

ABSTRACT

THE SWAZILAND RAILWAY: A STUDY IN POLITICO-ECONOMIC GEOGRAPHY

by Alan C. G. Best

During the past century the Boers, British and Swazilanders forwarded many proposals for railways between the eastern Transvaal and the Indian Ocean across Swaziland, but for politico-economic reasons none but the last materialized. This study examines the geographical aspects of these proposals, and analyzes the new railway's potential impact upon Swaziland's current geographic patterns. The study is presented in four parts.

Part One reviews the controversial railway issue prior to 1902 when the Boers sought a rail connection to a port independent of British control on the east coast. Delagoa Bay and Kosi Bay offered the Boers the most convenient harbour sites, but between the Transvaal and the coast lay the ill-defined territory of the Swazi, numerous militant tribes, topographical barriers, the Portuguese and the British who had unsettled interests in these coastal areas. To further their objectives, the Boers concluded numerous agreements with these different parties. From the Swazi the Boers secured land, mineral, commercial and

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communications concessions including the right to build railways; with the Portuguese they concluded commercial agreements; and with the British they became signatories to the three Swaziland Conventions which defined Boer and British interests in Swaziland and the native territories of Zambaan, Zambili and Umbegiza, all of which the Boers wished to incorporate.

Part Two examines all the railway proposals offered by both Swaziland and South Africa between 1902 and 1960 when Swaziland's political status was clouded by the Union's aspirations of incorporation. Field surveys were made in 1902 and 1918 between Lourenco Marques and the Witwatersrand across central Swaziland, and in the 1920's South Africa undertook three surveys from the eastern Transvaal across southern Swaziland to Sordwana and Kosi Bays to alleviate the traffic congestion at Durban and Lourenco Marques. Soon after the Second World War, the Union resurveyed several routes across Swaziland for the export of coal. Likewise, Swaziland authorized several rail surveys from the western highveld to Goba to encourage the development of its iron ore, coal, forest and agricultural resources.

All the rail proposals of this period were rejected because of the politico-economic issues resulting from Swaziland's low level of economic development, the Act of Union (1910), the Customs Union (1910), and legislation enacted by South Africa and Britain relating to Swaziland's

political status.

Part Three reviews the justification for the Swaziland railway (which was completed in September, 1964), the construction and operation contracts, the route, and the construction procedures.

Part Four examines the politico-economic significance of the Swaziland railway. The railway was authorized by proclamation in 1962 following the signing of an agreement between Japan and British and South African concerns which obtained the mineral rights to a high quality hematite deposit west of Mbabane. The contract calls for the delivery of a minimum of twelve million tons of ore over a ten year period. Although the line was designed specifically for this traffic, it will also convey paper pulp, petroleum products, coal, sugar, general merchandise and other products as markets are developed.

The railway will have three important effects upon Swaziland. First, it will provide Swaziland with an internal focus. Heretofore, Swazilanders have been oriented towards South African railheads; they will now turn to Matsahpa, the new industrial site near Manzini. Second, Swaziland's traffic flow patterns with Mozambique will become more pronounced and be protected by new legislation. Third, the railway will afford Swaziland with a certain degree of security should its political relationships with South Africa deteriorate. With this new sense of security,

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new industries will be encouraged and new regional patterns emerge.

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A THESIS

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Geography

1965

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This study could not have been completed without the thoughtful assistance of many interested persons who unselfishly gave up many valuable hours to enthusiastically discuss the problems and intrigues of the Swaziland railway. It is not possible to thank each individually, but I should particularly like to express my gratitude to certain librarians, administrators, industrialists, engineers and friends in London, South Africa and Swaziland.

A special word of thanks is due Mr. Overton, Deputy Librarian, Commonwealth Relations Office, London, for his valuable assistance in locating early British documents and unpublished reports in London during the winter of 1963-64.

In Johannesburg, John C. Cater, M.B.E. of the Commonwealth Development Corporation, provided me with maps and statistics of the C.D.C.'s Swaziland projects and gave me introductions to the general managers of the Swaziland concerns. Mr. A. Van Lingen, Public Relations Officer, South African Railways, Harbours and Airways Administration, released unpublished trade statistics and government notes concerning Swaziland and South Africa.

In Mbabane, Swaziland, John R. Masson, Acting Secretary for Finance and Development, and George and Eunice Murdoch of the Land Utilization Department, provided

me with base maps, confidential reports, notes and letters, unpublished trade statistics, and even an office equipped with a typewriter.

The fieldwork could not have been carried out without the assistance of Wyon Hawkins, the Chief Executive Officer and Chairman of the Swaziland Railway Board, and Hal Green and Peter Davies of the Swaziland Consulting Engineers who provided me with transportation, showed me the protectorate's agricultural, forest, commercial and mining regions, and enthusiastically discussed their earlier rail surveys. Peter Davies has kindly furnished Figures 11, 12, 23, and 24, and Figures 13 and 14 are reproduced courtesy of the Caminhos de Ferro e Transportes, Lourenco Marques.

In Ypsilanti, the writing of the dissertation has progressed under the guidance of Harm J. de Blij, Associate Professor of Geography, Michigan State University. His valuable suggestions and criticisms are sincerely appreciated. A special word of thanks is also due Mrs. June Johnson who has typed both the rough and final drafts of this dissertation.

Finally I must express my thanks to my mother whose interest and encouragement in this study have never failed.

Ypsilanti, Michigan
July 2, 1965

Alan C. G. Best

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INTRODUCTION

Background to the Problem

Railways have been important instruments in opening up the African continent. The great era of railway construction in Africa occurred between 1885 and 1931, and especially between 1895 and 1914 when the European powers were defining and delimiting their spheres of interests.¹ Each power sought to build its own network to keep trade within its loosely defined territory, and if possible to attract some from the neighbouring regions. To achieve this objective many gauges were selected so that only limited networks evolved.

In 1904 only three distinct regions — Tunisia and Algeria, the Nile Delta, and South Africa — had a well defined railway network.² Since then the colonial powers have extended their lines, integrated their systems and planned others, so that by 1954 seven distinct railway regions were

¹R. J. Harrison Church, "Geographical Factors in the Development of Transport in Africa," United Nations Transport and Communications Review, II (July-September, 1949), 7.

²A. Fock, "The Economic Conquest of Africa by the Railroads," Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution for the Year Ending June 30, 1904, (1905), pp. 721-35.

recognizable.³ Africa's railway patterns have been examined by geographers, historians and economists alike. Almost a half century after Fock's treatise on the economic conquest of Africa by railways, Varian wrote a general history of African railways.⁴ Regional treatments have likewise been made. Harrison Church (1949) reviewed the evolution of railways in British and French West Africa concluding that railways were designed to bring agricultural and mineral regions within the political spheres of these two European powers while there was little attempt to integrate the two systems.⁵ Within West Africa, Peter Gould examined the role of transportation in the process of economic development of Ghana before 1959 with special emphasis upon the development of transportation and commodity flow.⁶ In East Africa, Hill⁷ traced the growth of the Uganda and Kenya railways, and Van Dongen made a geographic analysis of the

³ Irene S. Van Dongen, The British East African Transport Complex, Department of Geography Research Paper No. 38, University of Chicago (Chicago, 1954), p. 7.

⁴ H. F. Varian, Some African Milestones: A History of Railways in Africa (Oxford: Wheatley Press, 1953).

⁵ R. J. Harrison Church, "The Evolution of Railways in French and British West Africa," (A Paper read at the International Geographical Congress, Lisbon, 1949).

⁶ Peter R. Gould, The Development of the Transportation Pattern in Ghana, Northwestern University Studies in Geography, No. 5, Northwestern University, 1960.

⁷ Mervyn F. Hill, The Permanent Way: The Story of the Kenya and Uganda Railway (Nairobi: East African Railways and Harbours, 1949).

transportation patterns in Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika⁸ with particular reference to railway development.

South Africa, which has the densest railway network in Africa, has had a history of railway development similar to that of British East and West Africa, though it was initially complicated by the Boers who controlled the wealthy interior highveld, a region which was sought by Britain. The first lines extended only short distances from the coastal cities, but after the discovery of diamonds and gold in the Boer Republics, the railways were extended across the highveld and integrated with those of the Orange Free State and the Transvaal in the late nineteenth century. The first treatise of railway expansion in Southern Africa (South Africa and the High Commission Territories) appeared before the colonial powers were required by the Berlin Conference (1885) to effectively occupy and develop their territorial claims.⁹ Since then numerous scholarly works have appeared treating railway expansion and policy in the frontier regions of Southern Africa. Historians Van Der Poel,¹⁰

⁸ Van Dongen, The British East

⁹ See D. E. Davenport, A Railway Sketch of South Africa (n.p. ca., 1882).

¹⁰ Jean Van Der Poel, Railway and Customs Policies in South Africa, 1885-1910 (London: Longmans, Green & Co., Ltd., 1933).

and Campbell,¹¹ and economists Frankel,¹² and Day,¹³ and the South African Railways and Harbours Administration¹⁴ have made the principal contributions.

Swaziland's early transportation patterns also began during the latter part of the nineteenth century when both Boer and Briton were defining their spheres of interest. Indeed, communications in Swaziland became an integral part of Boer and British objectives in Southern Africa. The first railway proposal for Swaziland was made in 1860, and the first field survey was conducted in 1864. Since then, and particularly between 1902 and 1928, and in the post World War II period, numerous railway routes have been proposed by Swazilanders,¹⁵ South Africans and Britishers, though the first and only line was not completed until 1964.

There has been a general lack of scholarly investi-

¹¹ Edward D. Campbell, The Birth and Development of the Natal Railways (Pietermaritzburg: Shuter and Shooter, 1951).

¹² S. Herbert Frankel, The Railway Policy of South Africa (Johannesburg: Hortors Ltd., 1928).

¹³ John R. Day, Railways of Southern Africa (London: Arthur Barker Ltd., 1963).

¹⁴ Union of South Africa, A Century of Transport: A Record of Achievement of the Ministry of Transport of the Union of South Africa (Cape Town: Da Gama Publications Ltd., 1960).

¹⁵ "Swazilanders" are the Europeans permanently residing in Swaziland. In this study the term is used interchangeably with "Europeans in Swaziland." The indigenous African peoples of Swaziland are the Swazi who are commonly referred to as the "natives", though not in any derogatory sense.

gations into these proposals, though the aforementioned treatises on South African railways make brief comment on the Swaziland scene. Van Der Poel examines from an historian's viewpoint the early intrigues and controversies of the Swaziland railway issue prior to 1895. In 1938 another historian, Kruger,¹⁶ reviewed the importance of Swaziland to the Boers in the nineteenth century, and this same thesis was expanded in 1957 by Garson.¹⁷ Soon after the Swaziland railway issue had been actively contested by South Africa, Britain and Swaziland in the mid-twenties, Doveton examined in general terms the communications patterns of Swaziland and noted that Swaziland was "more or less surrounded by railways" and claimed this avoidance of Swaziland was deliberate.¹⁸ Then as now, Swaziland had only one direct rail connection with South Africa, that being at Golel (Figure I). The mainline routes skirt Swaziland to the north, west and south where Komatipoort, Hectorspruit, Barberton, Breyten, Lothair and Piet Retief act as railheads for Swaziland traffic. Five miles east of Swaziland lies Goba, the terminal point of the Lourenco Marques railway.

¹⁶ D. W. Kruger, "Die Weg na die See," Archives Year Book for South African History, I (Parrow, Cape Province: Cape Town Ltd., 1938), pp. 5-210.

¹⁷ Noel G. Garson, "The Swaziland Question and a Road to the Sea, 1887-1895," Archives Year Book for South African History, II (Parrow, Cape Province: Cape Town Ltd., 1957), pp. 263-434.

¹⁸ Dorothy M. Doveton, The Human Geography of Swaziland, Publication No. 8 of the Institute of British Geographers Association (London: Philip and Sons, 1937), pp. 81-87.

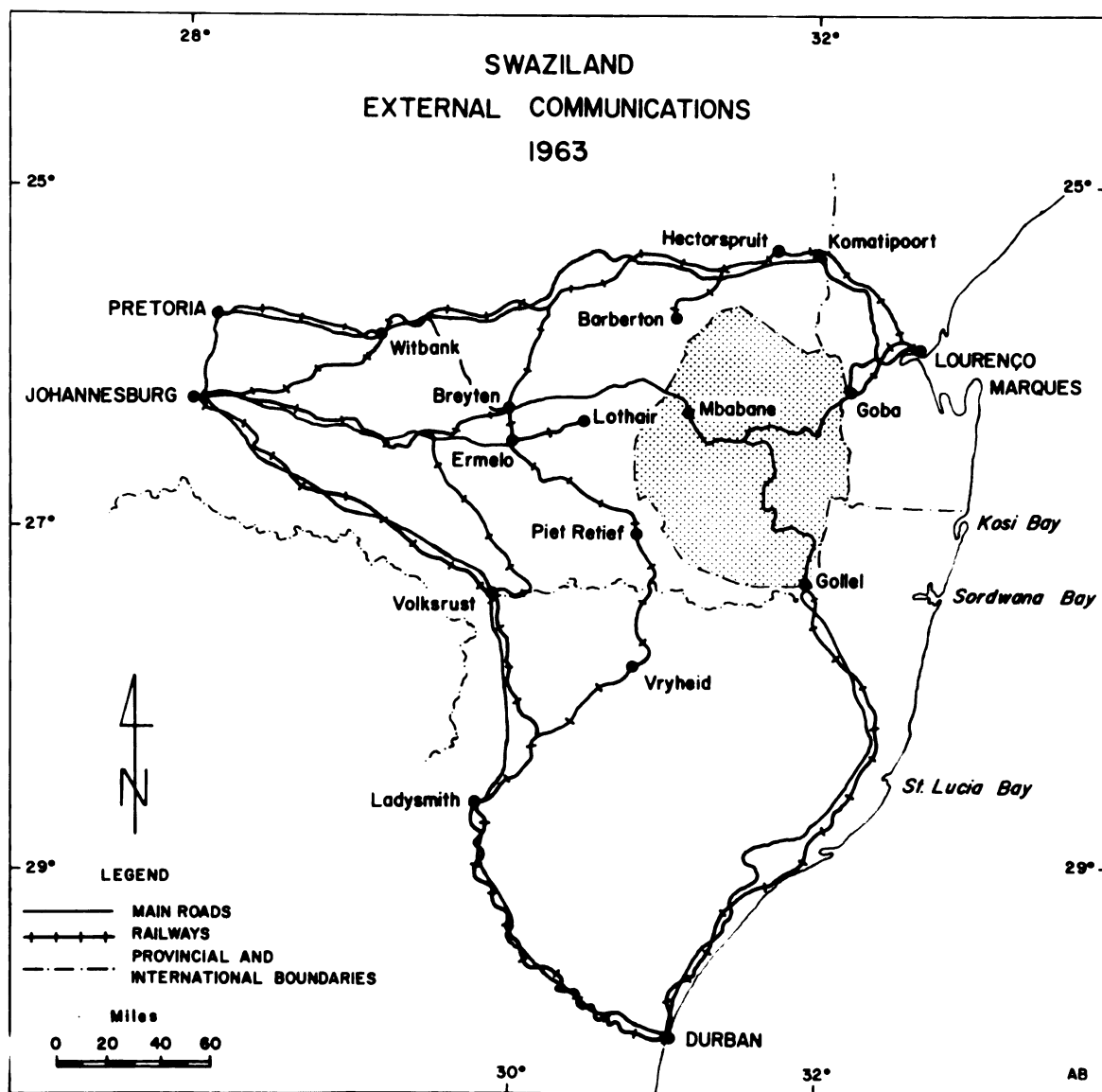


Fig. 1.

Statement of Problem

Although many railway proposals have been forwarded for Swaziland over the past century, and it has long been recognized that the Swaziland railway controversy has been conditioned by the differing policies and objectives of Britain, South Africa and Swaziland, the details of these proposals and issues have never been fully examined. It is the purpose of this study to examine the geographical aspects of the Swaziland railway issue from its inception during the eighteen-fifties to the present. The study examines the motifs and "justifications" for each of the rail proposals, the geographic factors which have affected these proposals, and the reasons for their rejection. It is the hypothesis that most of the early proposals were advanced for political rather than economic reasons, and that all except the last proposal were rejected for politico-geographic reasons, though some proposals were economically justified.

The lack of rail facilities in Swaziland until 1964 has resulted in distinct geographic patterns of production, economic development, and commodity flow. Now that Swaziland is traversed by a railway which connects with the Goba-Lourenco Marques line, new geographic patterns could conceivably emerge. This study therefore also evaluates the railway's possible impact upon the protectorate's primary and secondary industries. It is hypothesized that new spatial patterns of production, transportation, settlement and

commodity flow will result either directly or indirectly from the new rail facilities.

Organization of the Study

The study is presented in four parts. Part One reviews the role of Swaziland in the latter half of the nineteenth century when both Boer and Briton were delimiting their boundaries and defining their spheres of interest in Southern Africa. The Boers, who had established independent republics on the interior plateau, sought complete political independence of Britain and felt this could be achieved and maintained if they possessed a railway to a harbour on the east coast which was independent of British control. The shortest and easiest route lay through Swaziland, an ill-defined native territory between the Transvaal Republic and the Indian Ocean. To fulfill their objectives, therefore, the Boers attempted to annex Swaziland and the adjacent native territories, but for reasons to be described the Boers were unsuccessful in their eastward drive.

Part Two of the study examines the many railway proposals offered by both Swazilanders and the Union of South Africa between 1902 and 1960 when Swaziland's political future was clouded by South African aspirations of incorporation. During this period, when Swaziland was a British protectorate, all the railway proposals were rejected because of the politico-economic issues resulting from the level of economic development in Swaziland, the early Swaziland

Proclamations, the Act of Union (1910), the Customs Union (1910), and subsequent legislation between Great Britain and South Africa relating to Swaziland's political status.

In Part Three, four related aspects of the Swaziland railway are described: the economic justification for the railway, the construction and operation contracts, the railway route, and the construction procedures.

Part Four examines the politico-economic significance of the Swaziland railway. The current geographic patterns of land ownership, land use, population and trade are first reviewed so as to present a basis for evaluating the railway's possible impact on Swaziland's mineral, agricultural, forestry and secondary industries, and settlement patterns. The immediate impact will be a reorientation of certain flow patterns, but the precise and long range impact cannot be accurately assessed because of many ever changing variables. These controls are briefly reviewed as they relate to the impact question.

The Geographical Framework

In examining Swaziland's controversial railway issue, three separate yet related considerations must be examined simultaneously. The first concerns Swaziland's regional setting in relation to South Africa and Mozambique; the second, Swaziland's political and economic associations with its more powerful neighbour South Africa; and the third, the interrelationships between capital, economic de-

velopment and communications.

No region can be gainfully studied in isolation. Swaziland's railway proposals must be viewed in relation to the territory's geographical position between South Africa and Mozambique, since they have all been concerned with either or both of these countries. Before the Union of South Africa was formed Swaziland was a major objective of the Boers in their drive for an eastern outlet which was independent of British control. Since then, the numerous Swaziland railway proposals have similarly been affected by events and conditions in areas adjacent to Swaziland. In contrast to the Transvaal's southeastern lowveld where the whole economy of the region was built around the railway, economic growth in Swaziland preceded even an integrated road network commensurate with the scale of the development projects. The major railways peripheral to Swaziland from Lourenco Marques and Durban to the Witwatersrand are outside Swaziland's jurisdiction. These lines of communications between the coastal cities and their hinterlands have stimulated development in the towns and rural regions which are either on or adjacent to the major arteries; but Swaziland, lying between these lines of communications, has been isolated from the larger centres of population, industry and commerce which has adversely affected the rate of the territory's economic development.

Since Swaziland is bordered on three sides by South Africa, and on the fourth by Mozambique, it has historically

had close economic and political associations with these two countries. South Africa has been the dominant of these powers. Ever since the Boers founded their independent republic (the Transvaal) Swaziland has become a political objective of the Boers, while at the same time having certain attachments to Britain. Since 1910, by the Act of Union and the South Africa Customs Agreement, these politico-economic relationships have become more pronounced and have greatly affected all railway considerations for the protectorate.

The third important set of forces which are an integral part of the railway problem involves the interrelationships between capital, economic development and communications. The transportation patterns of a territory are largely dependent upon available capital, the level of economic development and the existing transportation facilities. Economic development itself is dependent upon available capital and an integrated communications system. Indeed the three aspects of regional development are interdependent. Swaziland has had insufficient revenue to build even an integrated road network which has retarded economic progress within the country which in turn has discouraged investment. Prior to 1945 Swaziland, financially and economically, revealed all the symptoms of an acutely underdeveloped country. Since then, Britain through the Colonial Development Corporation has invested £23 million to act as a catalyst for economic development,

and has contributed to the recent railway venture.¹⁹ Swazilanders have repeatedly requested further financial assistance from Britain, and have maintained that railway construction should have been undertaken by the Union Government since Swaziland was economically an integral and inseparable part of the Union. Both Britain and South Africa have refused to commit themselves because of the political issues and the low level of economic diversity and development.

Limitations

Complete statistical data of Swaziland's economic and social phenomena are not available. Censuses were taken of the protectorate's human and livestock populations and certain agricultural commodities in 1904, 1911, 1921, 1936, 1946, and a sample survey of Swaziland's socio-economic conditions was made in 1960.²⁰ However, comparisons are not in all cases possible because of changes in enumeration tracts, definitions, and kinds of phenomena enumerated. The greatest statistical limitation to the study concerns Swaziland's imports and exports. Since 1910 Swaziland's import and export data have been included with those of South Africa. Thus there are no official trade statistics

¹⁹John C. Cater, "C. D. C's. Swaziland Investment is Greater than in Any Other Dependent Territory," The Swaziland Recorder, I (September-December, 1962), 13-18.

²⁰See J. F. Holleman (ed.), Experiment in Swaziland: Report of the Swaziland Sample Survey, 1960 (London: Oxford University Press, 1964).

for Swaziland though the Administration periodically compiles and releases estimates of the territory's trade by volume and value. South Africa does not release statistics on the amount of traffic which is conveyed over each route in Swaziland, or across the Swaziland-South Africa border points, thus making accurate flow diagrams impossible, but this has not prevented crude estimates from being made.

Certain documents, private correspondence, railway proposals and reports remain in the British Government's "confidential files" for a fifty year period, and hence are not available for public inspection. Although the Colonial Office, the Commonwealth Relations Office and the Public Record Office would not release these materials, the Secretariat in Swaziland put all its confidential files at the writer's disposal for which he is most grateful. It is hoped and believed they contained most of the pertinent data which were not available in London.

Part Four of this study, which deals with the possible impact of the railway on Swaziland's geographic patterns is limited in its analysis by numerous everchanging variables: economic agreements are altered almost without warning, the political parties repeatedly revise their manifestoes, market patterns change, political issues rise and fall, and local planning boards change their schedules. These are only a few of the variables which act upon Swaziland making prediction almost meaningless.

PART I. PERIOD OF CONFLICT AND ADJUSTMENT

CHAPTER I

BOER ASPIRATIONS FOR AN EASTERN OUTLET

In the second half of the nineteenth century, both Boer and Briton were delimiting their boundaries and defining their spheres of interest in Southern Africa.¹ The Boers, headed by Piet Retief, Andries Pretorius, Hendrik Potgieter and others trekked in the 1840's from the British coastal colonies of Natal and the Cape onto the interior highveld of what became the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. There they sought political independence of Great Britain and founded widely dispersed towns and farm communities which at first had little political or territorial unity. In 1852, however, by the Sand River Convention

¹ The most complete general histories of Boer and British objectives in Southern Africa for this period are: C. W. De Kiewiet, History of Southern Africa, Social and Economic (London: Oxford University Press, 1941); J. Holland Rose, A. P. Newton, and E. A. Benians (eds.), Cambridge History of the British Empire, Vol. VIII: South Africa (2d ed. rev.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956); Eric A. Walker, A History of Southern Africa (3rd ed. rev.; London: Longmans, Green and Co. Ltd., 1957); W. J. Leyds, The Transvaal Surrounded (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., 1919); Lord Hailey, An African Survey: A Study of Problems Arising in Africa South of the Sahara (revised 1956; London: Oxford University Press, 1957); and John W. Lyon, British Objectives in the Transvaal, 1877-1884 (Amherst: College Press, 1962).

which defined Boer and British interests in southwestern Transvaal, it was clearly demonstrated that the Transvaal was de facto independent of British control. Four years later the nucleus of the south African Republic was founded by Pretorius and the Burghers of Pretoria, Potchefstroom and Rustenburg. Their authority and effective control were initially confined to the south and western regions, but in 1860 the Republic's sphere of influence was extended to the Swaziland border with the addition of the Lydenburg District to the Boer Republic.

Once on the interior highveld, the Boers sought an eastern outlet to the Indian Ocean which was independent of British control. They felt independence could be both achieved and maintained if a port was secured and a railway constructed from it to the principal settlements of the eastern Transvaal. To fulfill their objectives the Boers had to conclude treaties with the Swazi, their subordinates, the Portuguese and the British, all of whom had loosely defined territorial claims to the region between the Transvaal and the Indian Ocean. These treaties, territorial claims, first settlement patterns and the Swaziland region are here examined in this initial period of conflict and adjustment when the Swaziland railway issue first developed.

The European Arrival and the Road to the Sea

It was the Boers of the Lydenburg District who were the first Europeans to encounter the Swazi and their subor-

dinates.² In 1845 Potgieter founded the village of Oristadt on land that was ceded from the Ba Pedi, a tribe subordinate to the Swazi (Figure 2). A dispute between Potgieter and the Volksraad of the embryonic Republic of Lydenburg over this claim resulted in the Lydenburg obtaining a cession to "all the land from Oristadt northwards to the Oliphants River up and down to the line of Delagoa Bay, thence southwards to the Crocodile River, thence westwards to Elands Spruit, and to the 26th degree eastwards to where the Crocodile River runs into the Komati River, and on to the Delagoa Bay Line."³ Although none of this territory falls within the present political boundary of Swaziland, it was part of the Swazi sphere of influence in the nineteenth century and was the first region to be actively contested by the European and Swazi.

A decade later a second deed ceded more land to the Lydenburg Republic from the "lower poort of the Komati River eastwards to the Portuguese line, and from the poort up and along the mountain ridge westwards to the sources of

²The most authoritative ethnographies on the Swazi are: Brian A. Marwick, The Swazi: An Ethnographic Account of the Natives of the Swaziland Protectorate (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1940); Hilder Kuper, An African Aristocracy: Rank Among the Swazi (London: Oxford University Press, 1947); and Hilder Kuper, The Uniform of Colour: A Study of White Black Relationships in Swaziland (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1947).

³Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, C. 2316 (1879), "Further Correspondence Respecting the Affairs of South Africa," pp. 22-23. Hereafter further reference to a Parliamentary Paper already cited is referred to by its Command Number.

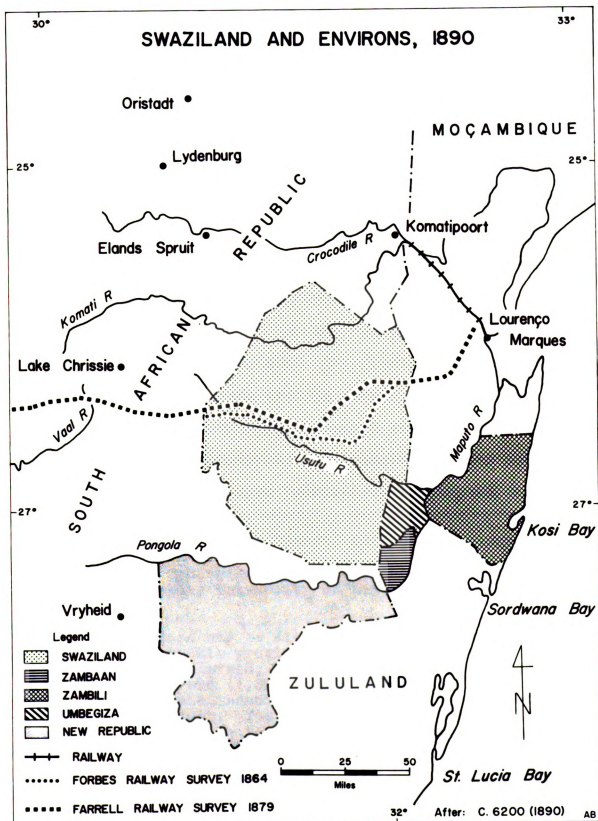


Fig. 2.

the Umgovuma River, and thence westwards to the Pongola River, which is Fanda's line, including all the waters running eastwards between the Kafir Chief Maveri and me (Ums-wazi)."⁴ This concession, vague in definition like the first, included all of present day Swaziland. A third concession gave the Boers a corridor of land between the southern boundary of Swaziland and the Pongola River, the object being to separate the Swazi from the hostile Zulu by an intervening Boer settlement. This latter region, however, was not immediately occupied.⁵

These territorial concessions paved the way for Boer occupation of Swaziland. The first Europeans in the territory were mainly hunters in search of game on the lowveld, farmers who winter grazed their sheep on the highveld, and a few missionaries and traders who were both British and Boers.⁶ Few were immediately interested in perma-

⁴ Ibid., p. 23. A "poort" is a gap or gorge.

⁵ F. C. Symington, "Swaziland tot 1890" (unpublished Master's Thesis, University of South Africa, 1931), p. 45.

⁶ Swaziland may be divided into four distinct longitudinal physiographic provinces called from west to east the highveld, middleveld, lowveld and the Lebombo Ridge. The western highveld (1,800 square miles) is a high plateau and deeply dissected mountain region which lies between 3,250 and 6,000 feet. Its eastern edge is part of the Great Escarpment which is so prominent in southeastern Africa. The Middleveld (2,000 square miles) is a region of rolling hills in central Swaziland between 1,800 and 3,250 feet. The lowveld (2,200 square miles) is a gently undulating lowland diversified by low kopjes (ridges) between 500 and 1,800 feet. The Lebombo Ridge (700 square miles) is a rolling plateau to the east of the lowveld with an elevation similar to that of the middleveld. Its western

nently occupying the land, but some made arrangements with the local chiefs for settlement on a temporary basis. The first personal land concession (of which there is a written record) was made in September 1860 to a Boer Trekker who acquired approximately 1,000 square miles of land in southeastern Swaziland for only thirty head of cattle and an annual rent of five pounds sterling.⁷ A small but important Boer settlement was later founded (1866-68) at Lake Chriesie near the headwaters of the Vaal River forty miles west of the present Swaziland-Transvaal border (Figure 2). To the east this new settlement connected with the Pongola Corridor which the Boers had previously acquired from the Swazi, and thus it formed a wedge of Boer territory between the Swazi in the north and the British in Natal. Within Swaziland itself most of the European settlers were Boers so that most of the land between the South African Republic and the east coast was either occupied or claimed by the Boers. Although Boer settlement and effective control of these territorial concessions were not immediate, these regions provided the Boers with a passage to the Indian Ocean through non-British territory. Delagoa Bay, the natural

edge rises steeply from the lowveld. For a detailed description of these physiographic provinces, see Harm J. deBlif, "The Concept of the Physiographic Province Applied to Swaziland," Journal for Geography, I, No. 7 (September, 1960), 7-20.

⁷ Great Britain, Colonial Office, Swaziland: Report for the Year 1962, (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1963), p. 109.

outlet for the eastern Transvaal, was preferred over either Kosi Bay or Sordwana Bay, but the Boers were prepared to accept any if the opportunity arose.

Initial movement of pioneers and their goods between Delagoa Bay and the eastern Transvaal was very limited and confined to the Komati and Pongola valleys. Water transport via the Komati, Maputo, Pongola and Usutu rivers was handicapped by numerous falls, rapids and the Great Escarpment only short distances from the coast. Transport by both pack animal and porter were impracticable due to the tsetse fly and malaria, and during the rainy season (summer) the few tracks were impassable. Consequently in 1860 some Boer pioneers proposed that a railway should be built from Lourenco Marques to the Transvaal highveld through either the Crocodile or Pongola valleys, neither of which were claimed by Britain. The suggestion was not actively pursued and a survey was never made, but in 1864 two British pioneers (McCorkindale and Forbes) in Swaziland proposed to build a railway from Delagoa Bay up the Usutu valley or the Umbeluzi valley to the Transvaal border. They conducted simple field surveys in the middle and low velds, but abandoned the project in the mountainous areas of the west (Figure 2). Although little is known of this proposal, it is recognized to be the first British proposal for a

railway across Swaziland to the Indian Ocean.⁸

The Treaties of 1874 and 1875

After these first railway investigations, and concurrent with the settlement of the Lake Chrissie area, the Boers made a bold bid for the control of Swaziland. On the death of King Ludvonga in 1874, they sent a deputation to the newly elected Swazi leader Mbandzeni to define Boer interests within the territory. A treaty was subsequently concluded whereby the Swazi were made "subjects" of the Transvaal, but were granted the management of their own affairs within the boundaries of Swaziland. The treaty also provided for a strip of land one mile wide on each side of the Maputa-Usutu rivers from Delagoa Bay to the Transvaal border across which a railway was later to be built. A final clause of the agreement, which neither Britain nor Portugal would recognize, made presumptuous territorial claims in Mashonaland and Matabeleland.⁹

⁸ Details of the route are lost, but in the files of the Secretariat, Mbabane, there are a few incomplete notations of the project. Since Britain did not claim Swaziland at that date, there was no official reaction by Britain to the proposal.

⁹ Two of the most detailed accounts of Swazi-Boer relationships during the latter part of the nineteenth century are: F. C. Symington, "Swaziland tot 1890" (unpublished Master's Thesis, Department of History, University of South Africa, 1931); and Kruger, Archives Year Book for South African History, I, 5-210. Additional readings on this 1874 Convention and others between the Swazi and the Boers are to be found in Kuper, An African Aristocracy . . . ; and Leyds, The Transvaal . . . , pp. 235-46, 507-08.

Although the Transvaal obtained the concession for railways through Swaziland by this agreement, it did not acquire the concession to use labour, local natural resources, or the rights to develop and use land adjacent to the proposed line, all of which were necessary for the efficient construction of the line. Consequently, the Republic was unable to develop its concession, which prompted the Boers to conclude a treaty (The Mozambique Convention) with Mozambique on matters of trade and communications in 1875. By the Mozambique Convention, "the products of the soil and of the industry of the Portuguese possessions in Mozambique shall not be liable to the payment of any import of transit duties in the territory of the South African Republic, and vice versa, the products of the soil and of the industry of the Republic shall be exempt from all import and transit duties in the Portuguese possessions of Mozambique."¹⁰ A Protocol to the Convention dated December 1875 provided that "the Government of His Majesty the King of Portugal consents to the aid in the construction of a railway from the port of Lourenco Marques . . . as far as the frontiers of the South African Republic . . ." to which the South African Government added ". . . that it binds itself to continue the line of railway from the Portuguese frontier as far as a centre of production and consumption will ensure the traffic of the line and the development of inter-

¹⁰Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, C. 3410 (1882) "Treaty Between the South African Republic and Portugal, 11th December 1875," p. 6.

national trade."¹¹ Upon the conclusion of this Convention, the Volksraad empowered President Burgess to raise a loan for the construction of the line. Portugal also co-operated by consenting to aid in its construction to the extent of a subsidy equal to one half of the cost of the line, the grant of the necessary land and the free importation of railway materials for fifteen years.¹²

The Lourenco Marques - Johannesburg railway was slow in materializing. The Transvaal was unable to finance the project or provide the required administrative and technical leadership since the country was torn by internal anarchy and financial failure.¹³ It was at this time (1877) that Britain annexed the Transvaal. Consequently, the northern railway project received little encouragement or support from Britain. Two years after the annexation, the Transvaal surveyed a route through central Swaziland from Pretoria to Lourenco Marques under the direction of Engineer Farrell. It was the first detailed and completed survey to be made in Swaziland and followed the easiest route possible. From Pretoria the proposed line ran east through Klipstapel, across the Transvaal highveld, through the Great Usutu valley, south of Bremersdorp and then northeast-

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid., p. 7.

¹³ The Lourenco Marques - Johannesburg railway is considered in greater detail in the next chapter together with an analysis of railway expansion and policy in the Republic, Natal, the Cape and the Orange Free State.

wards to the Umbeluzi River and Lourenco Marques (Figure 2), for a total distance of 340 miles. The route was selected on the basis of anticipated local traffic and directness subject to topographic considerations.¹⁴ Britain did not endorse the project, but the Transvaal ordered its investigation to demonstrate the Transvaal's readiness to assume independence of Britain and to encourage the resumption of construction on the Lourenco Marques-Johannesburg line.

The Pretoria Convention (1881) and
the London Convention (1884)

By the Preamble to the Pretoria Convention (1881) the Transvaal was guaranteed "complete self government, subject to the suzerainty of Her Majesty."¹⁵ The Transvaal

¹⁴ Justification on the basis of local traffic requirements may be questioned since the eastern Transvaal and Swaziland during the 1870's supported only a widely dispersed subsistence and grazing economy and small scale mining. Mining was confined to the Barberton and Forbes Reef districts of the Transvaal and Swaziland respectively, neither of which would have been directly served by this proposed railway. The most likely reason for the proposal being submitted at this time was to force the contracting parties on the Lourenco Marques-Komatipoort-Johannesburg route to resume construction. For a detailed description of the route including notes on the engineering difficulties, particularly in the section between Bremersdorp and the Transvaal highveld, see Farrell, The Delagoa Bay Railway, A Report Submitted to the Colonial Secretary, Pretoria, 1880.

¹⁵ The complete text of the Pretoria Convention is given in Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, C. 7611 (1895) "Further Correspondence Respecting the Affairs of Swaziland," pp. 42-48. Extracts of the Convention are found in Sir E. Hertslet, The Map of Africa by Treaty, Vol. I: British Colonies, Protectorates and Possessions in Africa (London: Harrison and Sons, 1909), p. 254.

was given the assurance that all matters of trade and future railway construction that were agreed upon in the Mozambique Convention (1875) would be held by the Transvaal Government without any objection by the Imperial Government.¹⁶ Article I defined the boundaries of Swaziland and Article 24 provided for the independence of the Swazi within these boundaries, and defined Boer and British interests in the territory.

The Pretoria Convention was replaced by the London Convention (1884) signed by the High Commissioner in South Africa, the Governor of the Cape of Good Hope, and delegates of the Transvaal State.¹⁷ Article I of this Convention fully described and redefined the Swaziland boundary, and Article 12 reiterated the independence of the Swazi within that boundary. The Convention also fully defined Boer and British interests in areas adjacent to the Transvaal and Swaziland, and severely curtailed the Boers within those regions:

The South African Republic will conclude no treaty or engagement with any State or nation other than the Orange Free State, nor with any native tribe to the eastward or westward of the Republic, until the same has been approved by Her Majesty the Queen.¹⁸

¹⁶Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, C. 3114 (1882) "Report of the Commissioners Appointed to Inquire into and Report upon All Matters Relating to the Settlement of the Transvaal Territory," pp. 6-8.

¹⁷The complete text of the London Convention is given in Great Britain, C. 7611, pp. 54-59. Extracts of the Convention are found in Hertslet, The Map of Africa . . ., I, 254.

¹⁸Great Britain, C. 7611, p. 57.

The significance of this Article (IV) was perhaps not immediately realized, but it prevented President Kruger from extending his sphere of influence into Zululand and Am-atongaland where Kosi Bay and Sordwana Bay offered the Boers a port independent of British control.

Concessions¹⁹

The Boers strengthened their claims to Swaziland, across which they planned to build a railway to the east coast, by acquiring from the Swazi grazing, mineral, land, commercial and manufacturing rights. The first concessions for land, water and grazing were granted by the local Swazi chiefs in the late 1860's but after the discovery of gold near Forbes Reef in the late seventies, and the granting of the first mineral concession by Mbandzeni in March 1882, European fortune hunters began to enter Swaziland in large numbers. Mineral concessions were granted principally to Britishers who later acquired commercial and manufacturing

¹⁹ Since concessions have been so important in the politico-economic development of Swaziland, they have received much attention. Principal of the writings are A. N. Boyce, "The Swaziland Concessions and Their Political Consequences, 1876-1908" (unpublished Master's Thesis, University of South Africa, 1947); Kuper, An African Aristocracy . . .; Lord Hailey, Native Administration in the British African Territories, Part V: The High Commission Territories: Basutoland, The Bechuanaland Protectorate and Swaziland (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1953), pp. 335-429; and A. G. Marwick, The Attitude of the Swazi Towards Government and Its Causes, A Report Prepared for the Swaziland Government, Mbabane, May 1955.

rights of all descriptions.²⁰ Rights to winter grazing, land settlement and water were granted primarily to the Boers who for many years had trekked their sheep across the border into Swaziland for winter grazing. The South African Government itself secured numerous rights in its pursuit of obtaining a port on the east coast and a route through Swaziland. King Mbandzeni granted the South African Government the right to levy customs and licenses, build telegraphs and railways across Swaziland, and control postal and survey services within the territory. A final strategic concession (the Private Revenue Concession) was obtained through an intermediary in 1889 which gave the Republic the right to collect all the private revenue of the Paramount Chief derived principally from rentals on land and mineral concessions in return for an annual rent of £12,000 (Table 1).

