AFRICAN FOLKLORE

Issued 24th July, 2001

This is the first set of stamps produced for the newly created Zimbabwe Post Limited.

(Extracted from Philatelic Bureau Bulletin No 3 of 2001)[2]

The Folklore of a people is very much part of its life and a royal road to understanding. Many of these stories will be familiar. They are part of the thought of a great Continent, already old when they were first told by Aesop of Ethiopia and passed down, through desert, jungle and savannah to the southern coastlands. They were even taken to America, the same stories but with different names, carried there by the home-sick West African slaves. The animal characters are vastly entertaining and full of country wisdom. The brave and cunning hare is the first favourite, closely followed by the tortoise. The king lion and the mighty elephant are bigger and more powerful than Mouse, Lizard and the rest but in the end they very seldom win. We learn that victory is not always to the proud and strong. Small is beautiful.

This series is dedicated to the grandmothers of Africa and to the wide-eyed children to whom, with enjoyment, they passed on these fire-side stories, down through the ages to our present day.



$8.00: The Hare who rode horseback

Kalulu the Hare went courting. "I am an important person!" he said. "I ride when I do not feel like walking!" Then he told the kind-hearted Baboon, "I am ill. Please be so good as to carry me to the farm" and the Baboon agreed. "I am dizzy," said Hare. "Let me hold onto a rope and carry the end in your teeth. Now for my other hand, I need a little branch to keep my balance." Again, Baboon agreed, but his reward was a smart slap behind and he had to run with cunning Hare riding horseback!

$12.00: The Hippo who lost his hair



Mvuu the Hippopotamus, was once called the River Horse, for in those days he had a hairy coat. He was a friendly, good-natured animal and very hospitable, inviting all he met to visit him. One day he even invited Brother Fire. "Are you sure?" asked Fire. "Most creatures run away from me!" "Come anytime and you are welcome", Mvuu said. Then one day it happened. Fire came and could not be stopped. In terror of their lives all fled before him and even Mvuu, who cannot run fast, was only saved by submerging in the river. He had lost all his hair before he escaped but half way down in the river mud is where he is happiest to this day.



$13.00: The Lion who was saved by a mouse

Simba the Lion is the king of all the animals and all fear his fierceness and strength. One day, when he was in a good mood, he caught a Stripped Mouse, a tiny timid creature, but he let it go. "One good turn deserves another", said the Mouse. "Maybe I can help you some day". Simba burst out laughing at such an idea. Not long after, it happened that the Lion was caught in a net. His wild struggles only made it worse and he knew that at any moment the hunter might return to kill him. However, his roars of rage and terror had been heard by the tiny mouse. She had not forgotten her own escape and with her sharp little teeth she bit through the rope that held him and let Simba go.

$16.00: The Bush Fowl who wakes the sun



In the beginning the Bush Fowl, the Red-Necked Francolin, was given the task of waking the sun each morning. When it is time for her to rise, she leaves her nest to crow in a loud voice, "Choorr, Choorr, Choorr, Chwirr...Kek-kek-kek-kek!" The sun knows that call well and rises. Only once down the ages did the bush fowl forget to cry out and that was in grief when an ant heap fell over and all her beautiful eggs were smashed. What an upset that was. The whole world was in darkness and disruption but she has promised never to forget again and she never has.

$21.00: The Chameleon who came too late



The Great spirit saw that men were getting old and were worried about what would happen when they died. "Take this message", he told the Chameleon Rwavi. "Tell them not to fear death. Like the moon they will seem to die but rise again". Rwavi set off, one foot at a time, looking at each side, stopping to catch and eat a fly. Slowly and carefully he was on his way, but Hare had overheard what was said and decided to take the message himself. He was such in a hurry that he had only listened to the first half. "Like the moon, you will die", he told them and they were very sad. The Chameleon arrived with the whole message. Which was true? The uncertainty was Rwavi's fault and he is still bad news - feared and hated wherever he is seen.

$28.00: The Tortoise who collected wisdom



Kamba the Tortoise moves slowly but he knows a great deal. One day how useful it would be to have a store of all the world's wisdom and over many years he did indeed collect it, from all the life on earth. How was he to store it safely? He had packed it all into a sealed pot and he decided to hide it in a fork of a tree. Sad to say, the rope used to haul it up slipped out of Kamba's tiny hands. The pot fell and broke into a thousand pieces. The precious Wisdom blew away in the wind, scattered in every direction and that is why you may come upon a piece of it yourself, anywhere and at any time at all.



