

# NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF ZIMBABWE

## 50TH ANNIVERSARY 1935-1985

Issued 18<sup>th</sup> September 1985

*(Extract from the Philatelic Bureau's Bulletin No 4 of 1985)<sup>2</sup>*

In September 1985 the National Archives of Zimbabwe celebrates its 50th anniversary. Founded in 1935, the organisation has developed from small beginnings into the multifunctioning national historical documentation centre of today.

The collections take the form of official documents, papers of individuals and organisations, oral history tapes, photographs, maps, films and sound recordings. Additionally, there is a comprehensive national reference library; galleries for historical exhibitions and reading rooms for research use which are open to the public.

The first pair of stamps depicts notable historical figures of Zimbabwe. On the 12c denomination is Mutapa Gatsi Rusere (1589-1623), drawn from imagination but incorporating contemporary artefacts. This representative of the Mutapa dynasty, ruler of Mashonaland and the Zambezi area, is respected for resisting Portuguese exploitation with some success. Also illustrated are a 17th-century Mutapa's seal and part of a document concerned with Portuguese-Mutapa relations. Copies of both items are in the National Archives.

The 18c stamp shows Lobengula, head of the Ndebele state (1870-1894), based on a sketch by E A Maund, 1889. Lobengula was confronted by similar pressures to those facing the Mutapa, but taking the form of British imperial expansion, by which the Ndebele nation was eventually overrun. Lobengula's official elephant seal and part of the Moffat Treaty of 1888 are also shown. The original portrait, seal and document can be seen at the National Archives



E A Maund's sketch in  
National Archives

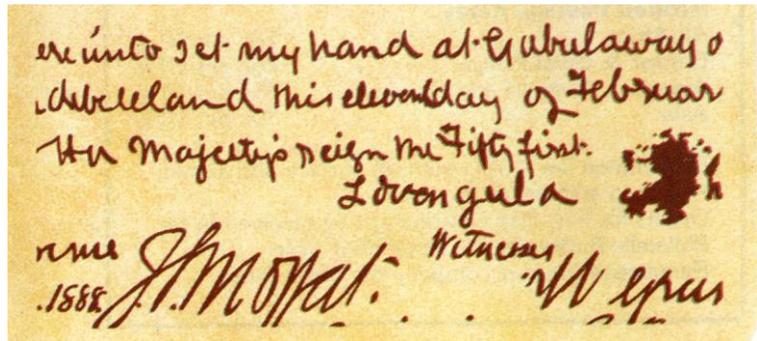
The second pair illustrates aspects of the institution today. On the 26c stamp is the Exhibition Gallery displaying some of the nation's historical treasures, arranged to illustrate the country's development from prehistoric times to the present

The 35c value shows part of the National Archives complex opened in 1961, the building was one of the world's finest purpose built archives. It is still remarkable today for its imaginative architecture (intended to suggest ancient Zimbabwean stone-building) and for its setting in one of the finest aloe gardens in the country.

Apart from documents and photographs the exhibits include 1890s war medals, postage stamps, ancient maps and books on southern Africa, the first newspapers printed in Zimbabwe, paintings by Thomas Baines, constitutional relics of the British South Africa Company and the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, and cultural artefacts ranging from gold from Great Zimbabwe to the spear said to have been used by Chief Makoni in the Shona Rising.

The illustration on the First Day Cover is from a drawing by Thomas Baines and shows a young man at Mutigezi's village, in South East Mashonaland, 1870.

Also included in the Bulletin is a copy of the signatories to a treaty of friendship between the Matabele nation and the British. It was signed by both Lobengula and John Smith Moffat.



The document is held in the National Archives

Within the Rhodesian Study Circle Journal there was some debate about whether various photographs purporting to be of Lobengula (see Journals 246 of March 2013, page 14; 247 of June 2013, pages 70-1; 250 of March 2014, page 11; and 251 of June 2014, pages 53-4). In the last Journal, Rob Burnett gives a detailed analysis of the probability of the photos being authentic and concludes that they were not, principally as there is no record of any photographs being taken in Matabeleland during the life of Lobengula. He is the view that the E A Maude sketch is probably the most accurate illustration of Lobengula.