Despite these strategic concessions, the Transvaal Government claimed it had been unfairly treated with respect to mining and industrial concessions and threatened to send a commando "for the purpose of taking over the country and annexing it to the Transvaal."²¹ Indeed, in 1886 Mbandzeni

²⁰ Among the commercial and manufacturing concessions granted to the British at this time were those for printing, publishing and advertising; tanning and tanneries; the collection and receipt of customs; the extraction of oil; the export of tobacco; the building of townships; the generation of steam and electricity; and the manufacture of dynamite, buttons and postage stamps.

²¹ Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, C. 5089 (1887) "Correspondence Respecting the Affairs of Swaziland," pp. 16-17.

TABLE 1

CONCESSIONS OWNED BY THE SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC, 1890^a

Concession	Date Acquired	Cost of Concession £ _j	Annual Rent of Concession £
Railway	August 1887	12,000	10
Railway Refreshment Bars	October 1890	2,000	25
Surveying	August 1888	2,000	25
Canals and Navigation	December 1888	4,000	25
Telegraphs and Electricity	January 1889	7,000	25 ^b
Postal	November 1888	12,000	25
Licenses	?	50,000	100 ^c
Customs	?	1,500 ^d	200

^aCompiled from Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, C. 7212 (1893) "Further Correspondence Respecting the Affairs of Swaziland," pp. 116-17; and Garson, Archives Year Book for South African History, II, 263-434.

^bFor the first five years the annual rent was £25. Thereafter it was £100.

^cA rent was collected only during period of exercise.

^dAn additional £1,500 was to be paid if the Transvaal Republic acquired Swaziland.

informed the Governor of Natal that emissaries from Pretoria had pressed him to sign an agreement recognizing the Boer Government and repudiating any obligations to the British.²² These charges of aggression were denied by the Republic which stated it had no intention of interfering in the native affairs of Swaziland, and that the encroachment of individual Boers did not necessarily represent the attitude of the Transvaal Government.

In May 1887 the Paramount Chief requested British protection under Theophilus Shepstone, but Her Majesty's Government replied that they "were not prepared either to annex Swaziland or to establish a British protectorate there, nor could they recognize Mr. Shepstone as an official representative."²³ The Imperial Government, however, did propose that a joint commission consisting of one representative of each government be established to inquire into the affairs of Swaziland, and to report what measures might be jointly taken to prevent further complications and to secure the independence of the Swazi.²⁴

When British protection was refused, Mbandzeni appointed Theophilus Shepstone as his chief advisor and administrator of all Europeans in the territory with the power to frame laws, collect revenues, and settle ownership and property disputes. One of Shepstone's first duties was

²² Ibid., pp. 14-15.

²³ Ibid., p. 9.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 50.

the preparation of a concession's register for the systematic collection of rentals (Table 2). A committee of

TABLE 2

SHEPSTONE CONCESSIONS REGISTRY, 1890^a

Concession	Number
Grazing and Farming	64
Minerals	53
Timber and Plantation	10
Manufacturing	10
Commerce and Trade	7
Others	37
Total	131

^aCompiled from: Great Britain,
Parliamentary Papers, C. 6201 (1890)
 "Report on Swaziland by Colonel Sir
 F. De Winton," pp. 59-74.

fifteen European (both Boer and British) property owners representing land, mining and other interests was elected with five additional members appointed by the king. To this committee Mbandzeni gave a charter of self government which empowered the committee to "adjudicate on all matters relating to the white people in the country."²⁵ But the king expressly reserved to himself the right to veto any decision. Personal intrigue and national objectives made the work of the committee ineffective. Most of the land-owners favoured incorporation with the South African Republic as a means of strengthening their own interests in the territory whereas the mining and commercial

²⁵ Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, C. 6200 (1890) "Further Correspondence Respecting the Affairs of Swaziland and Tongaland," p. 195.

concessionaires desired independence for the Swazi and their country. The committee was dissolved in 1889 shortly after the death of Mbandzeni.

CHAPTER II

POLITICO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS IN AREAS SURROUNDING SWAZILAND

The problems and intrigues of the Swaziland railway issue were not conditioned solely by Boer and British actions within the ill-defined area of Swaziland, but were also affected by events in the neighbouring territories. To the east and south of Swaziland lay the chieftainships of Zambaan, Umbegiza and Zambili which formed a wedge of tribal territory between Swaziland and the Indian Ocean where Kosi Bay offered Kruger his last chance for an independent Boer port. It was in these independent areas and the middle Pongola valley that the Boers focused their efforts in their drive to the east.

Concurrent with this drive, railways were being built from the British coastal colonies to the interior Boer Republics, and from Lourenco Marques to the Rand. This expansion of railways in both British and Boer territory had an important effect upon the Swaziland railway issue. These two separate but related aspects of the Swaziland railway controversy are now examined.

Railway Development in Southern Africa Before 1902

Lourenco Marques - Johannesburg Railway

By the Protocol to the Transvaal - Mozambique Convention of 1875, the Governments of the South African Republic and Portugal bound themselves to construct a railway from Lourenco Marques to the center of production and consumption in the Transvaal. President Burgess was subsequently empowered by the Volksraad to raise a loan for its construction, and Portugal consented to aid in the construction to the extent of one half of the cost of the line, the grants of the necessary land, and free import of railway materials for fifteen years. The Transvaal Government was at this time crippled by internal anarchy and by financial failures, and so was unable to raise sufficient funds in the Republic, but found meagre support in Amsterdam. With the monies, South Africa purchased some railway equipment which was duly shipped to Lourenco Marques where it was left to rust because of inadequate Boer funds, facilities and technicians. The Volksraad in order to increase the revenue for the railway, then imposed a "Railway Line Tax" on every Transvaal farm.¹

The Portuguese gave the railway concession to an American financier, McMurdo, after the Portuguese concessionaires failed to raise the necessary funds in Lisbon.

¹ Union of South Africa, A Century of Transport . . ., p. 7.

McMurdo was authorized to build the line to the Transvaal border on the understanding that no competing line would be built within one hundred kilometers of either side of the company's line, and that his company should have all rights to fix rates of carriage.² The Republic gave a Holland-German syndicate the monopoly of railway construction from Komatipoort to the Rand. Kruger viewed the McMurdo concession with much misgiving since the financial support was largely British, and McMurdo's right to fix rates could deprive the Transvaal trade of the considerable advantage it had gained from the low customs charges defined by the Mozambique Convention. Hence, to protect its own interests, South Africa demanded that a "tramway" be built parallel to McMurdo's railway to carry rail materials to the Transvaal in the event McMurdo's line should not materialize.³ This demand, which was acknowledged by Portugal, disrupted all the financial and administrative arrangements between McMurdo and his British supporters, and caused all construction to be temporarily abandoned.

In 1889 McMurdo lost his concession to the Netherlands South African Railway Company which precipitated additional financial and administrative problems.

² Consequently, by this agreement, no railway could legally be built in Swaziland north of the Umbeluzi River or through the Umbeluzipoort, the natural connection between Swaziland and Delagoa Bay.

³ Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, C. 5903 (1890) "Correspondence Respecting the Action of Portugal in Regard to the Delagoa Bay Railway," pp. 19-28.

Six years after the construction was started in Lourenco Marques, the Delagoa Bay railway reached Komatipoort (October, 1889). At the same time, the line was begun from the Witwatersrand towards the eastern frontier.

The Lourenco Marques-Johannesburg line did not give the Transvaal Boers the independence they sought; it had British financial backing and terminated in Portuguese territory. Thus the Boers could not abandon their claims to Swaziland which still provided them with a possible eastern outlet. With their financial and administrative resources divided between these two regions, the Boers were ineffective in their drive, but as the northern line progressed the Swaziland issue diminished in importance.

Other Railways and the Proposed Customs Union

With increased mining and agricultural activities in the eastern Transvaal, the need for railways intensified. This need combined with the slow progress on the Delagoa Bay railway, forced President Kruger to ask the Cape Colony in July 1885 to consider a Customs Union on the basis of mutual free trade in Cape and Transvaal products.⁴ The Cape Government was urged to comply for it would have meant closer steps to federation, but the opportunity was lost due to the inability of the Cape and Free State officials to

⁴ See Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, C. 5390 (1880) "Conference at Cape Town on Questions of Customs Union and Railway Extension in South Africa."

comprehend the significance.⁵ A year later gold was discovered in Johannesburg and the rich Sheba mine was opened in Barberton. The Transvaal immediately became the economic focus of Southern Africa with the peripheral states desiring closer economic union through railways and trade agreements. In July 1886 a Customs Conference was proposed by the South African states but the Transvaal refused to attend since Kruger maintained that the independence of the Transvaal was in large measure dependent on the possession of at least one non-British port. Dependence on the colonial ports in the Cape and Natal meant submission to Britain.

To discourage British interests in the Transvaal and to guard Boer independence, the Transvaal imposed prohibitive duties on all colonial and imported produce entering the Republic from the southern ports, and cemented its commercial friendship with Mozambique by declaring all goods in transit through the Transvaal from Delagoa Bay subject to a transit duty of only three percent.⁶ Further, the Transvaal prohibited any rail connection with Natal or the Cape until the completion of the Delagoa Bay line. However, both the Cape and Natal continued to extend their lines towards the Transvaal frontier in the hopes of draw-

⁵ Van der Poel, Railways and Customs . . . , pp. 21-23.

⁶ Colony of Natal, Votes and Proceedings of Legislative Council of Natal, August 25, 1886, Law No. 9 of 1886, quoted in Van der Poel, Railway and Customs . . . , p. 27; See also Great Britain, C. 5903.

ing the Transvaal wealth to their ports (Figure 3). The Cape offered to build a railway across the Free State and thence to Johannesburg, Pretoria and Central Africa.

Once the Lourenco Marques line was under construction within the Transvaal, Kruger declared he was ready to discuss free trade with the British colonies, but the Cape under the leadership of Rhodes ignored the invitation and announced the Cape would be linked with the Rhodesias through Bechuanaland and not through the Transvaal. In 1892 the line from Port Elizabeth via Bloemfontein was connected with Johannesburg, and in the following year East London was linked with the Transvaal (Figure 3). Both of these lines were completed before the Delagoa Bay railway reached Johannesburg.

The complexities of these South African railway issues have an important bearing upon the Swaziland problem. Had Britain entered a customs agreement with the Transvaal in 1885 and extended her railways to Johannesburg when the opportunity arose, the Transvaal's economic and political independence would have been curtailed, and its claims to Swaziland invalidated. But since the opportunity was lost and the Transvaal's autonomy was retained though threatened by the advancing railways, the Boers resumed their drive in Swaziland and the native areas of the lower Pongola valley.

The Chieftainships of Umbegiza, Zambaan and Zambili

In 1887 Tongaland was the only strip of coastal territory under independent native rule from Senegal on the

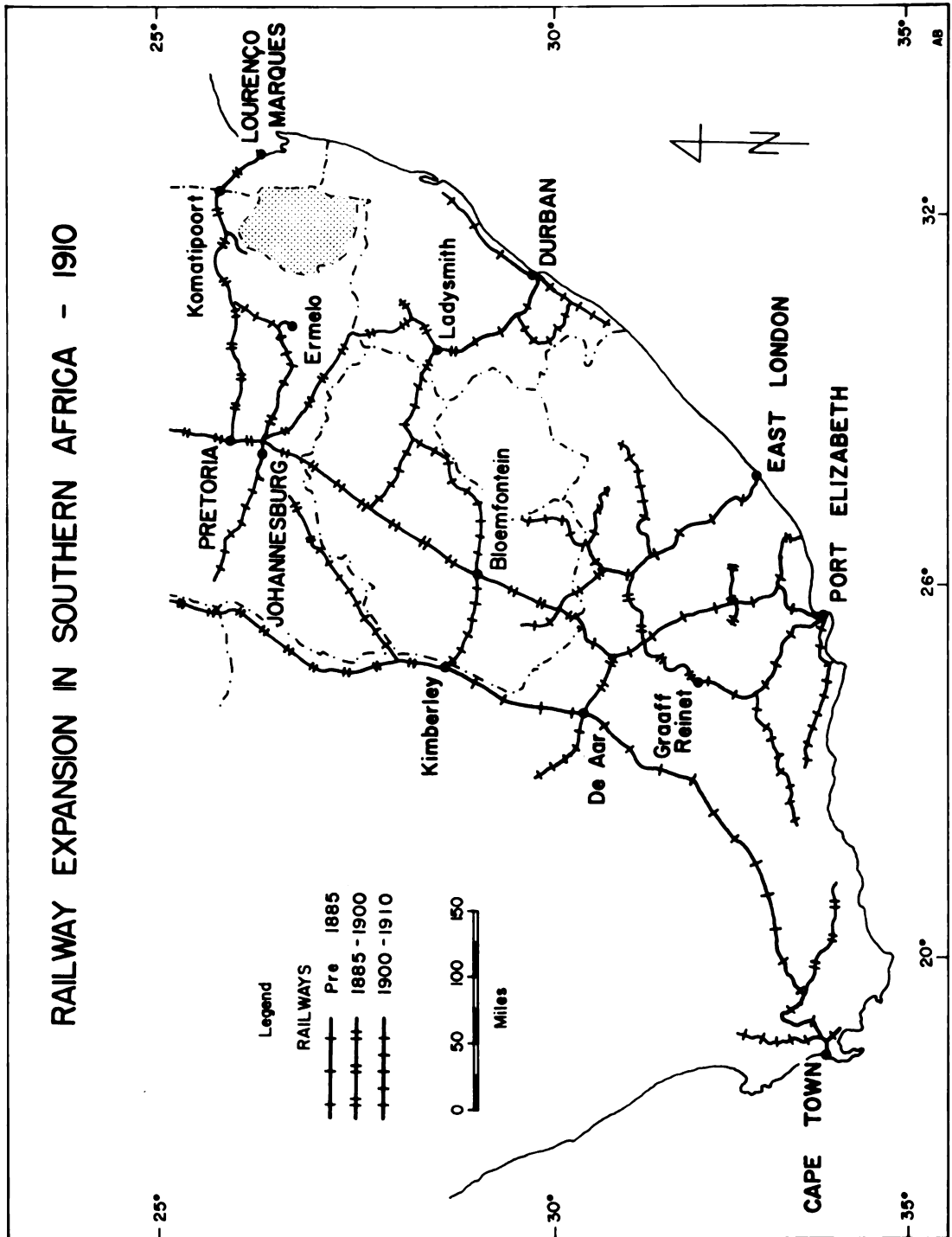


Fig. 3.

west to Zanzibar on the east. Britain controlled all the coast from the mouth of the Orange River to Mozambique except for Tongaland, a native area between Zululand and Delagoa Bay. Within Tongaland was the potential harbour of Kosi Bay that offered Kruger his last chance of securing an eastern outlet (Figure 2). The area consequently became the object of both nationals in furthering their political and economic objectives.

In March 1887, when progress on the Lourenco Marques-Komatipoort-Johannesburg line was beset by financial, technical and administrative difficulties, some Boer sympathizers advised President Kruger to obtain a concession to Kosi Bay and access to it through the Pongola valley south and east of Swaziland.⁷ By pursuing this Pongola route the Transvaal Government hoped to bring pressure on the concessionaires building the northern line, and failing this the Boers would possess a second outlet to the Indian Ocean. Subsequently two Boer officials were sent to Tongaland and the Pongola region to obtain the railway rights. The New Republic, a native area between Swaziland and Zululand was secured and recognized by Britain, but when the Boers demanded rights and privileges in Tongaland, Queen Regent Zambili refused and appealed for British

⁷ Edwin A. Pratt, Leading Points in South African History, 1486 to March 30, 1900 (London: J. Murray, 1900), p. 154.

protection which was granted in June 1887.⁸

In her agreement with Britain, which brought Tongaland within the "exclusive sphere of Britain's influence", the Queen Regent undertook not to cede any part of Tongaland or the region claimed by Zambaan and Umbegiza to any foreign power without the prior consent of the British High Commissioner. The petty chieftainships of Zambaan and Umbegiza which lay between Tongaland and Swaziland in the Pongola valley (Figure 2), were claimed by the militantly superior Tongas. The chieftains themselves, who disclaimed any allegiance to Queen Zambili, protested their independence and requested Transvaal protection in 1889. Chief Zambaan made formal representation in the words:

I, the undersigned Zambaan, Chief, living to the east of Swazieland, and to the west of Amatongaland, supported by my Council and Captains, hereby repeat the request several times before made to the Government of the South African Republic, to take me with all my people and all my territory under the protection of the South African Republic and I hereby place myself with all my people and all my territory as a dependent (onderhoorige) under the protection of the South African Republic.

I hereby declare that I am an independent Chief, do

⁸Great Britain, C. 6200, pp. 12-17. The treaty of Union between the South African Republic and the New Republic was signed on September 14, 1887 and ratified with the approval of Britain on July 2, 1888. Great Britain was required to give her consent by Article IV of the London Convention (1884). See also, Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, C. 4645 (1886) "Further Correspondence Respecting the Affairs of Zululand and Adjacent Territories."; Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, C. 4913 (1887) "Further Correspondence Respecting the Affairs of Zululand and Adjacent Territories."; and Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, C. 4980 (1887) "Further Correspondence Respecting the Affairs of Zululand and Adjacent Territories."

not belong under Amatongaland, nor under Zululand, nor under Swazieland; that I have asked protection from no other Government, and also that I shall not do so.⁹

A similar document was signed by Umbegiza in the same month. A few months later, however, Zambaan requested the protection of and annexation to Natal, in the words:

" . . . [we] are ready and wish to pay taxes to the English, and come under the laws of this territory, and all we ask is that a magistracy may be established in the district we occupy, and that we may be governed in the same manner as the other Natives in Zululand."¹⁰

Similarly, Umbegiza revised his position by claiming he and his people were English subjects and that "he [would] send messengers . . . to request the Government to annex his district at once." Furthermore, Chief Umbegiza announced "he and his tribe [were] willing to pay taxes, and ask that they might be taken under the protection of the English, and governed in the same manner as the other Natives are in Zululand."¹¹

By these agreements, Britain claimed, though did not legally possess, the three native chieftainships in the lower Pongola valley, which thereby denied the Transvaal Boers their eastern outlet. Britain realized that if the South African Republic was allowed access to a navigable river at a "point distant from the sea coast the interests of Her Majesty's possessions in South Africa would not be prejudicially affected, as they would be by the acquisition

⁹ Great Britain, C. 6200, p. 140.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 255.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 256.

of a port on the sea."¹² Thus had the Transvaal annexed Tongaland and the lands of Zambaan and Umbegiza, the Boers would have had uninhibited access to the sea at Kosi Bay, but not at Portuguese Delagoa Bay. The value of Kosi Bay itself was in question:

The Kosi River or lake is situated to the southeast of Imfihlweni . . . and appears to be a series of small lakes. These lakes are in a line almost parallel with the coast, and are at times nearly dry, and can be crossed by foot. The mouth is frequently closed in the dry season . . . It appears to be the general opinion in Lourenco Marques and Tongaland that the place would never be any use as a harbour.¹³

Although the Boers were temporarily defeated in their eastern objectives, they continued to make representations to Britain for the annexation of Swaziland and the neighbouring chieftainships. In 1889 President Kruger offered to withdraw the Republic's claims to the lands north of its borders in Matabeleland and Mashonaland on condition that Britain withdraw from Swaziland, Tongaland and the territories of Zambaan and Umbegiza.¹⁴ The Transvaal considered that annexation of Swaziland was the "best, the most just and the only solution . . . a solution which this Republic is prepared and willing to enter upon and carry out with the observance of all lawfully obtained

¹² Ibid., p. 92.

¹³ R. E. R. Martin, Commissioner to Tongaland, to Sir Havelock, Governor of Natal and Zululand, in Great Britain, C. 6200, p. 87.

¹⁴ Great Britain, C. 6201, p. 15.

interests."¹⁵ The Boers argued in favour of incorporation by reason of geographical position and the number and kind of concessions held by the Republic in Swaziland. British concessionaires, who outnumbered the Boers, asked that Swaziland be made a British protectorate on the basis of their many mineral and manufacturing concessions.

Britain, however, was prepared neither to annex Swaziland nor to submit to Boer demands, but agreed to form a joint commission to examine the position. Consequently in 1889, Britain sent Sir Francis De Winton to meet with General Joubert of the Transvaal. The British Commissioner appears to have favoured incorporation within the Republic, but the Secretary of State, pressed by philanthropic and commercial interests in Britain, and the threat to the hopes of the British South Africa Company in Matabeleland, saw dual control as the only solution.¹⁶ Britain favoured a provisional government to consist of three members, one from each of the major powers concerned and a third representing the native interests. Theophilus Shepstone, Advisor to the Swazi on European Affairs, was appointed on behalf of the Swazi Nation. Discussions between these

¹⁵Great Britain, C. 6200, p. 111.

¹⁶Among the civic and commercial organizations that opposed incorporation within the Republic were: the London and Edinburgh Chambers of Commerce, the Forbes Reef Company, and the Umbandine Swaziland Concession. It is estimated that over two million pounds sterling were invested in Swaziland by these and other organizations headquartered in Britain at this time. See Great Britain, C. 6201, pp. 51-58, 162-77.

officials paved the way for a meeting between Boer and British representatives at Blignaut's Pont to decide the political future of Swaziland and British interests in Matabeleland, and led to the signing of the First Swaziland Convention in 1890.

CHAPTER III

THE SWAZILAND CONVENTIONS

Boer and British interests in Swaziland and the adjacent native territories were clearly defined by the three Swaziland Conventions (1890-94). By them the Boers sought the incorporation of Swaziland and Tongaland as a means of obtaining their eastern outlet at Kosi Bay. Many of the articles referred specifically to the incorporation question and the railway issue.

Clauses of the Swaziland Conventions

The First Swaziland Convention (1890) confirmed the independence of the Swazi as recognized by the London Convention (1884). No inroad on that independence was to be permitted even with the consent of the Swazi without the approval of both Britain and the South African Republic. The powers and authorities of the Provisional Government Committee, conferred by the Organic Proclamation (1889) were to be continued for an indefinite period.¹ Britain

¹Other administrative provisions included the appointment of a Government Secretary and Treasurer; the establishment of the Chief Court which was to have full power and jurisdiction over all persons of European decent in Swaziland; subordinate judicial appointments; the administration of the Roman Dutch Common Law; and the right

recognized the validity of the concessions made to the South African Republic with respect to postal and telegraphic services, navigation and surveying, and to the construction of railways in Swaziland.

The controversial issues of the Swaziland railway question were defined in Article VIII by which Britain recognized the Republic's acquisition of a corridor of land three miles wide across Swaziland from the Transvaal border for the purpose of a railway providing that:

1. The sovereignty over the land so acquired shall not be deemed to be acquired by the South African Republic, but such land shall in like manner with any other part of Swaziland remain under the Government and Administration of the Government Committee referred to in this Convention; and

2. Her Majesty shall, if occasion require, have the right of passage across such railway and land so acquired.²

Since the intended railway between the Transvaal and Kosi Bay would cross not only Swaziland but Tongaland, Zambaan and Umbegiza, these areas were also considered in the Convention. Article XI provided that:

to raise revenues. No powers or jurisdiction were to be exercised by the Provisional Government Committee or by any judicial tribunal in respect of any matter in which Swazi Natives alone were concerned. Subject to all existing rights, the sovereignty and ownership of the Swazi Nation in respect of all land within the boundaries of Swaziland was to be recognized, but no new grant or concession in respect of such land was to have any legal validity save with the approval of the British and Transvaal authorities. The control and management by the Swazi Government of all affairs in which Natives alone were concerned were to remain unaffected. See Great Britain, C. 7611, pp. 60-61.

² Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, C. 6217 (1890) "A Convention Between Her Majesty and the South African Republic for the Settlement of the Affairs of Swaziland, with Correspondence Relating Thereto," p. 8.

Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in the Convention of London of 1884, Her Majesty's Government approves of the acquisition by the Government of the South African Republic of rights under the Treaty with the Chieftain Umbegesa and the Queen Zambili of Amatongaland, over a strip of land not exceeding three miles in width, north of the 27th parallel of South Latitude, for the construction of railway or for other purposes between the frontier of Swaziland and the sea-coast at or near Kosi Bay; provided that Her Majesty's Government undertakes to use its influence to obtain a concession to the South African Republic of an area of ten miles in radius from a point to be mutually agreed upon situate on the coast of Amatongaland, which area of land shall be deemed to be and to form portion of the Territory of the South African Republic.³

Furthermore, by Article XII, Her Majesty's Government agreed to recognize the sovereignty of the South African Republic in respect of:

1. The land acquired as aforesaid by such Treaties as are in the last preceding Article contemplated with the Chieftain Umbegesa and the Queen Zambili of Amatongaland for the purposes therein referred to:
2. So much land, connected with the land acquired from the said Chieftain as aforesaid for the purposes aforesaid as may be acquired for the purposes of the navigation of the Pongola River by the South African Republic by Treaty with the said Chieftain, as may not exceed in area an extent of four miles as the crow flies in radius from point within the territory of the said Chieftain and on the Pongola River; and
3. A strip of land for constructing a line of railway or other purposes, which strip of land may be acquired by a Treaty or Treaties with the Chieftains Zambaan and Umbegesa, and shall not exceed three miles in breadth, running lengthwise, either from Nyawos Hill along the Pongola River to a point north of the 27th parallel of South Latitude, where such strip of land would cut across the strip of land referred to in the last preceding Article.⁴

The Convention also provided that should the South African Republic acquire by treaty the rights to build

³Ibid., pp. 8-9.

⁴Ibid., p. 9.

either of these railways, Britain should have the right of passage across them and all the land acquired by the Republic. To safeguard Britain's interests in the native territories along the Swaziland border, Britain required first that the Transvaal make no treaty with Zambaan, Zambili or Umbegiza without the approval of Her Majesty's Government in the manner prescribed by the London Convention (1884); and second, that South Africa not part with the sovereignty, control or management of Kosi Bay, its harbour works, or land acquired for railways to any foreign power without the consent of Britain. Finally, the South African Republic agreed, in the event of acquiring Kosi Bay and the sovereign rights over the lands referred to in Articles XI and XII, to

enter with Her Majesty's Colony of the Cape of Good Hope and the Orange Free State, and with such other Colonies or Dependencies of Her Majesty as may then be parties thereto, into the then existing Customs Union Convention; provided that terms and conditions of entrance are conceded with due regard to the existing contracts and to the existing treaties recognized by Her Majesty's Government, by which the Government of the South African Republic is bound.⁵

To promote the proposed Customs Agreement, the South African Republic agreed to permit the extension of railways from or through any of Britain's colonies in Southern Africa towards the boundaries of the Republic and even to Johannesburg and Pretoria.

Dual administration of Swaziland was agreed upon by

⁵Ibid., pp. 11-12.

Britain and the Transvaal, but its success was hampered by national and personal rivalries stemming from the complexities of the concessions granted by Mbandzeni.⁶ The South African Republic possessed the vital concessions controlling revenues and the administration of Swaziland, whereas Britain possessed no such rights, and the Swazi, who derived most of their income from these concessions, paid nothing towards the maintenance of the Government. Consequently, the two administrative powers agreed to re-examine the position in June 1893 and drafted the Second Swaziland Convention which was duly signed in November 1893 and later ratified by the Volksraad.⁷

The Second Swaziland Convention gave the Republic greater liberties in the affairs of Swaziland but limited its movements east of the territory. It permitted the Republic to negotiate with the Swazi a Convention or Organic Proclamation which would allow it to assume powers of jurisdiction, protection and administration over Swaziland without incorporation. The Swazi, however, were guaranteed "protection with regard to the management of their own internal affairs according to their own laws and

⁶ The administrative problems in Swaziland between August 15, 1890, and November 8, 1893, are discussed in Great Britain, C. 7212, pp. 1-166. See also James A. Worrall, "The British Press and the Transvaal Problem, 1881-1899" (unpublished Ph.d. dissertation, University of Michigan), pp. 1-32, 56-78, 133-45; and Sir Hercules Robinson, "The Swaziland Question," The Fortnightly Review, LIII (February, 1890), 284-86.

⁷ The text of this Convention is given in full in Great Britain, C. 7611, pp. 91-93.

customs."⁸ The Republic was prevented from constructing a railway east of Swaziland except under the provisions of a further contemplated convention between Britain and the Republic, or with the consent of Her Majesty's Government. The Swazi refused to acknowledge the Organic Proclamation and sent a deputation to England to seek British protection. Their demands were not met, and in the following year (1894) Britain concluded the Third Swaziland Convention with the Transvaal, whereby the need to obtain the prior consent of the Swazi was waived and the territory became a protected dependency of the Republic.

Like the Convention of 1893, the Third Swaziland Convention made no provision for the acquisition of a seaport by the Republic. The British representative (Sir Henry Loch) adhered to the principle of treating the question of Swaziland and that of Kosi Bay and railway communications as entirely separate. Loch insisted upon including in the Third Convention those clauses of the 1893 Convention which had no connection with the basic administrative problem of Swaziland, and which bound the Republic to withdraw all claims to extend its territory or to enter into treaties with tribes to the north and northwest, and not to build a railway beyond the eastern border of Swaziland except under the provision of a further contemplated convention between Britain and the South African

⁸ Ibid., p. 91.

Republic.⁹

Significance and Consequences of the Swaziland
Conventions

Only two months after the ratification of the Third Swaziland Convention, Britain incorporated the lands of Zambaan and Umbegiza to Zululand thereby denying the Transvaal access to the sea through non-British territory. The annexation was bitterly resented by the Transvaal which had not anticipated any such move. For three decades the Boers had attempted to secure a passage to the coast via Swaziland and the Pongola valley, with their position being greatly strengthened by the three Swaziland conventions. By the last convention, the Republic had consented to assume the full responsibility for Swaziland in the expectation it would obtain a route to the sea. Moreover, in payment for this route, the Republic had relinquished its rights to expand to the north and had assisted the British to obtain exclusive possession of that vast territory. But with Britain's annexation of the native areas of Zambaan and

⁹ There is reason to believe that no such further convention was actually contemplated by the British Government and that the reinsertion of this clause was merely a means of making the Transvaal withdraw its claims in Matabeleland and Mashonaland where the British South Africa Company was extending its sphere of influence. See Leyds, The Transvaal . . ., pp. 344-62; Great Britain, C. 7611, pp. 31-41, 93-96; Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, C. 7780 (1895) "Correspondence Relating to Certain Native Territories Situated to the Northeast of Zululand," pp. 41-54; and Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, C. 7878 (1895) "Further Correspondence Relating to Certain Native Territories Situated to the Northeast of Zululand," pp. 1-9.

Umbegiza, the Transvaal's aspirations for an eastern outlet independent of Britain in the non-Portuguese sphere were finally extinguished. President Kruger summarized the position in the words:

Swaziland was nothing save a way to the sea. And now they no sooner give it me than they take away altogether the only thing that made it worth having, the way to the sea.¹⁰

Since the real value of Swaziland to the Transvaal was negated by Britain's annexation of Tongaland in May 1895, the Transvaal's interests in the territory were reduced and its administration undistinguished. To build a second railway to Delagoa Bay through Swaziland was financially impossible, and there was nothing in the protectorate itself to warrant a rail connection with either the Republic or the coast, although a railway would have provided the stimulus for economic development.

In the mid 1890's the permanent European population was small and widely dispersed, and the mineral, trade and manufacturing concessions were not developed.¹¹ Gold was the only profitable export which was easily sent to

¹⁰ Sir Edward T. Cook; Edward Garrett: A Memoir (London: Edward Arnold, 1909), p. 211.

¹¹ The European population was estimated to be one thousand in 1895. Sir Francis De Winton had estimated it to be five hundred in 1889. For general economic and social conditions in Swaziland in the last decade of the nineteenth century, see Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, C. 8648 (1897) "Diplomatic and Consular Reports on Trade and Finance: Swaziland, 1896"; Great Britain, C. 6201; and Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, C. 9206 (1899) "Further Correspondence Relative to the Affairs of Swaziland."

Barberton and thence to Johannesburg and Britain, but coal and tin could not be economically mined without rail connection to either the Witwatersrand or Lourenco Marques. Trade and commerce, limited to the small European population, were oriented primarily to Lourenco Marques, the territory's natural outlet. A small though indeterminable amount of trade was also conducted with the Natal Colony. Soon after the Transvaal assumed the responsibilities of Swaziland, the Boer Wars broke out and the territory's Administration was withdrawn in October 1899. Lack of finances, high administrative costs, and limited economic potential within Swaziland itself prevented the Transvaal from embarking upon any railway scheme.

PART II. THE PERIOD OF INDECISION, 1902-1960

CHAPTER IV

SWAZILAND RAILWAY PROPOSALS, 1902-1939

On the annexation of the South African Republic at the end of the Anglo-Boer War, all rights and powers of the Republic were transferred to the British Government.¹ In 1903 a Swaziland Order in Council was issued under which the control of Swaziland was vested in the Governor of the Transvaal Colony, and in the following year Swaziland was administered as a district of the Transvaal. When the Transvaal received self government in 1906, the control of Swaziland was transferred to the High Commissioner for South Africa and the present system of administration was inaugurated.

In 1909 when the constitution of the Union of South Africa was being drafted, the indigenous populations of the three High Commission Territories asked that they be excluded from the proposed Union with the Cape, Natal,

¹ For a discussion of the reconstruction of the British colonies and protectorates in Southern Africa until the Act of Union, see W. Basil Worsfold, The Reconstruction of the New Colonies Under Lord Milner (2 vols.; London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., 1913); and G. B. Pyrah, Imperial Policy and South Africa, 1902-10 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955).

Orange Free State and the Transvaal. Assurances were given them that no immediate change in their administration was contemplated but provision for the possible transfer of their administration to the Union was made in Section 151 of the South Africa Act:

The King, with the advice of the Privy Council, may, on addresses from the Houses of Parliament of the Union, transfer to the Union the government of any territories, other than the territories administered by the British South Africa Company, belonging to or under the protection of His Majesty, and inhabited wholly or in part by natives, and upon such transfer the Governor-General in Council may undertake the government of such territory upon the terms and conditions embodied in the Schedule to this Act.²

When the South Africa Bill was before the British Parliament, pledges were given by the United Kingdom that Parliament should have the fullest opportunity of discussing and, if they wished, disapproving any proposed transfer of the High Commission Territories, and also that the wishes of the inhabitants would be ascertained and considered before any transfer took place. The welfare of the Swazi was safeguarded in the Schedule to the South Africa Act. The alienation of native land in Swaziland was prohibited, and the revenue from the protectorate was to be expended within or on behalf of the territory.

The Schedule paved the way for a closer economic union between South Africa and the High Commission Terri-

²Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, Cmd. 8707 (1952) "Basutoland, the Bechuanaland Protectorate and Swaziland: History of Discussions with the Union of South Africa, 1909-1939," p. 118.

tories, and this was formally drawn up in the Customs Union Convention of 1910. In the Preamble to the Convention, all previous customs agreements between the former South African Colonies, Southern Rhodesia, Northwestern Rhodesia and the three High Commission Territories were terminated. By the Agreement of 1910 Swaziland was to maintain a tariff similar to that which existed in the Union of South Africa, and an equitable share of the duties collected on goods passing through the Union to Swaziland was to be paid over to it and vice versa. In addition, there was to be a free interchange of South African products and manufactures between the Union and Swaziland with the exception of beer and spirits. Payments due Swaziland by the Customs Agreement are assessed on a fixed proportion (0.149 per cent) of the total receipts of the Union each year.³

The Act of Union and the attached Schedule (1909), and the Customs Union of 1910 in large measure have determined the politico-economic relationships between Swaziland the Union of South Africa over the past fifty years. They have affected all railway proposals, since railways became a major condition for incorporation, a move the British Governments would not authorize without the approval of the Swazi and the Swazilanders. Numerous railway proposals were advanced during this period but none

³This proportion was based upon the returns during the three years ending March 31, 1911. By the same Agreement, Bechuanaland receives 0.276 per cent and Basutoland receives 0.885 per cent of the total Customs collections.

materialized. Each proposal is now reviewed chronologically and the specific reasons for their abandonment are discussed.

The Lord Milner and Karri Davies Railway Proposal,
1902-05

Immediately after Britain assumed the administrative responsibilities in Swaziland, an Australian entrepreneur proposed to build a railway from Lourenco Marques through the Umbeluzipoort to the untapped Swaziland coalfields some ten miles south of the Umbeluzi in the eastern lowveld (Figure 4). It was strictly a private venture that initially had no official endorsement by either Britain or Portugal. Major Karri Davies, the proponent of this scheme, saw in Southern Africa great economic opportunity based upon the local resources, the abundant unused labour, and the recently established British authority.

To implement his plan of regional development in Southern Africa, Davies first acquired the rights to Inyaca Island in Delagoa Bay where he proposed to build a coaling station, a meat packing plant, and a saw mill to handle imported lumber to be used by the railway.⁴ He next sought private financial support in Britain, South Africa and Mozambique, and announced in 1902 that he proposed to extend the railway across Swaziland to Johannesburg. Having

⁴ Inyaca (Inhaca) Island lies twenty-five miles east of Lourenco Marques in Delagoa Bay. Its value as a coaling station and rail terminus is thus in question. Lourenco Marques would have provided superior facilities.

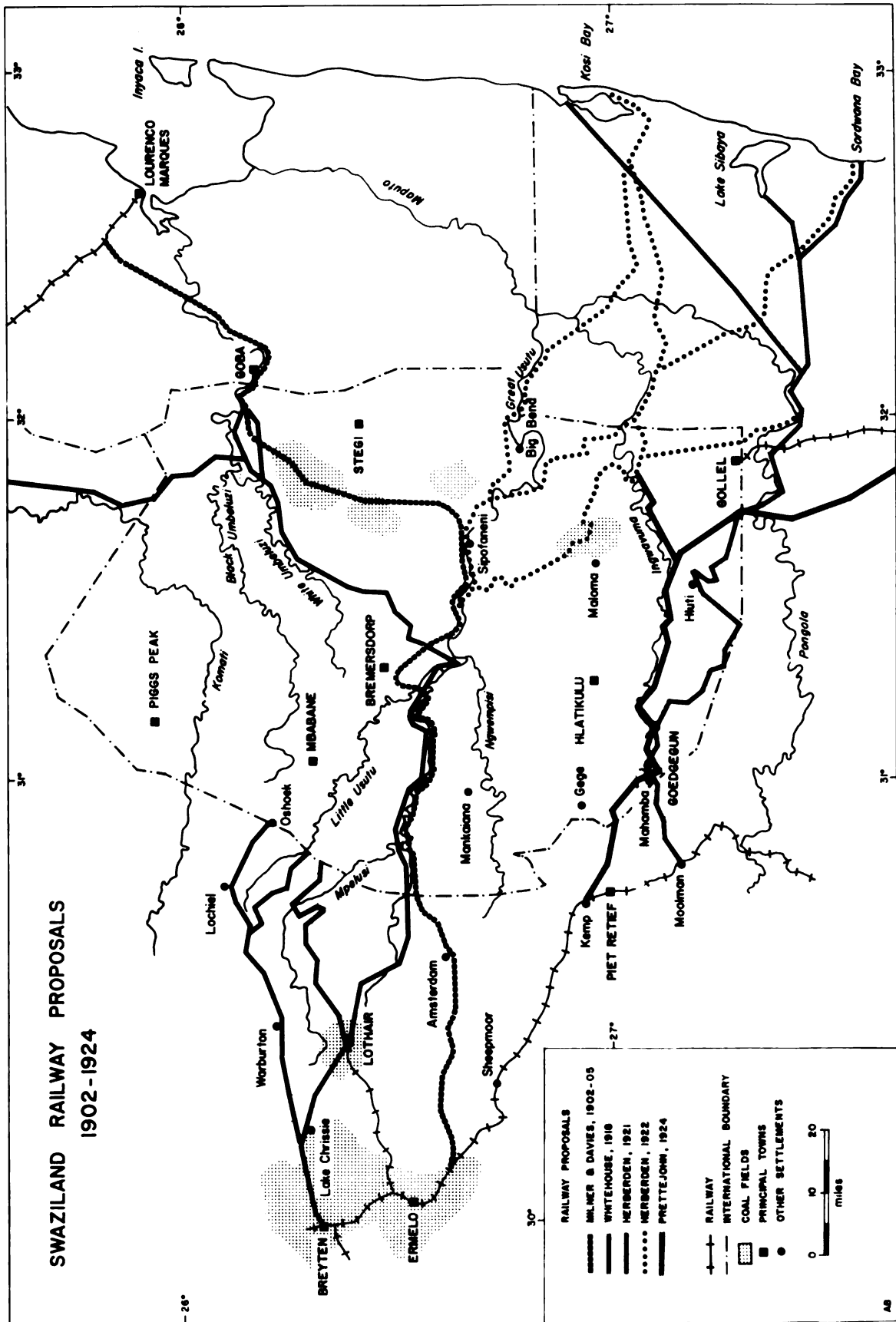


FIG. 4.

been assured financial support, Davies offered to pay Portugal a duty of "three-pence a ton on all coal exported, three-pence on every fifty cubic feet of timber, and five hundred Reins a ton on all goods with certain exceptions taken into Swaziland."⁵

Once the preliminary investigations were made, Britain readily endorsed the plan for it meant another Indian Ocean coaling station (Lourenco Marques) for her navy.⁶ Portugal also saw the economic potentials of such a railway and new port facilities, but demanded assurances from Britain that the line would be extended from Swaziland across the highveld to Ermelo and Johannesburg. Lord Milner, the High Commissioner for South Africa, gave his promise in 1902.⁷

⁵Great Britain, Public Record Office. F. O. 63, No. 1444 (1902-05). This is an untitled collection of unpublished letters from Major Karri Davies, Lord Milner, Lord Selbourne and Portuguese government officials in Mozambique and Portugal relating to the Davies-Milner railway proposal. Few of the entries are complete or numbered.