Miniature sheet: 50% of normal size

Catalogue listings

SG	ZSC[1]	Value	Description
1053	481	$8.00	The hare who rode horseback
1054	482	$12.00	The hippo who lost his hair
1055	483	$13.00	The lion who was saved by a mouse
1056	484	$16.00	The bush fowl who wakes the sun
1057	485	$21.00	The chameleon who came too late
1058	485	$28.00	The tortoise who collected wisdom
MS1059	MS3		Miniature sheet (se-tenant block of six designs)

Technical details

Stamp size: All values 30 x 35 mm
Miniature sheet: 126 x 106 mm

Sheet Size: 40 stamps (5 rows of 8 stamps), two panes per printed sheet

Artist: Lady Margaret Tredgold

Paper: Stamps: ZSC paper type D – HS8, another type of lithographic paper, fluorescent front and back, PVA cream gum.

Miniature sheet: ZSC paper type G – Phosphor coated paper. The phosphor is possibly copper-activated zinc sulphide which exhibits a short yellow-green afterglow and a long white afterglow following excitation by UV. The long white afterglow may also be seen when the phosphor has been activated by ordinary candescent or fluorescent light. The paper coating itself fluoresces yellowish-cream under UV, back non-fluorescent

Print colours: Cyan, magenta, yellow & black

Perforations: SG 14 x 14½, ZSC 14 x 14¼ - including miniature sheet
Right margin: Perforated through.
Other margins: Imperforate

Printer: NatPrint, Harare, Zimbabwe

Printer's Imprint: Stamps only: Bottom Margin, below Row 5 Columns 4 & 5. Imprint printed in black

Cylinder numbers: Stamps only: Bottom margin below R5/1. Colours from left – cyan, magenta, yellow, black

Colour register: Stamps only: Type TL 4– round boxed – left margin opposite R5/1. Colours reading down **–** cyan, magenta, yellow, black

Sheet Value:	Stamps only: Bottom margin, below R5/8, printed in black.			
Sheet Number:	Stamps only: Type SN 4a with 'PTC' prefix, right margin opposite R5/8, reading down			
Print numbers:	\$8.00	4,005,040	\$12.00	297,040
	\$13.00	396,000	\$16.00	396,000
	\$21.00	396,000	\$28.00	297,040
Issue date:	14th July, 2001			

Miniature sheet

This is the first miniature sheet produced since the Rotary and POSB sheetlets in 1980. Unlike the previous sheetlets, these miniature sheets have no perforations through the margins. In simple terms the sheetlets were produced using comb perforators, in a laborious process of perforating with the head and teeth of the comb separately. For more details on this process see the section of the Encyclopaedia headed "the Local Printing of Rhodesian & Zimbabwean Stamps".

As a result of this perforating process, with the need to take the sheets through the perforators twice, variations in the positioning of the perforations can be found. This slight move should be be considered normal.

Listed varieties

No listed varieties have been noted

Unlisted Varieties

There are numerous small dots and specks in the printing of these stamps, particularly in the backgrounds.



\$8.00: Imperforate proof
(Source eBay Oct 2024)



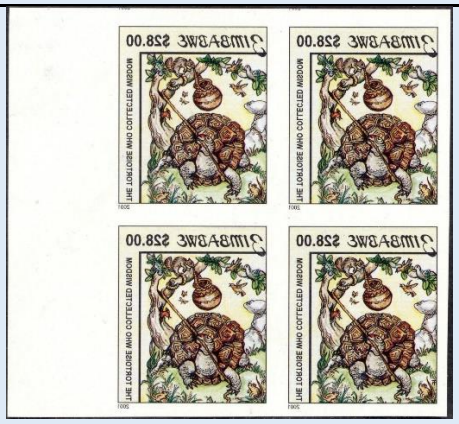
\$16.00: Imperforate proof, imprint block
(Source eBay April 2023)



$13.00: Imperforate cylinder 1A proof block
(Source eBay November 2023)



$21.00: Imperforate proof pair
(Source eBay August 2020)



