumstances. They have great staying capacity and are very patient—as they would need to be. They maintain good condition whilst working hard, and seem capable of filling themselves with food off the veld more rapidly than grade stock and so need a shorter time at the outspan. They lack the weight of Africanders, Mangwatos or grades for heavy loads, hence longer spans are wanted for such work, but on account of their many virtues they are, where known, favoured both for road transport and for farm work. It cannot be claimed with any degree of truth that they were bred for wagon transport as this was unknown until the advent of the white man, a comparatively recent occurrence in the history of the breed.

AGE.

It is generally agreed that the age to which cows ordinarily live is very high, and it is remarkable how

long animals may go on after they have lost all their teeth, which says much for the nature of the herbage as well as the longevity of the breed. Cows live normally up to 15 or 16 years, often over 20, and a case is known of a cow which reached 27 years and calved regularly to the last, and other cases are recorded of cows of 26 years of age. Working oxen are frequently met with which are known to be 16 years old and more though 12 years is an ordinary life. Undoubtedly Mashona cattle in Rhodesia live longer than do European ones. Oxen are not grown out till 7 or 8 years, though usually fit for slaughter much earlier.

FECUNDITY.

Heifers may give their first calves before they are two years old, and almost always before they are three, and cows ordinarily go on calving till about 16 years old, or more, commonly giving ten to fifteen calves. Authenticated cases are recorded of cows giving 18 and even 25 calves in their lifetimes. As regular and persistent breeders, the Mashona cow cannot be surpassed. The cows are very prolific and normally give calves regularly every ten or eleven months or practically once every year. A safe calving average would be over 80 per cent. and in many cases 100 per cent. would be achieved.

HARDINESS.

As is only to be expected from an ancient and indigenous breed, the Mashona beast is extremely hardy in its own country and thrives where an imported beast would starve. They can stand extremes of summer and winter weather, drought and excessive wet seasons, and it is extraordinary how they retain their condition during adverse spells. The crude native methods of handling prove how hardy the breed must be; weaklings could not endure it.

RESISTANCE TO DISEASE.

The opinion is general that native stock are, on the whole, more resistant to disease than European breeds. They certainly appear to suffer less than improved cattle from redwater and gallsickness, and epizootics appear sooner to lose their virulence. They seem to acquire immunity to introduced diseases more rapidly than do cross-breeds or foreign breeds. Thus, quarter evil has less effect upon them and disappears after a smaller mortality and without preventive or curative measures being taken.

TEMPERAMENT.

Mashona cattle from long close association with their owners are tame, placid in disposition, and quiet to handle, though if left to run unkraaled, become like other cattle, shy and wary. They are particularly easily handled by natives. At calving time the cows are apt to be wild and exhibit a primitive tendency to hide their offspring for the first few days. The bulls are rarely treacherous or dangerous.

TREATMENT.

The Mashona people, to use a generic term covering widely distinct races, show little interest or knowledge of cattle and regard them mainly as a form of currency and an indication of wealth. Ownership is not permanent and cattle are used chiefly for the purpose of acquiring wives, ten head being formerly the usual *lobola*, though now seven are often given along with some small stock and other considerations. The Mashonas possess an intimate knowledge of the medicinal virtues of herbs, roots and bark and use these for their cattle. Generally speaking, these drugs are similar in action to corresponding materials known to us, and in use are in more convenient form whether it be as purgatives, laxatives, diuretics, emollients, astringents, and so on. The cattle live in close contact with their owners, herded in small lots of a few head only, kept in the kraal for sixteen or more hours out of the twenty-four, milked, worked as draught stock, pulling sledges, carts or wagons and ploughs, ridden, or loaded with packs, and of late years, generally dipped once a week. All this intimate handling tends to keep them very tame.

THE MATABELE CATTLE.

The Matabele cattle, *Inkomo eza Mandabele*, originate from the blend of many stocks and are an admixture of many strange strains. Though commonly used, the term "breed" in speaking of the cattle owned by the Matabele is scarcely correct, since they are of a very mixed derivation, so recently collected and amalgamated that the original types are known and distinguished. and they possess no common characteristics distinguishing them as a breed, as is the case with the Mashona cattle. According to their origin, the Matabele distinguish quite a number of different breeds which are combined in their cattle, the enumeration of which reflects the history of the nation.

HISTORY.