⁶The nearest British coaling station to that planned for Lourenco Marques was in Mauritius.

⁷In the correspondence files in Great Britain, Public Record Office, F.O. 63, No. 1444 (1902-05), there is reference to this promise but none to the formal agreement between Britain and Portugal which recognized this promise. If indeed there was a formal agreement between Portugal and Britain, there is no record of it in the Colonial or Commonwealth Relations Offices, London, where documents of this kind are filed. Likewise in the collection of Lord Milner's writings relating to South Africa and Swaziland, and edited by Cecil Headlam, there is no reference to any formal agreement between Britain and Portugal for the construction of a railway across Swaziland from Lourenco Marques to the Witwatersrand. See Cecil Headlam (ed.), The Milner Papers, Vol. II: South Africa, 1899-1905 (London: Cassell & Co., Ltd., 1933).

The Portuguese made several unreasonable demands of Britain over finances and administration of the line which led to the cancellation of the scheme in February 1903. First, Portugal demanded that Britain make a deposit of £100,000 to the local treasury for the Portuguese section of the line. Second, the Portuguese wanted assurance that a steady and dependable quantity of coal would be mined for export far beyond the amount possible under the proposed mining methods. Third, the Portuguese demanded that the railway from Delagoa Bay to the Swaziland frontier be built by the Portuguese Government without the consultation or aid of the British Government or private concerns in South Africa.⁸

Shortly after these negotiations collapsed, a German syndicate showed interests in obtaining similar concessions to Inyaca Island and Lourenco Marques, which revitalized Britain's claims and the negotiations resumed. With the fundamental issues of administration and finances resolved, both governments conducted field surveys, but could not agree where the railway should cross the Swaziland-Mozambique border. The Portuguese favoured a route through Port Henrique to the Usutu Poort, whereas the Transvaal government preferred the Umbeluzi Poort where there were well established European farming communities adjacent to

⁸ Great Britain, F.O. 63, No. 1444.

the Komati and Umbeluzi Rivers.⁹ The latter point was finally selected. From Lourenco Marques, the railway was to cross the coastal plain to Goba and the Umbeluzipoort where it entered Swaziland to the Siveji coalfields in the lowveld west of the Lebombo Mountains, for a distance of 46 miles (Figure 4). From the proposed coal mine, the railway was to follow the easiest gradients south through the semi-arid lowveld occupied solely by Swazi, to the Great Usutu River where it turned westwards to Bremersdorp, about 110 miles from the coast. The next section, from Bremersdorp up the Great Usutu River valley to Amsterdam, presented the greatest engineering difficulties through mountainous terrain. The final section (190 miles) was to Johannesburg via Ermelo, Bethal and Springs. The total distance from Lourenco Marques to Johannesburg by this proposed railway was 361 miles or approximately thirty-nine miles shorter than the existing route through Komatipoort.¹⁰

A Mozambique Decree dated July 15th, 1903 author-

⁹ A. A. Lisboa de Lima, "O Caminho de ferro da Swazilandia," Boletim da Sociedade de Geographia de Lisboa, No. 7 (July, 1904), pp. 222-41; and A. A. Lisboa de Lima, "O Caminho de ferro da Swazilandia, (Conclusao com um Mappa)," Boletim da Sociedade de Geographia de Lisboa, No. 8 (August, 1904), pp. 265-82.

¹⁰ Distance was a key consideration for this Swazi-land route. The Transvaal was interested in building the line if it was to be shorter than the existing route, but a saving of less than fifty miles through some very difficult terrain was enough to dampen the Transvaal's interests.

In the original correspondence between Davies and the British Government, the distance given from Bremersdorp to Amsterdam via the Usutu valley was only 37 miles, whereas it is really 60 miles.

ized the construction of the Swaziland-Mozambique Railway and improvements to the harbour of Lourenco Marques including the construction of two new wharves to handle the expected coal and lumber traffic, at a cost of £405,000 to the Portuguese Government.¹¹ The Portuguese, confident that the British would build their section of the railway, began construction in 1906 and completed the line to Goba by 1912 at a minimum of cost and difficulty. The British, however, did not keep their promise and the project collapsed. The explanation for the scheme's cancellation is really a matter of conjecture, but a few important political and economic events both in Southern Africa and Europe influenced the position, but no one issue may be considered more important than another.

First, soon after the "agreement" had been made between Lord Milner and the Portuguese, Britain's new Liberal Government, (which replaced the Conservative Government) refused to acknowledge the railway agreement.¹²

¹¹Great Britain, F.O. 63, No. 1444.

¹²Many Liberal M.P.'s claimed that no formal agreement was ever made between Britain and Portugal, but that it was merely a verbal understanding that a railway would one day be constructed. In a letter dated 4th October, 1916, however, Lord Milner wrote: "My recollection is absolutely clear that there was an honourable agreement and if the Portuguese have actually built the line to the Swaziland border, and we have left it in the air, it is, in my opinion, a breach of faith towards them . . ." He also indicated in the same letter that there was a record of this agreement in official correspondence, which he had in his personal file. The Lourenco Marques Guardian. March 15, 1921.

Second, Britain maintained Swaziland's economy was not sufficiently diversified and that coal alone could not possibly warrant the line. The protectorate's economy was based almost exclusively upon the export of tin and gold from small scale operations near Mbabane and Piggs Peak, and commercial agriculture from the widely dispersed European farms. Of the 1,083 Europeans in Swaziland in 1911, only 456 were gainfully employed with about half engaged in agriculture, commerce and personal services. Most of the Europeans were located in areas which would not be directly served by the proposed railway. If Swaziland was to have a railway, Britain maintained it must be prepared to finance it, but with the low level of production and limited income this was clearly impossible.¹³

Third, political pressure by Natal on the Transvaal was considerable. The Natal Government, fearing that Durban would lose a large proportion of its trade to the Swaziland route, forced the Inter Colonial Council (which controlled all railway matters in the Transvaal and Orange Free State) to refuse their authorization.¹⁴ By using the Durban route,

¹³ In 1911, Swaziland's Ordinary Revenue was only £40,747. See Great Britain, Colonial Office, Swaziland: Report for the Year 1911 (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1912), p. 32.

¹⁴ For the first five months of 1905, the Transvaal shipped a total of 265,000 tons to the coast of which Cape ports received 35,000 tons, Natal ports 100,000 tons, and Lourenco Marques 129,000 tons or 48 percent of the total. See Great Britain, Public Record Office, F.O. 367, No. 18 (1906). This is an unpublished collection of original correspondence relating to Portuguese affairs in Africa.

the Johannesburg industrialists were guaranteed fair rates, whereas on the Swaziland route they were not assured the controlling rights from the Rand to the sea. Existing rail rates and commodities between Johannesburg and Lourenco Marques were of importance. By the Transvaal-Mozambique Modus Vivendi (1901), the Delagoa Bay railway had preferential rates over the railways to both the Cape and Natal ports, and the proposed route through Swaziland would not have received the same preferential rights.¹⁵ The Portuguese, however, who were extremely desirous of the Swaziland Railway, agreed to modify the Modus Vivendi and gave their assurances for a continuous supply of native labour for the Rand mines without any stipulation with respect to railway rates. Although these proposals were very attractive for the Transvaal, it was decided that the greatest savings to the colony were on the existing route, so again the Swaziland Railway proposal was abandoned.

Fourth, South Africa had embarked upon an ambitious program of railway construction and could not afford the technicians or capital for the line through Swaziland whose political future was unsettled. Between 1905 and 1915 some 3,600 miles of new track were laid, of which 1,414 miles

¹⁵ The Transvaal-Mozambique Modus Vivendi (1901) was concluded without consultation with the governments of the Cape Colony and Natal, both of which objected to the preferential treatment accorded Mozambique to the prejudice of their trade. This action is reviewed in Union of South Africa, Prime Minister's Office, Correspondence Respecting the "Modus Vivendi" Between The Transvaal and The Province of Mozambique (Pietermaritzburg, April, 1908).

were in the Transvaal.¹⁶ The railway from Springs to Breyten through Leslie and Bethal was opened to traffic in December 1905, and from Breyten to Ermelo in March 1907. The main line from Lourenco Marques to Johannesburg (which was carrying about ten percent of South Africa's total imports by value) was linked by a fifty-five mile line to Breyten from Machadadorp in the following year. The railway under construction from Johannesburg to Vryheid through Ermelo was extended to the Pongola River at Comondale by July 1913.

Fifth, the Transvaal was hesitant to continue the line east of Ermelo to the Mozambique frontier unless it was "given beforehand the practical control of the whole line from Ermelo to the sea."¹⁷ This in effect meant the annexation of Swaziland to the Transvaal, but by the Act of Union (1910), this could not be executed without the consent of Britain and the inhabitants of Swaziland.

¹⁶Republic of South Africa, South African Railways and Harbours, Annual Report of the General Manager, 1962-63 (Pretoria: Government Printer, 1963), pp. 149-50; and Union of South Africa, Railway Communication: Piet Retief and District. Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Excellency the Governor (Pretoria: The Government Printing and Stationery Office, 1909).

¹⁷Great Britain, Public Record Office, C. O. 528, No. 2 (1903). This is an unpublished collection of original correspondence relating to South African Railways before 1903.

The Usutu River and the Whitehouse Proposal, 1918

Soon after the Milner Davies scheme collapsed, and four years after the Act of Union defined South Africa's relationships with the protectorate, Swaziland farmers requested that Mozambique and the Transvaal resume their railway investigations across Swaziland. In July 1914, the Governor General of Mozambique informed the Swaziland Farmers' Association that Mozambique was prepared to extend the Goba line fifty miles into Swaziland and maintain it for all purposes of traffic subject to reasonable terms of expropriation when the time should arrive for Britain to take it over. The Association then proposed that a railway committee be formed to make the proper representations to His Majesty's Government.

The Resident Commissioner of Swaziland readily endorsed the proposal. The proposed line, which would have terminated a few miles from Bremersdorp and promoted agriculture in the low and middle velds, would have been in the interests of the protectorate and would not have adversely affected Union ports as there remained a large area between the proposed Swaziland terminus and the nearest Union lines at Piet Retief and Breyten.¹⁸ Although nothing came of this proposal, it did demonstrate Swaziland's interest in developing her economic relationships with the

¹⁸Swaziland Farmers' Association to D. Honey, Resident Commissioner of Swaziland, July 8, 1914. (In the files R.C.S. 562/14 of the Secretariat, Mbabane).

Portuguese, and it encouraged the Transvaal to reconsider its link with the protectorate and Lourenco Marques.

In November 1917, the Union Minister of Railways, upon the invitation of the Swaziland Farmers' Association, examined the possibilities of a rail connection between the Union and Mozambique along the Great Usutu and Umbeluzi Rivers. But it was clearly stated from the outset that such a railway would depend upon the entry of Swaziland into the Union. Although no discussions of these terms were formally made, a detailed survey was conducted the following year and the report submitted to both Pretoria and Mbabane.¹⁹

The report recommended a mainline railway from Breyten eastwards through Lake Chrissie and Lothair to a point on the Great Usutu River sixteen miles west of the Swaziland border, from where it followed the Usutu to its confluence with the Ngwempisi south of Bremersdorp (Figure 4). There the proposed railway left the Great Usutu and took a northeasterly course to the south bank of the White Umbeluzi River which it followed down to Goba. An alternate route was surveyed from the south bank of the White Umbeluzi River five miles above its confluence with the Black Umbeluzi, north through the Lowveld along the Komati valley to Komatipoort. In its western section, this proposed mainline would have required only light earthworks and could

¹⁹ Miscellaneous untitled correspondence in the files (R.C.S. 86/18) of the Secretariat, Mbabane.

have been constructed at a minimum cost. The maximum gradients throughout the line would conform to the standards required of through mainline railways in the Union - one in eighty.²⁰

At the same time three alternate routes were surveyed from Breyten to the Swaziland border (Figure 4). The first followed the original survey from Breyten to Lake Chrissie, and thence due east over the Mpelusi River to Warburton and Lochiel and across considerable rough terrain all the way to the border near Oshoek. This first alternative, 88 miles in length, essentially followed the main road between Swaziland and the Rand. The second alternate was the same as the first as far as Warburton, but then it followed the divide between the Little Usutu River and the Mpelusi River until four miles from the boundary where it dropped down into the Little Usutu valley. The third alternate route left the recommended route near Lothair where it then followed the divide between the Mpelusi and Metula Rivers.²¹

South Africa was not prepared to build this railway unless the through and local traffic justified it. There is little question that there was sufficient through traffic but the problem was to find a local traffic that was payable. The Swaziland route would have relieved much of

²⁰"The Whitehouse Report, 1918," Notes in the files (S310B) of the Secretariat, Mbabane.

²¹Ibid.

the burden placed on the Lourenco Marques - Johannesburg line, which prior to the First World War, handled between 51 and 66 percent of all the commercial seaborne traffic forwarded from the ports in the Union and Mozambique to the "Competitive Area".²² In 1910 for example, 407,388 tons of traffic or 66.06 percent of the total was railed from Lourenco Marques to the "Competitive Area" with Durban supplying 24 percent, Port Elizabeth just over 5 percent, East London and Buffalo only 4 percent, and Cape Town less than one percent. During the war years, however, these proportions changed in favour of the South African ports (Table 3). Of the local traffic to be generated in the Transvaal it was proposed to open the coalfields near Breyten, Carolina and Lake Chrissie, primarily for an export market. Additional freight for both Johannesburg and overseas markets were livestock and timber. The local freight situation in Swaziland, however, was less promising. The only active mineral concerns near the proposed route were coal mining on a very limited scale near the Usulutwana River by the Central Mining and Investment Company, and some alluvial tin mines between Mbabane and

²² The "Competitive Area" includes that area bounded by lines drawn between the goods traffic stations serving Pretoria, Springs, Vereeniging, Klerksdorp, Welverdiend, Krugersdorp and Pretoria. See Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, Cd. 3495 (1930) "Convention Between His Majesty's Government in the Union of South Africa and the Government of the Portuguese Republic Regarding the Native Labour from Mozambique, Railway Matters and Commercial Intercourse, Signed at Pretoria, September 11, 1928," p. 22.

TABLE 3

**TONNAGES OF COMMERCIAL SEA BORNE TRAFFIC FORWARDED FROM
PORTS TO THE "COMPETITIVE AREA", 1909-1939^a**

Calendar Year	South African Ports Tons	Lourenco Marques Tons	Total Tons	Lourenco Marques % of Total
1909	158,108	307,269	465,377	66.03
1910	209,297	407,388	616,685	66.06
1911	219,008	326,468	545,476	59.85
1912	215,870	268,436	484,306	55.43
1913	219,410	240,394	459,804	51.39
1914	188,360	179,399	367,759	48.78
1915	211,325	119,759	331,084	36.17
1916	223,061	103,363	326,424	31.19
1917	219,253	99,819	319,072	31.28
1918	162,408	89,129	251,537	34.43
1919	140,935	49,292	190,227	25.91
1920	146,794	79,429	227,223	35.11
1921	193,774	123,382	317,156	38.90
1922	122,182	107,196	229,378	46.73
1923	142,147	146,186	298,333	52.36
1924	192,029	174,294	366,323	47.58
1925	190,607	202,211	392,818	51.48
1926	203,808	232,837	436,645	53.32
1927	221,862	251,786	473,648	53.16
1928	254,299	279,404	533,703	52.35
1929	296,177	283,256	579,433	48.89
1930	247,030	247,368	494,398	50.03
1931 ^b	.	.	.	.
1932	191,311	258,024	449,335	57.42
1933	236,439	346,214	582,653	59.42
1934	319,742	474,792	794,534	59.76
1935	415,170	557,384	972,554	57.31
1936	493,152	570,008	1,063,160	53.61
1937 ^b	.	.	.	.
1938	478,040	528,804	1,006,844	52.52
1938	453,168	512,387	965,555	53.07

^a Compiled from data in the files of the South African Railways and Harbours Administration, Johannesburg.

^b Data are not available.

Bremersdorp. Neither really justified the line, and the only area of large scale commercial agriculture was considered too distant to be directly served by the railway.

The most important prerequisite for the railway was the incorporation of Swaziland. General Botha raised this point with the Secretary of State, Lord Milner, in 1919, when it was argued that incorporation within the Union would enable the South African Government to spend money on the territory's development, and particularly on transportation. But the Union Government reiterated that it would not act in this matter, however useful or urgent it may be, while Swaziland retained an administration independent of it. European feeling in Swaziland was unfavourable to incorporation since the Europeans (who owned two-thirds of the land in the protectorate) would not be guaranteed either full European status or the guarantee of a railway in the event of incorporation.²³

Concurrent with the above investigations, the South African Railways Administration examined the possibilities of constructing a network of light railways in Swaziland similar to that planned for Zululand. The Union had designed a railway that would negotiate steep gradients and curves, which could be built at a minimum of costs (£700 to £1,000 per mile), and serve a wide region.²⁴ Surveying

²³ Great Britain, Cmd. 8707, p. 14.

²⁴ The Light Railway Problem, A Report in the files (R.C.S. 601/18) of the Secretariat, Mbabane.

would be geared to the traffic need and not to the terrain. Thus it was proposed that the main line be built parallel to the Mbabane-Stegi road with numerous branch lines connecting it with the dispersed farm population. The entire cost of such a scheme would have been borne by Swaziland since it was not proposed to integrate this network with that of South Africa or Mozambique.

South Africa, Swaziland and Kosi Bay

During the 1920's South Africa embarked upon an ambitious program of railway improvement in keeping with her expanding economy. Between 1920 and 1925 over one thousand miles of new track were opened of which 284 miles were in the Transvaal. Essentially all the new lines were built to serve agricultural and mining areas and did not form part of the main line system.²⁵ The building of these branch lines was mainly a question of political competition whereby in satisfying the demands of the various electoral

²⁵ In 1922 for example, the Union Government approved the construction of twenty-three new lines of which fifteen were classified "agricultural lines" and five "mineral lines". The Lothair extension from Ermelo was approved in 1922, for example, to stimulate commercial agriculture in the eastern transvaal near the Swaziland border. In 1925 almost 950 miles of new track were approved all of which were part of agricultural branch lines. See Union of South Africa, Department of Transport, Railways and Harbours, Report of the Railways and Harbours Board on Proposed New Lines of Railway from Ermelo (Buhrmann's Takelkop) to Lothair (Pretoria: The Government Printing and Stationery Office, 1927), pp. 120-23.

divisions in the Union, the real interests of the country as a whole became obscured if not ignored.²⁶ This local political competition was not limited to the Union, but included Swaziland because of its close proximity to centers of economic activity in the Transvaal. Several railway proposals were advanced by private and governmental agencies in both the Union and Swaziland, most of which were based upon the expansion of South Africa's coal industry near Witbank.

South Africa was, in the 1920's a major coal producer and dependent upon Lourenco Marques and Durban as outlets to the export markets.²⁷ In the immediate postwar period (1918) South African coal exports through Durban and Lourenco Marques amounted to 704,474 tons and 589,433 tons respectively and by 1924 more than a million and a half tons were shipped through Durban and almost a half million tons through Lourenco Marques (Table 4). Coal was the principal export by weight to be railed to these ports, whose trade relations with the Rand were defined and governed by the Mozambique Convention of 1909. That agreement was concluded at a time when the Transvaal was anxious to secure cheap imports and Portuguese Shangaan labour for the mines. The need for labour was not less, but the need

²⁶For a detailed analysis of the politico-economic implications of the Union's railway policy of this period, see Frankel, South African . . .

²⁷In 1920 the Union of South Africa mined 11,473,464 tons of coal of which 7,180,124 tons or 65 percent was produced in the Transvaal.

TABLE 4

**SOUTH AFRICAN COAL EXPORTS THROUGH DURBAN AND
LOURENCO MARQUES, 1910-1939 (in tons)^a**

Year	Exports through Durban	Exports through Lourenco Marques
1910	57,046	34,990
1911	84,116	22,150
1912	174,087	215,322
1913	355,901	436,960
1914	207,033	361,853
1915	219,788	324,731
1916	165,167	392,446
1917-18	261,930	447,967
1918-19	704,474	589,433
1919-20	439,749	441,697
1920-21	749,785	842,594
1921-22	1,014,488	750,952
1922-23	1,150,201	272,861
1923-24	1,453,678	534,157
1924-25	1,520,601	416,357
1925-26	1,299,748	401,280
1926-27	1,804,409	491,103
1927-28	1,487,287	278,147
1928-29	1,487,702	189,709
1929-30	1,561,858	237,588
1930-31	1,054,458	129,297
1931-32	761,226	91,076
1932-33	623,302	55,149
1933-34	720,053	72,260
1934-35	978,291	96,089
1935-36	980,279	122,816
1936-37	874,393	124,259
1937-38	621,979	175,627
1938-39	902,703	245,355
1939-40	684,950	265,690

^a Compiled from: Union of South Africa, South Africa Railways and Harbours, Annual Reports of the General Manager (Pretoria: Government Printer).

for export facilities was growing each year. The railway through Mozambique and the harbour at Lourenco Marques failed to give adequate facilities especially to Transvaal coal so the Union Government renounced the Convention and asked for a share in the control of both the railway and the port. This the Portuguese refused which prompted the Union to reexamine its entire communications system and to authorize several railway surveys from the coalfields to the coast through Swaziland.

Proposal of 1921

The first such survey was made in 1921 by Herberden (Figure 4). It made use of the Breyten-Ermelo-Durban line to Moolman, a point fifteen miles south of Piet Retief. From Moolman the proposed railway took an easterly course through the small European communities of Mahamba, Goedgegun and Hluti in southern Swaziland before re-entering the Transvaal ten miles west of Gollel where it joined the Pongola valley which it followed for forty miles before crossing the narrow coastal plain to Kosi Bay. An alternate route was surveyed from the eastern side of the Lebombo ridge to Sordwana Bay and Lake Sibaya (Figure 4). This line was designed to move coal to the coast by the shortest and most economical route. It was not the Union's interests to build a line to serve Swaziland although the territory's European landowners did request that the line be a multi-commodity line that would transport Swaziland products in particular cotton, tobacco and cattle. These three items in

1920 represented some 44 percent of the protectorate's total exports by value and with improved transport facilities their importance would have likely increased. The Union Government indicated that if Swaziland wished to use the proposed railway it must be prepared to share the costs.²⁸ With an annual revenue of only £72,293 and an expenditure of £102,310 in 1920, this was clearly impossible (Table 5).

Whilst the Union Government was investigating this southern route, a private company made representations to the Colonial Office for financial aid to build a line to connect central Swaziland with Goba.²⁹ Although Britain agreed in principle to this proposal it emphasized that it was economically unjustified and could not be built or maintained by Swaziland derived revenues, and Britain would not raise the necessary loans if the territory was to become politically a part of the Union as provided for by the Schedule to the Act of Union.

²⁸"Railway Construction Application by Hutchings, 16th November, 1921," Notes in the files (R.C.S. 685/21) of the Secretariat, Mbabane.

²⁹"The Swaziland Railway," Notes in the files (C11/21) of the Secretariat, Mbabane.

TABLE 5
SWAZILAND: ORDINARY REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE,
1916-1930^a

(in pounds sterling)

Fiscal Year	Ordinary Revenue	Ordinary Expenditure
1916	56,525	63,165
1917	64,467	67,119
1918	67,573	74,590
1919	67,845	75,979
1920	72,293	102,310
1921	75,497	89,994
1922	77,577	84,612
1923	80,156	85,682
1924	80,467	79,639
1925	87,788	85,066
1926	86,677	85,471
1927	84,488	88,659
1928	91,767	104,088
1929	102,998	109,486
1930	86,691	114,344

^aCompiled from data in the files of the Secretariat, Mbabane; and Great Britain, Colonial Office, Swaziland: Annual Report for the Years 1917 - 1932 (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office). Figures varied in these reports, but the latest revised figure is given in this Table.

Proposal of 1922

The Second Union reconnaissance survey was made in 1922 and took a more northerly route from Ermelo to Kosi Bay via Lothair and the Great Usutu valley (Figure 4). At Kosi Bay the Union Government proposed to build a coaling station and general harbour facilities. Parallel to the double track railway was to be a pipeline to carry

sufficient water to generate electrical power to operate the railway and port installations.³⁰ The pipe-line was also to convey crushed coal and coal dust to be manufactured into briquets at the coaling station.

Three alternate routes were also surveyed at this time (Figure 4). The first left the main survey route near Sipofaneni and took a southeasterly course to the Ingwavuma-poort and thence to Kosi Bay. The second route was to Sordwana Bay through the European owned farmlands near Maloma and the Ingwavuma River. The third route, to be used whilst the facilities at Kosi Bay were under construction, went from the Bulungu Poort through Gollel and Mtubatuba to Durban. Since these various schemes required the close co-operation of both South Africa and Swaziland on matters of water and land rights, and would have required more capital than either country was able or willing to contribute, the entire project was abandoned.

Proposal of 1924

In 1924 the Union Government reexamined the position and ordered another survey (by Prettejohn) to the coast through southern Swaziland. A route was surveyed from Kemp (five miles north of Piet Retief) southeastwards

³⁰"Railway Construction Application . . . "; "Further Surveys by South Africa," Notes in the files (R.C.S. 471/22) of the Secretariat, Mbabane; "Minute by David Forbed to H. B. Papenfus on the Proposed New Port and Railways to Serve the Eastern Transvaal," Notes in the files (R.C.S. 579/22) of the Secretariat, Mbabane.

through Mahamba and Goedgegun and along the south bank of the Ingwavuma River to a point in the lowveld where it joined the Herberden route of 1922. An alternate line was proposed from the Ingwavuma valley near Hluti southwards through the European farmlands to the Pongola River and Durban (Figure 4).

Swaziland supported this proposal in principle, but like the preceding proposals it was abandoned for reasons of cost, political uncertainty of Swaziland, and the level of economic diversity and development in the regions to be served. It was the last proposal of its kind to be advanced by the Union until 1946, but in the interim Swaziland was concerned with several others proposed by Swazilanders.

Swaziland and the Pongola Proposal

After 1924 all railway proposals that concerned Swaziland were promoted by European settlers within the protectorate, the eastern Transvaal and northern Zululand who realized the need for improved communications in the development of these areas. Responsible for these actions in Swaziland was the European Advisory Council, an administrative body of nine elected members established in 1921 to deal with the affairs affecting European residents.

In late 1923 the European Advisory Council approached the South African Railway Board in connection with the Union's announcement of extending the Durban-Mtubatuba line north to the Pongola River. The European

Advisory Council requested that the line be extended at least to Gollel and preferably to Komatipoort or even to Bulawayo, Southern Rhodesia. By connecting Bulawayo to Durban through West Nicholson, Beit Bridge, Komatipoort, Gollel and Somkele, the distance by existing routes (1,173 miles) would be reduced by approximately 225 miles.³¹

The immediate need, however, was a direct link with Durban, and in a communication with Pretoria the E.A.C. stated:

It is the conviction that the results from this stimulus [the railway] of the area north of the Pongola would soon prove justification in your Board's opinion for further extension. The nature of the country and the conditions warrant extension, we believe, actually through the territory now; only the political circumstances preclude the initiative in approaching the members of your Board on the subject at the present time.³²

Union reaction to this was made in February 1924 when Prime Minister Smuts clearly stated the purpose of the Mtubatuba extension, which was to promote the cultivation of sugar cane, cotton and ground nuts on an export basis, between Mtubatuba and the Swaziland border. Prior to 1924 commercial agriculture had been only a marginal proposition being handicapped by inefficient transportation that

³¹ The E.A.C. approached the South African and Southern Rhodesian administrations on this matter in 1922 and 1930. Neither Government saw any real justification for the line, but the E.A.C. continued to make it an issue with the hopes of strengthening Swaziland's position for a railway. See "Minute by David Forbes . . ."; and File C11/21 "The Swaziland"

³² "Correspondence on the Possible Extension of a Railway from Somkele to the Pongola Poort," Notes in the files (R.C.S. 560/23) of the Secretariat, Mbabane.

involved haulage by wagon to the Durban and Johannesburg markets. By building a railway, South Africa hoped not only to improve the existing marketing facilities, but to encourage settlement on the previously unoccupied Crown Lands along the Pongola River, particularly east of Swaziland.

Although the initial purpose of the railway was to serve the Union, it was conceded that an extension could be made to Gollol or even to the Mbabane-Stegi road. But before South Africa would consider such an undertaking, it requested a statement from the Swaziland Administration on anticipated traffic and government policy of promoting settlement in the unallotted lands east of Hluti and Maloma and south of the Usutu. Specifically, the Union wished to know whether the Imperial Government was prepared to sell its Crown Lands and place at the disposal of the South African Railways and Harbours Administration a certain proportion of the revenue derived from these sales. The Swaziland Administration replied that it was impossible to forecast with any degree of accuracy the territory's imports and exports beyond 1926, and that all revenue from the sale of Crown Land was applied to road construction within the protectorate and hence would not be available for rail construction. The communication failed to offer an alternative source of revenue and even failed to indicate

whether the Administration approved of a rail connection.³³

Since official reaction was so indifferent, various local organizations, including the European Advisory Council and the Swaziland Farmers' Association approached the Colonial Office requesting immediate approval and financial support. The Colonial Office declined action pending a report on communications and agricultural potentials to be conducted by the Empire Cotton Growing Corporation and various administrative offices in Swaziland. The agricultural report emphasized the great cotton potentials of the middle and lowvelds where over a million acres of land were considered suitable for cotton cultivation. Most of this land belonged to either the Swazi or European freeholders, but 21,000 morgen was unsold Crown Land.³⁴ Increased cotton cultivation was recommended in view of the recent Pongola irrigation schemes initiated by the Union Government, and because of Swaziland's central position in the rapidly developing cotton belt from Komatipoort to Durban. South Africa had encouraged these schemes by providing improved road and rail services, and if Swaziland would open up its Crown

³³ General Jan C. Smuts, Premier of the Union of South Africa, to Resident Commissioner of Swaziland, February 14, 1924. Correspondence in the files (R.C.S. 560/23) of the Secretariat, Mbabane.

³⁴ Report to the Empire Cotton Growing Corporation on a Recent Visit to Swaziland, A Report in the files (C9/24) of the Secretariat, Mbabane. A "Morgen" is approximately 2.1 acres.

Lands and improve its roads it was conceded South Africa might consider building a railway through the protectorate since it would benefit both territories.

Swaziland's transportation was considered inadequate by both the communication's and agricultural reports.³⁵ In 1924 the territory was served by only one main road (Mbabane-Stegi) which was supplemented by a sparse network of dirt tracks that were often impassable in the rainy season. In the lowveld cotton growers had to transport their bales over a hundred miles of poor roads by wagon to Piet Retief or to the Goba railhead. With improved roads to the projected Pongola railhead a saving of sixty miles would be made, and with direct rail service both the distance and cost to the producer would be further reduced.

Although these investigations strongly recommended railway connection with South Africa, and the proposal had unofficial support of the Union Ministers, the Imperial Government failed to take positive action. South Africa, however, unaffected by Britain's indifference authorized the construction of the line from Mtubatuba to the south bank of the Pongola River in 1924. Construction began in the following year and was completed in July 1927.³⁶ The

³⁵ Only extracts of the communication's report remain, and are found in the correspondence files on railways in the Secretariat, Mbabane.

³⁶ The eighty-eight mile Pongola-Mtubatuba railway was authorized by the Zululand Railway Construction Act, 1924. See, Union of South Africa, Bureau of Census and Statistics, Official Year Book of the Union and of Basutoland, Bechuanaland Protectorate and Swaziland, No. 8

indifference on the part of Britain also prompted the European landowners in the territory to send a deputation to Prime Minister Hertzog in 1924 requesting incorporation as a means of securing the railway.³⁷

In the following year two railway proposals were submitted by private interests to connect Swaziland with the Union and Goba. Both were to serve Stegi, Mbabane, Mankaiana, Hlatikulu and Bremersdorp and join the Union railhead at Piet Retief. The South African Government, however, was opposed to any link between Union and private lines, and prepared a statement condemning these proposals and defining the Union's position on railway development in Swaziland which was delivered to the British High Commissioner in May 1926.³⁸ In this report, General Hertzog referred to the sparsity of the European population engaged in primary industries (Table 6) and to the long

(Pretoria: The Government Printing and Stationery Office, 1927), p. 699; and Union of South Africa, Department of Transport, Railways and Harbours, Report of the Railways and Harbours Board on Extension of Line from Present Terminus of the Mtubatuba-Pongola Line to the Swaziland Border (Pretoria: The Government Printing and Stationery Office, 1926).

³⁷ Earlier informal discussions on incorporation were held between the E.A.C. and General Smuts in 1922. At this time and as a result of this action, the Swazi sent a deputation to London which was assured that if and when transfer was to be affected, the safeguards in the Schedule to the South Africa Act would come into operation. See Hailey, An African Survey . . ., p. 178; and Great Britain, Cmd. 8707, pp. 125-26.

³⁸ "Minute No. 420 from the Prime Minister's Office to His Excellency the Commissioner, Dated 20th May, 1926" A Minute in the files (C2/1926) of the Secretariat, Mbabane.

TABLE 6

OCCUPATIONS IN SWAZILAND BY RACE FOR 1911, 1921 AND 1936^a

Occupation	1911 Non-native	1921 European Coloured	1936 European Coloured
Agriculture	108	533	570 ^b
Mining and Quarrying.	56	22	25
Industry ^c	80	59	84
Transport and Communications.	10	19	54
Commerce and Finance.	104 ^d	48	132
Professional and Entertainment.	52	74	172
Public Service.	46	56	69
Personal Service. . . . .	..^e	20	31
Others and Undefined. . . . .	..	22	53
Total	456	853	1,190
		112	227

^aCompiled from: Swaziland, Swaziland Census Report, 1921 (Mbabane, 1921); and Swaziland, Swaziland Census Report, 1936 (Mbabane, 1938).

^bIncluded persons in forestry.

^cIndustry includes all craftsmen, factory operatives, manual workers and labourers.

^dThe 1911 Census included the Personal Service occupational group in the commerce and finance category.

^eData were not tabulated.

period that would elapse before the Swaziland railway would earn sufficient revenue to become a payable proposition. The construction of a trunk line from either Piet Retief or Ermelo to Goba would involve a large capital outlay and it was assumed that promoters of such a project would rely for the revenue chiefly upon through traffic between Lourenco Marques and the Union to be diverted from existing routes. The Union Government felt there was insufficient traffic conveyed between the Transvaal and the same port, and that the distance from Johannesburg to Delagoa Bay via Swaziland and Goba was greater than that through Witbank and Komatipoort.

Although the Union Government was not prepared to build an east-west line across Swaziland, it noted that the immediate railway requirements might best be met by an extension of the Pongola line to Komatipoort. The European Advisory Council then made representations to the Imperial Government which agreed to finance the rail extension from the Pongola River to Gollel. The line was completed in July 1927 at a cost of £10,000 and thus became the first line to directly serve Swaziland.

CHAPTER V

THE INCORPORATION QUESTION REVIEWED

Conditions for a rail connection with South Africa were becoming clearer and firmer. The basic prerequisite was the incorporation of Swaziland into the Union of South Africa as provided for by the Act of Union, but this could not be achieved without the consent of the inhabitants of Swaziland and the British Government. This chapter reviews the constitutional position of the incorporation issue and analyzes its relevance to the Swaziland railway issue.

Discussions Prior to 1931

The 1924 meetings between the European Advisory Council and General Hertzog reopened the incorporation debate though no formal meetings between the heads of state were held until 1934. In May 1925, General Hertzog announced in the South African House of Assembly that his party was not prepared to incorporate into the Union any territory "unless the inhabitants of the territory are prepared to come in."¹ In December of the same year the British Colonial Secretary (Amery) briefed the British High Commissioner to South Africa on the procedure of approaching

¹Great Britain, Cmd. 8707, p. 17.

the incorporation issue and stressed that the British Government did not regard the present as the most opportune time to propose the transfer of Swaziland to the Union.

Amery further conceded that:

The present state of uncertainty, consequent on the various statements made during recent years indicating that an application for the transfer of the Territory must be regarded as imminent, is very embarrassing to His Majesty's Government, and makes it impossible to administer the Territory except in a purely hand-to-mouth manner.²

Transfer of the administration of Swaziland to the Union of South Africa was governed by three principal considerations:

1. By the pledges given by or on behalf of the successive Secretaries of State to Parliament and to the inhabitants of Swaziland.
2. By the conditions prescribed in the Schedule to the South Africa Act, 1909.
3. By the wishes of the inhabitants of Swaziland.

² Ibid., p. 18. This assertion might be regarded as evidence supporting the view often quoted that Britain was unwilling to develop her territories while their future status was uncertain. Cf., J. E. Spence, "British Policy Towards the High Commission Territories," The Journal of Modern African Studies, II, No. 2 (July, 1964), 221-46; Royal Institute of International Affairs, The High Commission Territories and the Union of South Africa, A Report Prepared by the Information Department (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, April, 1957), pp. 17-21; and "The High Commission Territories: A Remnant of British Africa," The Round Table, No. 213 (December, 1963), pp. 26-40. The most detailed analysis of the incorporation issue is found in Lord Hailey, The Republic of South Africa and the High Commission Territories (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), pp. 50-95. In his discussion of the incorporation issue, Lord Hailey draws largely upon his own experience in Southern Africa and upon Great Britain, Cmd. 8707.

During the interwar period the wishes of the inhabitants, particularly those of the Europeans, were frequently voiced and assumed prominence in the incorporation debate. The white population sent deputations appointed by the European Advisory Council to the High Commissioner and the Union Government, and further expressed their position in a number of resolutions.³ These resolutions were to the effect that Swazilanders should secure from the Imperial Government a railway through the protectorate and a greater control of the territory's finances to promote industry and raise the level of economic production. Furthermore, it was repeatedly resolved that if Britain should fail to comply with these requests, the European Advisory Council should approach the Union directly for incorporation. Incorporation within the Union would be welcomed by most Swazilanders provided that Swaziland was removed from the terms of the Schedule to the South Africa Act; the entity of Swaziland be preserved with all Europeans being entitled to the same rights and privileges as those enjoyed by the South Africans in the Union; the native and European areas as defined by the Land Concessions Commission remain unaltered; and that a railway be built through the territory commencing on the date of incorporation. On the latter,

³ These resolutions and additional minutes and discussions of the E.A.C. are collectively filed under the title "Incorporation of Swaziland into the Union," Minutes and Notes in the files (R.C.S. 609/25, R.C.S. 42/26, R.C.S. 463/34, R.C.S. 522/34 and file 907) of the Secretariat, Mbabane.

Prime Minister Hertzog informed the Swaziland Deputation in January 1925 that the "Deputation could be assured that Union would mean railway development without delay for Swaziland."⁴

Britain's position, however, was less decisive:

Although the finances of the Territory do not permit of the Administration constructing a railway through the Territory, it is realized that if the Union Government should be prepared to undertake the construction of such a railway as part of its railway programme, it would be of the greatest benefit to the Territory, and that His Majesty's Government would not desire that such action should be made dependent upon the transfer to the Territory to the Union, and would be glad to afford all possible facilities.⁵

The Union of South Africa fully appreciated the railway dilemma particularly in view of the protectorate's agricultural potentials and the rapidly developing Pongola and Komatipoort cotton schemes, but the Union found it impossible "to give anything in the nature of a guarantee in this matter."⁶ Incorporation within the Union, and hence European representation in the Union Parliament, would, however, permit the Swazilanders to make proper representations to the Union Railway Board. South African opinion was clearly outlined in a communication from Hertzog to the British High Commissioner:

It is, I believe, still a very open question as to the particular area in the Territory which the first railway

⁴Great Britain, Cmd. 8707, p. 23.