$28.00: Imperforate proof block
(Source eBay November 2023)



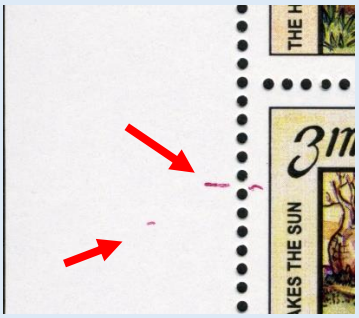
Additional perforations to right margin of sheetlet



Messy offset, including some magenta and cyan to Zimpost logo



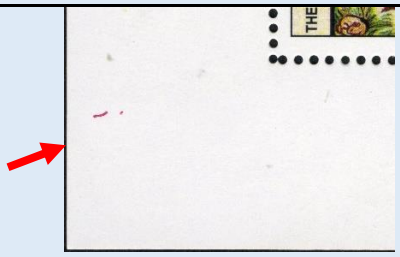
Significant offset of colours



Miniature sheet: magenta lines to the left of the $16 value



Miniature sheet: Vertical black lines to bottom of the $16 value



Miniature sheet: Magenta line and dot to bottom left corner of sheetlet

First Day Cover

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.



ZW090.1 (Zimpost)



Cover with set of stamps, placed on cover using Autophix machine and printed pictorial cancellation.
220 x 110 mm

ZW090.1 (MS) (Zimpost)



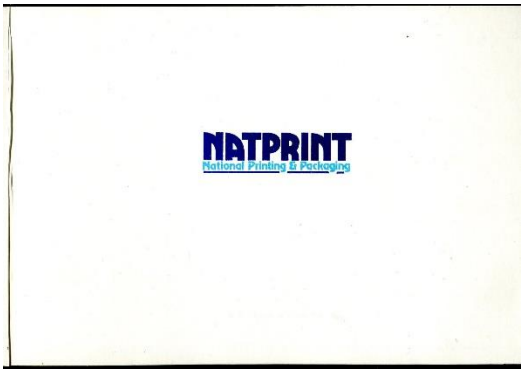
Miniature sheet with hand struck
First Day of Issue, Harare, cancellation

Related Material

Natprint Proof Presentation Cards

Presentation cards produced by Natprint with imperforate proofs of five of the stamps to be issued. The presentation cards were forwarded to the PTC for approval of the "final" product.

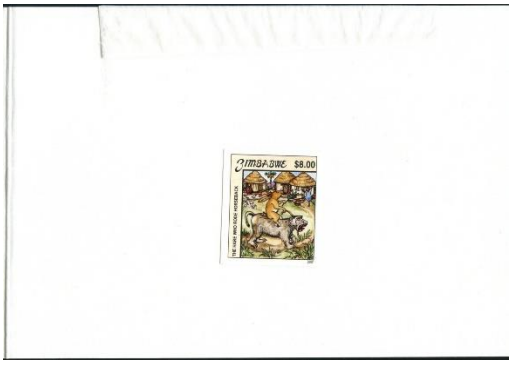
(Courtesy of Jefferson Ritson)



