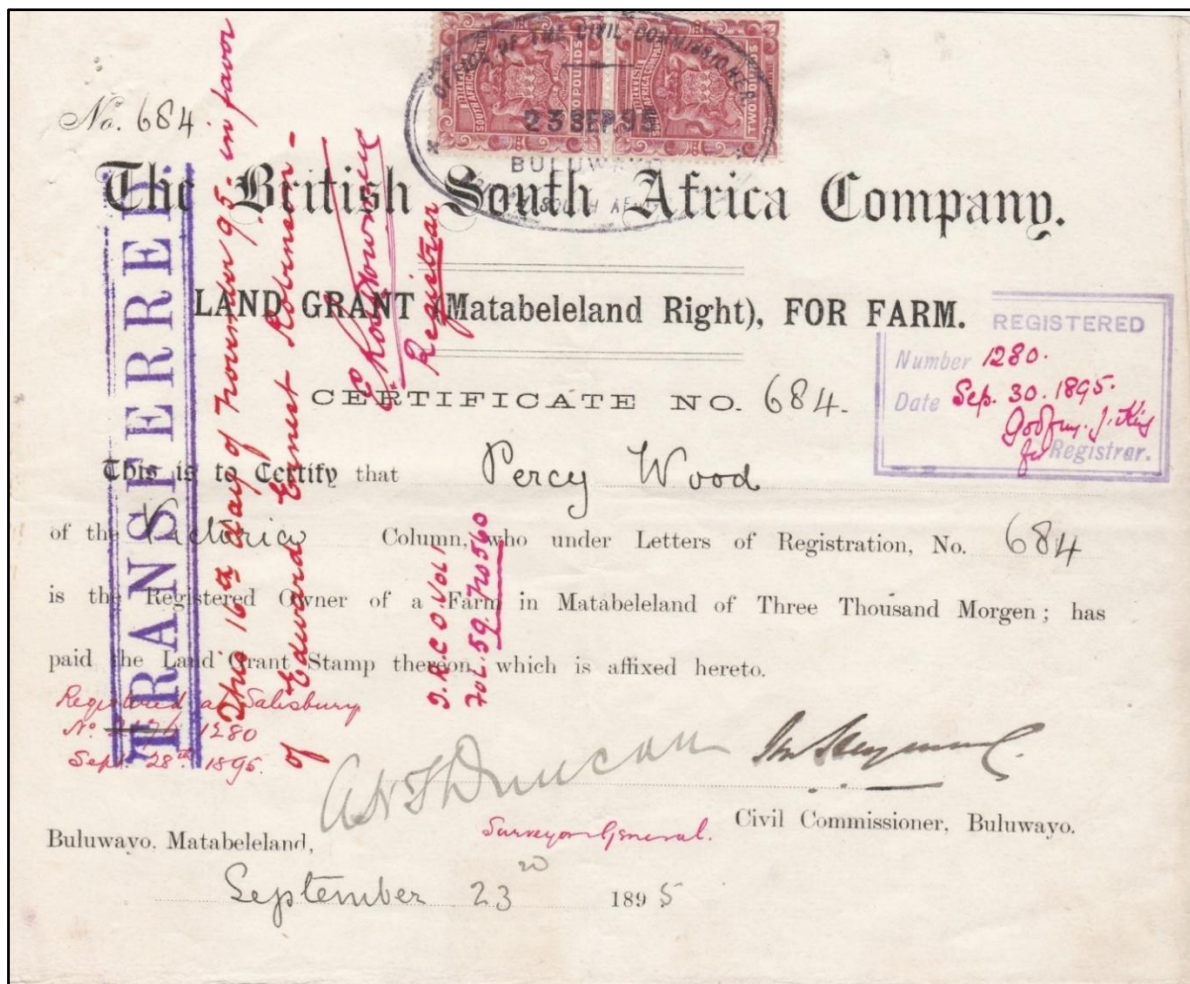


A MATABELELAND VOLUNTEER'S REWARD



A "Land Grant (Matabeleland Right), For Farm" certificate signed by Andrew Duncan, the Surveyor General, and Captain Herman Heyman, the Civil Commissioner in Buluwayo

Certificate No. 684 issued 23rd September 1895 records that PERCY WOOD was a volunteer with the VICTORIA COLUMN (commanded by Major Alan Wilson) which had participated in the Occupation of Matabeleland. For this service he was entitled to a 3 000 morgen farm in Matabeleland on terms set out by the Volunteers' Committee on 14th August 1893 which had been agreed to by Dr Jameson on behalf of the BSACo, referred to as the "Victoria Agreement". Importantly, it was free from the condition of *bona fide personal and beneficial occupation*. All Matabeleland Rights were recorded in a register dated 21st December 1893 (the Letters of Administration), probably prepared by the office of the Civil Commissioner in coordination with the military authorities. The certificates seem to have been issued as and when requested by grantees. This Right was transferred on 16th November 1895, shortly after the certificate was issued. 965 Rights for Farms were granted to the members of the Matabeleland Expedition.

PERCY WOOD died from fever on 17th October 1895 after the combined Salisbury and Victoria Columns had departed Iron Mine Hill and were advancing towards Gwelo under the overall command of Major Forbes. He was buried close to where Captain Campbell, the first casualty of the Campaign, had been buried the previous day in a ceremony with full military honours conducted by the Right Rev. Knight-Bruce, Bishop of Mashonaland.

"A poor fellow named Woods [sic] who had suffered from fever, dysentery and other complications, died during the night and as we were to trek next morning, a few of his comrades went out and dug a grave and buried him there in the bush by moonlight, while all the camp lay asleep, every man with his arms [a Martini-Henry rifle] beside him and each man of the burying party with his rifle ready, as we fully expected to be attacked that night. However, we were not." What a contrast to the burial with full military honours given to Captain Campbell. One wonders where the good Bishop Knight-Bruce was at this time.

Reference

"Iron Mine Hill (Ntabasinsimbe) and the first casualty of the 1893 Matabele War" published on the ZimFieldGuide.com website