⁵Ibid., p. 19. The Ordinary Revenue and Expenditure of Swaziland in 1925 were £87,788 and £85,066 respectively.

⁶Ibid., p. 15.

therein should traverse; and is a question on which the European inhabitants of the Territory are themselves by no means unanimous. But that a railway should be constructed in the Territory as soon as possible after the transfer of the Territory to the Union takes place, seems reasonably certain. That question would be pressed on the attention of the Railway Board and the Government, not only by the European representative of the Territory in Parliament, but by others who, while not inhabitants of the Territory, have interests therein.⁷

In the same communication, Hertzog outlined the conditions for transfer. Among them were that Swaziland be treated as a district of the Transvaal with the Europeans electing one member to the Transvaal Provincial Council; the Union Government take over all the custom's and excise revenue derived from Swaziland, and that the "Union Railway Administration and Railway Board should function in the Territory, that any railways constructed therein should be such as Parliament authorizes and becomes subject in all respects to Union Railway Acts and be part of the Union system."⁸ Since this latter condition did not guarantee railway construction on incorporation, but only defined the procedure for railway application and authorization, the European freeholders dropped the issue.

The Statute of Westminster (1931)
and the Status of the Union Act (1934)

The constitutional position of the incorporation question was altered by the enactment of the Statute of

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid., p. 28.

Westminster (1931) and the Status of the Union Act (1934) which gave to each of the self-governing Dominions the status of a fully sovereign state. The adoption of part of this Statute in the Status of the Union Act of 1934 gave to South Africa, as a fully sovereign state, the power to make laws without reference to the British Crown. Consequently these two Statutes profoundly affected the safeguards which the South Africa Act (1910) had provided for regulating the administration of Swaziland in the event of transfer.⁹

A British Parliamentary Committee, appointed to study the position of Swaziland (and Bechuanaland and Basutoland) pointed out that the effect of the two Acts had been to "repeal all the sections or articles of the South Africa Act which had made provision for reservation to, or a disallowance by, the King, advised by His Majesty's Government at Westminster."¹⁰ In addition it noted the

⁹For further discussion of the constitutional position of Swaziland and the Union of South Africa, see N. Mansergh (ed.), Documents and Speeches on British Commonwealth Affairs, 1931-52 (London: Oxford University Press, 1953), II, 922; Sir Charles Arden-Clarke, "The Problem of the High Commission Territories," Optima, VIII (December, 1958), 163-70; Isobel Edwards, Protectorates or Native Reserves? A Political and Constitutional Survey of the High Commission Territories in South Africa - Basutoland, Bechuanaland and Swaziland, A Report Prepared by the Africa Bureau (Southwick: Grange Press, n.d.), pp. 1-7; "The Protectorates and the Union," The Round Table, No. 96 (September, 1934), pp. 785-802; "Reform in the Protectorates," The Round Table, No. 100 (September, 1935), pp. 746-53; "A Trust in South Africa: The Problem of the Protectorates," The Round Table, No. 158 (March, 1950), pp. 121-26; "South Africa: The High Commission Territories," The Round Table, No. 165 (December, 1951), pp. 90-94; and B. Greaves, The High Commission Territories (Edinburgh: Edinburgh House Press, 1954).

¹⁰Great Britain, Cmd. 8707, p. 133.

Parliament of the Union of South Africa might repeal or make any amendment it chose of the sections and articles of the Schedule of the South Africa Act, 1909, and neither His Majesty's Government nor the Parliament at Westminster would have any constitutional status for expressing any opinion on the subject. Consequently, the Schedule to Section 151 of the South Africa Act could no longer be regarded as affording in itself a legal safeguard of native rights in the event of transfer.

In 1935 Prime Minister Hertzog and the British Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs agreed on a policy which the two governments should follow concerning the Swaziland Administration. This agreement was embodied in an Aide-Memoire from the British Government to General Hertzog, and pledged that the transfer of the High Commission Territories should not take place until the inhabitants, native as well as European, had been consulted and until Parliament had been given an opportunity of expressing its views.¹¹ Considerable misunderstanding arose over the meaning of the Aide-Memoire itself and over the implementation of the policy of co-operation proposed

¹¹ Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, Cmd. 4948 (1935), "Aide-Memoire Handed to the Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa by the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs on the 15th May, 1935," p. 1.

in it.¹²

Rather than clarify the constitutional position and prepare Swaziland for incorporation, the Statute of Westminster and the consequential aide-memoires and official statements of both governments only complicated the issue and retarded any positive action. The Swazilanders saw incorporation as the only solution for economic development, primarily through railways and improved roads, but since this required the consent and approval of the Swazi (who feared the Union's native policies), the position remained stalemated. Such was the position until 1961 when the Republic left the British Commonwealth.

¹²See Great Britain, Cmd. 8707, pp. 57-63; Margery Perham and L. Curtish, The Protectorates of South Africa: The Question of Their Transfer to the Union (London: Milford Press, 1935); R. K. Orchard, The High Commission Territories of South Africa (London: World Dominion Press, 1951); and Sir Alan Pim, "The Question of the South African Protectorates," International Affairs, XIII (1934), 668-88.

CHAPTER VI

THE SOUTH AFRICAN RAILWAY MOTOR SERVICES INTRODUCED TO SWAZILAND

In 1928 the South African Railway Administration established its Railway Motor Services on the main roads in Swaziland. The decision was made after continued requests by Swazilanders and the local administration for improved communications with the Union. The Railway Motor Services was in effect a compromise to the railway requests since neither the Union nor Britain would authorize and finance a railway through Swaziland. The facilities have raised the level of production within Swaziland, reduced transportation costs and facilitated both the import and export trade, but they also lessened Swaziland's chances for any rail connection with the Union and overseas markets. This chapter examines these two separate yet related aspects of the Swaziland railway issue.

Areas Served by the South African Railway Motor Services

Prior to 1928 all of Swaziland's imports and exports were conveyed by several small private trucking companies operating from the South African and Mozambique railheads and the larger communities within the protectorate.

The most important route in operation before South Africa introduced its Railways Motor Services (R.M.S.) was between Breyten and Stegi. It served Lake Chrissie, Vossman's Beacon, Lochiel, Oshoek, Mbabane, Bremersdorp, Stegi, and the widely dispersed intervening farm populations. The Swaziland settlements were the largest of these and accounted for the bulk of the traffic.¹ Three small trucking concerns operated this route but none had a regular service with fixed rates (Table 7). Rates were subject to contract between the transport agents and the customer with preference shown to the larger users. Only the Swaziland Government had a preferential rate for the transport of its stores from the Breyten railhead to Mbabane. Provisions, mealies, construction materials and processed goods accounted for the bulk of the traffic into Swaziland and particularly to the tin mining region near Mbabane, and to the small commercial center, Bremersdorp. One of the protectorate's principal exports in the twenties was tin, and in 1925 it accounted for 52 per cent of the total value (Table 8). Of the commodities sent from Swaziland by private trucking firms in the mid-twenties, tin, mail and

¹ Lake Chrissie at this time had a population of only two hundred, and had two general stores, an hotel, and a police station. Lochiel and Oshoek were even smaller. In 1927 the local farm population of this region had requested an extension of the bus service east of Vossman's Beacon, and had urged the Swazilanders to do likewise. See Railway Motor Services: Swaziland, A Report Prepared for the South African Railways Administration, in the files (C8/27) of the Secretariat, Mbabane. pp. 11-13.

TABLE 7
TRANSPORT FACILITIES IN SWAZILAND, 1927^a

Route	Number of Journeys Each Week	Carrying Capacity (lbs)	Freight Carried
Carolina-Mbabane (1)	2	7,000	General merchandise
Carolina-Mbabane (2)	Variable	3,000	General merchandise
Breyten-Bremersdorp.	2	2,000	Mail, general merchandise
Lothair-Mbabane-Bremersdorp.	Variable	7,000	General merchandise, natives
Piet Retief-Hlatikulu	2	6,000	Mail, general merchandise
Moolman-Hlatikulu (1)	4	3,000	Natives, general merchandise
Moolman-Hlatikulu (2)	Variable	3,000	Mail, general merchandise
Moolman-Mahamba.	Variable	2,000	Natives, mealies
Moolman-Goedgedun.	Variable	3,000	Natives, general merchandise

^a Compiled from Railway Motor . . ., pp. 6-10.

Swazi labourers were the most frequent and lucrative with native labourers increasing in importance after Stegi was linked to Bremersdorp by the R.M.S. and to Goba by the Portuguese East Africa Motor System. Although Carolina had the most frequent connection with Swaziland and had the greatest carrying capacity of all operators, Breyten was selected as the terminus of the R.M.S. because of its junction with the Durban-Machadadorp line and the Johannesburg line. Total tonnages and their values have increased annually to the present along this route with an increasing variety of produce being carried.²

Southern Swaziland, before 1928, was served by five irregularly operated trucking concerns headquartered in Piet Retief and Moolman. Like the others, they had no fixed rates or schedules, but their rates were lower than on the Breyten-Bremersdorp route since there were more companies competing for a very limited traffic. Although Moolman had both a more frequent service with Swaziland, and a greater carrying capacity than Piet Retief prior to 1928, Piet Retief was selected as the R.M.S. terminus since it had the headquarters of the native labour recruiting service which operated in Swaziland, and since it had a tobacco factory and general urban functions.

With the extension of the Pongola railway to Gollel

²The Railway Motor Services does not release data of traffic carried over each Swaziland route. Swaziland is now treated as one unit for which data as a whole are available.

TABLE 8
VALUE (IN POUNDS STERLING) OF SWAZILAND'S EXPORTS, 1920-39.^a

Year	Tin	Gold	Cattle	Hides and Skins	Wool	Butter and Butter Fat	Tobacco	Seed Cotton	Wattle Bark
1920	59,254	631	26,240	2,099	.	.	25,875	10,282	400
1921	29,767	1,056	21,637	2,165	.	.	7,500	6,860	.
1922	16,420	1,926	41,432	1,147	.	.	5,432	2,013	.
1923	29,240	418	45,000	1,054	.	.	8,140	8,231	.
1924	59,082	1,693	64,688	1,298	.	.	7,909	10,306	.
1925	67,722	5,561	36,758	1,038	.	.	6,981	9,997	.
1926	52,947	6,324	44,456	3,940	.	.	22,750	13,900	.
1927	42,776	4,795	63,560	10,157	400	250	36,825	11,270	6,576
1928	39,706	1,475	54,594	13,047	400	510	37,428	13,785	4,920
1929	38,692	382	85,000	7,250	150	220	35,613	37,961	.
1930	23,414	.	50,763	3,469	909	805	14,397	26,868	9,108
1931	8,875	.	33,322	1,733	1,636	683	9,082	9,578	37
1932	11,497	1,542	23,728	633	490	825	10,850	3,125	28
1933	19,665	3,914	62,400	5,910	533	4,034	10,010	1,400	2,653
1934	37,628	2,608	40,536	6,200	536	1,140	10,433	2,048	536
1935	39,351	2,132	38,316	8,499	750	1,254	6,542	1,459	1,825
1936	39,352	1,938	57,468	15,000	825	3,825	9,441	950	1,335
1937	37,158	16,873	55,000	12,000	260	4,506	6,191	640	4,002
1938	33,129	9,035	43,420	5,132	800	11,763	8,174	.	4,115
1939	36,528	7,314	50,000	12,598	750	15,100	9,711	191	2,651

^aCompiled from: D.A.C. Purser, "The Trend of Mineral Production in Swaziland from 1907-1960," Bulletin No. I, Geological Survey and Mines Department, Swaziland (Mbabane, 1961), pp. 25-26, and Great Britain, The Annual Report for Swaziland (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office), various years.

in July 1928, and the establishment of an R.M.S. depot there, the southern middleveld and lowveld areas became drawn into the extended Durban hinterland, whereas previously they were part of the Piet Retief, Goba and Breyten catchment areas. To facilitate the flow of goods to this new railhead, the Swaziland Administration authorized considerable road improvements between Gollel and Bremersdorp, and Gollel and Goedgegun. In 1928 these routes had a bi-weekly connection with Gollel, but the road service itself was not extended across the Pongola.

The R.M.S. routes were selected on the basis of existing trucking routes and the economic centres which corresponded with the principal European farmlands and commercial centres (Figure 5). In 1928 these routes connected Breyten with Mbabane, Bremersdorp and Stegi; Gollel with Goedgegun and Bremersdorp; and Piet Retief with Hlatikulu, Goedgegun, Mankalana and Bremersdorp. Bremersdorp became the regional headquarters of the R.M.S. and Swaziland's major transshipment centre which drew upon all areas south of the Black Umbeluzi River. The bulk of the territory's imports were transported along the Breyten-Bremersdorp route, whereas most of the exports were conveyed to Piet Retief and Gollel. The latter two railheads received cotton, tobacco, wattle bark and cattle, which in the twenties and thirties were Swaziland's major agricultural exports produced primarily in the Hlatikulu District (Table 8). Cotton and tobacco were particularly important

SWAZILAND: RAILWAY MOTOR SERVICES 1928-36

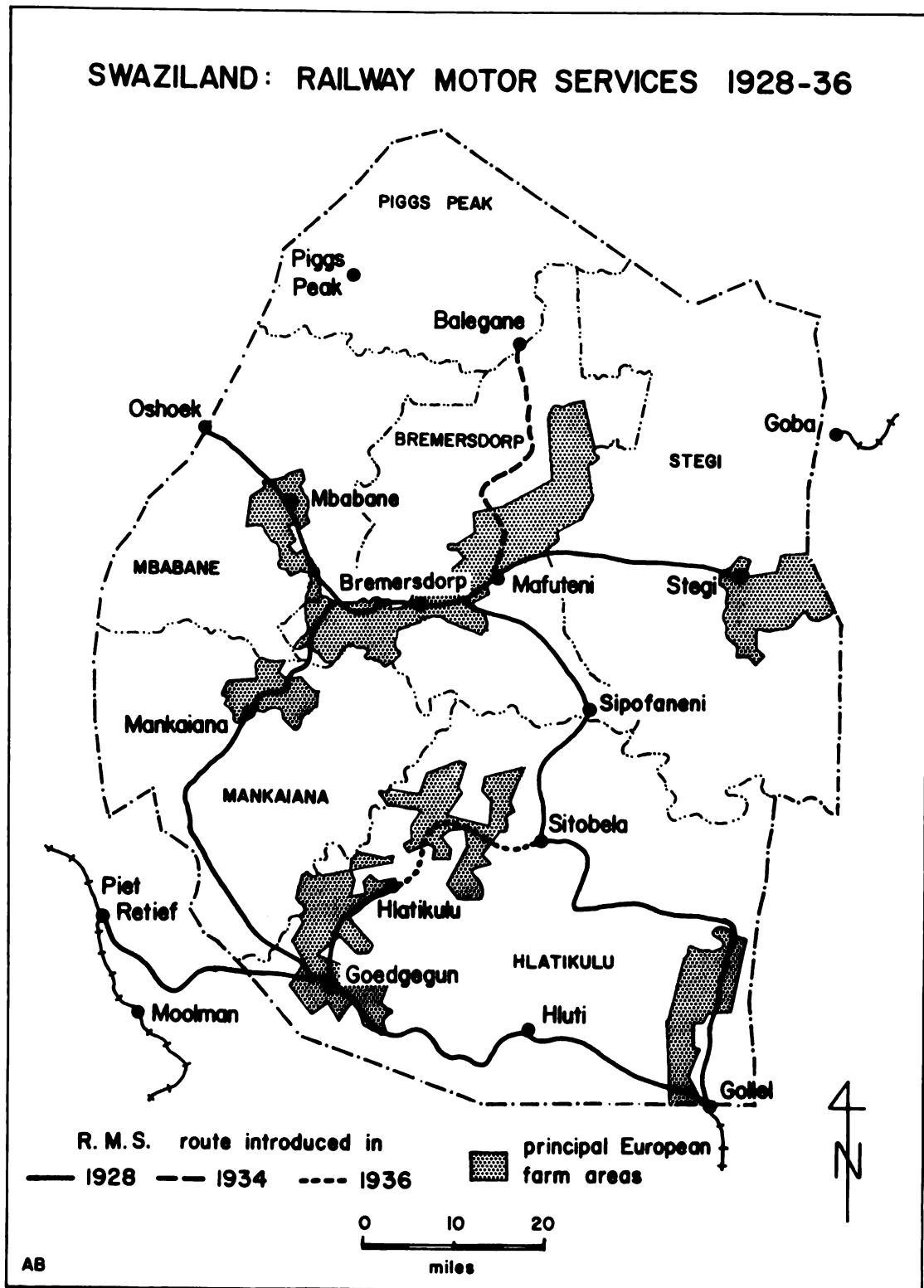


Fig. 5.

in these regions.³

In its first year of operation, the R.M.S. carried 22,374 passengers (of whom 16,717 were natives) and 6,339 tons of merchandise (Table 9). In 1929 the traffic volume

TABLE 9

PASSENGERS AND FREIGHT CARRIED BY THE SOUTH AFRICAN
RAILWAY MOTOR SERVICES IN SWAZILAND, 1928-1938^a

Year	Passengers Carried	Total Tonnages (2000 lbs) Carried
1928	22,374	6,339
1929	33,260	7,930
1930	40,855	10,078
1931	48,343	8,559
1932	39,761	6,413
1933	43,408	7,156
1934	49,904	9,297
1935 ^b	50,284	13,018
1936	62,370	11,175
1937	60,452	13,432
1938	72,341	14,829

^aSource: from the files of the South African Railways Administration, Department of Railway Motor Services, Johannesburg.

^bBeginning April 1, 1935, statistics were tabulated on a fiscal year basis from April 1st to March 31st.

increased to 33,260 passengers and 7,930 tons of merchandise.

The amount of traffic has continued to rise, although during

³Prior to 1930, tobacco could be freely marketed in the Union, but in that year the Swaziland growers were forced to form a co-operative society as the only alternative to an embargo on its tobacco. Production consequently drastically declined from 1,065,400 lbs (£14,397) in 1929 to only 298,413 lbs (£9,082) in 1931 (Table 8).

the depression years there was a temporary decline. Two new routes were added to the Swaziland system in 1934 and 1936 (Figure 5). Balegane was linked to the Bremersdorp-Stegi route at Mafuteni in 1934, and the Piet Retief-Hlatikulu route was extended through predominantly European farmland near Kubuta to Sitobela in 1936. The Balegane extension opened up north central Swaziland, which was primarily a cattle region with a limited amount of commercial agriculture.

Railways or a Continuation of the R.M.S.
in Swaziland?

Although the R.M.S. greatly improved Swaziland's transport system and promoted industry and commerce, it was regarded by most Europeans as inadequate for the territory's existing and future requirements. They argued that the territory's agricultural, mineral and commercial potentials would not be fully realized without a rail connection to the coast. A spokesman for the European Advisory Council summarized this viewpoint in the words:

Swaziland, despite its great fertility, irrigation possibilities and natural advantages, has failed to draw the settlers. He follows a railway. Our future depends on a coastal railway for the handling of the commercial types of produce suitable to the territory.⁴

It was the European Advisory Council, pressed by the Swaziland Farmers' Association and independent farmers

⁴"A Memorandum", Prepared by the European Advisory Council, 1929, in the files (C7/29) of the Secretariat, Mbabane.

in the eastern Transvaal, who repeatedly urged the Swaziland Administration and the Union Government in the inter-war period to reconsider the railway possibilities and to link the territory to both the Rand and its overseas markets. The European Advisory Council favoured an east-west link across the protectorate, but it also saw the advantages of an extension of the Golliel line to Komatipoort and even to Rhodesia. Indeed this body concentrated its efforts on promoting the latter route since it would require less capital expenditure, and would in all probability be the first choice of the Union Government, which itself had previously considered the project. In the lowveld there was sufficient European land to be divided into 500 farms each of 1,000 acres capable of producing sugar cane and cotton under irrigation. In the middleveld, the European land suitable for extensive commercial cultivation exceeded 800,000 acres, and in the highveld some 840,000 acres were suitable for forestry and grazing. The protectorate's farm population, centered primarily in the Hlatikulu District was only 533 in 1921 and 570 in 1936 (Table 6).

At the request of these farmers in 1929, the European Advisory Council conducted a survey of freight potentials and freight rates by rail and bus from Bremersdorp to the Durban markets through Golliel. The results of this investigation are shown in Table 10. For all agricultural commodities, supplies and farm machinery, it was found to be cheaper to use rail rather than bus transport

TABLE 10

ROAD AND RAIL TRANSPORT RATES (IN PENCE) FOR SWAZILAND, 1929^a

Item	Rail Rate per 2,000 lbs from Durban to		Additional Rail Rate for extra 112 miles	Bus Rate per 2,000 lbs, Gollet to Bremersdorp	Excess Bus over rail for 112 miles
	Gollet (250 miles)	Bremersdorp (362 miles)			
Citrus ^b	150	150	0	560	560
Seed Cotton . .	169	223	54	660	606
Ginned Cotton .	169	223	54	660	606
Peanuts ^b . . .	169	223	54	660	606
Sisal fibre ^b . .	169	223	54	660	606
Kaffir Corn ^b . .	171	180	9	560	551
Kaffir Corn ^c . .	209	263	54	560	506
Beans, Potatoes	209	263	54	560	506
Fence materials	209	263	54	560	506
Fertilizers . .	114	143	29	560	531
Raw Sugar . . .	480	620	140	680	520
Agr. Machinery.	540	700	160	660	500

^a Source: File C7/29 of the Secretariat, Mbabane. These figures were prepared by the European Advisory Council, 1929.

^b Packed for export, i.e. packed for markets not included in the Customs Agreement, 1910.

^c Packed for South African markets.

between Gollel and Bremersdorp - a distance of 112 miles. The cost of railing 2000 lbs seed cotton between these two points, for example, was 4/6 (54 pence), whereas the cost by bus over the same distance was 55/= (660 pence). In all cases the road cost was greater between Gollel and Bremersdorp than the rail cost between Durban and Gollel which involved a 250 mile haulage. Based upon these figures and upon prevailing average yields per acre, the extra cost to the producer by bus from Gollel as against rail, for such crops as cotton, monkey nuts, beans and kaffir corn was from 15/= to 40/= per acre; for potatoes between £6 and £10 per acre; and for citrus between £20 and £50 per acre. These findings were submitted to the Union Railways Administration which maintained that the Swaziland bus service was quite adequate for the existing needs, and that although the rates were undoubtedly lower by rail, they could never justify a railway with only a small annual traffic.⁵

This freight survey prompted the Union and British Governments to re-examine the Gollel-Komatipoort proposal though no field survey was made. Both Governments were cognizant of the protectorate's railway needs, but neither was prepared to finance the project. Britain stated its position in the words:

⁵"Miscellaneous Notes" in the files (C7/29) of the Secretariat, Mbabane. File C7/29 contains a number of extracts from letters and reports, none of which is clearly identified by author, date and title. The file itself is not titled.

Construction and ownership of railways by the Imperial Government in Swaziland is out of the question since the capital outlay per mile would be just as great as in the Union while the South African Railways would have the lion's share of the haulage and consequently of the profits.⁶

South Africa maintained that the Durban-Golles line, like most branch lines, had operated at a loss since its completion and consequently no further extension could be considered without some guarantee by the Swaziland Administration to cover these losses.⁷

Concurrent with these investigations, the two Governments re-examined the Johannesburg-Swaziland-Kosi Bay railway project, though neither Government wholly endorsed the proposals. Britain objected to the route on the basis that British commercial interests in Lourenco Marques would be adversely affected since much of the international transit trade of Lourenco Marques (which in 1930 amounted to 52 per cent of the total) would be diverted to the Kosi Bay route.⁸ South Africa dissented on grounds of cost and

⁶The Kosi Bay and Rhodesia Railway Proposals, A Report in the files (C32/30) of the Secretariat, Mbabane.

⁷The Union had even cancelled some of its railway projects although monies had been voted by Parliament. The Railway Motor Services were being substituted for the proposed railways.

⁸By the Transvaal-Mozambique Convention (1928), the Union Government undertook "to secure to the Port and Railways of Lourenco Marques from fifty to fifty-five per cent of the total tonnage of commercial sea-borne goods traffic imported into the 'competitive area'." See Great Britain, Cd. 3495, pp. 1-14; and Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, Cd. 3676 (1930) "Commercial Agreement Between the High Commission for South Africa and the Governor-General of Mozambique, Regarding the Commercial Relations Between Swaziland, Basutoland and the Bechuanaland Protectorate, and

questionable returns from Swaziland.

These were the last discussions held between Britain and the Union of South Africa on the Swaziland railway issue until 1946. In the interim period, Swaziland continued to depend upon the Railway Motor Services.

the Portuguese Colony of Mozambique. Signed at Cape Town, February 13, 1930, and at Lourenco Marques, February 18, 1930," pp. 1-6.

CHAPTER VII

SWAZILAND RAILWAY PROPOSALS, 1945-1958

During the Second World War the Swaziland railway issue was not actively pursued by either Britain or South Africa. Since the war, however, the issue has been fully reappraised. Several routes have been proposed by the Union Government, the Swaziland Administration and numerous civic and industrial organizations in Southern Africa to transport coal, iron ore, agricultural and forestry products to both Union and overseas markets. The British Government itself made no proposals, though it endorsed those which would have served its large-scale projects in Swaziland.

All the proposed and surveyed routes have been either from the eastern Transvaal across central Swaziland to Lourenco Marques and Sordwana Bay, or from Piet Retief through southern Swaziland and Zululand to Sordwana Bay. This chapter examines the geographic aspects of these proposals and the politico-economic circumstances that led to their rejection.

The Ermelo Railway Conference

In December 1946 over sixty delegates from Swaziland and the eastern Transvaal convened in Ermelo to

re-examine the case for railway extensions across the Transvaal highveld and Swaziland to the Indian Ocean.¹ The Railway Committee, representing the Ermelo Municipality, the Ermelo Chamber of Commerce, the Eastern Transvaal Agricultural Union and the Swaziland Farmers' Association, was the first of its kind to systematically examine the Swaziland railway problem and provided the basis for later railway investigations in the post-war years. Since the Conference was attended by several organizations representing diversified and often unrelated interests, many aspects of the railway issue were examined, but they focused upon the need for an extension of the Johannesburg line to Lourenco Marques across Swaziland.

Delegates from the Transvaal urged the Union Government to improve the existing railways of the eastern highveld and to extend the Lothair line to the Swaziland border near the Mpelusi River. They recommended that a mainline be built from Davel to Ermelo to avoid the more circuitous route through Breyten. Such a line would have better served the coal, hematite and torbanite industries near Ermelo and Mooifontein, and the farm populations of the

¹Deputations were present from Swaziland, Ermelo, Lake Chrissie, Bethal, Amersfoot, Morgenson, Hendrina, Breyten, Lothair, Carolina, Davel and Amsterdam. The Conference was also attended by five members (including the General Manager) of the South African Railways and Harbours Administration, and numerous industrialists from the Witwatersrand.

same region.²

A second route was proposed by the Swaziland delegation to serve not only the Ermelo district but also Swaziland. It was a more northerly route that originated at Breyten and passed through Lake Chrissie and Lochiel to the Little Usutu River and thence east across Swaziland to Goba (Figure 6). Breyten was selected as the connecting point because of its rail facilities. In the Transvaal the line would have served the afforestation projects at Vossman's Beacon and could have led to the mining of asbestos and barytes near Steynsdorp, and coal and iron ore near Lake Chrissie. Indeed, Iscor (The South African Iron and Steel Corporation) indicated that if the railway was constructed it would build a smelting works at either Lake Chrissie or Steynsdorp.³ In Swaziland the proposed railway would have served Mbabane, Bremersdorp, and a widely dispersed farm population. Although the railway would have served these varied interests, coal was to have been the major commodity transported, most of which to the coast for export.

The South African Railways Board recognized the importance of these two railway proposals but declined to

²The oil traffic mileage from Moolfontein to Johannesburg, and the Ermelo coal traffic to the Reef would have been reduced by approximately eight percent. A dairy company in Ermelo claimed it was prepared to rail two and a half million pounds of cheese to the Rand annually in addition to substantially increased quantities of eggs, butter, milk and poultry. The Highveld Herald, December 6, 1946.

³Ibid.

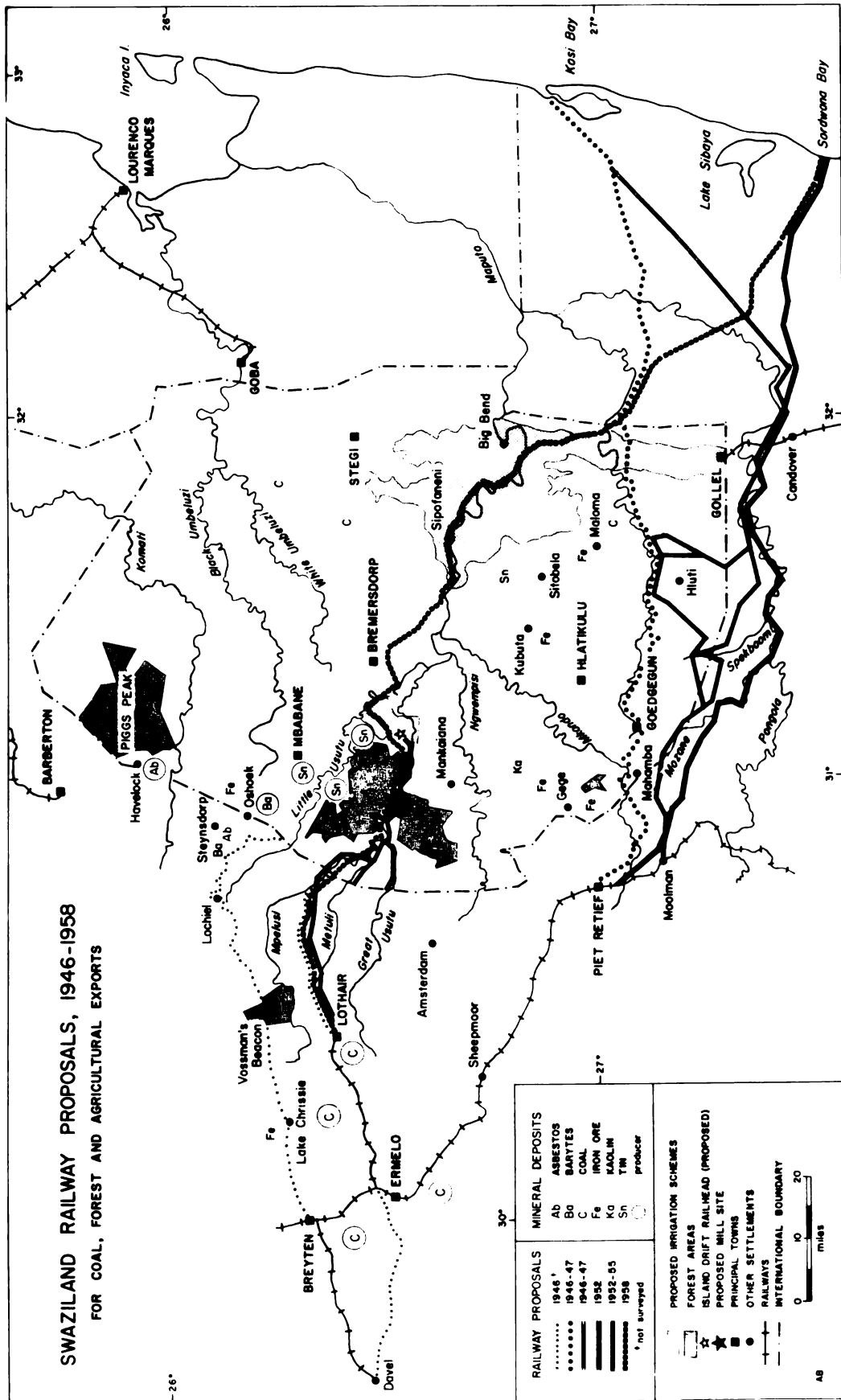


FIG. 6.

authorize any construction before the Union's entire railway program had been reviewed. The Board had three basic objections to the proposals. First, the Board contended that the basic premise for railway construction was based upon a probable rather than a confirmed coal traffic which made it difficult for the Board to recommend to the Union Government the provision for a £6 million line to carry a yet unsecured traffic. Second, the Board contended that most of the Transvaal's coal was consumed domestically which meant an inward movement of traffic over adequate facilities that needed neither extension nor upgrading. Third, the Board expressed reluctance to build the Swaziland line in view of the then recent criticism in the United Nations of the Union building a railway across Southwest Africa which had the effect of making that country an indistinguishable part of South Africa. It was felt similar criticism would be levied if the Swaziland railway were built, and that Union ports might have objected to Lourenco Marques receiving additional traffic at their expense.⁴ The South African Railways Board conceded, however, that the position could be altered if Swaziland would build the railway bridge over the Usutu River at the Transvaal-Swaziland border, and upgrade its roads to accommodate additional Railway Motor Services which would be introduced from that point.

The Ermelo Railway Conference played an important

⁴Ibid.

role in the Swaziland railway controversy for it brought together all interested groups to reappraise the position and formed the groundwork for further discussions between the Union and Swaziland. It provided Swaziland with the opportunity to restate its case for a rail connection with the Union, and for the Union Railways and Harbours Administration to openly evaluate these proposals. It clearly showed that before any decision could be made on a route across Swaziland, the territory's political status would have to be changed, but since Britain was not prepared to yield to Union demands, the railway issue remained deadlocked.

Swaziland Railway Proposals and South African Coal Exports

Between October 1946 and the end of 1952, the Union Government surveyed three routes from the eastern Transvaal to Sordwana Bay and Kosi Bay for the annual export of five million tons of coal. Two of the proposed routes traversed Swaziland and the third followed the Mozane-Pongola valleys south of the Swaziland border (Figure 6). Although the lines were designed specifically to handle a coal traffic, the Union was prepared to make them multi-commodity lines if Swaziland would develop its agricultural and mineral resources. It was proposed that the Lebombo Flats near Big Bend be irrigated and prepared for sugar and cotton, and the Malkerns region be prepared for subtropical fruits and cotton. Furthermore it was hoped that the

mineral deposits near Gege, Hluti and Maloma would also be exploited.⁵

The first survey, made late in 1946, was for a mainline railway from Piet Retief to Kosi Bay through Mahamba, Goedgegun and the Ingwavuma valley following the 1924 Prettejohn survey (Figure 6). Of the three routes surveyed, it was the most direct and would have best served the Union and Swaziland. Two Swaziland stations were planned on this route. The first was at the intersection of the proposed line and the Gollel-Bremersdorp road, and would have served eastern Swaziland in particular the Big Bend cotton plantations, Stegi, Maloma, Sipofaneni and Bremersdorp. The railway could possibly have led to the mining of the Maloma anthracite. The second station at Goedgegun, would have served all the territory south of the Usutu and west of Sitobela and Hluti. Tobacco, cotton, cattle, wattle and dairy produce from the Hlatikulu District (and possibly iron ore from Gege) would have been the most likely freights from this station to the Rand.⁶

The second mainline route through southern Swazi-

⁵ The Swaziland Administration made rudimentary investigations of the agricultural and mineral potentials of central and southern Swaziland in February 1947 but was unable to estimate the potential traffic which would be generated if a railway was built across the protectorate.

⁶ The Bethlehem Steel Corporation would probably have developed the Gege taconite deposits had the railway been built. It re-examined the situation in 1952 when South Africa surveyed another route from the Transvaal to Kosi Bay. "The Swaziland Railway," Notes in the files (S310 IV) of the Secretariat, Mbabane.

land was surveyed in 1946-47 (Figure 6). It started at Moolman (near Piet Retief) and ran east to the extreme southwestern corner of Swaziland then south along the Mozane River into the Transvaal where it paralleled the Pongola-Piet Retief road to Candover on the Durban-Golles railway. From the Candover junction the line followed the Pongola River and the Herberden survey of 1921 to Kosi Bay. Several alternative routes were also surveyed, the major being from the Mozane valley northeast to the Ingwavuma valley where it looped around Hluti and turned south to the Pongola Flats. This circuitous alternate route was planned to serve the European freeholders of this region. Both construction and operational costs of this second route would have been greater than those of the Ingwavuma route.

The third route was surveyed early in 1952 from Piet Retief southeastwards to the Mozane and Pongola valleys, and thence east to Candover and Sordwana Bay (Figure 6). Although a more costly route than either of the routes through Swaziland, it was preferred by the Union Government since it circumvented Swaziland and followed the potentially productive Pongola Flats. Britain reacted to this proposal in the words:

If the Union Government were to construct a link outside Swaziland, despite the fact that the economic interests of all concerned would clearly be best served by its construction within Swaziland, their action would be attributed, correctly, to the Union [sic] dislike of the present political status of the Territory, for which Swaziland Europeans . . . would regard the loss of the railway as a very high price. Indeed, an announcement by the Union Government of its intention to build outside Swaziland territory would

almost certainly provoke agitation amongst Swaziland Europeans in favour of incorporation.⁷

Each of these proposals was based upon the assumption South Africa would continue to export vast quantities of coal after World War II. During the War, the Union was the world's leading exporter of coal, shipping over four million tons in 1944 through Durban and Lourenco Marques (Table 11). Total exports declined to 3.5 million tons in 1946 and to less than two million tons in 1948. The reduced burden placed on Durban and Lourenco Marques and the uncertainty of the Union's coal industry led to the temporary abandonment of the Kosi Bay and Sordwana Bay schemes and the projected railways across Swaziland. In 1958, although there was no improvement in the coal export trade, the Union surveyed another and final route from Lothair to Sordwana Bay through the Usutu valley and the Ngwavumapoort (Figure 6).

Reaction to these proposals was mixed. The European Advisory Council endorsed all three proposals but favoured that between Piet Retief and Gollel since the territory's agricultural regions would be directly drawn into the Durban and Johannesburg hinterlands. Afrikaner farmers of the Hlatikulu District supported this view, but many British businessmen on the Rand and property owners in the protectorate objected to both Swaziland routes claiming

⁷"High Commissioner and the Commonwealth Relations Office on Railway Development in Swaziland and a New Port on the East Coast," Notes in the files (S310 III) of the Secretariat, Mbabane.

TABLE 11

SOUTH AFRICAN COAL EXPORTS (TONS) THROUGH
DURBAN AND LOURENÇO MARQUES, 1944-1961^a

Fiscal Year ^b	Tons of Coal Exported		Total South African Coal Exports ^d
	Through Durban	Through Lourenço Marques	
1944	1,568,968	2,548,198	. . . ^d
1945	1,453,417	2,428,831	4,211,584
1946	1,353,186	1,823,509	3,523,445
1947	1,292,654	1,043,243	. . . ^d
1948	925,893	325,378	1,893,000
1949	1,025,626	987,271	2,044,000
1950	1,132,625	1,611,650	2,832,000
1951	688,682	390,813	1,892,000
1952	601,877	168,826	932,000
1953	607,078	518,894	1,326,000
1954	326,892	255,246	1,245,000 ^d
1955	371,941	83,155	. . . ^d
1956	247,379	33,411	544,974
1957	262,956	57,715	418,797
1958	201,347	23,774	509,996
1959	307,985	56,659	425,980
1960	567,079	244,600	1,047,606
1961	646,157	326,952	1,161,268

^a Compiled from various yearbooks of Union of South Africa, Bureau of Census and Statistics, Official Year Book of the Union and of Basutoland, Bechuanaland Protectorate and Swaziland (Pretoria: The Government Printer), No. 24 (1949), p. 954; No. 27 (1953), p. 958; No. 29 (1957), p. 635; Republic of South Africa, South Africa Railways and Harbours, Annual Report of the General Manager, 1962-63 (Pretoria: The Government Printer, 1963), pp. 126-28; and Republic of South Africa, State of South Africa: Economic, Financial and Statistical Year Book for the Republic of South Africa, 1963 (Johannesburg: Da Gama Publications, Ltd., 1964), p. 153.

^b Fiscal year is from April 1st to March 31st.

^c Totals are for the calendar year.

^d Data not available.

that neither would meet the demands of Swaziland and that if the railway was built, South Africa would never build the more useful line from Lothair to Goba. The Colonial Office refused to commit itself since the greatest costs would have accrued to Britain whereas the greatest returns would have been credited to South Africa.⁸ South Africa finally abandoned the projects because of the uncertain traffic (both from Swaziland and the Transvaal), the reluctance of Britain to finance the Swaziland section, and because of the political issues.