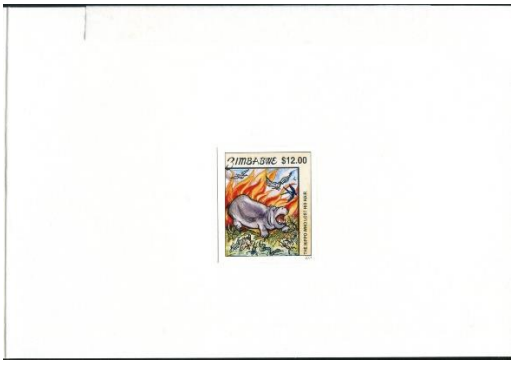
Front cover



Inside front cover



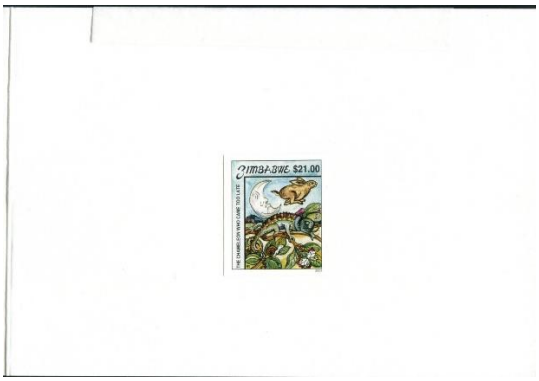
$8 stamp



$12 stamp



$16 stamp



$21 stamp



$28 stamp

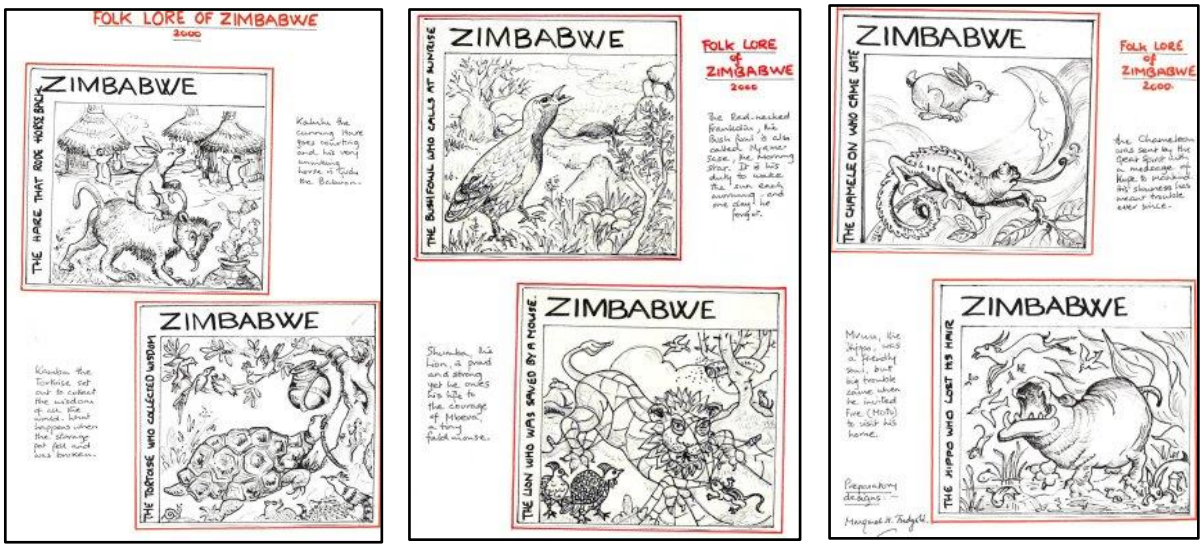
Signed covers



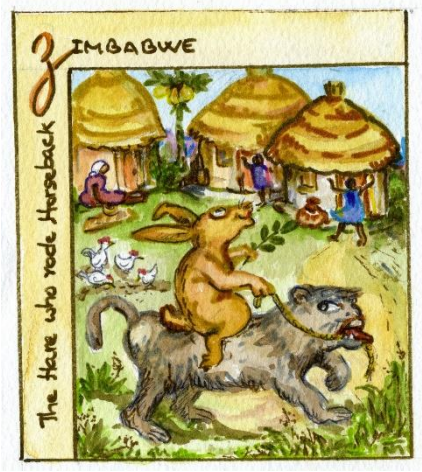
First day covers signed by Lady Margaret Tredgold