## The Stamps



## Catalogue listings

SG	ZSC <sup>1</sup>	Value	Description
681	105	12c	Mutapa Gatsi Rusere, circa 1589-1623
	a.		'Notch' flaw (batch)
682	106	18c	Lobengula, 1870-1894
	a.		'Green faced' Lobengula
683	107	26c	Interior of National Archives
684	108	35c	Exterior of National Archives

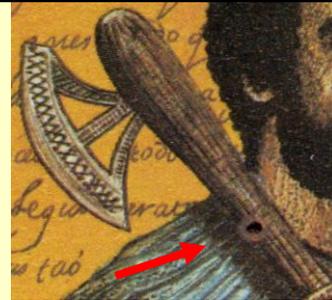
## Technical details

<b>Stamp size:</b>	All values	42 x 28 mm	
<b>Sheet Size:</b>	50 stamps (10 rows of 5 stamps), two panes per printed sheet		
<b>Artist:</b>	Cedric Herbert		
<b>Paper:</b>	ZSC paper type B – HS6, fluorescent coated paper with PVA gum with a blueish/greenish tinge.		
<b>Print colours:</b>	All values - Black, magenta, cyan, yellow		
<b>Perforations:</b>	SG 14½, ZSC 14¼ Top margin: Perforated through. Other margins: Imperforate		
<b>Printer:</b>	Mardon Printers (Pvt) Ltd., Harare, Zimbabwe		
<b>Printer's Imprint:</b>	Bottom Margin, below Row 10 Columns 2 to 4. Imprint printed in black		
<b>Cylinder numbers:</b>	Top margin above column 5. Colours reading from left All values – yellow, cyan, magenta, black		
<b>Colour register:</b>	Type TL 4– round boxed – right margin opposite R1/5. Colours reading down. All values – black, magenta, cyan, yellow  Note: with the cyl. 1A and 1B 35c values the bottom quarter of the traffic light is missing		
<b>Sheet Value:</b>	Top margin, above R1/1, printed in black.		
<b>Sheet Number:</b>	Type SN 4a with 'PTC' prefix, left margin, opposite R1/1, reading down.		
<b>Print numbers:</b>	12c	750,000	18c 500,000 26c 500,000 35c 500,000
<b>Issue date:</b>	18 <sup>th</sup> September, 1985		
<b>Withdrawal from sale:</b>			
<b>Demonetarisaton:</b>	31 <sup>st</sup> January, 1994		

## Listed varieties

**12c:** 'Notch' Flaw, batch flaw found within column one

**ZSC 105a**



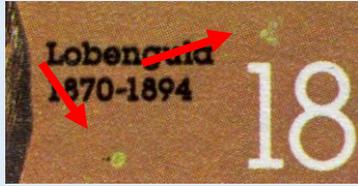
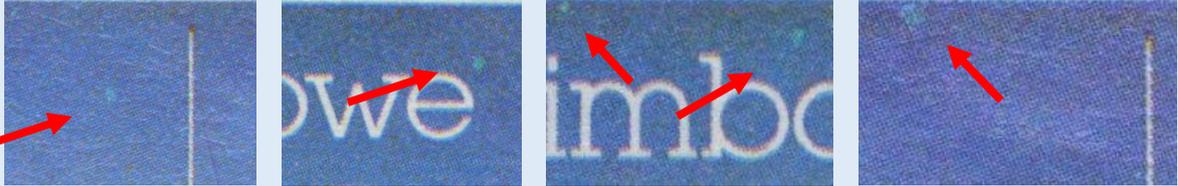
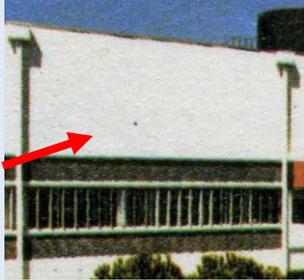
**18c:** 'Green faced' Lobengula, batch flaw. **ZSC 106a**

This flaw is spread over several stamps. In the example above the two stamps to the right clearly show the face of Lobengula as green. There are also areas of green to his body. The top left stamp has some green to the face. The degree of the 'greening' varies over the stamps.