Umziligazi, when he fled from Zululand (1828), is said to have brought with him a number of cattle from Zululand, and his impis collected more on his way through Natal, the Cape, Free State, Transvaal and Bechuanaland. On arrival in what is now known as Matabeleland, about 1838 or the early forties. cattle of the Mashona type were taken and others from across the Zambesi, and later on in Lobengula's time (1868-1892), cattle from Ngamiland as well. These were inter-bred to form what are known as the Matabele cattle, which, though not an ancient breed, may certainly claim to have been brought together by a most rigorous process of selection, which was continued by systematic raiding up to 1890, the date of the occupation by the British South Africa Company, when it ceased abruptly and permanently.

The Matabele themselves, like their cattle, are not an old or pure race. The Matabele consisted in part of the followers

of Mziligazi (the Abezansi); in part of those who joined them in their northward migration (the Abenhla), and in part of Swazi, who amalgamated with them on their reaching the end of their peregrinations, and finally of admixtures of the older local tribes whose women they carried off (Makalanga, Abarozwe, etc.). Matabele cattle are still to be found in the region in which the Matabele finally settled down. Their habitat lies to the south of the Shangani River, westwards of the Insiza River, within approximately the western borders of the Shangani and Gwai Native Reserves, and to the south it borders on the Kalahari and down the Ramaquabane River and the valley of the Limpopo. Within this area large sections, such as the Matopos, are, however, occupied by Mashona cattle. The boundaries are, of course, nowhere sharp and a transition from one class of stock to another is generally to be found. Thus quite a few Matabele cattle are to be found in Belingwe.

The purest or most nearly pure Matabele cattle to-day are probably those found at Matibis, because rinderpest missed these cattle when they were in Belingwe in the hands of Mashlashlene, a brother-in-law to Lobengula and father of Maduna. These were true "king's cattle," in colour chiefly "intusi" and "iwaba" and with little or no Mangwato blood in them.

The great majority of the Matabele cattle, which so impressed the early pioneers, disappeared with the rinderpest in 1896-98. These cattle, described as larger than the cattle found amongst the natives to-day, were products of crosses of many native breeds, principally those of the Bechuanas and Mashonas, but also of the Basutos, Barotse and Boers.

BREEDS USED.

The following are the different races known to have gone to form the cattle of the Matabele:—

(1) *Zansi* cattle which came up with the Matabele from the south. They may have been the original stock with which Mziligazi fled from Zululand and were of all colours, good stamina and good milkers.

(2) *Amabula*, *Ibula* or *Amabuna*, (Boer), cattle, captured on the northward journey and said to be of two types, the one thick-set red cattle with white faces and long horns, the second *Imofu* or *Amofa* (Dutch "moff"), a heavy animal, red, with small horns and reputed to be Shorthorn-Africander cross or perhaps Devon-Africander cross. It is doubtful whether the Dutch settlers in the Transvaal in 1830 or thereabouts had cattle of these European breeds, but it is a point to be investigated, as also is the derivation of the word "moff."

(3) *Amabowe* or *Mambowe*. These were Mangwato cattle, obtained by raids on the Bamangwato Bechuanas, which may be regarded as a true and distinct breed and as such will be dealt with separately. The term seems to have been loosely used for any Kalahari cattle.

It is apparently of the Amabowe cattle that the following tale is told by Mr. W. Posselt of Felixburg:—

“During the migration of the Matabele from the south, they lost, whilst passing through Bechuanaland, a number of their cattle, taken from them by Sekuni and his people, who lived in the region of Lake Ngami. Mziligazi, before he died, directed Lobengula to recover them. Lobengula sent one of his indunas, Ma Nyu, on this mission, directing him to fetch his father's cattle ‘from the place where you can catch the sun with your hand as he sets,’ the far west. This the impi went and did, suffering great hardships and casualties in the process, but bringing back about 5,000 head, not of the small-horned Zulu cattle, which had been stolen from them originally, but a breed described picturesquely as being so tall that they could be milked by people standing instead of squatting, and with ribs so thick that they contained marrow, whilst a dead beast could be seen for miles by its great length of horn. In many the horns turned downwards and so far that the cattle could not eat short grass nor drink in shallow water, and therefore largely ate the river reeds and were watered in deep pools.”

My informant, Mr. Posselt, often saw such cattle and noticed the worn ends of the down-turning horns. The base of the horn was so wide that dogs round the kraals used them to rear their pups in. This raiding of the Ngami cattle took place between 1876 and the early eighties.