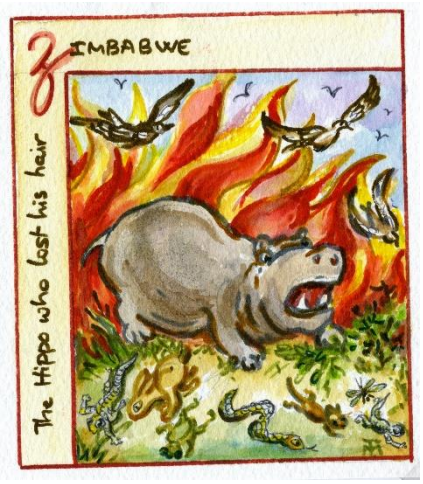


Artwork by Lady Margaret Tredgold

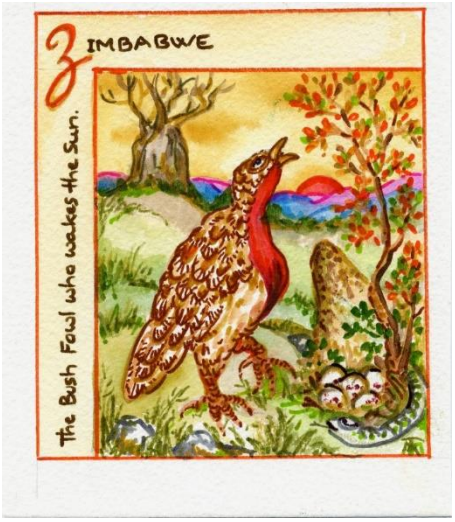


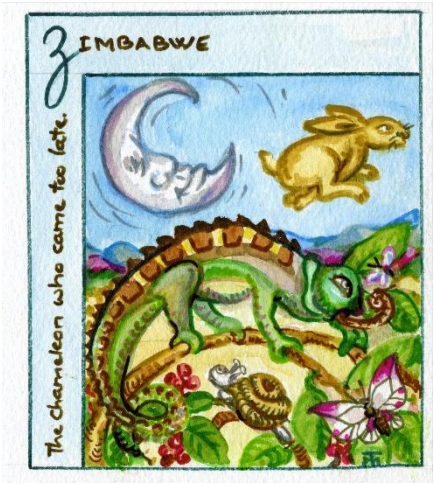
Original pen sketches of proposed designs for this issue.
Shown here approximately 25% of original size

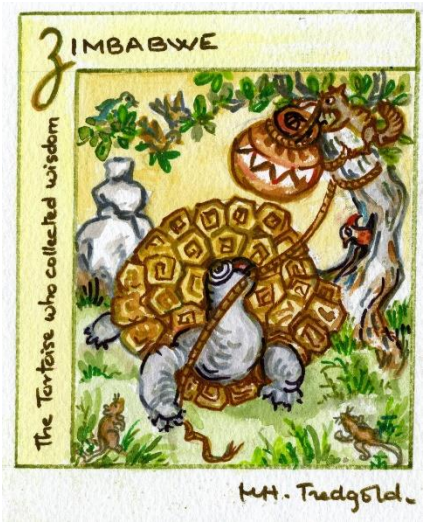




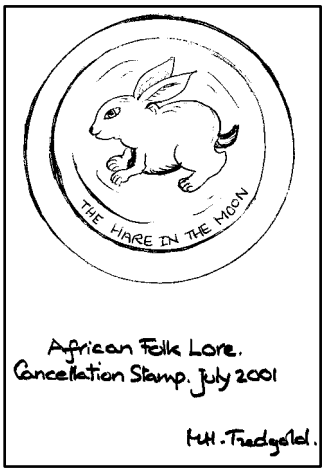




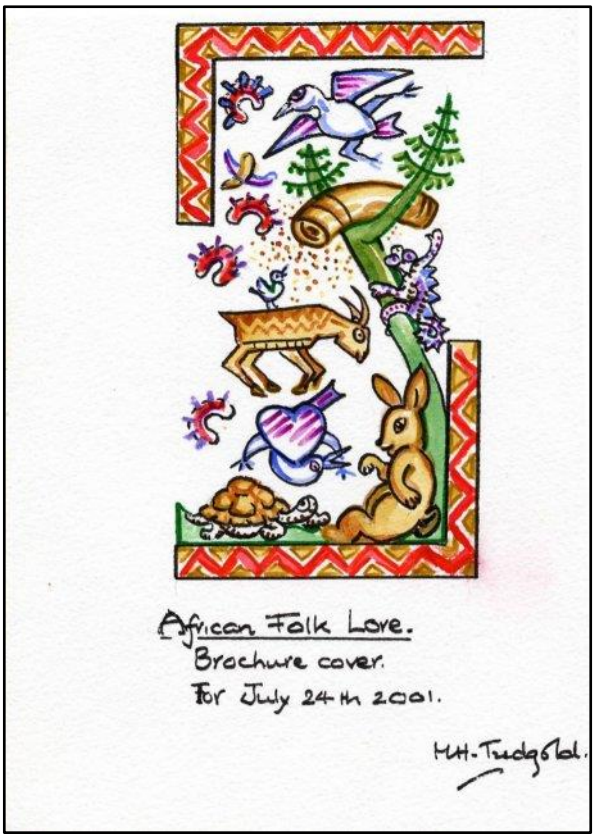




Original artwork with colour for all six designs.
Reduced to approximately 50% of original size



Proposed design of the
First Day Cover canceller.
Reduced to about 50% orginal size



Proposed artwork for Philatelic Bureau
Bulletin.