Swaziland Railway Proposals for
Forest and Agricultural Exports

During the Second World War, Swaziland's export sales were dominated by asbestos, which was sent via the overhead cable to Barberton and then by rail to Lourenco Marques and Johannesburg. Asbestos was first produced from the Havelock mine near Piggs Peak in 1939, and by 1941 it accounted for two-thirds of the territory's total exports. In 1946, asbestos exports earned £844,631 or almost 72 percent of the total exports (£1,173,269). The territory's second export, slaughter cattle, accounted for 19 percent of the total exports in 1941, and 17 percent in 1946.⁹ The

⁸Britain (1951) also rejected a request by the E.A.C. for a one million pound loan for a railway from Golliel to Komatipoort. See "Fifth Session of the Re-Constituted European Advisory Council for Swaziland, 14-15 August, 1951," Notes in the files (S310 III) of the Secretariat, Mbabane.

⁹Swaziland's trade statistics are incomplete for the period 1939-46.

cattle were trekked to the South African railheads, in particular Komatipoort. The balance of the exports was composed of tin, gold, hides and skins, and lesser amounts of cotton and tobacco. The Swaziland Administration considered this a very unfavourable export structure and recommended a more diversified economy based upon dairying, citrus, vegetables and forestry products.¹⁰ Consequently in 1948 the Colonial Development Corporation embarked upon an 100,000 acre afforestation project in the Great Usutu valley of the western highveld.¹¹

The scope of the C.D.C. Usutu afforestation project was undefined in 1948, but three possibilities existed. The Corporation could limit its operation to sawn timber, it could produce pulp, or it could make paper. This would largely depend upon the transportation facilities. If operations were limited to sawn timber,

¹⁰ V. Liversage, Swaziland Development, A Report Prepared for the Swaziland Government (Mbabane, ca., 1947), pp. 9-28.

¹¹ The Colonial Development Corporation (C.D.C.) was established by an Act of Parliament in 1948 to assist the economic development of dependent territories of the Commonwealth. It is empowered to undertake, either alone or in association with others, projects in agriculture, forestry, fisheries, mining, factories, electricity and water, transport, housing, hotels, buildings and engineering. The C.D.C. is organized to operate commercially, and has a statutory obligation to pay its own way. The Corporation has powers to borrow up to £150 million on a long- or medium term basis and £10 million on short-term. Of the £150 million, it may borrow up to £130 million outstanding at any one time from the United Kingdom Exchequer funds. Great Britain, Colonial Development Corporation, Annual Report and Statement of Accounts for Year Ended 31 December, 1962 (London: Gale and Polden, Ltd., 1963), p. 11.

improved road facilities with the Union would suffice, but if the Corporation decided to make pulp or paper a rail connection with either Lothair or Goba would be essential. The Corporation preferred the Goba link, but was not prepared to finance the project.¹²

Although this had not been settled in 1952, the Swaziland Administration authorized a rail survey from the western border down the Great Usutu valley to Island Drift, a point seventeen miles east of the proposed mill site and fifteen miles west of Bremersdorp (Figure 6). Two alternate routes were also surveyed from the border to the proposed mill site through the Mpelusi and Metuli valleys, which were preferred over the Usutu route because of lower construction costs.¹³

The railway was designed to serve two separate needs — the Usutu pulp mill and the Malkerns irrigation scheme. Incoming traffic to the mill would have included coal, petroleum, oil, salt, lime and building supplies. Amounts would have increased from approximately 10,000 tons in 1952 to over 75,000 tons by 1961.¹⁴ Paper pulp (up to 100,000 tons annually) of wattle bark and sawn timber would

¹²"The Great Usutu Project, 1952," Notes in the files (S310 VIII) of the Secretariat, Mbabane.

¹³Jeffares and H. Green, Reconnaissance Report on Proposed Extension of Railway from Lothair (Transvaal) into Swaziland, A Report Prepared for the Swaziland Government

¹⁴Swaziland, Government Secretary, "Rail Communications," Circular No. 25/52, Mbabane, May, 17, 1952, pp. 1-2.

have been the major outgoing commodities from the mill site. The Malkerns area and west-central Swaziland would have been served by the Island Drift terminus. Had this station been built, the Island Drift catchment area would have included Mbabane, Bremersdorp, Sipofaneni, Mankaiana and all the intervening areas (Figure 7). Bremersdorp and Mankaiana would have been less than twenty road miles from Island Drift, and Mbabane and Sipofaneni would have been 21 miles and 40 miles respectively from the terminus. Hluti, Maloma, and Big Bend would have remained in the Golliel hinterland, and Goedgegun, Hlatikulu and Gege would have remained in the Piet Retief catchment area. It is conceivable that Island Drift would have drawn these peripheral regions to it although other railheads would have been closer. The farmlands of the Mkondo and Komati valleys would have been the most distant (over sixty miles) from any railhead serving the territory (Figure 7).

The railway would have provided the cheapest form of transport for the Swaziland farmers. For example, fruit railed from Island Drift to Johannesburg would have cost 120 pence per ton less than by existing road services operated by the Union from Bremersdorp (Table 12). The cost of sending cattle to Johannesburg from Bremersdorp by road to Island Drift and thence by rail, would have been reduced by over 75 percent. Considerable savings would have been made by sending wattlebark, groundnuts and vegetables by rail to their Johannesburg markets rather than by road.

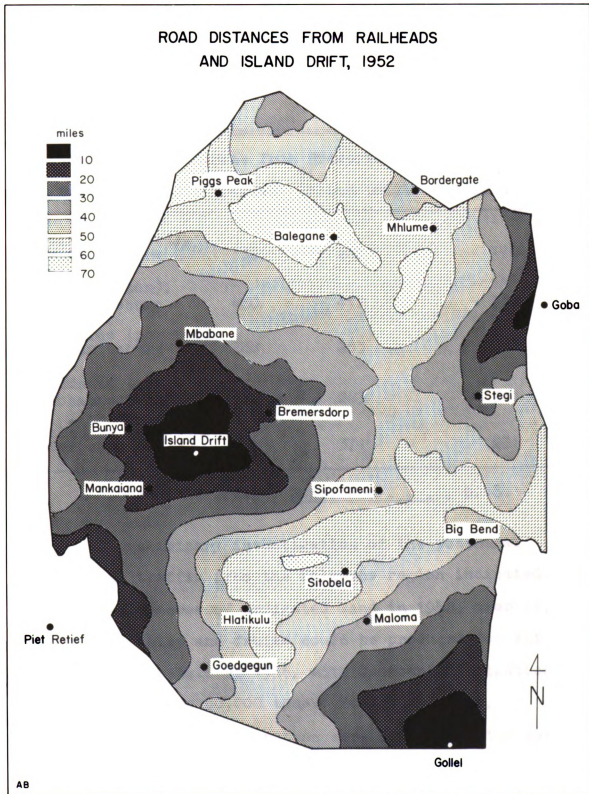


Fig. 7.

TABLE 12

COMPARATIVE ROAD AND RAIL RATES
FOR SWAZILAND PRODUCE, 1947^a
(in pence)

Commodity and Destination	Rate from Bremersdorp via via Breyten Island Drift		Rate direct from Island Drift
Cattle (per head), to Johannesburg	768	287	170
Fruit (per ton), to Johannesburg	460	412	340
Vegetables (per ton), to Johannesburg	388	283	211
Groundnuts (per ton), to Johannesburg	388	283	211
Wattlebark (per ton), to Durban	711	371	231

^aSource: Liversage, Swaziland . . ., p. 8.

A preliminary investigation of the potential agricultural traffic from the Malkerns region indicated that from the 2,500 acres of irrigated land in 1952, over 15,000 tons of vegetables and fruits could be produced for shipment to the Rand markets. By 1956, with increased irrigation, the output could be 60,000 tons. Bananas, citrus, pineapples, pawpaws and tomatoes were considered the most likely produce to be railed in large quantities. From the Kubuta estates it was estimated that over 10,000 tons of

bananas would be sent annually to Island Drift for shipment to the Union, and from Big Bend there would be a large volume of irrigated rice.¹⁵

Although these railway proposals were acceptable in principle to both the Union of South Africa and Swaziland, a working agreement could not be reached. In 1948 the estimated cost of the Lothair Island Drift railway was £725,000 of which £390,000 was for the Swaziland section. An annual loss of £51,000 was envisaged which was to have been divided equally between the Union and Swaziland, but such a commitment was not contemplated by the Swaziland Administration:

However desirable the construction of a railway might be, the expenditure of practically half of the total allocation to the Territory on a single project would disturb the balance of the revised Development Plan to a degree which would not be acceptable to the Secretary of State . . . but . . . if the Union should construct a railway to the border of the Territory, funds would be allocated for the construction of a first class road linking the new railhead with the road services of the Territory.¹⁶

By 1952 the cost of the railway from the border to the mill site via the Mpelusi and Great Usutu valleys was estimated

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 2.

¹⁶ Swaziland, Swaziland Eight Year Development Plan Covering the Period 1st April, 1948, to 31st March, 1956 (Mbabane, July, 1948), p. 23. Of the 189 schemes totalling £6.5 million approved by the Secretary of State during the year ending March 31, 1947, in the Dependent Empire as a whole, not a single grant was made for railway construction. Swaziland's Ordinary Revenue and Expenditure in 1948-49 were £422,078 and £481,970 respectively. The Colonial Development and Welfare Expenditure for the same period was £59,356 none of which was allocated to communications.

at almost half a million pounds, which again the Swaziland Administration was not prepared to finance.¹⁷

In 1953 the Union of South Africa redefined the conditions by which it would construct and/or operate the Swaziland railway. First, the Union offered to build the line from Lothair (and assume liability for the capital cost) to the boundary and to extend the line to the proposed mill site at the expense of the C.D.C. and/or the Swaziland Administration against some form of guarantee against operating losses. Second, if Swaziland would construct the railway from the Transvaal border through the Usutu valley to Gollel, the Union would not only waive its demand for a guarantee, but would "agree to pay the interest on the construction loan for the section of the line within the Territory, provided that all profits are paid to the South African Railways and that Swaziland remains content with the indirect benefits of the railway."¹⁸ Third and last, the Union would extend the railway from Lothair to the mill site only if Swaziland would guarantee never to link it with Goba or any point in Mozambique. None of these terms was acceptable to Swaziland. The last condition was a clear statement of the Union's wish to secure all the traffic generated in Swaziland which would have the effect of making the protectorate

¹⁷ This estimate is based upon an average cost of £25,000 per mile including the cost of bridges and stations. See Jeffares and Green, Reconnaissance Report . . ., p. 8.

¹⁸ "The Great Usutu . . .," n.p.

an integral part of the Union, and which would strengthen South Africa's claims for the incorporation of Swaziland. Such a move was not contemplated by either Britain or Swaziland. Furthermore, the financial arrangements proposed by the Union could not be met by the Colonial Development Corporation and the Administration.

Subsequent to these offers by South Africa it was ascertained that Swaziland and the Union could not agree where the Lothair extension should cross the Swaziland border.¹⁹ Swaziland wished the line to cross the border south of the Mpelusi River whereas the Union stated it would only build the railway if it entered Swaziland through the Great Usutu valley. All negotiations terminated when the C.D.C. announced it could profitably operate the mill without rail transport, but with improved road facilities to the Union and Lourenco Marques.

¹⁹ Sir Arthur Griffin. Report on Proposals to Construct a Railway or a Road from the Western Border of Swaziland Connecting with a Railway Extension from Lothair on the South African Railways, A Report Prepared for the Swaziland Government (Mbabane, March, 1955), p. 8.

PART III. THE SWAZILAND RAILWAY

CHAPTER VIII

SWAZILAND RAILWAY PROPOSALS AND IRON ORE EXPORTS, 1955-1960

The diversified economy envisaged by the Swaziland Administration in 1948 did not specifically include the development of iron ore, but in the resource investigations made in connection with the Usutu afforestation project, it was ascertained that Swaziland possessed three workable deposits of medium to high grade iron ore in the western highveld, and two smaller and lower grade deposits near Kubuta.¹ The three hematite deposits in the western highveld are Iron Hill (55 million tons reserve), Bomvu Ridge (150 million tons reserve), and Gege (100 million tons reserve). Tests in 1955 determined that the Bomvu Ridge deposit was of sufficient quantity and quality to be mined if a market and transport facilities could be found.²

¹ Swaziland, Swaziland Eight Year Development Plan, 1st April to 31st March, 1956: Financial Report on the First Four Years of the Plan, and Revision of the Plan for the Remaining Four Years, (Mbabane, February, 1953), p. 6.

² Sir Arthur Griffin and L. C. Reynolds, Report on the General Problem of Communications in Swaziland Having Regard to Existing and Potential Development, A Report Prepared for the Swaziland Government (Mbabane, April, 1956), pp. 20-21; H. J. R. Way, Mineral Ownership as Affecting

Following these discoveries, the government undertook a comprehensive survey of Swaziland's mineral, agricultural, forestry and water resources, and recommended an integrated program for the development of the territory's water, iron ore and coal resources.³ The initial development plan has since been revised, with each revision recommending the development of the Bomvu Ridge deposit and the construction of a railway from it to Lourenco Marques. All the recommendations were based upon the assumption iron ore would be exported by rail through Lourenco Marques, and pig iron would be produced locally using either hydropower generated on the Great Usutu, or bituminous coal from the eastern lowveld. Coal would also have been used by the railway itself, the pulp mill, and several small industries in Mbabane and Manzini. Several possible combinations of these developments justified this industrial scheme and the construction of the railway, so that several routes between Bomvu Ridge and Lourenco Marques were surveyed. These proposals are now reviewed.

Mineral Development, Swaziland, Geological Survey Department, Special Report No. 2 (Mbabane, 1955), pp. 22-23; and Swaziland, Geological Survey and Mines Department, The Mineral Resources of Swaziland, Bulletin No. 2, compiled by D. R. Hunter (Mbabane, 1962), pp. 44-57.

³ For details of this survey, see the Annual Reports, 1955 for each Department of the Swaziland Government; Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, Cmd. 9580 (1955) "High Commission Territories: Economic Development and Social Services."; and Jeffares and H. Green, Report, Maps and Drawings on Hydroelectric and Irrigation Development of the Great Usutu River, Swaziland, A Report Prepared for the Swaziland Government (Johannesburg, 1955).

Swaziland Railway Proposals, 1955-57

The Jeffares and Green report (1955), and the Sir Arthur Griffin report (1956)⁴ detailed three development programs for the Bomvu Ridge ore deposit. First, with an annual export of 250,000 tons of hematite and 50,000 tons of paper pulp, a railway was justified from Goba to a point fifteen miles west of Bremersdorp in the Ezulweni valley where a cableway would have been built to the mine. The paper pulp would have been loaded at this proposed Ezulweni railhead. Second, with an additional 50,000 tons or more of hematite per year, the railway could have been extended up the Usutu valley to the mill site, but the ore would still have been conveyed by cableway to the Ezulweni railhead. Third, if Swaziland produced pig iron (with a value comparable to that for the proposed iron ore exports) and 50,000 tons of paper pulp each year, a railway could be built from Goba to the Ezulweni railhead. Pig iron would only be produced if the hydroelectric schemes materialized and the coal deposits were exploited. In addition to these exports, there would have been an undeterminable quantity of coal, cotton, citrus and other agricultural products.

The outward freight was assured, but the return freight was uncertain. Possible return freights included

⁴ Jeffares and Green, Report, Maps and . . ., pp. 2-13; and Sir Arthur Griffin and L. C. Reynolds, Report on the General Problem of Communications in Swaziland Having Regard to Existing and Potential Development, A Report Prepared for the Swaziland Government (Mbabane, April, 1956), pp. 34-36, 57-58.

coal, petroleum and oils, chemicals, limestone and general merchandise. The Usutu Pulp Mill, the proposed pig iron smelter and the railway itself would have been the principal markets for this traffic. Petroleum at that time entered Swaziland from Lourenco Marques by rail and truck through Goba and Stegi, with the empty drums being returned through Breyten. The railway would have provided a more efficient service. Limestone for the smelting of pig iron could have been railed from the large reserves near Lourenco Marques rather than being trucked 46 miles from Badplaats to Bomvu Ridge. The amount of chemicals and general merchandise imports could not be ascertained since these items were required by the Customs Union (1910) to enter Swaziland from South Africa using Union facilities. Nevertheless, a compromise agreement was foreseen.

Three rail surveys were conducted in connection with these proposals. In 1955 an overhead cableway, similar to that from Havelock to Barberton, was surveyed from Bomvu Ridge to the Ezulweni terminus from which a line was surveyed through the Malkerns valley east towards Breimersdorp and the White Umbeluzi valley (Figure 8). This was the shortest and most economical route designed specifically for the export of iron ore and pulp. Two years later two additional routes were surveyed from a point in the White Umbeluzi valley eastwards across the coal deposits of the lowveld to the Umbeluzipoort, so that coal could be mined for export and local use. All three proposals were

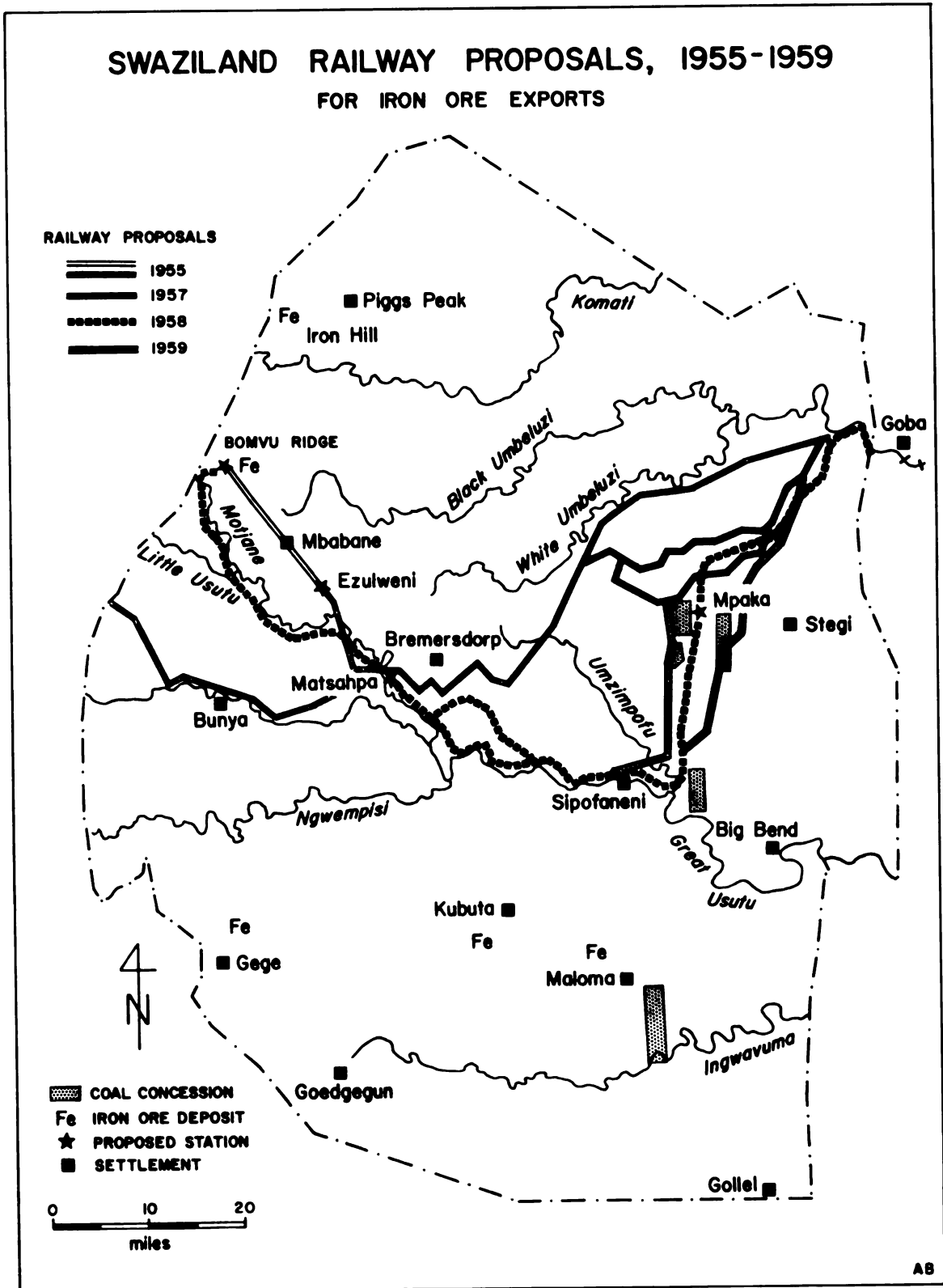


Fig. 8.

abandoned in favour of a revised proposal submitted after the Bomvu Ridge ore concession was approved.

The Iron Ore Concession and Railway
Proposals, 1957-60

In 1957 the Anglo American Corporation applied for the prospecting rights to Bomvu Ridge, but the application was withdrawn in favour of a new company (Swaziland Iron Ore Development Company) which was formed by the Anglo American Corporation in association with Guest, Keen and Nettlefold for the specific purpose of testing the ore deposit. On April 18, 1958 the Swaziland Government granted a Special Exclusive Prospecting Licence to the new company which immediately undertook an intensive exploration project and a market research survey.⁵

The Bomvu Ridge is part of the Ngwenya Range of the western highveld, some fifteen miles northwest of Mbabane and two miles east of the Transvaal border in Crown Mineral area No. 7 of the Hhohho District.⁶ It extends for about

⁵Anglo American Corporation of South Africa, The Bomvu Ridge Iron Ore Deposit, A Report in the files of the Corporation (Johannesburg, October, 1959), p. 2.

⁶Mineral ownership in Swaziland is entirely divorced from surface ownership and is divided between private concessionaires and the Crown. By the Swaziland Mining Proclamation (1958), all mineral rights over lapsed and surrendered mineral concessions reverted to the Crown and then to the Swazi Nation. Prior to the promulgation of this proclamation, some 3,273 square miles of land were vested in the Crown, but by mid 1964, 5,446 square miles (or 81.2 percent of the total area) were vested in the Crown. For a discussion on mineral ownership and development, See Way, Mineral Ownership . . ., pp. 7-22.

6,500 feet north from a point approximately one mile north of the Johannesburg-Ermelo-Mbabane road. The deposit is recorded on maps prepared for the Swaziland Corporation in 1889, but its existence was forgotten until its rediscovery by the Swaziland Geological Survey Department in 1946. The ridge is divided into three blocks named Castle, Lion and Stag. The first block to be exploited is Castle, the richest of the three where the ore in situ is composed of hematite averaging approximately 62.5 percent iron. The elevation of the highest peak is 5,548 feet and the lowest elevation at which the orebody was intersected in boreholes is 4,587 feet. Apart from minor faults, the ore zone persists over the entire length of the strike, and it has a maximum true thickness of 320 feet.⁷ To the east and south of the iron ridge, the country is undulating, but on the west there is a precipitous fall of nearly two thousand feet to the Steynsdorp valley.

In April 1958, while the deposit was being prospected, a rail survey was made from Bomvu Ridge to Goba (Figure 8). The proposed route followed the right bank of the Motjane river and then the Little Usutu river to its confluence with the Great Usutu near the foot of the Great Escarpment west of Bremersdorp. Near this point, Matsahpa, a new commercial station and the main marshalling yards were

⁷ Swaziland Iron Ore Development Company, Exploitation of Iron Ore Deposit at Bomvu Ridge, Swaziland, A Report in the files of the Anglo American Corporation of South Africa (Johannesburg, April, 1961), pp. 1-4.

planned. From Matsahpa the proposed route followed the left bank of the Great Usutu to Sipofaneni where it turned northwards to the Umbeluzipoort crossing the bituminous deposits near Mpaka. An alternate route was also surveyed east of Matsahpa and south of Bremersdorp (Figure 8). Although the 1958 routes were more circuitous than those of 1955 and 1957, they would have had larger catchment areas and more commercial sidings to serve the widely dispersed agricultural interests including those at Big Bend and Kubuta.

In June 1959 the Rand Mines Company, which has all rights to the Mpaka coal fields, requested that it be directly served by this railway. Two routes were subsequently surveyed (Figure 8). The western route from Sipofaneni over the Mzimpofo to Mpaka would have best served the mining company, but it was not suitable for any possible extension of the mainline route to Big Bend or southern Swaziland. The eastern alternative was nine miles from the proposed colliery, and the shortest route from Bomvu Ridge to the eastern border through Sipofaneni. Rand Mines Company reacted to this latter proposal in the words:

A private siding of even seven miles from the proposed shaft to the railway in the early stages of development would cripple the mine and might even prejudice its opening up.⁸

No decision was made though the eastern route was preferred

⁸ Jeffares and H. Green, Report on Swaziland Railway Surveys: Sipofaneni to Northern Route to Goba, A Report Prepared for the Swaziland Government (Johannesburg, June, 1959), pp. 1-8.

by the Swaziland Administration.

In 1959 a report confirmed the earlier supposition that the most economical transport system for the iron ore interests was a direct railway link with Goba, and not a cableway-railway combination or a road-rail combination.⁹ This report formed the basis for the final survey for the Swaziland railway which was made in 1961.

⁹ Jeffares and H. Green, Report on a Transport System for Conveying Iron Ore from Bomvu Ridge to Matsahpa, Swaziland, A Report Prepared for the Anglo American Corporation of South Africa Limited, and the Swaziland Iron Ore Development Company (Johannesburg, August, 1959).

CHAPTER IX

THE SWAZILAND RAILWAY — REALITY

The Contract

Following the issuance of the special prospecting rights to the Swaziland Iron Ore Development Company, an agreement in principle was reached between the Company and two of Japan's leading steel producers - the Yawata Iron and Steel Company and the Fuji Iron and Steel Company - for the delivery of a minimum of twelve million tons of iron ore over a ten year period. The contract calls for the delivery of 0.8 million tons in the first year, 1.2 million tons in the second, and between 1.2 and 1.4 million tons in succeeding years. The total value of the present contract is £40 million. Immediately after the ore contract was signed, and after lengthy negotiations between the governments of the United Kingdom, Swaziland and Portugal, Anglo American Corporation and the Commonwealth Development Corporation, it was agreed in August 1961 that a railway would be built from the mine to the Mozambique border, and that the Portuguese line would be extended from Goba to connect with the Swaziland railway.

In May 1962 the principal financial agreement was completed. The Anglo American Corporation, the Commonwealth

Development Corporation, the Swaziland Development Corporation Limited and the High Commissioner for Swaziland, Bechuanaland and Basutoland, made available £3,000,000 to the Swaziland Government for the construction of the railway. Thereafter a further £2,000,000 was provided by agreement by the High Commissioner on behalf of the Swaziland Government, the Commonwealth Development Corporation and the Anglo American Corporation, making a total amount of £5,000,000. To cover the purchase of rolling stock, Anglo American Corporation provided £750,000 and the C.D.C. £250,000. The estimated cost of constructing the railway, excluding railway stock, was £8,400,000. The balance of the amount required was provided by several South African insurance companies. Later in 1962 a Railway Board was established in terms of the Swaziland Railway Board Proclamation No. 61 of 1961 to administer the undertaking.¹ The Portuguese agreed to finance and build a five mile extension from Goba to the Swaziland border, and the Caminhos de Ferro de Mocambique agreed to operate the Swaziland railway and provide all the locomotives.

¹ Colonial Development Corporation, Annual Report and . . ., p. 104; Anglo American Corporation of South Africa, Partners in Progress: The Opening of Swaziland's Railway and Iron Ore Mine (Johannesburg: Anglo American Corporation of South Africa, 1964), pp. 5-7; and Swaziland, Swaziland Legislation, The Swaziland Railway Proclamation, 1962, Proclamation No. 15 (Mbabane, 1962).

The Route

The Swaziland Railway was completed in September 1964, a little over two years after it was begun, and a century after the first survey was made. The final survey was conducted in 1960 and required only slight modification of the 1959 route, particularly near Mpaka (Figure 9). From Lourenco Marques to its terminus at Bomvu Ridge, the railway may be divided into three distinct sections.²

Lourenco Marques to Goba

The forty-two mile, single track Lourenco Marques-Goba section was authorized in 1903 and completed nine years later as part of an intended through line from Johannesburg to the coast. In its lower sections the railway crosses the savanna scrublands of the Umbeluzi valley which has only infrequently been cleared for citrus, banana,

²Construction progress was frequently reported in the literature. See L. A. W. Hawkins, "The Swaziland Railway to Link Ngwenya with Goba," Railway Gazette, CXVI, No. 24 (June 15, 1962), 688-90. Hawkins is the Chief Executive Officer and Chairman of the Swaziland Railway Board. Peter H. Davies, "Survey and Design of the Swaziland Railway," Proceedings of Diamond Jubilee Convention, South African Institute of Civil Engineers (Johannesburg, 1963), pp. 73-77. Davies is one of the Consulting Engineers for the Swaziland Railway. R. W. Talbot, "The Railway — What It Could Mean to Swaziland," The Swaziland Recorder, I, No. 2 (July, 1961), 13-16; "Africa: New Railways for New Nations," International Railway Journal, II, No. 9 (September, 1962), 24-32; "The Railway Through the Mountains," The Swaziland Recorder, I, No. 8 (December, 1962 — March, 1963), 24-25; "Schedule Being Maintained for September, 1964 Completion," The Swaziland Recorder, No. 10 (June-September, 1963), pp. 31-33; "Commonwealth Railway Development," Railway Gazette, CXX, No. 2 (January 17, 1964), 78-79; and Derek Smith, "Railway the Key to Many New Industries," The Swaziland Recorder, No. 16 (September-December, 1964), pp. 15-21.

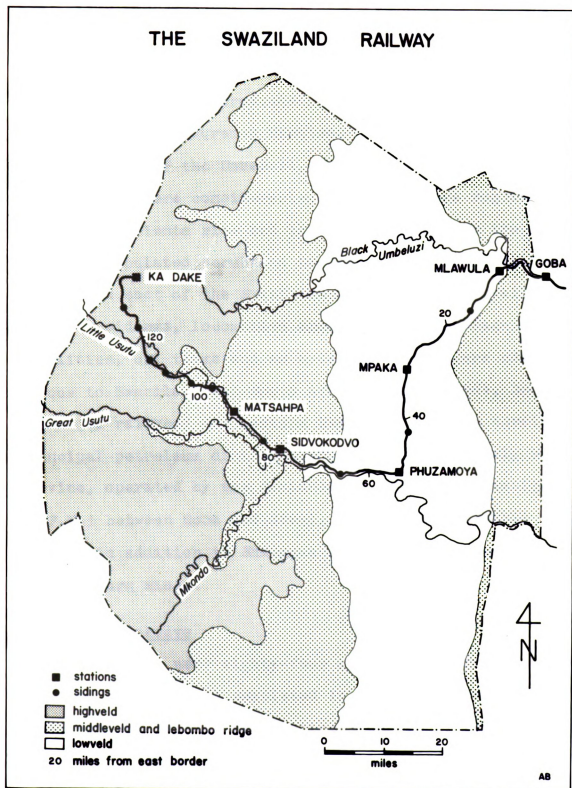


Fig. 9.

and cotton plantations. One mile east of the Umbeluzi River, and at the crossing of the main Lourenco Marques-Johannesburg road, there is a small siding (Boane) that handles agricultural products from nearby farms and general merchandise from Lourenco Marques.

West of the Umbeluzi, the railway crosses a north-south kopje where considerable earthworks were required. Here the gradients rise and the track winds over the sparsely populated scrubland to Goba, the former railhead five miles east of the Swaziland border. Goba entails a few rail sidings, locomotive sheds, general storage facilities, oil tanks and an hotel for passengers continuing by bus to Swaziland and South Africa. Until 1964, Goba was the major railhead for eastern Swaziland and the territory's principal petroleum distribution point. A bi-weekly bus service, operated by the Caminhos de Ferro de Mozambique (C.F.M.) between Goba and Stegi, carried most of this traffic in addition to Shangaan labourers being sent to the Johannesburg mines.

Goba to Sidvokodvo

In the next eighty-four mile section from Goba to Sidvokodvo, which was completed in May 1964, the single-track railway crosses two distinct geographic regions - the Lebombo Mountains and the Swaziland lowveld (Figure 9). The railway follows the Umbeluzi gorge across the Lebombo Mountains where the embankments are very narrow and the

retaining walls are great.³ At Mlawula, eight miles from the border, the railway breaks through the major ridge of the Lebombo Mountains and enters the valleys of the Mlawula and Mkumbana Rivers. Here a station and sidings have been built to handle traffic to and from Mhlume and points in the eastern lowveld north of the Great Usutu.⁴ After a further seven miles of medium earthworks through dense scrubland, the railway crosses a kopje and enters the lowveld near the Lusothi siding.

Where the transterritorial highway crosses the railway at mile 32, the second station, Mpaka, has been built. Here Swaziland's most accessible bituminous coal is being mined to provide coal for both the railway and the markets of Manzini and Mbabane. The railway then continues in a southerly direction across the lowveld to Phuzamoya at mile 54 between the Umzimpofu and Great Usutu Rivers. Phuzamoya was designed to serve the Big Bend sugar mill and may possibly be the junction point for a railway from Maloma or points south.

The railway then follows the Great Usutu for twenty-four miles with easy grades though some difficult terrain near Native Area 15 and the Mkondo River, to the main marshalling yards at Sidvokodvo. Throughout the entire

³To allow for exceptional floods, the line was built twenty-five feet above the normal flow. This thirteen mile section through the mountains, the first to be constructed, was one of the most difficult sections of the entire line.

⁴The major stations and sidings, and future traffic are analyzed in a later section.

mid-section, the railway is a first class line, the ruling grade of which is 1 in 80 against inland traffic and 1 in 120 against loaded ore trains. Although the lowveld is the flattest region in Swaziland, the railway takes a circuitous route between the low kopjes and over nine streams which required bridging.

Sidvokodvo to Ka Dake

Sidvokodvo is the site of the railway's principal marshalling yards and signal controls. Here eight trains daily from the mine, each with a carrying capacity of 504 short tons, are marshalled into five larger units each with a pay load capacity of 756 tons. The present carrying capacity of the whole line is restricted by the gradient, amount of rolling stock and the number of cross-over loops. Currently the Portuguese are operating thirteen locomotives, 370 wagons and ten guard vans. The entire trip from Ka Dake to Lourenco Marques currently takes 32 hours, which includes all the standing time at Sidvokodvo and the smaller sidings. If seven extra cross-over loops were constructed between the stations, the carrying capacity of the whole line would be increased by at least fifty percent. There are presently no plans to increase this capacity.⁵

At Sidvokodvo the grade changes to 1 in 50 for west bound trains, but maintains a 1 in 120 grade for east bound

⁵Interview with L. A. W. Hawkins, Chief Executive Officer and Chairman of the Swaziland Railway Board, Mbabane, May, 1964.

trains. In the third and final section from Sidvokodvo to Ka Dake, the railway climbs 3,350 feet in only fifty-eight miles and is consequently the most difficult and costly section of the line. At mile 91, immediately before the railway first crosses the Little Usutu River and about four miles west of Manzini (formerly Bremersdorp), a two mile spur has been constructed to a new industrial site, Matsahpa, which was designed to be Swaziland's major industrial core area. In the first twenty five miles between Sidvokodvo and Nyonyane, the earthworks are heavy though mainly in soft materials, but in the next five miles where the railway climbs the Great Escarpment, three tunnels had to be built. Material in this area varies from solid granite to a deep lateritic soil strewn with decomposed granitic boulders which presented unusually difficult construction problems (Figure 10).

West of the three tunnels, and between miles 110 and 130, the railway climbs steadily up the Escarpment through the Little Usutu Valley, where considerable earthworks, two bridges and two sidings were required. In the final section to the Ka Dake terminal, the railway follows the broad valley of the Motjane River where relatively little earthworks were necessary.

Construction Procedure

The Swaziland railway was built in only twenty-seven months, a remarkably short time for a line which

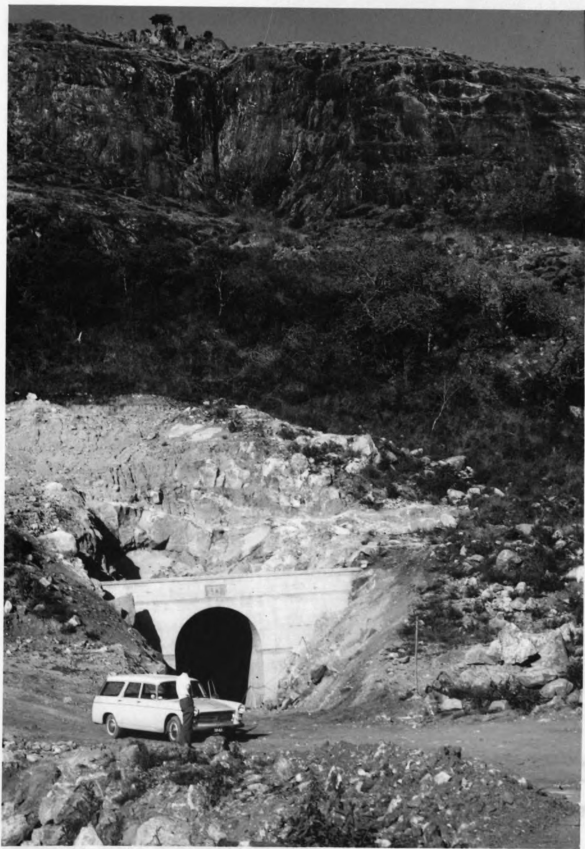


Fig. 10.--Railway Construction in the Highveld.

crosses difficult terrain, and which was built primarily by an unskilled labour force.⁶ It was not built without its problems: heavy rains, oppressive heat, weathered boulders, quicksand, and steep gradients were all foreseen obstacles, but the strikes called by labour union leaders and South African political refugees were not anticipated and caused serious delay in June, 1964. The successful completion of the undertaking lies in the integrated program of opening the mine, building the railway, and improving the harbour facilities at Lourenco Marques. Had these three separate yet related projects not been co-ordinated and undertaken simultaneously, their effectiveness and efficiency would have been reduced.

The railway was built by a consortium of three South African firms after tenders were invited from twelve United Kingdom and three South African companies. The consortium had its headquarters in Manzini about fourteen miles from the main marshalling yards and future administrative centre at Sidvokodvo. Work started simultaneously on the Umbeluzi Gorge near the Portuguese border and in the western mountains near the tunnels in August 1962. Especially designed tracklaying and tamping equipment and standardized bridge equipment contributed most to the rapid progress on the railway construction. The equipment, rails,

⁶ The normal length of time taken to build a railway of this kind is four years. Interviews with L. A. W. Hawkins, Chief Executive Officer and Chairman of the Swaziland Railway Board, Mbabane, May, 1964; and Hal Green, Swaziland Consulting Engineers, Mbabane, June, 1964.

machines and building supplies were railed from South Africa and Lourenco Marques, but wherever possible local materials and supplies were used. For example, three quarries adjacent to the railway were opened to provide rock ballast, and it was the policy of the Swaziland Railway Board to use Swazi labour whenever possible. In mid 1964, over 1,800 Swazi and 340 Europeans were employed. Many Swazi and Coloureds are being trained to fill the skilled positions which the Europeans currently hold.

Work proceeded at Bomvu Ridge immediately after the iron ore contract was signed. A three mile access road was first constructed from the main trans-territorial highway to the mine site where the crushing plant was erected. At the foot of the mountain two separate housing areas were built; one with thirteen units to accommodate the Swazi and rail employees, and the other with ten units to house the European supervisory staff. Construction materials were transported by road from Breyten, Lothair and the Goba rail-heads. Mining, which commenced in September, 1964, was synchronized with the completion of the railway.

The iron is being mined by open-cast methods. After blasting it is loaded into 35-ton trucks by mechanical excavators and taken to the crusher plant near the summit of Castle Block. There the ore is reduced into sizes of less than eight inches before being carried by conveyor belt to the washing and screening plant at the foot of the mountain (Figures 11 and 12). All the ore between $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch and eight

Fig. 11.--Washing and Screening Plants at Bomvu Ridge. In the centre background are the washing and screening plants which are connected by conveyor belts to the mine and stock piles at Ka Dake. The stacker on the left is depositing processed ore on the stock pile. On the right is the conveyor belt which is connected to the loading platform at Ka Dake.

Fig. 12.--Loaded Ore Trains at Ka Dake. Eight loaded ore trains leave Ka Dake for Sidvokodvo each day. Bomvu Ridge is in the background.



Figs. 11 and 12.

inch size is conveyed to a stockpile at the railhead, and the "fines" and slime are conveyed to a separate dump.