The foregoing statement has recently received the following confirmation from Mr. Stanley Jackson:—

“Mr. Posselt's information is verified by my head manager, Ntelo, who says he remembers the long-horned cattle with thick ribs containing marrow and with horns turned downwards so far that the cattle could not feed on short grass or drink in shallow water. He remembers using horns as milking utensils and says that one horn would hold more milk than several boys could drink.

He says that there were two distinct raids through the western deserts, but one of these raids resulted in only a few cattle being captured.”

(4) *Amanjanja* or *Njanja*. These have been already dealt with as the Mashona breed, which were largely stolen by the invaders and the word was used in contradistinction to “*amaboula*” and “*amabowe*,” for describing any small and stocky beast. They were taken from all the Maswina tribes, particularly from Gutus, Chibis, Zimutus and Siweshwes.

(5) *Inkomo eze Nkosi*. The Matabele Royal cattle are supposed to have been bred from the original cattle brought out of Zululand by the Matabele, inter-bred with larger cattle from Khama's country. Khama's cattle, in turn, are believed to have been improved by bulls of Africander type, strayed or stolen from Boer treks which migrated from the Transvaal in the early fifties, and went on past Lake Ngami into Angolaland, where their descendants are still to be found. These “king's cattle” were larger than the ordinary Matabele stock by fully 150 pounds in the mature ox and were mainly whitish in colour, which is otherwise unusual in native cattle. But Lobengula seems to have kept “royal” herds of several pure breeds of “looted” cattle.

(6) *Kavuvu* (*Kwarovu*). These were cattle raided from the Mashukulumbu tribes across the Zambesi River, were very small but very hardy cattle and fair milkers. They were chiefly black

or black and white but of all colours and had large horns. Is the word "*Kavuvu*" connected with what we call the Kafue river? These cattle were kept as a royal herd for the king by Gambo and, though almost annihilated by rinderpest, they are still to be found in the Bulalima Reserve.

(7) *Mpezeni* cattle. These were a breed from across the Zambesi, named after the chief of an Angoni tribe, near Fort Jameson, North-eastern Rhodesia, said to be descended from an impi which fled from Lobengula. They were small cattle with long horns and of all colours but mostly black. Lobengula kept a "royal" herd of them.

(8) *Barotse*. These are long legged cattle of which comparatively few were obtained by raiding though subsequently the cattle of the Wankie district have largely been recruited by purchase from this source.

(9) *Zebu* blood is not discernible in Matabele cattle, and it is most doubtful if any such exists. It is said that ten Angoni humped cows, spoken of as "*Ndiya*," black with white muzzles, speckled and brindled, accompanied the ten Queens who came to Lobengula from Gazaland. Only three proved in calf, and, all being heifers, the breed died out. (W. E. Thomas.) The Matabele also have a word "*Malundu*" for Angoni humped cattle.

(10) *Ndawanas* are a very long horned, lanky desert breed, taken from Sechelli's people in Ngamiland and characteristically of the marking known as "*ikone*," that is, red or black body with white along the back and white faces, also often speckled. Some are quite white. Some cattle are still known and regarded as *Ndawanas*. They are larger than the ordinary Matabele cattle, mature oxen weighing 650 to 700 lbs. dead weight, though otherwise not dissimilar to them and now much mixed with them and with Mashona cattle through the process of *lobola*.

(11) *Polled Ngami*. Ngamiland provided a large black polled type, of which some were kept apart as a "royal" herd.

There is the legend (can it be confirmed?) that Queen Victoria sent Lobengula a pure white shorthorn bull. The resulting calves were disappointing, and a witch doctor advised Lobengula that the object of the gift was to damage his herds, so that the bull was destroyed, but some of his progeny left their mark. (John Austen.) Then there is the story of a gift to Lobengula by Rhodes of six (?) Herefords, which are also supposed to have influenced the king's cattle. To test their merits compared with native cattle, Lobengula put in an equal number to fight the imported bulls and they killed them, thus conclusively proving their superiority in certain respects. Lobengula also heard of big horned cattle with mouse coloured muzzles round Lake Nyasa and sent an impi in 1893 north to bring them. but after crossing the Zambesi, they took smallpox and never got the cattle. Lobengula seems to have been a great collector of cattle, keeping the different kinds separate and sending them out to various kraals to be kept for him, forming "Royal."