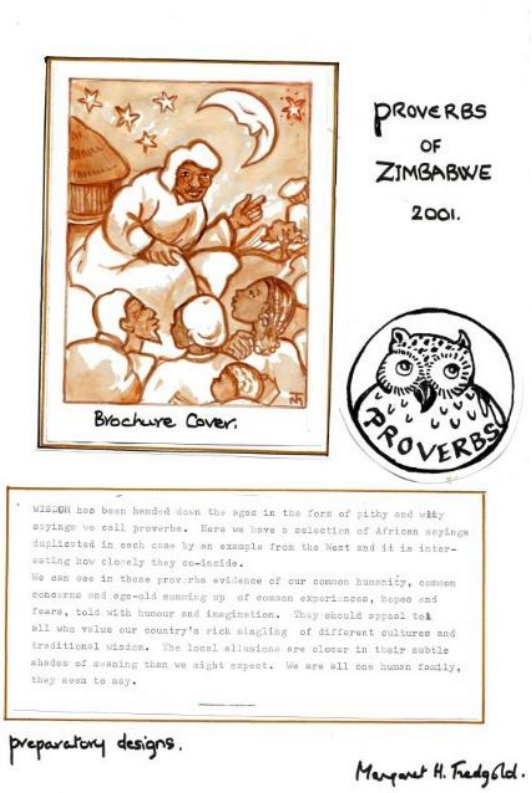
Bibliography:

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. Zimbabwe Post, Philatelic Bureau Bulletin No 3 of 2001
3. "The Artwork of Margaret Tredgold and more", Rhodesian Study Circle Journal, July 2018, RSCJ 269, pages 178-184

Additions/Changes since December 2020	
8-2021	Addition of $28 proof
8-2023	Addition of $16 proof
12-2023	$13, $15, $21 & 428 proof blocks
12-2024	$8 proof strip of three (replacement)

Zimbabwean Proverbs

Although not strictly part of the Folklore issue, Lady Margaret Tredgold produced preparatory designs for a possible "Proverbs of Zimbabwe" issue. The suggestion was not accepted, but the designs are interesting and worth placing alongside the Folklore artwork.