Probably cause by water on the magenta plate

## Unlisted varieties

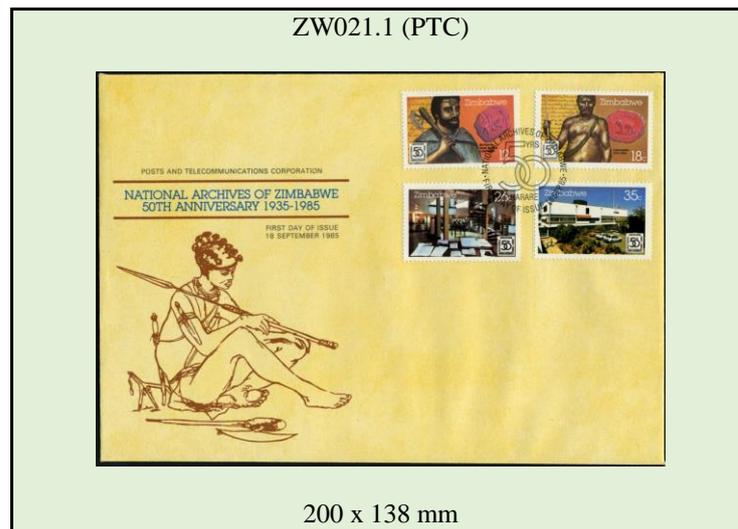
There are numerous small dots and specks in the printing of these stamps, particularly in the backgrounds. Some dots and specks shown below are a bit more distinctive, some may be constant.

 <p><b>12c:</b> yellow dot between seal and 2<sup>nd</sup> 'B' of Zimbabwe</p>	 <p><b>18c:</b> yellow splodges due to lack of magenta ink</p>	 <p><b>18c:</b> yellow splodge above '1' of value</p>
 <p><b>18c:</b> yellow/green marks above 'c' of value</p>	 <p><b>26c:</b> cyan dot to left of logo</p>	 <p><b>35c:</b> pink dot left of flagpole</p>
 <p><b>35c:</b> various blue spots to top of stamp.</p>		
 <p><b>35c:</b> black dot to front left of Archive building</p>		

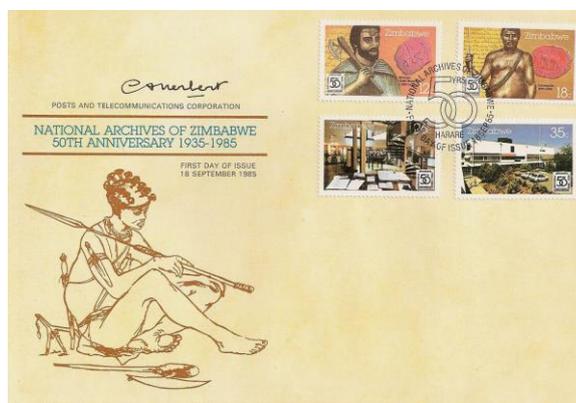
## First Day Covers

The cover numbering comes from the catalogue produced by Geoff Brakspear.

A pictorial first day of issue canceller was produced for this issued and was used by the Philatelic Bureau. Other first day cover cancellers continued to be used at main post offices.



## Related Material



First day cover signed by the artist, Cedric Herbert  
(Courtesy Narendhra Morar)

**Bibliography:**

1. "The Zimbabwean Concise Postage Stamp Catalogue", published by Harare Stamp Company, edited by Ken Allanson, Mike Amos and Geoff Brakspear. The catalogue continues to be updated and expanded by Geoff Brakspear
2. PTC Philatelic Bureau Bulletin No 4 of 1985.