To accommodate the increased ore tonnages to be shipped through Lourenco Marques, the Portuguese authorities immediately embarked upon a program of port expansion which included the construction of a new berth and mechanical loading plant at Entrepota da Matola which is a few miles up the Matola river from the main port (Figures 13 and 14). At present about one and a half million tons of ore are exported through Lourenco Marques annually from South Africa and Southern Rhodesia. This amount is expected to be doubled by 1966. The ore-loading plant therefore had to be sufficiently versatile to deal with a variety of ores in addition to iron ore. The wharf has a stockpiling capacity of 800,000 tons, of which space for 130,000 tons has been allocated for iron ore. The ore is conveyed into the ships by two new loaders each capable of loading at a nominal rate of 1,000 tons per hour. These ship loading towers are movable enabling loading to take place simultaneously into two holds or into different ships. The port and entry channel have themselves been deepened to permit ships with a 37 feet draft to enter Lourenco Marques and Matola at anytime regardless of tide. The ore is shipped to Japan in specially designed 77,500 ton ore carriers which were built in Norway. These ships will call at intervals of eighteen to twenty days, with the round trip from Lourenco Marques to

Fig. 13.--Iron Ore Loading Facilities at Matola Wharf, Lourenco Marques. Matola Wharf, built specifically for the Swaziland ore traffic, has all the modern loading facilities to reduce loading costs. Immediately to the left of the wharf is a large petroleum storage area, and in the background is the Mozambique coastal plain which extends some thirty miles inland to the Lebombo Ridge.

Fig. 14.--Lourenco Marques Port. Lourenco Marques handles approximately half of the import traffic to the South African "Competitive Area", and considerable ore traffic from Southern Rhodesia. Immediately behind the main wharf are the city's marshalling yards, railway station and central business district. Matola wharf lies about five miles west (left) of the main port.



Figs. 13 and 14.

Japan and back being completed in fifty-two to fifty-five days.⁷

⁷Anglo American Corporation of South Africa, The Opening of . . ., p. 19; and Letter from Carlos Ribeiro, Manager, Propaganda and Publicity Department, Caminhos de Ferro e Transportes, Lourenco Marques, November 4, 1964.

PART IV. POLITICO-ECONOMIC SIGNIFICANCE
OF THE SWAZILAND RAILWAY

CHAPTER X

GENERAL APPRAISAL OF SWAZILAND'S
CURRENT GEOGRAPHIC PATTERNS

The Swaziland railway will bring many changes to the territory's current geographic patterns of mining, agriculture, manufacturing, commodity flow, transportation and settlement. For example, new regions of economic production and consumption will emerge, additional roads will be built to encourage and accommodate the increased volume of traffic, new villages and towns will develop, and there will be a change in the volume, type and direction of trade. The exact degree of these changes cannot of course be predicted because of many ever changing politico-economic variables.

In order to evaluate the railway's potential impact on these spatial patterns in Swaziland, it is first necessary to summarize Swaziland's current patterns of land ownership, population, trade and communications, and the protectorate's geographic relationships with South Africa.

Swaziland Land Ownership and Population Patterns

Swaziland's distributional patterns of land utilization and ownership are unusually complex. They are largely the result of historical events which occurred during the period of concessionaires in the last century before the establishment of the British Administration. Land concessions for grazing and agricultural purposes were freely granted by King Mbandzeni to the early Boer and British settlers. They covered the entire area of the territory, and in many cases rights to the same area of land were granted three and four times over to different concessionaires. Many of the deeds contained clauses which reserved the sovereign rights of the Ngwenyama (King) and forbade the concessionaires from interfering with the rights of the Swazi living within the concession areas.

The complexities arising from this problem were immediately recognized by the British Administration, which in 1904 provided for the establishment of a commission to examine each land and grazing concession, and to define and survey its boundaries. A Special Commissioner was then appointed (1907) to set aside areas for the sole and exclusive use and occupation of the Swazi. He was empowered to expropriate one third of each land and grazing concession without compensation for the use of the Swazi, but should more than this be required, compensation was payable. In the remaining two-thirds portion, which was to be retained by the original concessionaire, the Swazi was to have no

rights, but he was not to be evicted from any holding for a period of five years. With permission from the concessionaire, however, the Swazi could remain on the European landholdings. Lands that were held by neither natives nor concessionaires were treated as Crown Lands.¹

Following the partition of the territory, further legislation was passed to secure the rights of the Swazi in the areas that had been set aside for them and also to define the conditions under which the Crown could sell, lease or otherwise dispose of Crown Land. Since 1907 the land ownership patterns have considerably altered so that in 1964, the Swazi Nation possessed approximately 54 percent of the total land area. The current land ownership patterns are shown in Figure 15. Land belonging to the Swazi Nation includes the Native Areas, Lifa Land, Crown Land and Native Land Settlement Areas. The Native Areas are the original areas set aside by the Concessions Partition Commissioner for occupation by the Swazi. It is scattered throughout the protectorate in blocks of varying sizes and covers 1,639,687

¹ For a detailed description of the field surveys and problems encountered in the boundary delimitations, see Some Account of George Grey and His Work in Africa (London: Privately published at the Chiswick Press, 1914). George Grey was the Special Commissioner appointed in terms of the Swaziland Concessions Partition Proclamation (No. 28 of 1907) to redefine Swaziland's land ownership patterns. See also A. J. B. Hughes, "Reflections on Traditional and Individual Land Tenure in Swaziland," Journal of Local Administration Overseas, III, No. 1 (January, 1964), 3-13; Great Britain, "The Swaziland Crown Lands Order in Council, 1907," British and Foreign State Papers, C (1906-07), 124-25; and Great Britain, "The Swaziland Crown Lands and Minerals Order in Council, 1908," British and Foreign State Papers, CVI (1913), 969-70.

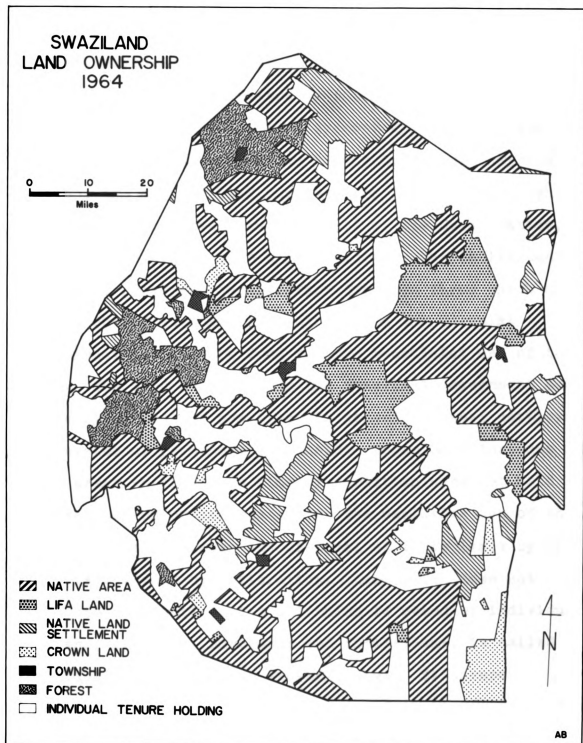


Fig. 15.

acres or 38.2 percent of the total land area. Soon after the partition was affected, the Chief Regent encouraged the Swazi to work in the Transvaal in order to earn money with which to purchase land from the European free-holders. Additional monies were raised by collections or levies on the proceeds from cattle sales ordered by the Ngwenyama. All the proceeds were credited to the Lifa Fund. By the end of 1963, the area of land purchased by the Lifa Fund, which is vested in the Ngwenyama on behalf of the Swazi Nation, amounted to approximately 275,000 acres. The Native Land Settlement Areas are those former European farms which have been purchased with money obtained from the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund for the beneficial use of the Swazi. The land is vested in the Swaziland Government and in theory, if not in practice, is issued to Swazi settlers on a system of permanent leasehold. Crown Land includes all those areas which at the time of partition were not held by concessionaires or demarcated for the exclusive use of the Swazi. The sale, lease and disposal of these lands by the Crown is governed by legislation. Land which does not belong to the Swazi Nation but which is owned by individual Africans, missions, Europeans and Euraficans, is called Individual Tenure Land or Freehold Area. It covers approximately 45 percent of the area of the territory. The balance of the land area (one percent) is divided into the several small townships.

This highly fragmented land ownership pattern has

meant an equally fragmented land use pattern.² On the Native Areas, a system of communal land ownership is practised where the emphasis has traditionally been placed upon cattle herding and subsistence agriculture. In contrast, on the individual Land Tenure Areas, most of which is owned by Europeans, the emphasis has been upon cash crops and cattle. Since the same type of land is settled by both racial groups, the land theoretically could be used the same way by both races, but most of the areas of extensive cotton, tobacco, sugar and fruit cultivation belong to the Europeans. The only region where the Swazi have participated on any significant scale in the cash economy other than in cattle raising, is in the south central middleveld near Goedgegun and Hluti. Large scale irrigation schemes financed both by private individuals and government agencies have tended to be concentrated on the European farms where the experience, management and technology generally reap the greatest rewards. This has further emphasized the differences in Swaziland's land ownership and land use patterns.

The landownership patterns also reflect and in large measure control the distribution of Swaziland's population by race. The population distributional pattern is uneven with ten main urban centres and further concentrations in rural areas where intensive cultivation is

² The most recent comprehensive study of Swaziland's land use patterns and rural economy is J. B. McI. Daniel, The Geography of the Rural Economy of Swaziland, Doctoral Thesis, Institute for Social Research, University of Natal (Durban: By the author, 1962).

greatest. The highest rural population densities (almost 300 per square mile) are in the Native Areas near Manzini, Goedgegun, Hlatikulu, Hluti and Sicunusa which are all in the middle and highvelds. The most sparsely populated areas are the European farm lands, the lower Umbeluzi valley, the northern parts of the Ubombo Ridge, and the Crown Lands near Gollel. The territorial density average is forty-two persons per square mile.

In December 1963 Swaziland's population totalled 287,900.³ The most recent complete tabulation of Swaziland's racial groupings was made in April 1962 when 232,400 persons, or slightly less than 83 percent of the total (280,300), were rural. The African population, which is almost entirely Swazi, totalled 269,960 of whom 228,910 were rural. The Europeans totalled 8,070 of whom 2,470 were rural, and the corresponding figures for the Eurafricans were 2,270 and 1,020 (Table 13). Almost seventy percent of the Europeans lived in urban communities, whereas only fifteen percent of the Swazi had an urban residence. The principal townships and other population centres in Swaziland are shown in Table 13.

The majority of Europeans in Swaziland are urban dwellers, though the greatest proportion of the territory's revenue is derived from agriculture which is predominantly controlled by the Europeans. This indicates that many of

³Great Britain, Colonial Office, Swaziland: Report for the Year 1963 (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1964), p. 9.

TABLE 13
TOWNSHIPS AND OTHER POPULATION CENTRES IN SWAZILAND, 1962^a

Place	Total	African	European	Coloured
Big Bend-Ubombo	6,200	5,840	320	40
Bunya	6,100	5,700	390	10
Goedgegun ^b	2,000	1,640	300	60
Havelock	4,600	4,020	560	20
Hlatikulu ^b	1,200	1,020	130	50
Manzini ^b	7,800	6,100	1,300	400
Mbabane ^b	8,400	6,300	1,800	300
Piggs Peak ^b	1,900	1,700	180	20
Stegi ^b	3,400	2,900	240	260
Tshaneni-Mhlume	6,300	5,830	380	90
Urban Total	47,900	41,050	5,600	1,250
Rural Total	232,400	228,910	2,470	1,020
Total Population	280,300	269,960	8,070	2,270

^a Compiled from data in the files of the Secretariat, based upon the sample census of April, 1962. All figures are corrected for underenumeration, and the urban and peri-urban data are combined for each place.

^b Proclaimed Townships.

the urban Europeans are professional men, and are in government service, commerce, finance, industry and business (Table 14). Complete data on the occupational structure of the Swazi are not available though the government has made a few estimates based upon its sample survey of 1960.⁴ According to these estimates, approximately eighty percent of the rural males and forty percent of the urban males were occupied in unskilled manual labour of

⁴Holleman, Experiment in Swaziland . . ., pp. 275-323.

TABLE 14

OCCUPATIONS OF EUROPEANS AND COLOURED IN SWAZILAND, 1956^a

Occupation	European	Coloured
Agriculture	417	98
Mining and Quarrying.	71	3
Industrial.	370	87
Transport and Communications. . .	61	23
Commercial and Financial.	325	45
Professional and Entertainment. .	325	12
Public Service.	159	1
Forestry.	65	2
Personal Service.	58	18
Others and Unidentified	26	22
Total . . .	1,877	311

^a Compiled from Swaziland, Swaziland Census Report, 1956 (Mbabane, 1957), pp. 3-5.

which agriculture was the most important.

The number of Africans employed by the larger industrial establishments in December 1963 are shown in Table 15. It will be noted that agriculture, forestry and timber processing accounted for more than two thirds of the total employment. Most of these Africans were employed on the large scale European estates near Big Bend, Tshaneni, Tambankulu, Ngonini and Malkerns, and on the extensive forestry plantations of Usutu and Peak Timbers which collectively form the backbone of Swaziland's economy. These few large scale European operations, which are confined to the Freehold Areas and Crown Lands, thus account for most of Swaziland's rural economy and employ the largest

percentage of the Africans who are members of the money economy. The importance of these and other concerns in the overall economy of Swaziland is now reviewed.

TABLE 15
AFRICANS EMPLOYED BY INDUSTRY GROUP IN SWAZILAND, 1963^a

Industrial Group	Africans Employed
Mining	1,261
Forestry, Timber Processing.	4,468
Agricultural Estates	10,122
Construction	2,902
Government	1,909
Miscellaneous Manufacture. .	234
Others	128
	<hr/>
Total	21,024

^a Source: Great Britain, Swaziland, 1963 . . . , p. 22. Figures represent returns rendered by employers of over fifty workers at the end of December, 1963.

Export Patterns

Although asbestos has for twenty years been Swaziland's major export, Swaziland is basically an agricultural country whose future lies in the development of its agricultural resources. Prior to the opening of the Havelock asbestos mine in 1938 the protectorate's major exports were slaughter cattle, hides and skins, cotton, tobacco, gold and tin. Then from 1938 until 1959, minerals were the chief exports accounting for between half and eighty percent of the total exports by value. Asbestos alone earned almost eighty percent of the territory's total export revenue. Two thirds of the asbestos has been

purchased by Britain with the balance being sent to South Africa, Spain, France and Belgium.⁵

Since World War II, however, Swaziland's economy has become less specialized and more diversified with a significant development in commercial agriculture and forestry. Most of this change has been due to large capital investment by the C. D. C. and certain prominent South African companies. Consequently the greatest production and returns are controlled by a very small group, with the majority of the Swazi practising traditional pastoralism and subsistence cultivation. The Swazi's chief contributions to the export market are slaughter stock and hides and skins though cotton and tobacco are becoming major sources of revenue for them.

The growth and diversification of Swaziland's postwar economy are summarized in Tables 16 and 17. Since 1946 the value of exports has increased almost eight fold from £1,173,269 to £9,204,315. The most significant gains have been in food crops which in 1949 accounted for only 1.05 percent of the total exports, but which in 1963 accounted for 52.34 percent of the total. The principal food crops in 1963 were sugar, rice, citrus and pineapples. Indeed in 1963 sugar was Swaziland's major export with sales of £4,115,500 which represented almost 45 percent of the total export sales. Food crops were not introduced on any

⁵Swaziland, Swaziland Commerce Report, 1960-61 (Mbabane, 1962), pp. 1-3.

TABLE 16
SWAZILAND EXPORTS, 1946-1963

Year		Minerals	Agriculture			Timber And Timber Products	Totals £
			Animals And Animal Products	Non-Foods	Foods		
1946	a	897,717	257,736	17,816	0	0	1,173,269
	b	76,52	21,96	1,52	0.00	0.00	
1947	a	896,604	304,633	29,164	0	0	1,230,401
	b	72,87	24,75	2,38	0.00	0.00	
1948	a	1,032,987	340,581	34,581	0	0	1,408,389
	b	73,34	24,19	2,47	0.00	0.00	
1949	a	1,267,116	355,118	45,085	17,896	10,000	1,695,215
	b	74,75	20,96	2,66	1,05	0,58	
1950	a	1,713,928	273,426	69,688	56,024	28,000	2,141,066
	b	80,05	12,78	3,26	2,61	1,30	
1951	a	1,908,642	490,919	123,610	65,600	51,000	2,639,771
	b	72,30	18,59	4,68	2,48	1,95	
1952	a	2,388,195	443,969	144,246	119,366	111,955	3,207,731
	b	74,45	13,85	4,49	3,72	3,49	
1953	a	2,108,129	539,284	146,171	189,061	131,038	3,113,683
	b	67,70	17,32	4,69	6,08	4,21	
1954	a	2,113,074	516,058	144,486	271,444	97,703	3,142,765
	b	67,23	16,43	4,60	8,63	3,11	
1955	a	2,355,909	421,320	241,780	213,988	72,700	3,305,657
	b	71,28	12,75	7,31	6,47	2,19	
1956	a	2,428,894	485,721	217,700	331,250	139,476	3,602,914
	b	67,41	13,49	6,04	9,19	3,87	
1957	a	2,462,816	513,923	273,453	479,587	386,324	4,116,103
	b	59,83	12,49	6,64	11,65	9,39	
1958	a	2,150,576	440,594	240,550	586,552	472,241	3,890,513
	b	55,27	11,32	6,18	15,09	12,14	

TABLE 16--Continued

Year		Minerals	Agriculture			Timber And Timber Products	Totals £
			Animals And Animal Products	Non-Foods	Foods		
1959	a	2,100,538	527,438	356,311	737,551	441,110	4,162,948
	b	50.46	12.67	8.56	17.71	10.60	
1960	a	2,822,500	620,388	316,515	1,764,505	501,092	6,025,000
	b	46.85	10.30	5.26	29.28	8.31	
1961	a	2,572,500	730,710	383,500	2,153,926	504,364	6,345,000
	b	40.54	11.52	6.04	33.95	7.95	
1962	a	2,525,172	707,816	248,500	3,479,012	391,500	7,351,000
	b	34.35	9.62	3.38	47.33	5.32	
1963	a	2,516,962	890,853	456,000	4,818,000	522,500	9,204,315
	b	27.34	9.68	4.95	52.34	5.69	

^a Value in pounds sterling^b Percentage of all exports

Compiled from data in the files of the Secretariat, Mbabane.

TABLE 17
SWAZILAND'S FIRST FIVE EXPORTS, 1946-63

Year	First Export	Second Export	Third Export	Fourth Export	Fifth Export	First Five Exports as a Percent of Total Exports
1946	Asbestos 844,631 71.99	Slaughter Stock 202,500 17.26	Gold 39,471 3.36	Hides & skins 38,889 3.31	Tobacco 17,816 1.52	97.44
1947	Asbestos 840,535 68.31	Slaughter Stock 245,868 19.98	Gold 45,603 3.70	Hides & skins 38,860 3.16	Tobacco 28,834 2.34	97.49
1948	Asbestos 995,767 70.70	Slaughter Stock 240,806 17.10	Hides & skins 74,838 5.31	Tobacco 29,948 2.12	Gold 24,994 1.77	97.00
1949	Asbestos 1,223,486 72.17	Slaughter Stock 258,069 15.22	Hides & skins 61,160 3.60	Tobacco 43,385 2.56	Butter 27,421 1.62	95.17
1950	Asbestos 1,662,741 77.66	Slaughter Stock 173,000 8.08	Hides & skins 62,921 2.94	Tobacco 45,000 2.10	Butter 29,756 1.39	92.17
1951	Asbestos 1,869,346 70.81	Slaughter Stock 354,000 13.41	Cotton 103,000 3.90	Hides & skins 86,500 3.27	Butter 44,033 1.67	93.06

TABLE 17--Continued

Year	First Export	Second Export	Third Export	Fourth Export	Fifth Export	First Five Exports as a Percent of Total Exports
1952	a Asbestos 2,352,827	Slaughter Stock 282,000 8.79	Cotton 113,962 3.55	Hides & skins 68,200 2.58	Rice 64,122 2.00	90.27
	b 73.35					
	c					
1953	a Asbestos 2,080,110	Slaughter Stock 364,374 11.70	Hides & skins 113,819 3.65	Rice 107,930 3.46	Cotton 101,400 3.26	87.87
	b 66.80					
	c					
1954	a Asbestos 2,084,614	Slaughter Stock 387,022 12.31	Rice 144,592 4.60	Cotton 115,286 3.67	Butter 69,565 2.21	89.12
	b 66.33					
	c					
1955	a Asbestos 2,332,151	Slaughter Stock 315,414 9.54	Cotton 223,000 6.74	Rice 143,019 4.33	Butter 70,194 2.12	93.28
	b 70.55					
	c					
1956	a Asbestos 2,398,531	Slaughter Stock 386,400 10.72	Rice 216,000 5.99	Cotton 199,000 5.52	Patulite 180,000 4.99	93.79
	b 66.57					
	c					

TABLE 17--Continued

Year	First Export	Second Export	Third Export	Fourth Export	Fifth Export	First Five Exports as a Percent of Total Exports
1957	Asbestos 2,437,917 59.23	Slaughter Stock 413,460 10.04	Patulite 370,955 9.01	Rice 250,000 6.07	Cotton 227,392 5.52	89.87
1958	Asbestos 2,130,952 54.77	Patulite 454,257 11.68	Slaughter Stock 333,058 8.56	Rice 225,000 5.78	Cotton 178,027 4.57	85.36
1959	Asbestos 2,085,353 50.09	Sugar 422,960 10.16	Slaughter Stock 405,060 9.73	Patulite 333,353 8.01	Cotton 298,233 7.16	85.15
1960	Asbestos 2,786,479 46.25	Sugar 1,280,000 21.24	Slaughter Stock 514,020 8.53	Patulite 367,364 6.10	Cotton 267,297 4.44	86.56
1961	Asbestos 2,535,000 39.95	Sugar 1,843,500 29.05	Slaughter Stock 633,500 9.98	Cotton 359,500 5.66	Rice 195,000 3.07	87.71

TABLE 17--Continued

Year	First Export	Second Export	Third Export	Fourth Export	Fifth Export	First Five Exports as a Percent of Total Exports
1962						
a	Sugar	Asbestos	Slaughter Stock	Rice	Timber	
b	2,991,000	2,469,837	636,500	305,000	264,500	
c	40.69	33.60	8.66	4.15	3.60	90.70
1963						
a	Sugar	Asbestos	Slaughter Stock	Cotton	Rice	
b	4,115,500	2,469,885	801,000	435,000	345,000	
c	44.71	26.83	8.70	4.73	3.75	88.72

^aProduct exported^bValue of product exported in pounds sterling^cPercent of the total export value

Compiled from data in the files of the Secretariat, Mbabane; and Great Britain, Basutoland, Bechuanaland Protectorate and Swaziland: Report of an Economic Survey Mission (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1960), pp. 546-47.

large scale until the development of the Malkerns region in 1949 when small quantities of rice, vegetables and sub-tropical fruits were grown on an experimental basis. Since then three additional irrigation schemes have been opened at Big Bend, Mhlume-Tambankulu and Ngonini.

Rice was the first food crop grown on a large-scale basis in Big Bend and Malkerns and immediately became Swaziland's principal food crop export. Peak production was reached in 1957 (5,917 short tons and £250,000), the year in which sugar cane was planted by the C. D. C. in the then recently developed Mhlume Flats. Sugar cane production is confined to the lowveld where temperatures are high, irrigation is possible and the soils are amongst the most fertile in the territory. There are two centres of production — Mhlume and Big Bend (Figure 16). Except where optimum irrigation conditions exist in areas such as the Umfolosi Flats and the Pongola valley, the natural environmental conditions of the Swaziland lowveld, provided irrigation is possible, are superior to those of the Natal sugar belt. Sugar promises to be one of Swaziland's major exports for decades to come and a major freight for the new railway.

Tropical and subtropical fruits and vegetables including pineapples, bananas, citrus, guavas and tomatoes have been major export items since 1950. Like sugar and rice they are grown almost entirely by Europeans, though the Swazi's participation in this part of the cash economy is increasing each year. The principal pineapple and tomato

Fig. 16.--Ubombo Sugar Mill and Sugar Plantations. The Ubombo mill has an 85,000 tons sugar quota for 1965, of which less than one quarter will be marketed locally. The potential for the Big Bend region is 120,000 tons per year which could be achieved within five years. The sugar, all grown under controlled irrigation, is harvested from May to December inclusive. The refined sugar was formerly trucked to Komatipoort, but is now sent to Phuzamoya for rail conveyance to Mozambique and overseas markets.

Fig. 17.--Pineapple Harvesting in Malkerns. Pineapples were first grown as a dry land crop in Malkerns in 1955 for South African markets. Currently almost ninety percent of the harvest is canned for European markets. The pineapples were formerly transported by road to Goba and Breyten, but they are now railed from Matsahpa. Note the edge of the Usutu Forests in the western highveld in the background.



Figs. 16 and 17.

region is at Malkerns (Figure 17); the citrus is widely scattered but the Malkerns, Tambankulu, and Ngonini estates are the largest; and the bananas are produced mainly near Kubuta. All these regions are close to European communities and adjacent to the major transport routes.

Of the non-food crops entering Swaziland's foreign trade, cotton and tobacco are the most important. Since 1950 cotton has been a leading export (Table 17), with an increasing proportion of the total being produced by Swazi on communally held land. Its revival as a major cash crop after the Second World War was due almost entirely to the development of a textile industry in South Africa. The high cost of cotton imported from the United States after the devaluation of sterling was a further incentive to local growers to increase production. As the South African textile industry was afforded a measure of government protection, Swaziland growers found a ready market for their cotton in South Africa. The major cotton producing areas are in the middle and lowvelds where it is a dry land crop. Tobacco, the exports of which are declining steadily, is grown by both Swazi and Europeans in the southern middleveld.

Commercial afforestation on a large scale did not start in Swaziland until 1942 although successful forestry experiments were conducted in the Hlatikulu District soon after the British Government assumed responsibility for the territory. In 1942 a private company commenced planting near Gege and later extended its operations to Piggs Peak.

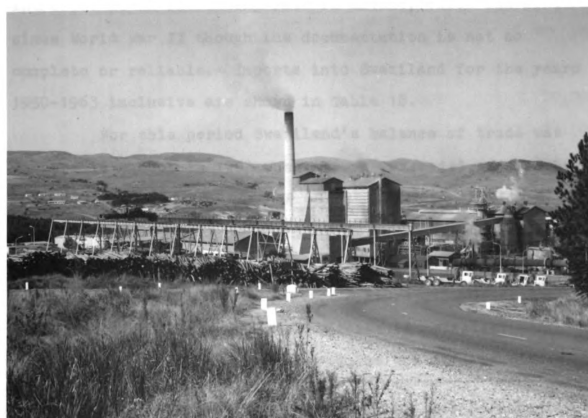
The largest plantation today is Usutu Forests which was initiated by the C. D. C. in 1948 (Figure 18). Up to 1961 emphasis was on the sale of sawn timber and chipboard, but in that year the Usutu pulp mill at Bunya was completed which is designed to produce 100,000 tons of unbleached sulphate pulp annually for British and European markets (Figure 19). Pulp, exports of which will earn £4 million annually, will be the second most important freight for the Swaziland railway. Timber and timber products currently earn over a half million pounds sterling.

Animals and animal products have long been leading items of trade. From 1922 to 1924, and from 1927 to 1938, animal husbandry was the territory's main source of income accounting for over forty percent of the total value of exports in those years. With the exploitation of asbestos, the diversification of agriculture and the development of forestry, the relative value of those exports declined and has accounted for less than twenty percent of the total exports since 1950. In 1963 animals and animal products earned £890,853 or almost ten percent of the export revenue (Table 16).

The Swazi are cattle keepers; it cannot be said they are ranchers. To the Swazi, cattle are regarded as a sign of wealth and prestige where quantity is more important than quality. This preoccupation with the social status afforded by cattle ownership has contributed to the failure of the Swazi to realize the full economic value of their

Fig. 18.--Usutu Forests. First planting of the Usutu Forests was begun by the C.D.C. in 1950 after some 75,000 acres of land in the western highveld were secured from the Swazi, Crown and freeholders. There are currently 105,000 acres of forest most of which is planted to *Pinus Patula*, *Pinus Elluttia* and *Eucalyptus*. Approximately 1,700 Swazi are employed as foresters.

Fig. 19.--Bunya Pulp Mill. The mill was completed in 1961 and went into production that year. Current production is 100,000 tons per year, all of which is now conveyed by rail from Matsahpa to Lourenco Marques for overseas shipment, especially to Europe and the Far East. The mill employs approximately 200 Europeans and 800 Africans.



Figs. 18 and 19.

herds. Consequently the export of slaughter cattle has been dominated by the European farmers on Freehold Areas and by European and Eurafrikan speculators. A major problem facing the Administration is the persuasion of the Swazi to destock and upgrade their herds to meet the export standards controlled by South Africa. Having achieved this, the livestock industry will undoubtedly be the major source of income for the Swazi traditionalists.

Import Patterns

While Swaziland's exports have historically been primary goods, the imports have been manufactured and processed goods. Like the exports, however, imports have increased at an increasing rate in amount, value and kind since World War II though the documentation is not so complete or reliable. Imports into Swaziland for the years 1950-1963 inclusive are shown in Table 18.

For this period Swaziland's balance of trade was favourable except in 1963 when imports exceeded exports by £670,685. The large increase in the value of imports since 1961 is due primarily to the flow of equipment, materials and supplies for the railway. In 1963, for example, railway equipment imports were valued at £2,515,000.⁶ General merchandise including clothing, household articles, electrical machinery, tobacco products and farm machinery

⁶ A preliminary figure released by the Secretariat, Mbabane, June 1964.

TABLE 18

SWAZILAND IMPORTS, 1950-63

(percentage of total imports and value in pounds sterling)

Year	Food and Beverages	Motor Vehicles Spares, Oils, and Fuels	Timber and Building Materials	Other Merchandise	Total £
1950	. . ^a	. . ^a	118,505	. . ^a	1,090,793
1951	. . ^a	. . ^a	111,651	. . ^a	1,918,984
1952	b 399,008 c (18.31)	527,061 (24.19)	210,336 (9.65)	1,042,833 (47.85)	2,179,238
1953	b 451,753 c (22.45)	337,220 (16.76)	149,807 (7.44)	1,073,806 (53.35)	2,012,586
1954	b 400,300 c (16.77)	410,013 (17.18)	335,249 (14.05)	1,240,770 (52.00)	1,386,332
1955	b 458,028 c (23.44)	459,136 (23.49)	185,386 (9.49)	851,745 (43.58)	1,954,295
1956	b 414,232 c (18.64)	396,157 (17.83)	164,625 (7.41)	1,247,232 (56.12)	2,222,246
1957	b 534,039 c (16.64)	805,427 (25.10)	204,297 (6.37)	1,665,096 (51.89)	3,208,859
1958	b 726,550 c (21.94)	578,408 (17.47)	234,307 (7.07)	1,772,070 (53.52)	3,311,335
1959	b 1,015,858 c (25.55)	798,264 (20.07)	427,157 (10.72)	1,735,185 (43.66)	3,976,464
1960	b 1,140,500 c (27.82)	802,500 (19.57)	411,000 (10.03)	1,746,000 (42.58)	4,100,000
1961	b 1,268,000 c (24.77)	950,000 (18.55)	646,500 (12.63)	2,255,500 (44.05)	5,120,000
1962	b 1,053,500 c (14.53)	1,900,000 (26.20)	654,500 (9.03)	3,643,500 (50.24)	7,251,500
1963	b 1,020,000 c (10.33)	2,000,000 (20.25)	925,000 (9.37)	5,930,000 (60.05)	9,875,000

^a Data are not available^b Value in pounds sterling^c Percent of total imports

Compiled from data in the files of the Secretariat, Mbabane; and Great Britain, Basutoland, Bechuanaland . . ., pp. 548-49.

has historically accounted for approximately half of the total imports with the value approaching £6 million in 1963. This reflects the general lack of secondary industry in Swaziland. In the pre-railway period all the general merchandise, motor vehicles, parts and machinery were imported from the Breyten, Piet Retief, Gollie and Komati-poort railheads. All the petroleum, oils, and lubricants were imported by truck through Mhlumeni and Stegi, but henceforth these items will be imported by rail to Matsahpa and Mlawula for final distribution. Timber and building supplies, which collectively in 1963 totalled £925,000 or 9.37 percent of the total imports, are also imported from South Africa and Mozambique. The value of these commodities has also increased several-fold since the Second World War.

Although Swaziland is an agricultural country, it must import vast quantities of foods and beverages, mainly from South Africa. These imports have accounted for between ten and twenty-eight percent of all imports since 1950. The largest single food import is maize the value of which in 1962 was £395,000. The Swazi are the major consumers, and must pay considerably more for South African maize than Rhodesian maize because of the Customs Agreement. The only food processing plants in Swaziland are a creamery, malt factory, rice mill and a maize mill in Manzini; a fruit cannery and maize mill in Malkerns; sugar and rice mills at Mhlume and Big Bend, and bakeries at Mbabane, Manzini and Piggs Peak. The largest of these concerns process Swaziland

produce for export rather than domestic markets. Although no detailed records are kept, it is clear that South Africa is the major supplier of Swaziland's imports.

Geographic Relationships with South Africa

Swaziland's external trade has always been oriented towards South Africa. Lying adjacent to this more prosperous and industrialized country, Swaziland has been able to find a dependable market for its produce and a supplier of manufactured goods without incurring prohibitive transport costs. Johannesburg and Durban, the two major foci for Swaziland's external trade are only 267 miles and 398 miles respectively from Manzini, Swaziland's main commercial centre. To promote and expedite the movement of goods between Swaziland and South Africa, the two countries have concluded several trade agreements the principal of which is the Customs Union Agreement.

The Customs Agreement has both promoted and retarded economic development in Swaziland. Among its positive attributes, the Agreement has guaranteed Swaziland a market for its agricultural and mineral products without the territory having to compete for foreign markets. As a signatory to the Customs Agreement, Swaziland receives a limited but important revenue from customs dues fixed at 0.149 percent of the gross customs revenues collected by

South Africa and the High Commission Territories.⁷

Consequently Swaziland has no control over these receipts, which in 1962-63 totalled £150,496. Since the Second World War the relative value of the receipts from the Customs Agreement has declined from 15.1 percent of all revenues in 1946 to 7.36 percent in 1961. The absolute values, however, have increased substantially (Table 19).

Besides the Customs Agreement there are several other commercial treaties that regulate the production, sale and marketing of Swaziland's produce. Three such treaties affect the tobacco, sugar and citrus industries. In 1930 Swaziland tobacco farmers were virtually forced to join the Swaziland Co-operative Tobacco Company, the alternative being a possible embargo on the exports to South Africa. This co-operative, established at Goedgegun in the heart of Swaziland's tobacco region, controls the production and marketing of the protectorate's tobacco crop according to South African regulations. Similar arrangements regulate Swaziland's citrus industry, and until January 1965, Swaziland's sugar quota was restricted to 8.5 percent of the South African sales by the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement. With South Africa's withdrawal from the Commonwealth in

⁷In comparison Basutoland receives 0.885 percent of the total customs revenue, and Bechuanaland receives 0.276 percent. In both territories, receipts from the Customs Union constitute a major proportion of the total ordinary revenues. In 1955 for example, Basutoland received £588,755 from the Customs Union which represented 40.3 percent of its total revenue. For the same year Bechuanaland received £200,420 from the Customs Union which represented 17.37 percent of its total revenue.

TABLE 19
SWAZILAND: PRINCIPAL SOURCES OF REVENUE, 1946-62^a

Fiscal Year	Native Tax		Customs		Income Tax		Posts and Telegraphs	
	£	% of total	£	% of total	£	% of total	£	% of total
1946	47,596	12.63	56,924	15.10	103,496	27.46	43,967	11.66
1947	49,725	12.76	54,919	14.09	106,479	27.33	40,397	10.37
1948	57,091	13.53	58,703	13.91	124,859	29.58	28,378	6.72
1949	55,796	11.63	45,972	9.58	185,991	38.76	25,570	5.33
1950	56,111	10.04	55,134	9.86	234,205	41.89	19,400	3.47
1951	58,286	8.86	62,625	9.52	322,681	49.03	22,979	3.49
1952	60,561	7.01	68,342	7.91	492,405	56.97	28,267	3.27
1953	58,152	6.77	80,126	7.96	558,654	55.49	32,927	3.27
1954	65,812	6.89	83,079	8.69	498,790	52.20	35,557	3.72
1955	65,413	6.71	98,319	10.08	498,984	51.17	45,036	4.62
1956	65,895	5.46	102,894	8.52	626,674	51.90	88,490	7.34
1957	64,453	5.12	111,724	8.87	683,444	54.24	63,456	5.04
1958	69,090	5.21	127,426	9.61	663,883	50.08	68,608	5.17
1959	66,642	4.32	144,587	9.37	643,937	41.72	79,343	5.14
1960	63,166	4.04	150,728	9.65	719,961	46.08	130,129	8.33
1961	60,406	3.18	140,027	7.36	981,178	51.61	185,493	9.76
1962	63,812	3.25	277,595	14.16	878,430	44.81	181,980	9.28

^a Compiled from data in the files of the Secretariat, Mbabane.

1961, this arrangement has terminated and Swaziland is treated independently under a new agreement.

To expedite the flow of goods between South Africa and Swaziland, the South African Railways and Harbours Administration operates a regular bus service between the major population and industrial centres and the railheads at Gollel, Piet Retief, Breyten and Komatipoort. The most frequent services are those between Breyten, Mbabane and Manzini, and between Hlatikulu and Piet Retief. Services also link Manzini with Stegi, and Gollel with Komatipoort. These services are supplemented by privately owned haulage and passenger services which operate under licenses granted by the Administration.

Total tonnages and passengers carried by the South African Railways and Harbours buses in Swaziland for the postwar years are shown in Table 20. In 1963-64 over 311,000 tons of merchandize were conveyed by these buses which represents almost a twenty five percent increase in the tonnage carried in 1962-63 and more than a 657 percent increase over the 1945-56 total. This very large increase in freight reflects the rapidly developing Swaziland economy. The number of passengers using the service has increased only slightly in the same period.

Swaziland's geographic relationships with South Africa may also be seen in the traffic flow patterns. A decade ago Swaziland's imports and exports totalled 143,000 tons. A little more than 93 percent of this total passed

TABLE 20

PASSENGERS AND FREIGHT CARRIED BY
THE RAILWAY MOTOR SERVICES
IN SWAZILAND, 1946-1963^a

Year	Passengers	Total Freight (tons) ^b
1945-46	189,638	41,143
1946-47	194,662	50,190
1947-48	184,025	44,339
1948-49	204,241	53,500
1949-50	178,162	42,357
1950-51	172,900	54,744
1951-52	180,355	50,047
1952-53	186,205	63,012
1953-54	194,768	62,866
1954-55	196,609	78,897
1955-56	196,755	88,403
1956-57	198,044	103,226
1957-58	181,083	94,066
1958-59	227,659	128,419
1959-60	215,596	152,390
1960-61	244,501	209,090
1961-62	232,929	256,694
1962-63	217,878	249,906
1963-64	149,604	311,766

^a Source: From the files
of the South African Railways and
Harbours Administration,
Johannesburg, South Africa.

^b 2,000 lbs per ton. Total
freight includes imports and
exports.

through South Africa and was handled primarily by seven
railheads — Barberton (48,000 tons), Hectorspruit (13,800
tons), Komatipoort (12,600 tons), Piet Retief (9,000 tons),

Golles (8,500 tons), Breyten and Lothair.⁸ The balance of this traffic (10,000 tons) was conveyed through Mozambique and the Goba railhead (Figure 20).

Although in 1955 the total traffic through Oshoek was second to that through Havelock, Oshoek was and always has been the major outlet point for Swaziland's agricultural products and the principal entry point for its general merchandise.⁹ Most of the traffic was conveyed to and from Breyten, the Railway Motor Services depot seventy-two miles west of the border. The major artery of traffic within Swaziland extended from Oshoek through Mbabane, Manzini, and Stegi to Mhlumeni and Goba. Traffic decreased from Oshoek to Stegi and thence increased slightly to the Mozambique border. Manzini, the territory's commercial capital and R. M. S. regional headquarters, lies on this axis, but is unfavourably situated with respect to the surrounding railheads (Figure 21). In the pre-Swaziland railway period, it was sixty-eight miles by road from Goba, seventy miles from Piet Retief, one hundred and twenty four miles from Breyten and almost a hundred miles from Golles. Only parts of the

⁸ Traffic data for Breyten and Lothair are not available, but most of the 36,000 tons of traffic which passed through Oshoek undoubtedly came from Breyten. Only a small amount was handled by Lothair, and probably an even smaller amount passed through Carolina and intermediate points. All 1955 data used in this section are taken from Griffin and Reynolds, Report on the General . . .

⁹ The large volume of traffic between Havelock and Barberton is accounted for solely by the export of asbestos and the import of mining supplies and equipment, and hence is excluded from the general discussion of South African railheads and general trade flow patterns.