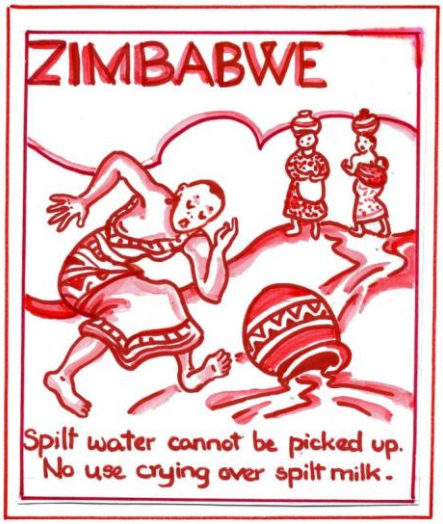


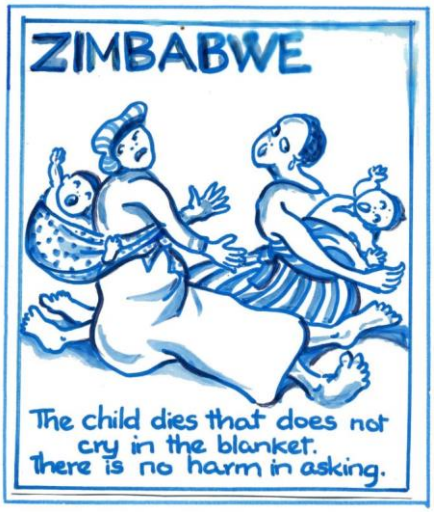
"Brochure cover

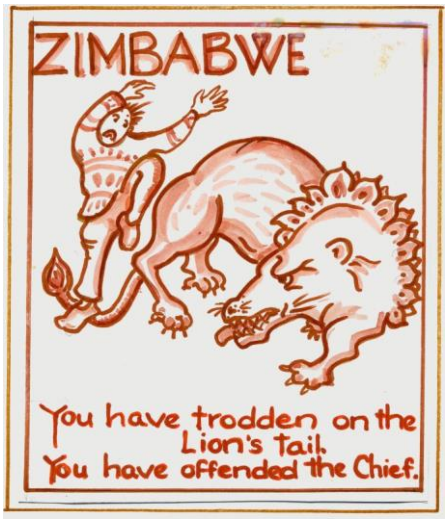
Proverbs of Zimbabwe 2001

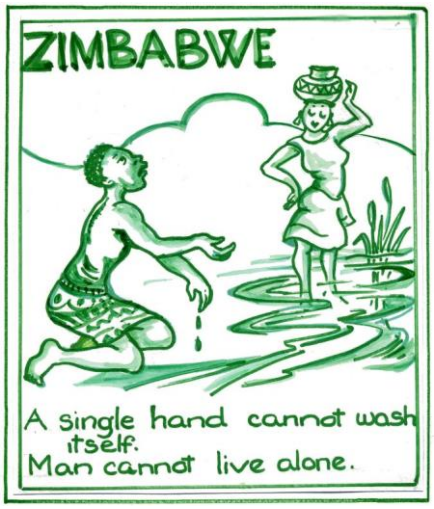
Wisdom has been handed down the ages in the form of pithy and witty sayings, we call proverbs. Here we have a selection of African sayings duplicated in each case by an example from the West and it is interesting how closely they co-inside

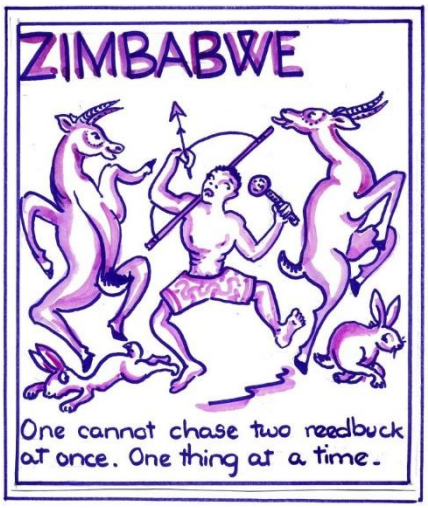
We can see in these proverbs evidence of our common humanity, common concerns and age-old summing up of common experiences, hopes and fears, told with humour and imagination. They should appeal to all who value our country's rich mingling of different cultures and traditional wisdom. The local allusions are closer to their subtle shades of meaning than we might expect. We are all one human family; they seem to say."

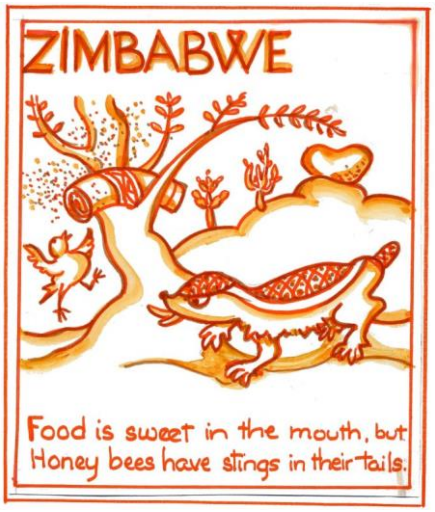


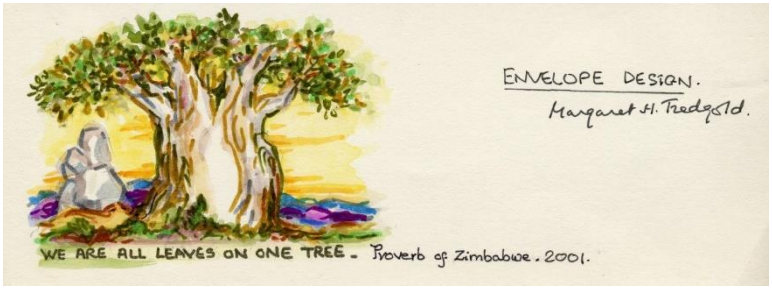












Bibliography:

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