Mashonas, Mangwato, Kavuvu, Mpezeni and Polled Ngami herds. Such cattle were all termed *izikomo ze nkosi* to distinguish them from *izikomo ze masunga*, the private property of his subjects. Later on these became blended.

The Mavenda introduced cattle in early days from the Transvaal and these have left their mark in the better class of stock owned by these natives. During and after the Boer War natives brought in a number of stolen cattle from the northern Transvaal and these have been scattered amongst them, and added to the confusion of types met with.

Matabele cattle are still to be found throughout all parts of Matabeleland except where tsetse fly exists, but they are, after these vicissitudes, no longer of very distinctive character nor equal to their ancient reputation. Rinderpest left few of the original Matabele cattle alive.

Selous, in his book, "Sunshine and Storm in Rhodesia," p. 255, writes:—

"In the early part of this year (1896) there were over 100,000 head of cattle, all sleek and in excellent condition, in Matabeleland, but when it closes I think it is very doubtful if 500 will still be left alive in the whole country. Even this loss is small as compared with that sustained by Khama and his people, who were the largest cattle holders in South Africa and whose loss, it has been computed from reliable data, exceeds 800,000 head of horned cattle."

In the Umzingwane district after the rinderpest only seventy cattle were left. Matabeleland was restocked with cattle from other parts, largely from Belingwe, so that many of the native cattle to-day is of the Mashona type.

Previously, pleuro-pneumonia had levied a heavy regular toll, but since the rinderpest swept the country, lung-sickness has not reappeared, all infection having apparently been destroyed with the cattle that died of the plague. Since then East Coast Fever has devastated the country in parts and at intervals. The exchange of cattle for purposes of *lobola* has still further led to the disappearance of original types. Generally speaking, the cattle found to-day in the hands of the natives in Matabeleland are not very different from the Mashona beast, but are superior in size and form, heavier by 100 pounds or more of dressed weight when mature, larger in frame, and thick-set, with more powerful, if rather long, legs, a larger head and heavier more spreading horn. They are more squarely built, and have thinner and less wide-spreading horns than these. Red is perhaps more frequent than other colours, though they show no predominant or distinctive coat, in fact, the Matabele cattle are so variable as to render any description liable to criticism as not characteristic.

The Mashona speak of cattle simply by their colour, but the Matabele had and still have many distinctive descriptive words for cattle according to marking as well as tinge, the same terms as are also used by the Zulus of Natal. A few of them are as follows:—

Ilunqa: black and white (like the characteristic Friesland mark); *Iwaba*: black with white flanks (witlys); *Intusi*: red

with white flanks (roi witlys); *Ingoo*: red and white; *Ihwanca*: speckled; *Impofu*: fawn, like an eland; *Impemvu*: red with white face, sides, belly, legs, tail and whisk; *Iputunga*: red with white face and brisket, like a Hereford; *Umtaka*: dark dun; *Intenjane*: light dun, vaal (like a Kiwiki); *Nyama*: black ox; *S'Magasa*: black cow or heifer; *Mbomvu*: red ox; *Inhlamvugase*: red cow or heifer; *Inkone*: black or red sides with white ridge on back and belly, speckled edge between (Kreus); *Amaganu*: mealy mouthed muzzle in ox; *Maganukazi*: mealy mouthed muzzle in cow or heifer, usually found on a black animal with tan tinge at points.

THE MANGWATO CATTLE.

The Mangwato is a distinct type, deserving of the distinction of a breed, not to be confused with Matabele or Makalanga. It is found particularly in the south and west of Gwanda district, in the southern end of Bulalima-Mangwe and across the border to the south of Tuli also. This breed is one which contributed its share to the Matabele, and was in existence long before the advent of that warrior race. Mangwato cattle are large framed, the fat oxen averaging 600 lbs. dressed weight. They stand on long, strong limbs, and carry very widespreading, thick, heavy horns. They make heavy, powerful trek oxen of great endurance, and the carcass is of good shape and quality, though maturity is only reached at eight or nine years. The cows yield, as native breeds do, a good quantity of rich, creamy milk, and generally furnish about ten calves. They show a resistance to the common diseases and probably possess some degree of inherited immunity. Red or red and white colours predominate, though most colours are found and they show that fixity of type which is characteristic of a long established breed.