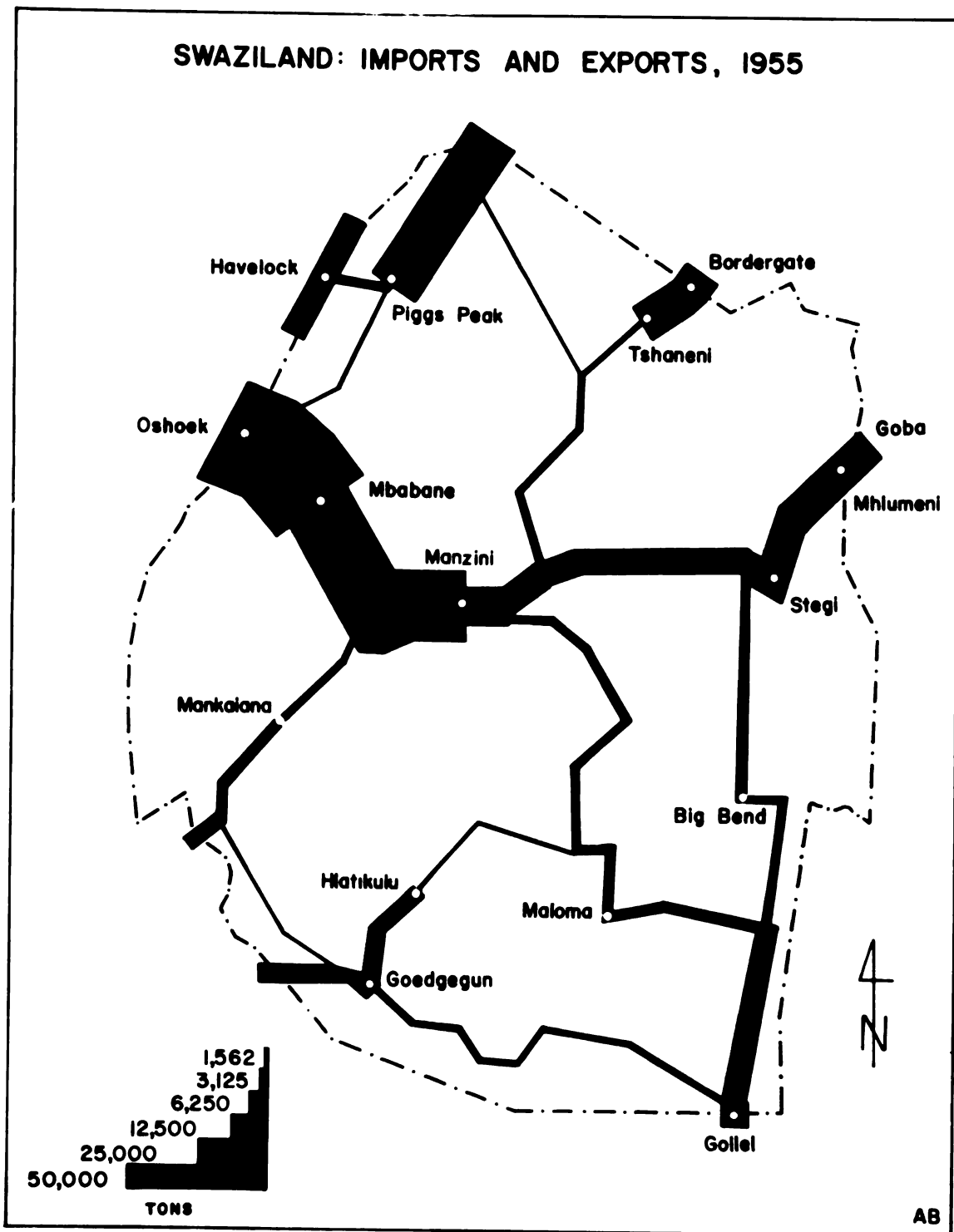


Fig. 20.

Great Usutu-Mkondo valleys south of Manzini, and the upper reaches of the Umbeluzi valley were further from these rail-heads. Both regions are within Manzini's hinterland (Figure 21).

In the pre-railway period the Piggs Peak-Hectorspruit route was the second most important route of international traffic between Swaziland and South Africa. In 1955 almost 19,000 tons of traffic passed over this route with lumber and chipboard being the major exports and chemicals and general merchandise being the chief imports (Figure 20). All of this traffic was conveyed by private carriers since the R. M. S. did not operate between Piggs Peak and Hectorspruit. Hectorspruit served not only Piggs Peak, Ngonini and Hhohho, but also Balegane and Mhlume although the latter is closer to Komatipoort (Figure 21). Petroleum, oil and fertilizers were the principal imports from Hectorspruit to Mhlume. Today the Hectorspruit catchment area is the smallest in Swaziland and is confined to the area north of the Komati River.

Komatipoort has traditionally been the major rail-head for northeastern Swaziland although it was not linked with the Tshaneni Bordergate by the R. M. S. until 1957. The Bordergate itself was not connected to Balegane until 1954. In 1955 Swaziland imported 9,800 tons of fertilizers, fuel, cement and building supplies from Komatipoort and exported 2,800 tons of rice and fruit from the Umbeluzi and Komati irrigation schemes, and Komatipoort has traditionally

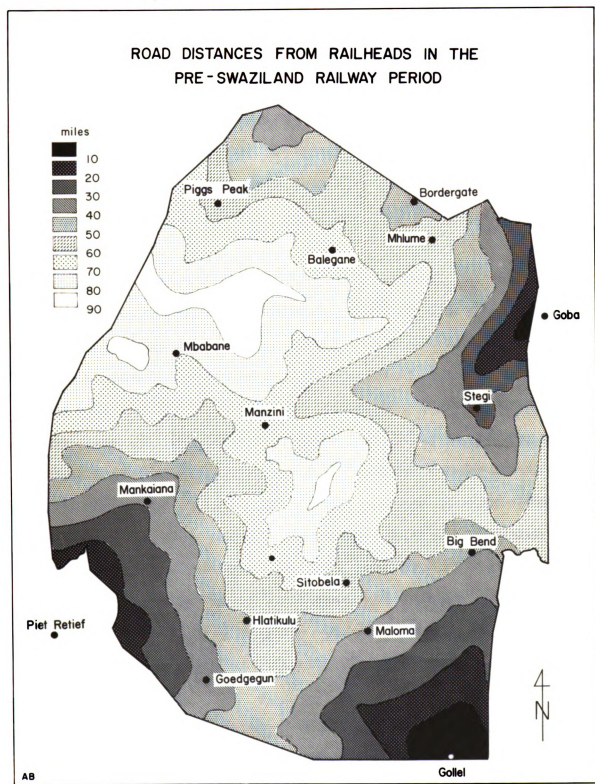


Fig. 21.

been Swaziland's second major outlet for cattle. In the post war years, it has been the principal receiving point for Swaziland cattle railed to Johannesburg (Table 21). In recent years Komatipoort has handled all the sugar, rice and citrus exports from Mhlume and Tambankulu. In 1963 these amounted to 50,000 tons. Komatipoort is, therefore, a major railhead for Swaziland, but with the opening of the railway and the new border post at Namaacha, its importance will decline.

The Lebombo Ridge and the Swaziland lowveld north of the Great Usutu, have been oriented to the Goba railhead since 1931 when Mozambique introduced a bus service between Goba and Stegi. Since then the amount of traffic over this route has steadily increased. A decade ago Goba transhipped 8,400 tons of Swaziland's imports including petroleum products destined for all of the European settlements, and fertilizers for use throughout the eastern lowveld (Figure 20). Exports consigned to this route in 1955 included citrus and avacadoes, but in 1963 over 85,000 tons of pulp and 10,000 tons of sugar were exported through Mhlumeni, making this Swaziland's major outlet (by volume). Its prominence will also be reduced by the opening of the railway and Namaacha.

Since 1928 Gollel has been the railhead for Swaziland south of the Great Usutu and east of Sitobela and Hluti, though its catchment area extends beyond these points. Big Bend the largest economic centre within the Gollel

TABLE 21
EXPORT OF CATTLE FROM SWAZILAND TO SOUTH AFRICA, 1946-1963^a

Year	Number of head sent to Durban via Gollel	Number of head sent to Johannesburg via			Total Number of head Exported	Value £
		Breyten	Komatipoort	Piet Retief		
1946	11,505	1,148	847	..	13,500	202,500
1948	14,359	1,425	1,917	..	17,701	240,806
1950	7,431	1,562	1,158	..	10,151	173,000
1952	9,754	1,623	493	..	11,870	282,000
1954	11,785	1,838	1,802	367	15,792	387,022
1956	9,903	790	3,107	..	13,800	386,400
1958	8,802	610	2,454	30	11,896	335,058
1960	14,058	2,099	966	84	17,207	514,020
1962	16,018	576	4,415	204	21,213	636,500
1963	19,473	973	5,234	1,048	26,692	801,000

^a Compiled from data in the files of the Department of Land Utilization, Veterinary Division, Manzini.

hinterland, lies forty miles north of the railhead, and Maloma is the same distance to its northwest (Figure 21). Although Gollel was Swaziland's nearest railhead in the pre-railway period, it was never the most important since the major agricultural regions and population centres were closer to Piet Retief, Manzini and Stegi, but it has been an important outlet for cattle, cotton and molasses, particularly to Durban. Since 1928 Gollel has been Swaziland's principal outlet for cattle which are trekked there from all areas of the middle and lowvelds south of the Usutu (Table 21). A decade ago Gollel handled 5,300 tons of exports and 3,200 tons of imports including sugar bags, fertilizers and maize (Figure 20).

Southwestern Swaziland's imports and exports in the pre-railway period were handled primarily by Piet Retief. Both the Swazi and the Afrikaner farmers of this region have historically regarded Piet Retief as the natural outlet for their cotton, tobacco, cattle and wattlebark. In recent years timber from Gege and kaolin from Mahlangatsha have been added to this flow for shipment to Johannesburg. In 1955 Piet Retief distributed 5,700 tons of goods to Swaziland and received 3,300 tons of the territory's exports. With the opening of the railway and the development of Matsahpa, cotton and cattle will cease to be exported by this route, but tobacco, wattle barks and fruit will still be transported to Piet Retief.

Communications

It is recognized that Swaziland's economic prosperity and development have been retarded by inadequate communications within Swaziland and between the protectorate and South Africa. Swazilanders have long demanded of Britain and South Africa increased financial assistance for road and railway construction, but for reasons previously enumerated these demands were not met. With the postwar program of economic diversification in both South Africa and Swaziland, the need for improved communications has become more apparent. In 1956 the High Commissioner appointed a commission to examine the entire communications question with particular reference to existing and proposed projects in forestry, agriculture and mining. The report recommended that expenditures on road maintenance should be doubled and that the most travelled routes between the widely dispersed economic centres should first be improved to good gravel standards and later tarred.

Four years later the communication question was reviewed by an Economic Mission in view of Swaziland's continued economic development.¹⁰ The transport problem as seen by the Mission was firstly the need to provide a transport system to serve the territory as a whole, and secondly the specific need to develop the mineral resources,

¹⁰ The Economic Mission reviewed the economic conditions in each of the High Commission Territories and made recommendations for further development which appear in full in, Great Britain, Basutoland, Bechuanaland

in particular the iron ore deposits. The greater part of the first requirement it was maintained could be filled by the extension and improvement of the road system without recourse to a railway. However, it was accepted that there was no alternative to rail transport for the shipment of minerals (iron ore) to Lourenco Marques.¹¹

Following these investigations the Swaziland Government embarked upon the recommended road improvement projects assisted primarily by Colonial Development and Welfare Funds. The costs of these undertakings are shown in Table 22. The major projects included the building of a paved road between Mhlambanyatsi and Manzini, the upgrading

TABLE 22
COMMUNICATIONS PROJECTS, AND COLONIAL DEVELOPMENT AND
WELFARE FUND EXPENDITURES IN SWAZILAND, 1945-1962^a
(in pounds sterling)

Year	Total C.D. & W. Expenditures in Swaziland £	C.D. & W. Road And Rail Construction Expenditures £
1945-50	508,620	5,199
1950-55	690,158	109,432
1955-60	1,561,048	929,553
1960-61	562,768	431,835
1961-62	853,818	402,541
1962-63	556,168	6,729

^aCompiled from Great Britain, Basutoland, Bechuanaland . . ., pp. 543-44; and Great Britain, Swaziland, 1963 . . ., pp. 32, 124.

¹¹Ibid., p. 456.

of the Mhlambanyatsi-Mbabane gravel road, road realignment near Gollel, the building of service roads near Bunya, and the construction of a bridge across the Usutu near Big Bend. In 1961 the World Bank for Reconstruction and Development approved a £1,000,000 loan for the realignment and paving of Swaziland's major transterritorial highway. The Oshoek-Mpaka section was paved by December 1963 and the new road from Mpaka across the Umbeluzi to Namaacha was completed a year later. The latter section was preferred over the existing trunk road through Stegi to Mhlumeni for three reasons. First, it provided a better connection for the rapidly developing Umbeluzi irrigation schemes including those of Mhlume and Tambankulu; second it joined the paved road to Lourenco Marques at Namaacha which is a better road and the same distance as Mhlumeni from Lourenco Marques; and third, it would be connected by gravel road to the Mlawula rail station.

Although these undertakings have greatly improved Swaziland's communications, the general condition remains inadequate for present and future requirements. The only paved roads (totalling 142 miles) are between Oshoek and Namaacha, and Mhlambanyatsi and Malkerns. All other routes are gravel and dirt tracks which are often impassable during the rainy season. At the end of 1964 Swaziland possessed 743 miles of primary roads (275 miles of trunk roads and 468 miles of main roads) and 510 miles of secondary

roads¹² (Figure 22). This represents an increase of only 54 miles of primary roads and 58 miles of secondary roads in the last decade.

The new trans-territorial highway is Swaziland's major artery from which trunk and main roads radiate to the widely dispersed economic areas. Principal of these routes are from Gollel to Hhohho through Big Bend, Sipofaneni and Croydon; Mhlumeni to Mpaka; Piet Retief to Malkerns; and Piggs Peak to Motshane (Figure 22).

¹²A "primary road" is defined as "a road which links the major centres of industry, business and population, and provides access to the neighbouring territories." Primary roads are the most travelled routes (carrying eighty percent of all road traffic) and receive about three fourths of the available road funds. Griffin and Reynolds, Report on the General . . ., p. 65.

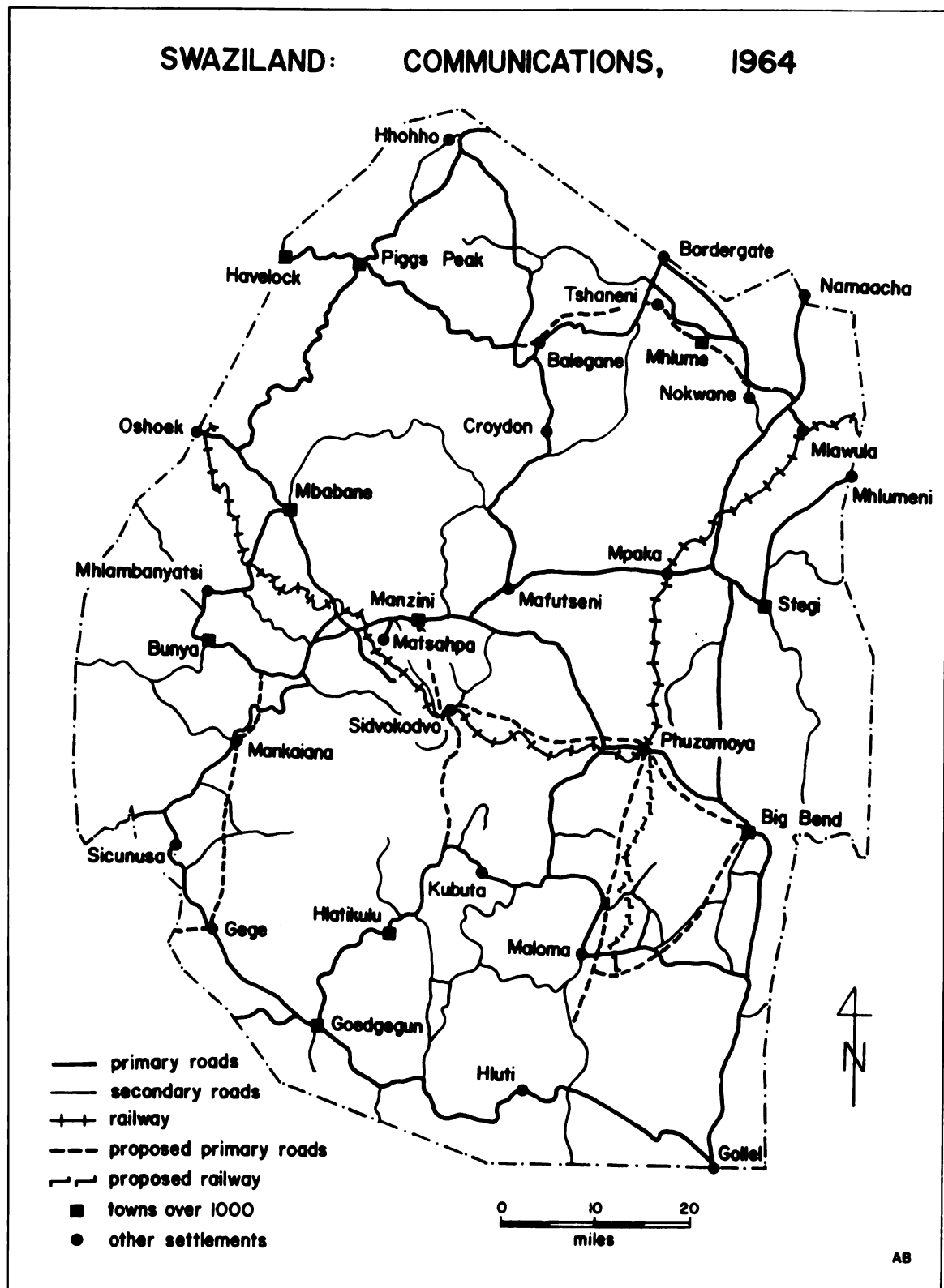


Fig. 22.

CHAPTER XI

IMPACT OF SWAZILAND RAILWAY ON MAJOR PATTERNS OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

It is recognized that the new railway will affect Swaziland's developing economy, but its precise impact upon the territory's geographic patterns is less certain. In any country (and Swaziland is no exception) undergoing rapid political and economic change conditioned by internal and external forces and controls, prediction on even a short term basis is difficult and often near impossible. In Swaziland these forces and controls are particularly difficult to predict with any degree of accuracy.

The principal variables influencing the railway's potential impact on Swaziland's spatial patterns include: the territory's political issues centering upon nationalism, independence and the incorporation with South Africa¹;

¹In June 1964, Swaziland held its first national elections. King Sobhuza's traditionalist party, the Imbhokodo, and the conservative European party, the United Swaziland Association, won all sixteen seats to the first Swaziland Legislative Council. The Imbhokodo seeks the termination of colonial policy and government and the "redress of sixty years of neglect of its country and people." It will mobilize all its power to secure independence as soon as possible and to create a free Swaziland within the British Commonwealth of Nations under a Constitution of its own making. It seeks the protection and adaptation of Swazi institution, law and custom and the fostering of Swazi culture in all its forms. It rejects

Britain's possible though unlikely entry into the Common Market; the complex land and mineral ownership patterns; the trade and marketing agreements regulated by South Africa; international market patterns; and capital investment and development policies of Britain and South Africa. The latter two countries will continue to dominate Swaziland's political and economic affairs in the immediate future, even after independence is granted because of their strong historical and geographic associations with Swaziland.

The impact analysis is further restricted by the paucity of complete and reliable demographic and economic data. This is largely a consequence of the Customs Agreement, which for trade purposes treats Swaziland as an integral and inseparable part of the Republic of South Africa. Although there are these limitations, it is still possible to discuss the potential impact of the Swaziland railway on the protectorate's geographic patterns.

British policy and the design of the present constitution to remove all control over land and minerals by the Swazi Nation. The basic principles are also adhered to by the United Swaziland Association which seeks a continuation of the close economic ties with South Africa without incorporation. For a summary of these recent political developments in Swaziland, see: Dennis V. Cowen, Swaziland: Report on Constitutional Reform. A Report Made on Behalf of the Swaziland Progressive Party and the Eurafican Welfare Association (Johannesburg, 1962); G. V. Doxey, The High Commission Territories and the Republic of South Africa, A Report Prepared for the Royal Institute of International Affairs (London: Oxford University Press, 1963); Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, Cmnd. 2052 (1963), "The Swaziland Constitution."; The Times of Swaziland, May 29, 1964, pp. 1-3, 9-10; The Times of Swaziland, June 19, 1964, pp. 1-2, 5; and The Times of Swaziland, July 3, 1964, pp. 1-2, 6, 9-10.

MineralsIron Ore

The principal factors which influence the market price of iron ore are grade, production costs, and the cost of transportation to the mills. Ore of any grade above 30 percent iron can be beneficiated to provide an acceptable blast furnace feed and consequently grade only becomes a significant factor when measured with transport costs. Long hauls from distant deposits involve transport costs frequently as high as the cost of the ore, and since freight must be paid on the useable ore and the gangue alike, the latter must be kept to a minimum. However ore of 60 percent iron should be regarded as the minimum grade for Swaziland ores entering the export market.²

The present iron ore contract calls for the export of twelve million long tons of hematite over a ten year period. In the first year 800,000 tons will be exported and then production will be increased to between 1.2 million and 1.4 million tons annually until the ninth year when production will be reduced to present rates.³ The mine has

²Anglo American Corporation of South Africa, The Bomvu Ridge . . ., p. 4.

³In the first three months 152,686 short tons of ore were moved to Lourenco Marques. Letter from L. A. W. Hawkins, Chief Executive Officer, Swaziland Railway Board, Mbabane, February 3, 1965. In May 1965, approximately 29,000 short tons of ore were being railed each week. Letter from Peter Davies, Swaziland Consulting Engineers, Mbabane, May 12, 1965.

an economic reserve of about 30,000,000 long tons plus 700,000 long tons of detrital ore which if mined at present rates would last for twenty-five years. The present contract with Japan may be extended.

Japanese annual iron ore requirements are currently estimated at fifteen million tons, but they are expected to rise to twenty million tons by 1967. Japan is the fourth largest producer of industrial steel in the world but must import three-fourths of its iron ore. Its principal sources are Brazil, India, Malaya, Canada and the Philippines. The highest grade ores are from Brazil and India. Swaziland ores must compete against these and possibly ores from Australia and Liberia.

There is little likelihood of a market being developed in Europe as there are extensive supplies of iron ore in Labrador, Liberia, Mauritania, Sweden, Venezuela and Brazil all of which are closer than Swaziland to Europe's steel centres. Swaziland's remoteness from these highly industrialized areas puts the country at a disadvantage. West Africa has recently assumed greater prominence in the iron ore trade with Western Europe with the opening of three iron deposits and the building of five new railways. Mauritania, for example, completed a 400 mile railway in 1963 from Fort Gouraud to Port Etienne to convey between four million and six million tons of high grade ore (64.5 percent iron) each year for shipment to a new steel mill in Dunkerque, France. Liberia recently built four railways to

the coast to transport over fifteen million tons of iron ore each year for shipment to the United States and West Germany.

South Africa is an unlikely market for Swaziland iron ore since the Republic has adequate supplies of her own near Thabazimbi and Rustenburg, and the railway would need extending across the border to either Lothair or Breyten. Iron filings, however, could be economically transported by road from Bomvu Ridge to these railheads. Until a market is secured or the Bomvu Ridge deposit is depleted, there is little chance of either the Iron Hill or Gege deposits being exploited.

Coal

The railway was designed not only to serve the iron ore deposit, but also to serve the Mpaka coal fields which cover an area ninety miles in length (north-south) by five to twenty miles in width (east-west). There are eighteen coal seams in this series, three of which are of mineable grade and thickness (averages ten feet) close to the surface and in an essentially horizontal attitude.⁴ Coal was first mined on an exploratory basis in 1959 to determine its quality and quantity. Small amounts were exported to South Africa (1,977 tons), Mozambique (2,050 tons) and Japan (520 tons). Operations were suspended in 1962 because of inadequate transport facilities although the export quality

⁴Swaziland, The Mineral Resources . . . , pp. 89-90.

requirements were met. Mining resumed on a commercial scale in September 1964.

Mpaka coal is being produced for the railway, local consumers and a limited export market. The railway will use approximately 35,000 tons annually, it being taken to Sidvokodvo as the main coaling point to cover movement over the Lourenco Marques - Sidvokodvo and Sidvokodvo - KaDake sections. Smaller amounts will be used by local industries and for domestic fuel in Mbabane and Manzini. The export market is not yet fully developed. "Peas" and "duff" coal are currently being sent to two Lourenco Marques industries, and a Kenya company has requested a minimum of 40,000 tons per annum.⁵ Mining for an export market, however, will not be an economical proposition until 100,000 tons are mined annually. This is not foreseen before 1968.

A large deposit of first grade anthracite with a proven reserve of 44,000,000 tons of which slightly less than half is marketable, is located near Maloma twenty-three miles south of Phuzamoya station. The quality of this anthracite is as high as any deposit in Southern Africa, and with washing it would be most suitable for export. The exploratory work for this deposit took place in 1957-59 and further tests were made on the completion of the railway. Although the world demand for high grade anthracite is

⁵"Peas" and "duff" coal are coal particles too small to be used economically by the railway, but which can be used in large quantities by power stations short distances from the mine.

increasing, the concessionaires have decided to withhold production until there is a "substantial increase in the price of anthracite in Europe and the Far East, which will probably constitute the main markets, particularly Europe."⁶ Should a colliery be opened, it is reasonable to presume output would average 40,000 tons per month. Providing this output were maintained for ten years, a railway spur from Phuzamoya would be justified, and the mine would employ approximately eight hundred Africans and fifty Europeans.

To encourage its development, both a railway and a paved road have been proposed from the intended Maloma colliery to Phuzamoya. A reconnaissance rail survey was made in June 1964 (Figure 22), but the high cost of rail construction to be borne by the mining company has discouraged any development. The Swaziland Administration in mid 1964 proposed that either Maloma be linked directly with Phuzamoya by a paved road, or indirectly through Big Bend.⁷

Other Minerals

The railway is likely to have very little effect on the development of other mineral deposits in Swaziland. Asbestos will continue to be exported by overhead cable from

⁶Letter from the Manager, Johannesburg Consolidated Investment Company Limited, Johannesburg, South Africa, January 26, 1965.

⁷Swaziland, Public Works Department, A Road Development Plan for Swaziland (Mbabane, 1964), pp. 34-36.

Havelock to Barberton for shipment to Britain, South Africa, Spain, France, Belgium and other countries. The barytes deposit located a quarter mile from KaDake could be developed providing the present markets in South Africa and the United States are expanded. The high quality kaolin deposit near Mankalana, with reserves estimated at over two million tons, could be beneficiated to an export grade for shipment along the railway. Kaolin from the same deposit could also be sent to Bunya should the C. D. C. decide to manufacture paper or paper finishing. Currently the kaolin is transported in limited quantities (3,500 tons in 1964) to Piet Retief. No other minerals are likely to be mined for shipment by the Swaziland railway.

Agriculture

The railway will play an increasingly important role in the development of Swaziland's agriculture, the territory's major industry. It will provide a cheaper and more efficient means of transport for sugar, citrus, cotton and perhaps livestock and livestock products.

Sugar

Sugar is currently Swaziland's leading export with sales in excess of £4 million. The industry entered a new phase in January 1965 with the protectorate becoming a

member of the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement.⁸ Prior to that date Swaziland's sugar production was governed by an agreement with the South African Sugar Association whereby Swaziland sugar was sold on a similar basis to South African sugar and participated pro rata in the same market. Swaziland's sugar production was restricted to 8.5 percent of the total sales of South African and Swaziland sugar, which has varied between 80,000 short tons and 140,000 short tons annually.⁹

By becoming a signatory to the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement, Swaziland will receive an overall quota of 120,000 short tons of which 92,000 short tons will be sold to the United Kingdom.¹⁰ The amount sold to Britain and the price payable are subject to annual review, but under the Agreement the former would not fall below 85,000 short tons. The balance of the quota will be sold in markets (eg., Canada) where there is a preference over the world price. Swaziland production is not limited to the quotas established by the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement; sugar may also be sold on the free world market. Production is expected to increase from 94,000 short tons in 1963-64 to 180,000 short tons in 1966-67; quotas for 142,000 tons have

⁸"New Marketing Era for Swaziland's Sugar," The Swaziland Recorder, No. 16 (September - December, 1964), p. 45.

⁹The Times of Swaziland, August 21, 1964, pp. 1, 10.

¹⁰The Times of Swaziland, December 11, 1964, p. 13.

already been issued.¹¹ To meet these quotas both sugar producers are increasing their acreages and expanding the capacity of their mills.

Prior to 1964 all Swaziland sugar was transported by truck to South African and Mozambique railheads. That from Mhlume was carried to Komatipoort and thence to South African, Mozambique and overseas markets. Sugar from Big Bend was sent to Goba, Komatipoort, Breyten and Piet Retief. None was ever transported to Gollol since the Durban requirements were met by Natal producers especially from Pongola and Matubatuba. The new railway will now carry all Swaziland sugar destined for external markets excluding South Africa. Two rail sidings, Mlawula and Phuzamoya, have been designed to handle the sugar traffic. From the Mhlume mill approximately 500 tons of sugar will be trucked daily to Mlawula (21 miles) during the peak export season from May to December inclusive. Shipments will later be increased to 800 short tons per day.¹² From Big Bend over 800 short tons of sugar will be trucked daily to Phuzamoya (18 miles) for shipment to Lourenco Marques.¹³

Rail shipment will considerably reduce transportation costs. For example, the cost of trucking sugar from Mhlume to Komatipoort for delivery in Lourenco Marques was

¹¹ The Times of Swaziland, September 4, 1964, p. 1.

¹² Interview with K. C. Riggs, General Manager, Mhlume Sugar Company Limited, May 11, 1964.

¹³ Interview with C. van der Pol, General Manager, Ubombo Ranches, May 8, 1964.

R 5.35 per ton, whereas by railway to Lourenco Marques the cost is only R 3.80 per ton. Similar reduced rates apply to sugar railed from Phuzamoya.

Other Agricultural Products

Whilst Swaziland remains under the control of the Customs Union and affiliated with South African agricultural organizations, there will be little unprocessed agricultural traffic for the railway. Until these agreements are terminated and the market patterns changed, Swaziland's agricultural produce will continue to be transported by either the R.M.S. or private truckers to South Africa. If Swaziland were to process more of its food and non-food crops, thereby increasing their value and reducing the bulk, Swaziland would be better able to compete for external markets and use its railway. Swaziland is only now entering this phase of development.

The only unprocessed agricultural produce which is currently railed to Lourenco Marques includes citrus from Malkerns and Tambankulu, and avacadoes from Malkerns. Cotton, tobacco, rice, pineapples, bananas, hides and skins, dairy produce and wattle bark will continue to be trucked to South African railheads.

Forest Industries

Until October 1964 all timber, chipboard and paper pulp were conveyed to South African railheads and Goba by

truck. Breyten and Hectorspruit were the principal rail-heads for timber and chipboard from the Peak Timbers forests, and Goba was the major outlet for the paper pulp from Bunya. Since 1961, when the Bunya mill came into operation, paper pulp has been Swaziland's leading forest product exported. In 1964 the exports totalled 85,000 tons.

All paper pulp will now be conveyed to Matsahpa by truck and thence by rail to Lourenco Marques for shipment to Britain, Japan, Germany, Brazil and other markets as they are developed. Daily production is currently 275 tons, but this will be increased to 300 tons later in 1965. Mill capacity is 100,000 tons annually. Trucks returning from Matsahpa to Bunya will transport approximately eight million gallons of furnace oil, paraffin and diesel oil, and perhaps chemicals which are currently conveyed from Lothair.¹⁴ It is also conceivable that between ten and fifteen thousand tons of pulp might be exported annually from Bunya to Lothair for South African use.

The sawmill and chipboard factory on the plantations of Peak Timbers near Piggs Peak will be unaffected by the new railway. Their lumber, chipboard and crates will be exported by truck to Hectorspruit, but should this outlet be closed for political reasons, the Swaziland railway would undoubtedly be used.

¹⁴ Interview with Dr. J. Mackenzie, Mill Manager, June 11, 1964.

CHAPTER XII

IMPACT OF SWAZILAND RAILWAY ON SECONDARY INDUSTRIES AND SETTLEMENTS

The Swaziland railway has already had an important effect upon the protectorate's settlement patterns and secondary industries but the greatest impact is yet to come. Matsahpa and Sidvokodvo, the two principal railway stations, have developed into industrial and administrative centres respectively. The minor stations have become localized focal points of economic activity serving large tributary areas; they could become major centres of commerce, industry and permanent settlement. Existing communities have and will be changed either directly or indirectly by the railway. These centres along and adjacent to the railway are now examined.

Matsahpa Industrial Area and Manzini

Matsahpa is a newly created industrial site on a three and a half mile railway spur of the mainline located five miles west of Manzini. The 600 acre industrial site is a government sponsored project financed in part by an Exchequer Loan (£50,000) from the Colonial Office. All amenities have been provided by the government: roads were

designed and built by the government, electricity is supplied by the Swaziland Electricity Board, and water and sewage are provided by Manzini. Thirty-three industrial sites have been designed on the rail spur and seventy-eight others have road frontage. The railway may be extended to serve forty additional sites.¹ All further secondary industry wishing to locate in Swaziland will be required to locate, whenever possible, at Matsahpa.² The Government has discouraged residential units within Matsahpa so as to reduce administrative problems and expenditures.³ However a few high density residences will be built to accommodate the construction employees; these will later be used by families employed in Matsahpa. Most Matsahpa employees will reside in Manzini, Kwaluseni (an African township west of Manzini) and in Ngwane, a new residential suburb between Matsahpa and Manzini. Adjacent to the industrial sites are the military barracks, police training college and Matsahpa airport.

¹"Matsahpa Fast Becoming Major Industrial Complex," The Swaziland Recorder, No. 16 (September - December, 1964), p. 41.

²Interview with J. R. Masson, Acting Secretary for Finance and Development, Mbabane, April 20, 1964.

³A development plan for the Manzini-Matsahpa area was submitted in 1962 which envisaged a population of between 50,000 and 60,000 by 1975. The report includes plans of proposed residential and recreational areas, education and civic centres, a business district, industrial sites, station, hospital and cemeteries. For details see C. M. Spence, "A Development Plan for the Manzini-Matsahpa Area of Swaziland" (unpublished thesis presented for the Diploma in Town Planning, University of Natal, 1962).

Matsahpa's centrality within Swaziland will have a far reaching effect on the territory's existing and future geographic patterns. Swaziland producers will henceforth look inwards rather than towards South Africa. Matsahpa is only 23 miles from Mbabane, 30 miles from Bunya, 46 miles from Stegi and 56 miles from Big Bend. Its hinterland, however, will extend beyond these points to include the Hlatikulu-Goedegun region, Maloma, Balegane and others.

By January 1965, seven industrial concerns had purchased lots at Matsahpa and several others had made applications.⁴ Industries using local raw materials and Swazi labour have been encouraged and include an abattoir and meat canning factory, a cotton ginnery, a brewery, five oil companies (for bulk storage purposes), the Usutu Forests pulp distributors, a trucking company and an engineering company. Potential industries include a fertilizer factory, distilleries, a bottled gas company, a furniture and box-crate company and general contractors (Figure 23).

Initially the abattoir and meat canning establishments will be the most important industries for they will stimulate Swaziland's cattle industry in which the majority of Swazi have interests. They will alleviate the overstocking problem and pave the way for improved animal

⁴The Government has been accused of mishandling the applications for sites and the consequent loss of industry. The Government, however, has maintained no stands could be sold before the land had been purchased and approval had been received from the Colonial Office. The Times of Swaziland, August 21, 1964, p. 4.

Fig. 23.--Matsahpa Industrial Site Under Construction. The industrial site should be completed in 1965. At the right are the petroleum storage tanks of the five oil companies, and behind them are a warehouse and other industrial facilities.

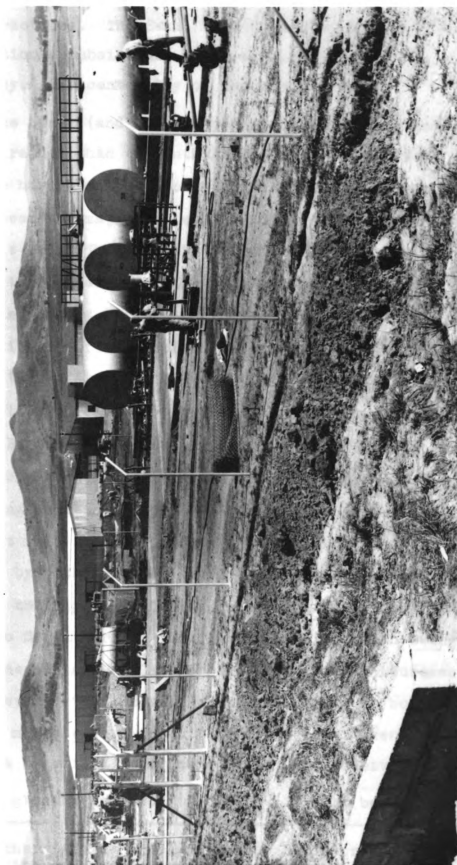


FIG. 23.

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husbandry practices. The Swazi will consequently break from their traditional subsistence level and participate in a money economy. The centrality of these concerns will encourage the Swazi (and the Europeans) to send their cattle to Matsahpa rather than to South Africa where in the past cattle sales have been restricted by severe weight embargoes. Gollol has been the major outlet and Durban the leading market (Table 21). The abattoir will have an annual capacity of 18,000 head. Cattle will be slaughtered for both local and export markets including South Africa.

Swaziland's first cotton ginnery is to be built at Matsahpa in 1965. At present Swaziland's cotton is marketed in the Republic where it is processed at four ginneries situated at Barberton, Magudu, Kempton Park and Randfontein. Cotton has long been a leading cash crop for Swaziland and with expanding markets in Southern Africa, its future is assured.⁵ It is a successful dry land crop in the middle and lowvelds by both Swazi and Europeans where increased acreages are anticipated. The ginned cotton will probably be shipped to South African textile mills rather than being further processed in Swaziland or exported through Lourenco Marques, however a textile mill could eventually be built and external markets developed. The first consignment of cotton from a Swaziland farm (near Hluti) was received at the Matsahpa ginnery on March 19, 1965. It will be stored

⁵ Southern Africa (including Swaziland) produces only one-third of its cotton requirements, the deficiency being met by overseas imports mainly from the United States.

at the receiving dock until the plant is ready to go into production later this year.⁶

Matsahpa is the territory's headquarters for five petroleum companies. Oil, petroleum, lubricants and diesel, which were formerly trucked from Goba, are now railed from Lourenco Marques to this central distribution point. These products will constitute one of the largest freights for the railway, totalling approximately 4,300,000 gallons in 1965 and increasing to 5 million gallons by 1968.⁷ All communities will draw their supplies from Matsahpa, except for Mhlume and Tambankulu which will be served by a secondary distribution centre at Mlawula. These two areas currently receive their oil and petroleum products from Hectorspruit. Big Bend and Gollel may later draw their petroleum from Phuzamoya, but the Swaziland Railway Board first wishes to have one centralized petroleum depot.

Other establishments locating in Matsahpa are a brewery, two transport companies and a retail engineering company specializing in farm equipment. The German owned brewery will import its hops and malt through Lourenco Marques but use local sugar, molasses and maize. Crates will be supplied by Peak Timbers. No export is forseen. Although only two transport companies are currently committed to Matsahpa, several others are expected. Matsahpa will be

⁶The Times of Swaziland, March 26, 1965, p. 7.

⁷From the files of the Swaziland Railway Board, Mbabane, May 16, 1964.

the distribution centre for the Malkerns region although there is a closer siding at Nyonyane. The Malkerns fruit business, particularly the canning factory, has been restricted by lack of cheap transport and competitive markets. Fresh and canned fruits including pineapples, avacadoes, citrus and tomatoes have heretofore been taken by the Railway Motor Services to South African markets where they competed with similar locally grown produce. In 1963 canned fruit exports (mainly pineapples) totalled £142,000, and citrus exports earned £150,000. Pineapple production is expected to double by 1967 with overseas markets greatly exceeding the South African market. The railway will be important in this respect.

Manzini will naturally undergo certain changes also. Its general commercial functions will be accentuated, its residential areas extended and its local industries expanded. Private truck carriers and the R.M.S. operating from Manzini are expected to increase their services between the town and the adjacent areas. As the volume of general freight railed to and from Matsahpa increases, Manzini's current commercial and industrial activities should likewise increase. To accommodate Matsahpa's working force, Manzini has extended its residential areas particularly to the west, and additional housing development is expected commensurate with Matsahpa's development.

