



JOHN MEADE HELLIWELL: A BRIEF CAREER SUMMARY

John (Jack) Meade Helliwell was born 4th May, 1913, in Umtata, South Africa. His grandfather, Henry Meade, had been in the Cape Mounted Police and Chief Constable in Umtata. His father Jesse Helliwell had enlisted with the Yorkshire Hussars, and later the East Griqualand Rifles, enlisting for the Boer War with the Imperial Yeomanry. Jack was educated at Grey College, Bloemfontein.

At 19, he joined the mounted branch of the British South Africa Police (BSAP) as a trooper, enlisting on the 15th November, 1932. Between the wars the Rhodesian Army was small; the BSAP trained as both police and soldiers. Prior to the use of motor vehicles, extended rural patrols were carried out on

horseback and Jack spent four years as a mounted trooper on rural stations in the Victoria District of Southern Rhodesia.

On 1st January, 1937, Jack joined the Northern Rhodesia Police. Military and Civil Police had been divided into separate forces in 1932. At this time, Jack undertook studies of law and African languages. When war came Colonial Police Forces were made into Defence units and, though he wished to enlist, he would under regulations have had to resign, forfeiting pension and promotion prospects. His father had died in late 1938, his sister in 1939 and his mother, a WAAF nurse stationed at RAF Healy in Bulawayo, begged him to stay on.

In 1940, having married Constance MacDonald in Lusaka, he was posted to Mongu Lealui, Barotseland, as Assistant Inspector in charge of the police detachment. His two daughters were born there. In 1943 he was posted to Kitwe as a public prosecutor. In 1945 he was sent to Lusaka as Assistant Superintendent in charge of that police district. In 1946 he served as the gazetted officers' representative on a Police Commission of Inquiry, under Sir Herbert Cox, into police administration and conditions of service. In 1947 he was promoted to Police Headquarters in Lusaka as Staff Officer.

In 1948-49 he went to England with his family, to take the Devonshire Senior Course in colonial administration at Cambridge University. This course was a move by the British Government to expand and upgrade Crown Service staff in the colonies. His "thesis" was on Bantu Customary Law. In 1949 he was awarded the Colonial Police Medal for Meritorious Service. (CPM). After a posting in 1951 to Broken Hill, (Kabwe) having been promoted to Senior Superintendent and in 1952 he was appointed Chief Commandant of the Northern Rhodesia Police Reserve, with headquarters at Kitwe on the Copperbelt.

In July, 1953, he was appointed to Nyasaland as Deputy Commissioner of Police. When civil disturbances broke out in the Southern Province he assumed command of police operations there. Police included detachments from the Rhodesias and Tanganyika. He was closely involved with the reorganisation and expansion of the Nyasaland Police Force after 1953, and was responsible for organising the Police Mobile Force. He compiled the Force Standing Orders, 1954. He acted as Commissioner of Police when necessary, and Director of Intelligence and Security. He was also appointed a provisional member of the Nyasaland Legislative Council in 1954. In 1957 he was awarded the Queen's Police Medal for Distinguished Service. (QPM).

As political agitation for independence in the colonies became more intense in the 1950's, police were heavily involved in keeping the peace. There seemed to be no future in the police in the coming dispensation, and although he was offered the post of Commissioner of Police in the Falkland Islands and the Seychelles, he took advantage of regulations allowing retirement at the age of 45. He retired on the 1st December, 1958, to follow his dream of living in England..

At the beginning of 1959, Jack joined the staff of the Federal Government at Rhodesia House as an immigration official. In 1962, he and Connie returned to Salisbury, where he served as a principal in the Office of Race Relations in the Ministry of Home Affairs until the break-up of the Federation in 1963. He and Connie eventually retired to the Cape where his mother had lived and many expats had settled. He died on the 2nd July, 1994.