

MY TIME IN NYASALAND/MALAWI

By Derek Harling

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June 1956 Arrived in Nyasaland. Posted to the staff office as HQ Inspector. My immediate boss was ASP Malcolm Llewelyn, but also worked directly for ACP Vic Smithyman and the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner, 'Charlie' Apthorp and Jack Helliwell and their successors.

1957 or 1958 (memory fails me re which year) seconded to the Police Mobile Force convoy which was sent to assist Northern Rhodesia Police at Ndola during an 'emergency' situation on the copperbelt. A hair-raising road journey of several days that I recorded on 8mm cine-film.



(L-R) Harry Edmunds, John T. Parker, Reg Brill, Jeff York, John Wilkes, Derek Harling and Jim Wilkinson.

Returned to staff office at the end of the emergency and after some months was seconded to Special Branch HQ, Zomba.

1959 seconded as 2 I/c PMF platoon commanded by my first boss, Malcolm Llewelyn, to relieve Karonga where both the police station and prison had been overrun at the start of the emergency. This I've always claimed was the first airborne operation undertaken by the Nyasaland Police. We were flown by a WNLA plane from Chileka to Ford Hill airstrip, which was in the throes of being dug up by rioters as we came into land. There's quite a story about our action in Fort Hill and the subsequent 'road' trip to Karonga. I subsequently took command of the platoon in Karonga when Malcolm felt seriously ill with cerebral malaria, and took part in night-time amphibious operations on the Lake.



After a couple of weeks OC Northern Division, John Le Mesurier, arrived by an unscheduled CAA Beaver, and when I met him at the airstrip asked 'where the bloody hell's your kit, didn't you know you're coming to be my staff officer?' I didn't! I have several stories re John L - many were terrified of him, but I 'loved' him and to misuse the motto of my own old regiment would have followed him 'through the mud and into blood to the green fields beyond.'

April to September 1959 DAO, Northern Division, Mzuzu,

September 1959-March 1960 leave and marriage in UK.

March 1960-1962 Station Officer, Mzimba.

1962-1963 OC Mzuzu. While on leave in UK.

1963 promoted Assistant Superintendent, return to Nyasaland served briefly as Senior Prosecution Officer, Limbe, before being posted to Lilongwe as Station Officer and subsequently as acting Officer in Charge.

1966 UK leave and promotion to Superintendent.

September 1966-September 1969 Officer in Charge, Zomba.

Returned to UK.