Stations and Settlements

Sidvokodvo is a new railway settlement in central Swaziland fifteen miles south of Manzini (Figure 24). Here are the railway's engineering, signalling and maintenance headquarters and the main marshalling yards where the grade changes from 1 in 80 to 1 in 50. In addition to these railway facilities Sidvokodvo has seventy-one staff houses, ninety labourers' cottages, a school, clinic, church, stores, bank, post office and recreational facilities, and like all Swaziland communities it has attracted hundreds of unemployed Swazi who have erected very substandard temporary dwellings. It was designed to be a self contained community because of its distance from Manzini and its sub-standard road facilities. Its size will be largely determined by the railway since industry is currently prohibited. If, however, the Goedgegun - Hlatikulu road were extended over the very rough terrain south of the Usutu to Sidvokodvo, it could become a major commercial centre since south central Swaziland would be drawn closer to Manzini and Matsahpa. The chances of this road being built, however, are presently remote.

Three stations, Mlawula, Phuzamoya and Ka Dake will become secondary settlement areas. Mlawula was built to handle the sugar, citrus and rice from Mhlume, Nokwane and Tambankulu, and as a petrol depot for the same region. The only commercial establishment at Mlawula is a general trading store, but should commercial agriculture continue

Fig. 24.--Aerial View of Sidvokodvo.
Sidvokodvo is a railway community in the middleveld fifteen miles south of Manzini. To the right are the main marshalling yards, signalling centre and station; in the upper left is the European residential district; and in the left centre are the labourers' cottages. Still under construction are the school and commercial establishments.



FIG. 24.

to expand, Mlawula could conceivably become its principal supply centre. Phuzamoya is its counterpart for the Big Bend region though there are no commercial establishments at present. Ka Dake is the rail terminus at the foot of Bomvu Ridge. Adjacent to the station a township called Ngwenya has been planned where most of the workmen and mine officials will be housed. Present planning envisages approximately fifty houses, half of which were completed by January 1965. A small school is being built for all school-age children in the vicinity and not exclusively for the children of mine personnel. A post office is under construction, and a clinic, civic hall, store and recreation club are contemplated. Ngwenya could become a typical mining community.

The larger existing communities will be little affected by the railway. Only when the railway brings improved economic conditions will there be any visible change to these centres. Stegi (3,400) will lose some of its distributing functions since traffic will be diverted through the new border - post, Namaacha, and along the railway.

CHAPTER XIII

REORIENTATION OF SWAZILAND'S FLOW PATTERNS

The Swaziland railway will have two important effects upon the orientation of the territory's internal and foreign trade patterns. First it will encourage Swazilanders to look internally toward Matsahpa and Manzini rather than to South Africa, and second it will give Swaziland an eastern outlet which will strengthen Swaziland's politico-economic ties with Mozambique. Both these new orientations will reduce the heretofore prominence of South Africa in Swaziland's commercial patterns. These reorientations will result from and be fostered by four important geographic factors: the centrality of the railway and its specially designed commercial stations; the possible suspension of the Railway Motor Services and the subsequent closing of South African railheads; a road improvement program; and revised legislation including a freight carriers policy and a customs agreement between Mozambique and Swaziland.

Centrality of the Swaziland Railway

Since the railway with its five strategically sited commercial stations traverses central Swaziland, it will create new catchment areas and encourage Swazilanders to

lessen their commercial ties with South Africa. All of Swaziland except the upper Komati valley now lies within seventy miles of a multi-function railroad or station in either Swaziland or South Africa (Figure 25), whereas formerly two regions (the northwest and the central Usutu valley) were over eighty miles from such facilities (Figure 21). Mbabane lies twenty-six miles from Matsahpa, whereas it was seventy miles from the closest railhead (Piet Retief); and Manzini is only five miles from Matsahpa whereas it was approximately sixty-five miles from the nearest railhead at Goba and Piet Retief (Figure 25). Today half of Swaziland lies within thirty miles of a multi-function railhead, but before the railway was built less than one quarter of the territory was within this distance.

The five commercial and industrial sidings, which were designed to serve special needs and regions, will develop distinct catchment areas and reduce the importance of the South African and Mozambique railheads. Mlawula, Mpaka and Phuzamoya have already replaced Goba and Komati-poort as the railheads for eastern Swaziland and will become the focal points for the Lebombo Ridge and the lowveld. Except for the Balegane area, this entire eastern region lies within fifty miles of these stations and Gollel (Figure 25). Mlawula will initially serve only the northeastern irrigation schemes, but it may later become the transshipment point for Piggs Peak and Stegi. Phuzamoya was selected to handle all the Big Bend traffic except molasses, cement and

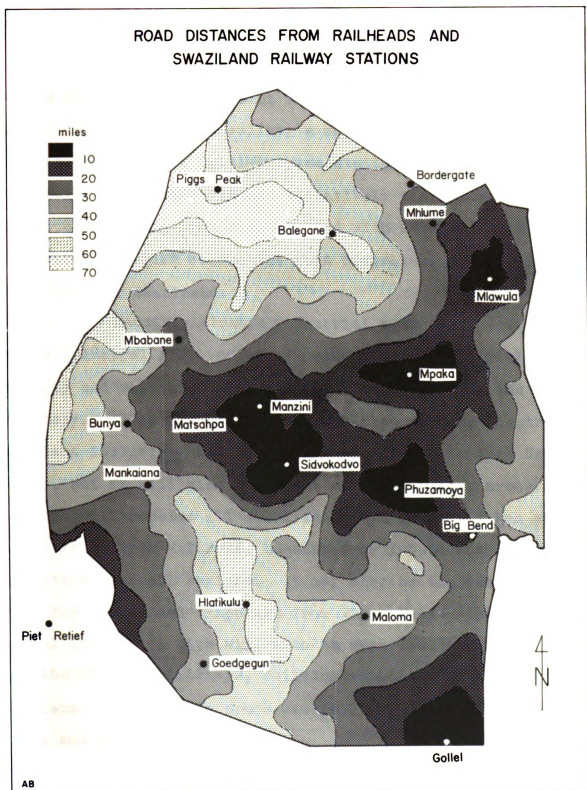


Fig. 25.

jute bags which will continue to be distributed from Gollel. It may also become the rail centre for the Mpaka collieries. Mpaka will initially be only a coaling station, but it could become the transshipment point for Stegi and the Lebombo Ridge. Sidvokodvo, the railway's main marshalling yards, is expected to become a multi-purpose station when Matsahpa has been fully developed. It has tentatively been selected as the site for a pig iron smelter, and with improved road facilities it could become the main transshipment point for south-central Swaziland.

The Manzini-Matsahpa industrial area will be Swaziland's principal focal point of economic and industrial activity and will draw upon and serve all points of the territory. It is now the closest railhead for west-central Swaziland including Mbabane, Mankaiana and the central Usutu valley, but it will also serve the more peripheral areas. Matsahpa will receive all Swaziland grown cotton, fresh and canned fruit from Malkerns, bananas from Kubuta and Sitobela, and cattle from all regions. It may also be the receiving point for timber and chipboard from Piggs Peak. This central industrial site will also be Swaziland's chief distributor of fertilizers, building supplies, oil and petroleum. All of this trade was formerly oriented to South Africa and Mozambique.

Possible Suspension of the Railway
Motor Services in Swaziland

South Africa may limit or even suspend its R.M.S. services to and within Swaziland and close a number of its railheads by 1968.¹ This would be justified on the basis of improved private carrier service between the railway and Swaziland's economic areas, and the revised commercial agreements between Swaziland and the Republic. Should South Africa revise its transport policy, it would first discontinue its bus services within Swaziland, but maintain its services between the railheads and the border posts (Mahamba, Oshoek, and Tshaneni). If the political relationships deteriorate, South Africa might close its railheads and discontinue its bus services to Swaziland. Komatipoort, Hectorspruit and Gollel would be the first to be closed since their traffic will be reduced by the Swaziland railway. It is unlikely that either Breyten or Piet Retief would be closed, but should they be, there would be a spontaneous reorientation to Swaziland's five stations, and in particular to Matsahpa, with private carriers operating between the railway and the territory's economic areas. Providing political stability is maintained, however, South Africa is not expected to reduce its transportation services to or

¹ Interview with L. A. W. Hawkins, Chief Executive Officer of the Swaziland Railway Board, Mbabane, May 12, 1964. Neither the Swaziland Administration nor the South African Railways and Harbours Administration would elaborate on this statement, though both agreed to its possibility though improbability.

within Swaziland; it may even increase the services to Matsahpa and Manzini.

The projected amount of Swaziland's import and export traffic conveyed by road in 1965 is shown in Figure 26. Traffic transhipped from road to rail, and from rail to road is not shown. The general orientation is similar to that of 1955, but the volume has increased appreciably, particularly between Breyten and Manzini. Over this main artery between the border and Mbabane, and between Mbabane and Manzini, the amount of traffic is approximately 80,000 tons and 48,000 tons respectively. This represents a ninety percent increase in traffic over the 1955 totals for both sections. Lesser increases are to be noted between Piet Retief and Goedgegun, and between Gollel, Big Bend and Manzini. Only two routes show decreases in the amount of traffic conveyed: the first is between Tshaneni and Bordergate, and the second is between Stegi and Mhlumeni. Rice, sugar, citrus, petroleum products and fertilizers which in 1955 were conveyed over the first route will henceforth be directed to Namaacha and Mlawula. Part of the traffic which has traditionally passed through Mhlumeni will be directed to the new transterritorial highway and Namaacha.

Figure 26 illustrates Swaziland's close economic relationships with South Africa and its dependence upon the peripheral railheads and the Republic's R.M.S. Private carriers operate within the protectorate conveying export items to Manzini and other points served by the R.M.S. while

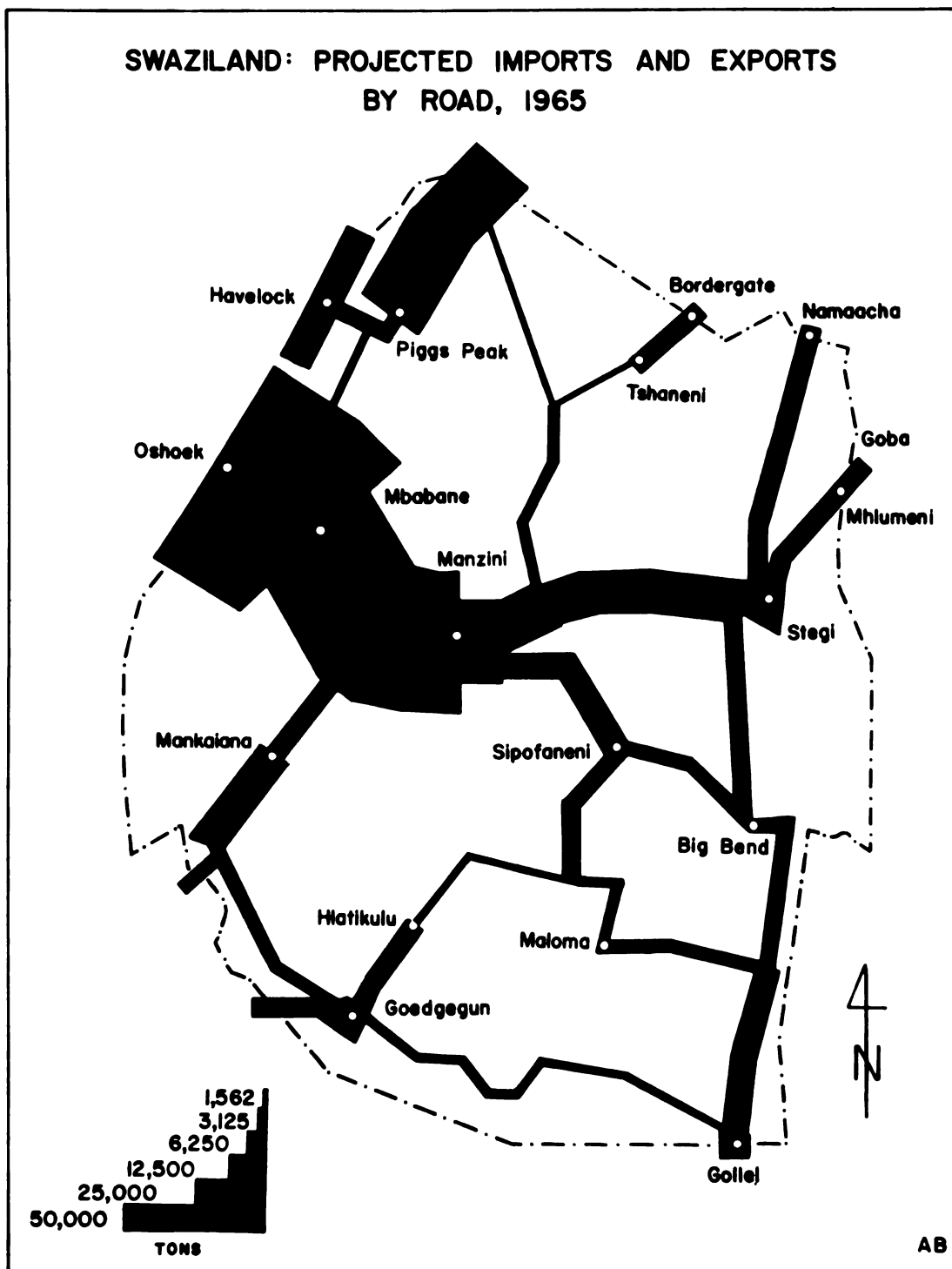


Fig. 26.

practically all traffic crossing the international boundary is conveyed by the R.M.S. Should South Africa discontinue its bus services within Swaziland but permit Swaziland carriers to operate between the territory and its railheads, the flow patterns would alter little, but should the railheads be closed, a completely new flow pattern would emerge. The Namaacha border point would become Swaziland's major road outlet, but it is impossible to estimate the volume of traffic that would be conveyed through it.

Possible Road Improvements in Swaziland

The most strategically sited railway is never fully effective unless it is complemented by a well-planned network of roads. The present roads are substandard for current demands and need widespread upgrading to accommodate future traffic which is expected to increase at six percent per annum. Traffic using paved roads is expected to double within two years and thereafter increase at six percent per annum.² To complement the railway, therefore, the Swaziland Administration plans to upgrade the existing roads and to build new highways between the widely dispersed economic areas and the stations. Three major projects are currently under review (Figure 22).

The first project involves the relocation and paving of the Manzini-Piet Retief road to bring southern Swaziland closer to the local consumer markets of central Swaziland

²Swaziland, A Road Development . . . , pp. 6, 15.

and to the Manzini-Matsahpa depot. The proposed route runs due south of the Bunya-Malkerns road through Mankalana to Gege where it connects with the Goedgegun-Piet Retief road. This first class road would be ten miles shorter than the present gravel road from Goedgegun to Matsahpa. Daily traffic over sections of this road currently varies from only 35 vehicles between Sicunusa and Gege, to 220 vehicles between Mankalana and the Bunya-Malkerns junction (Figure 27). If realigned and paved, all parts of this road would handle more than 120 vehicles per day, and north of Mankalana there would be over 250 vehicles daily.³ This road would encourage Europeans and Swazi alike to bring their cotton, fruit, vegetables and cattle to Matsahpa rather than to Piet Retief or Gollel, and stimulate agricultural production in this region of great potential.

The second road which the Administration might build is an all-weather road from Big Bend to Manzini through Phuzamoya, Sipofaneni and Sidvokodvo (Figure 22). It would parallel the railway and cross large tracts of idle land which if irrigated could support citrus, pineapples and cotton. The present gravel road between these communities traverses marginal ranching country. The proposal has the further attraction that should heavy industry be developed in Swaziland, the most likely site for such development is Sidvokodvo, though Phuzamoya or Mpaka could be selected on the basis of local coal deposits. Should this road be built,

³Ibid., p. 29.

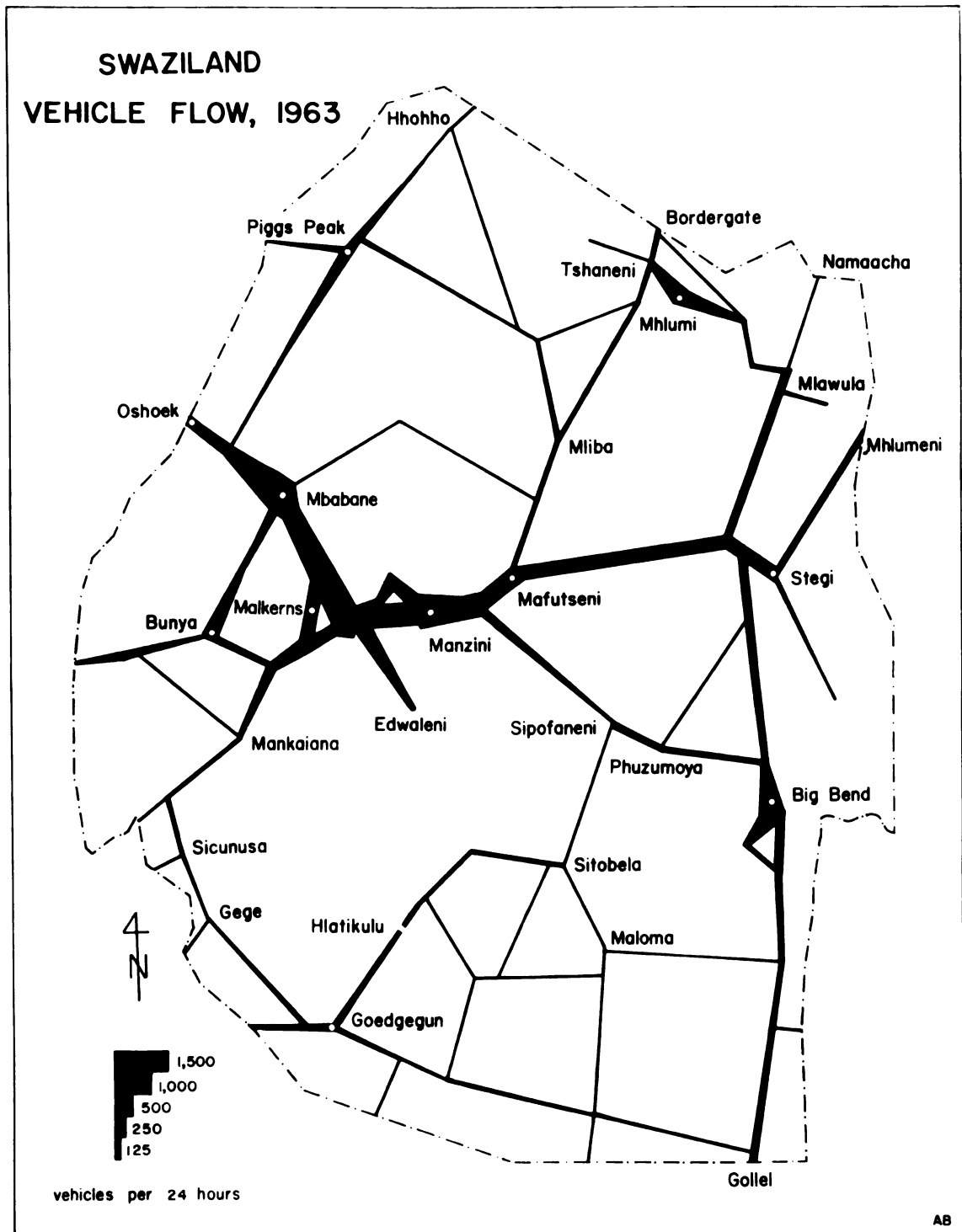


Fig. 27.

and Sidvokodvo become an industrial or even a secondary commercial centre, the Manzini road would probably be extended south across the highly dissected Singceni Upland and the Mkondo valley to Hlatikulu.

The third high grade road which has been proposed in view of the railway and the anticipated traffic reorientation, is from Piggs Peak to Mlawula through Balegane, Tshaneni, Mhlume and Nokwane (Figure 22). The road would serve both the citrus and forestry industries of the north-west should South Africa close the Hectorspruit railhead and restrict the number of commercial vehicles entering the Transvaal from Hhohho. It would also improve communications between the sugar mill and Mlawula which is currently handicapped by a low grade gravel road. The 1963 daily traffic volume between Piggs Peak and Tshaneni averaged only fifty-five vehicles (Figure 27), but if the Piggs Peak traffic was diverted to Mlawula, this section by 1966 would have over 175 vehicles per day. Likewise the local traffic around Mlawula would increase from 350 to 550 vehicles per day.⁴

In addition to these three major road improvement proposals, Swaziland envisages improved roads between Stegi and Mpaka, Mbabane and Mhlambanyatsi, and if the anthracite field is developed, a road from Maloma to either Phuzamoya or Big Bend.

⁴Ibid., p. 15.

Swaziland Road Transportation Proclamation
(1963) and the Swaziland-Mozambique
Convention (1964)

In December 1963, the Swaziland Administration issued a Road Transportation Proclamation which appointed a Board to revise the territory's road transport licensing policy. The Board was empowered to examine all applications made by individuals and companies to operate freight and passenger services within Swaziland. It reviewed the applicants' proposed routes or areas to be served, and the proposed schedules and tariffs, and if in the Board's opinion the grant of the application would adversely affect rail transport, or the transportation service was not justified, having regard to existing facilities, the Board could refuse its permission.⁵

This proclamation therefore protects the railway from road haulers who would be tempted to take part of the freight by operating services alongside or in competition with those provided by the railway. It also protects the interests of the Commonwealth Development Corporation. Consequently all bulk freight required by the C.D.C., the mine and the railway itself will be railed from Lourenco Marques and some general freight which might normally be conveyed by road will be directed to the railway. Furthermore, preference will be given to those companies which plan

⁵Swaziland, Swaziland Legislation, Road Transportation Proclamation, 1963, Proclamation No. 6 (Mbabane, 1964). See also The Railway Gazette, CXX, No. 2, 78-79.

to operate between the economic areas and the railway.

In April 1964 a convention between the United Kingdom and Portugal was signed in Lisbon to "encourage the use of the port of Lourenco Marques for traffic between Swaziland and overseas territories."⁶ The British Government pledged that "all reasonable steps shall be taken by the Government of Swaziland to attract to the railways connecting Swaziland with the port of Lourenco Marques, traffic originating from and destined to Swaziland for which that port is the natural outlet."⁷ In Article VIII the two colonial powers agreed that for a twenty year period from the date the Convention became effective, the transit or reexportation of goods coming from, or consigned to, Swaziland through Lourenco Marques "shall be free of customs duties and during such period of twenty years no customs charges shall be levied in respect of such goods other than the customs leviable at the date of entry into force of the Convention of the same class coming from or consigned to the neighbouring territories of the Republic of South Africa, Northern and Southern Rhodesia and Nyasaland."⁸

This convention could be of great importance to

⁶Great Britain, "Convention Between the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of the Republic of Portugal Relative to the Construction of Connecting Railways Between Swaziland and Mozambique (April, 1964)," (Mimeographed copy in the files of the Swaziland Railway Board, Mbabane), p. 1.

⁷Ibid., p. 3.

⁸Ibid., p. 4.

Swaziland's economy, but the extent of its significance lies in the interpretation of the clause "all reasonable steps shall be taken by the Government of Swaziland to attract to the railways . . . traffic originating from and destined to Swaziland . . ." Swaziland will undoubtedly act with prudence so as not to strain its strong economic ties with the Republic of South Africa. To completely sever all its economic ties with South Africa and to depend solely upon the railway would be folly since South Africa can provide the cheapest imports and a market for Swaziland exports. Swaziland will undoubtedly however, direct all its bulk traffic to the railway and later encourage general merchandise to it which is currently oriented to South Africa.

Summary of Railway Flow, 1965

The projected amount of rail traffic for 1965 is shown in Figure 28. It is clear that iron ore is the principal freight, totalling approximately 800,000 tons, and that paper pulp, sugar, coal, fertilizers, general merchandise, petroleum and petroleum products are secondary freights whose total tonnage is less than 300,000 tons. The amount of traffic increases from west to east with four breaks in the general flow pattern.

The first break is at Matsahpa where 100,000 tons of paper pulp are received from Bunya, and from where petroleum products, chemicals and lesser amounts of general merchandise are distributed. At present there are no data on the amount

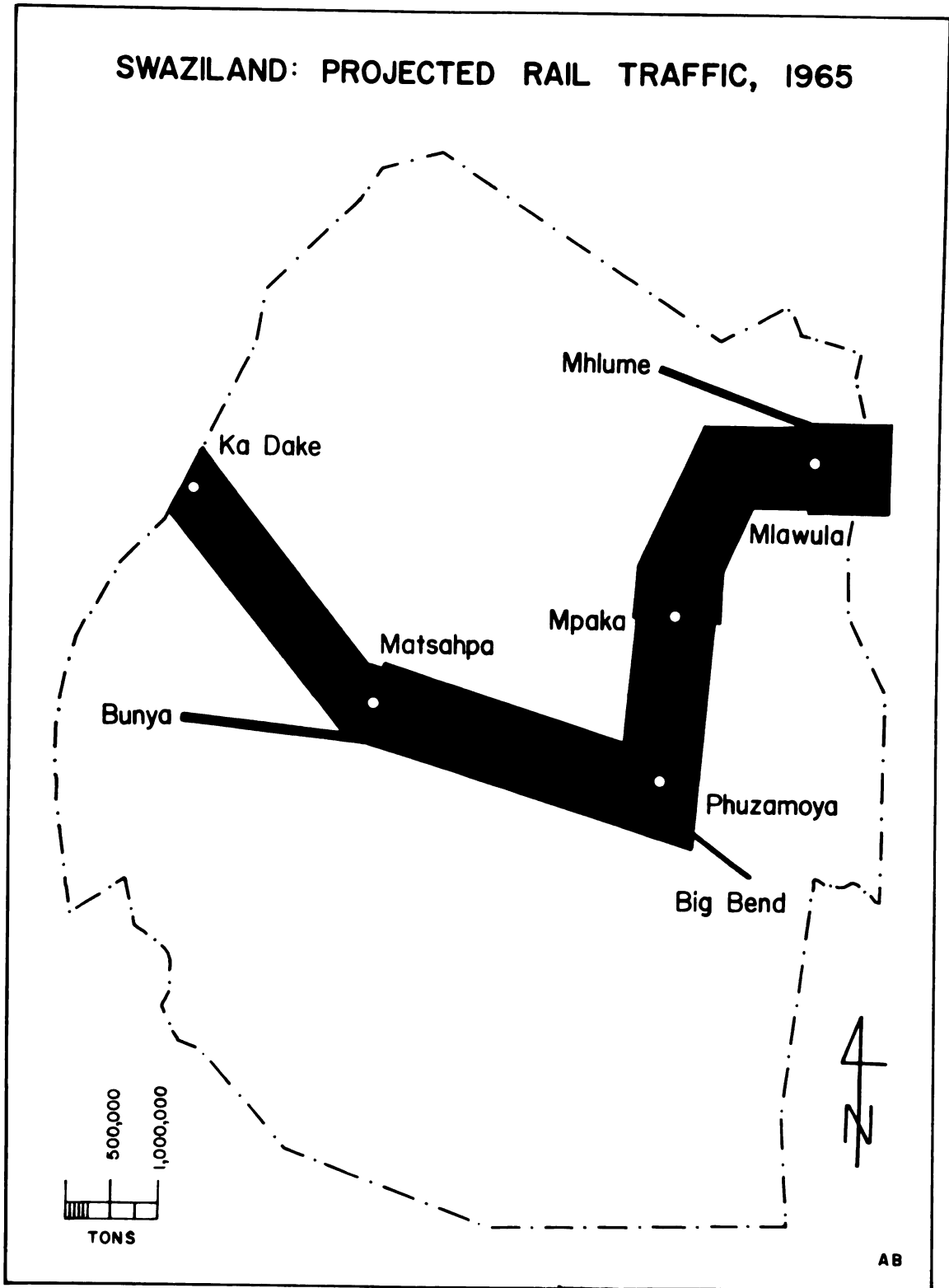


Fig. 23.

of these minor freights, but the total is probably less than 50,000 tons.

The second point where the traffic volume changes is Phuzamoya, the station designed specifically to handle the freight requirements of Big Bend. Sugar, fertilizers, oil and building supplies are the major freights transhipped, which are not expected to exceed 55,000 tons in 1965.

Mpaka, the coaling station of the eastern lowveld, is the third point where the freight volume changes. This is accounted for solely by the addition of approximately 50,000 tons of coal for Mozambique. Depending upon local demands, this freight could be substantially increased both west and east.

The fourth transshipment point is Mlawula, through which over 1,076,000 tons of traffic are expected to be railed in 1965. Export traffic received at Mlawula for shipment to Lourenco Marques and overseas markets includes sugar from Mhlume and citrus from Nokwane and Tambankulu. Imports received for distribution to these same points includes fertilizers, petroleum, oils and building supplies. The total freight transhipped at Mlawula in 1965 is expected to be 64,000 tons.

CHAPTER XIV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The Swaziland railway was completed in September 1964, a century after the first rail survey was made between the territory and Delagoa Bay. In those hundred years both Boer and Briton have suggested numerous railway routes but for politico-economic reasons only the last proposal materialized though several were economically justified. The problems and intrigues of the Swaziland railway issue fall into three distinct time periods: the period of conflict and adjustment; the period of indecision; and the present. Since these periods have clearly defined limits set by a change in British and South African policy towards the affairs of Swaziland, the nature and outcome of the railway issues have differed in each period.

Period of Conflict and Adjustment

Until 1902 the Swaziland railway issue focused upon Boer objectives of securing an eastern outlet that was independent of British control. Delagoa Bay, Kosi Bay and Sordwana Bay offered the Transvaal Boers the most convenient harbour sites but between the Boers and the coast lay the Great Escarpment, the Lebombo Ridge, narrow gorges, malarial

swamps and militant native tribes including the Swazi, all of which had to be overcome before a railway could be built. To further their objectives therefore, the Boers entered agreements with the Swazi and Zulu, and later with the Portuguese and British who themselves had interests in Swaziland and the east coast. From the Swazi the Boers secured land, mineral, industrial, commercial and communications concessions including the right to build railways across Swaziland; with the Portuguese they concluded a commercial agreement (1875) to promote commerce and communications between Delagoa Bay and Pretoria; and from the British the Boers attempted to obtain Swaziland, the lower Pongola valley and the Zululand coast, all of which became part of the British sphere of influence.

The British proved to be the greatest deterrent to the Boers since after the mid 1840's, Britain became the unofficial "protector" of the Swazi against the warring Zulu and later against the Boers. Britain, although not wishing to assume complete administrative responsibility in Swaziland, was not prepared to relinquish her political rights there if it would weaken her control over the Boers. Thus in each of the conventions between the South African Republic and Britain after 1880, Britain imposed restrictive measures on the Boers while gaining little materially herself. The Pretoria (1881) and London (1884) Conventions provided for the independence of the Swazi within new boundaries and fully defined Boer and British interests in

and adjacent to Swaziland. The London Convention prevented Kruger from concluding treaties with any native tribe or nation east of the Republic without British approval which consequently hindered the Boers in their objectives. Undaunted, however, the Boers sent emissaries to annex the native chieftainships in the lower Pongola valley and Tongaland, while Britain claimed the Zululand coast. Kruger offered to withdraw the Republic's claims to Matabeleland on condition Britain withdraw from Swaziland, Tongaland and the lower Pongola valley. Britain was not prepared to yield but agreed to re-examine the issues and redefine her policies in three Swaziland Conventions.

The First Swaziland Convention (1890) provided for the dual administration of Swaziland by Britain and the South African Republic; it gave the Boers a three mile wide corridor of land across Swaziland for a railway; and required that should the Boers obtain railway rights from Umbegiza and Zambili, they must enter a customs union with the British South African Colonies. By the Second (1893) and Third Swaziland Conventions (1894), the Boers tightened their control over Swaziland in the expectation they would obtain their eastern outlet, but in 1895 Britain herself claimed the lower Pongola valley and annexed Tongaland to Zululand thereby finally extinguishing Boer aspirations for an independent eastern outlet.

Recurrent economic depression and near anarchy within the Transvaal itself during the last two decades of

the nineteenth century further handicapped the Boers in their eastern objective. The Transvaal was committed to build a railway from Lourenco Marques through Komatipoort to Pretoria, and was pressured to build railways to the British coastal colonies after the discovery of gold at Johannesburg. These financial burdens and the consequential administrative difficulties forced the Transvaal to relinquish some of its objectives in Swaziland.

Because of these enduring political and economic issues, the Transvaal only once conducted a rail survey from Pretoria through Swaziland to Delagoa Bay (1879), and that was when the Transvaal was under British control. However, almost twenty years earlier the Boers and Portuguese had proposed their territories be linked by a railway through either the Crocodile or Pongola valleys. Neither actively pursued the suggestion, but in 1864 two British pioneers completed the first rudimentary rail survey between Delagoa Bay and the Transvaal border via the Usutu River.

Period of Indecision

South Africa's political aspirations in and for Swaziland did not terminate after the Boer Wars when Swaziland became a British protectorate. Rather they intensified and were strengthened by numerous acts, statutes and agreements which provided for the possible incorporation of Swaziland into the Union. The South Africa Act (1910) and the attached Schedule, which established a Customs Agreement

between the Union and the High Commission Territories, profoundly influenced the politico-economic relationships of Swaziland and South Africa, and thwarted all attempts to build a railway across Swaziland. The incorporation question was periodically reviewed (1922, 1934, 1949 and 1956), and redefined by the Statute of Westminster (1931) and the Status of the Union Act (1934), but it and the Swaziland railway issue became more interdependent and inseparable. Not until 1961, when the Union left the British Commonwealth, did incorporation cease to be a condition for railways.

Both Swaziland and the Union of South Africa argued for railways on economic grounds since by the Customs Agreement (1910), Swaziland became an integral part of South Africa which required a well-integrated communications system. Swaziland, herself unable to finance or construct a railway, sought South African and British assistance, but neither power was prepared to commit itself to rail construction while the political issues in Swaziland remained unresolved. Many Swazilanders (notably Afrikaners) realized that incorporation was the quickest means of securing a railway. Consequently they periodically requested that the Union guarantee them a railway on the immediate transfer of Swaziland, but their demands were always refused. South Africa reiterated it would only build a line after the incorporation of Swaziland, and Britain, reluctant to increase her financial commitments in the

protectorate, would not sanction incorporation against the wishes of the inhabitants.

Despite this unresolved political problem, numerous rail proposals were made and several surveys completed. The first was made in 1902-03 when Lord Milner and the Portuguese agreed to build a railway across central Swaziland from Lourenco Marques to Johannesburg. The Portuguese built their section to Goba by 1912, but Britain failed to keep her promise because: the newly elected Liberal Government in England refused to acknowledge Milner's "agreement"; Swaziland was not politically a part of the Transvaal; Swaziland's immediate freight potential was uncertain; and rival South African ports feared they would lose a large proportion of their trade to the Swaziland route.

In 1918 the Union Government, upon the requests of Swaziland, surveyed a similar route from Breyten through the Usutu valley to Goba, but refused to commit itself before a local traffic could be guaranteed, and before Swaziland was transferred to the Union's administration. For similar reasons the Union abandoned its three rail projects across southern Swaziland made in the 1920's to alleviate the traffic congestion at Durban and Lourenco Marques, and to stimulate the Transvaal's coal industry. Following these three investigations Swaziland explored the possibilities of extending the Durban-Gollee line to Komatipoort and Rhodesia to encourage cotton cultivation and irrigated agriculture in the eastern lowveld, but for

financial and political difficulties neither South Africa nor Britain would undertake the project. As compensation, however, South Africa introduced its Railway Motor Services (1928) which operated a frequent schedule between Union railheads and Swaziland's economic areas. Once in operation, the Union claimed it met the territory's needs and that local freight did not warrant a railway, which further reduced Swaziland's hopes for a rail connection with South Africa or the coast. Indeed, eighteen years elapsed before South Africa surveyed another route across southern Swaziland. The project, designed to stimulate the Transvaal's coal industry, collapsed because of a drop in the world coal prices, lack of funds and the restrictions of the Act of Union and subsequent legislation affecting Swaziland.

It was not until after the Second World War when Swaziland diversified its economy, that local industries justified a railway. The Usutu afforestation scheme and the specialized irrigated agriculture near Malkerns and Big Bend prompted Swazilanders to request immediate rail connections with both South Africa and Delagoa Bay. Several routes were surveyed but subsequently cancelled when neither Britain nor South Africa would assume financial responsibility for political reasons. Following the confirmation of a large hematite deposit at Bomvu Ridge in 1955, Swaziland investigated several railway routes through the Usutu valley and across the lowveld coal fields to the Umbeluzi gorge and Goba. In September 1961 following protracted negotiations

between Japanese and South African industrialists, and the governments of Portugal, Britain and Swaziland, a railway contract was signed.

The Swaziland Railway

The Swaziland railway could have an important impact upon the territory's geographic patterns. The degree of this impact however, cannot be accurately measured because of numerous everchanging politico-economic variables. Within Swaziland the major forces are those of political leadership and policy. Swaziland's new Legislative Council, elected in June 1964 and composed of Swazi traditionalists and conservative Europeans, will influence the territory's economic patterns through its political policy. It seeks rapid and progressive economic development, the stimulation of commerce, mining and agriculture, and the creation through a stable government of a favourable climate for outside capital investment without endangering its political freedoms. It recognizes the benefits of a close economic alignment with the Republic of South Africa but rejects political incorporation. The United Swaziland Association Party, which represents the conservative Europeans, however, could lead Swaziland to closer political association with South Africa. The present Legco favours the return of land and mineral rights to the Swazi Nation which could discourage foreign capital investment there. But to induce economic development the Swaziland Administration proposes considerable road improvement, particularly between the

railway stations and the peripheral areas. The extent of this will depend upon local revenues and loans by Britain and the World Bank.

Affecting Swaziland from without, and beyond Swaziland's immediate control, are long standing administrative, commercial and financial agreements between the protectorate, South Africa and Great Britain. Although the Republic of South Africa can no longer legally claim Swaziland under the Act of Union, its economic interests are maintained by the Customs Agreement (1910) and other commercial treaties. These agreements will undoubtedly be modified but could affect the use of the railway. The question of political independence likewise will have an important effect upon Swaziland's economic future. Britain's Labour Government is expected to encourage Swaziland's independence and membership to the Commonwealth of Nations. Whatever the exact role of these and other factors, the railway will have three important effects upon Swaziland.

First, the railway with its strategically located stations and industrial site, provides Swaziland with an internal focus. Swaziland producers who formerly were oriented towards South African railheads and markets will be encouraged to bring their cattle, fruits and vegetables to Matsahpa for processing before export to either South Africa or overseas markets. The regions of specialization will look towards their respective sidings rather than to South African railheads. Furthermore, the widely dispersed rural

populations and settlements will receive their fertilizers, petroleum, oil, building supplies and perhaps later, general merchandise from Matsahpa. The Matsahpa industries themselves, though currently limited, will provide considerable employment and define a central core region of economic activity.

Second, Swaziland's traffic flow patterns with Mozambique will become more pronounced. The railway will be the principal medium for conveying Swaziland's bulk imports and exports. The former, excepting petroleum and oil, have traditionally come from South Africa, whereas the latter excepting sugar have been trucked to Goba. The major changes in these flow patterns, therefore, will be that all bulk imports and some general freight will be imported by rail, and sugar will henceforth be railed directly to Lourenco Marques. The total volume of this general freight will always be limited and of secondary importance to iron ore, but will be encouraged and protected by the Swaziland-Mozambique Convention (1964).

Perhaps the railway's immediate effect upon Swaziland will be psychological rather than real. With the problematic political relationships between Swaziland and South Africa, and the uncertainty of the Customs Agreement, Swazilanders feel that the railway affords them a certain degree of security. Should South Africa impose restrictive measures on Swaziland, the protectorate could turn to Mozambique. Economic strangulation is less likely in Swazi-

land than in Basutoland which is completely enclosed by the Republic and totally dependent upon South Africa economically. However, the likelihood of South Africa and Swaziland terminating their long standing economic associations is remote since the benefits are mutual: South Africa is a natural market for Swaziland produce, and the most convenient source of manufactured goods for Swaziland. In addition Swaziland could capitalize on the economic embargoes currently being levied against South Africa; South African manufacturers could locate in the protectorate and market their produce under Swaziland labels. Furthermore the Republic has recently proposed a multi-racial common market of Southern Africa to promote closer economic ties between South Africa, the High Commission Territories, Southern Rhodesia, the Portuguese possessions, and even Zambia and Malawi. The political connotations are many, but the economic opportunities are greater. The railway could play an important role in its implementation. Indeed, if the line were extended from Matsahpa to Breyten, Swaziland would enter a new phase of economic development. The real impact of the railway would only then be realized.

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