

**A THOUSAND MILES IN THE  
HEART OF AFRICA: A RECORD OF  
A VISIT TO THE MISSION-FIELD  
OF THE BOER CHURCH IN  
CENTRAL AFRICA**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649066834

A Thousand Miles in the Heart of Africa: A Record of a Visit to the Mission-Field of the Boer Church in Central Africa by J. Du Plessis

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**J. DU PLESSIS**

**A THOUSAND MILES IN THE  
HEART OF AFRICA: A RECORD OF  
A VISIT TO THE MISSION-FIELD  
OF THE BOER CHURCH IN  
CENTRAL AFRICA**



A THOUSAND MILES IN THE  
HEART OF AFRICA



CENTRAL AFRICAN CHIEFS  
*Assembled for the King's Coronation*

# A THOUSAND MILES IN THE HEART OF AFRICA

A RECORD OF A VISIT TO THE MISSION-FIELD  
OF THE BOER CHURCH IN CENTRAL AFRICA

BY

J. DU PLESSIS, B.A.(CAPE), B.D.(EDIN.)  
GENERAL MISSION SECRETARY OF THE DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH

WITH AN INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER BY

PROFESSOR J. I. MARAIS, B.A., D.D.(ST. ANDR.)  
OF THE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, STELLENBOSCH,  
SOUTH AFRICA

*WITH TWO MAPS AND TWENTY-NINE ILLUSTRATIONS*

EDINBURGH AND LONDON  
OLIPHANT ANDERSON & FERRIER  
CAPE TOWN, PRETORIA, AND BULAWAYO  
T. MASKEW MILLER

1905

## PREFACE

EVERY Sir John Mandeville who undertakes a tour to the uncivilised regions of the globe is from time immemorial expected to recount his experiences for the benefit of the less fortunate stay-at-homes. To remonstrate against the unreasonableness of this exaction were a useless task, and therefore I yield with what grace I can to the kindly importunity of personal friends and a generous public, and publish, not without considerable diffidence, a selection from letters and journals written by myself in the heart of Africa. Those who look in these pages for tales à la Mandeville of

“the Anthropophagi, and men whose heads  
Do grow beneath their shoulders,”

will, I give them fair warning, look in vain. But those who are not unwilling to learn what the Boers are doing for missions, and those who are always ready to be instructed and amused by the manners and customs of strange communities, will, I think, find these chapters not wholly uninteresting. My jottings make no claim to be anything but the impressions caught by a passing traveller,—literary pretensions they have none; nor can I claim any value



for my observations in the domain of geography or natural history. I trust, however, that the maps I have prepared will be found accurate in all essential features.

My hearty acknowledgments are due to my revered teacher and friend Dr. Marais, Professor of Apologetical Theology at the Theological Seminary, Stellenbosch, for the introductory chapter, and for the warm interest he has evinced in the preparation of this work for the press. My thanks are also due to a member of the Zambesi Industrial Mission for permission to use the excellent full-page illustrations which adorn the volume. Of the smaller illustrations, three are from photographs by Rev. A. G. Murray, now of Mlanda, Nyasaland, and the rest from photographs taken by myself.

J. DU PLESSIS.

SEA POINT, CAPE COLONY,  
*July 1904.*

## CONTENTS

CHAP.	PAGE
PREFACE . . . . .	5
INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.—Rev. Dr. Marais . . . . .	11
I. THE GATEWAY TO CENTRAL AFRICA . . . . .	21
Departure—Delagoa Bay—Beira—Chinde—The Zam- bezi—The Shiré—Chiromo.	
II. MISSIONS AT WORK . . . . .	35
Blantyre—Mitsidi—Our travels begin—Central African English—Mlanda.	
III. IN THE FEVER DISTRICTS . . . . .	47
Livlezi and its martyrs—Khola—A visit to a native village—The land of insects—Malembo—A hunt —Trophies from African heathenism.	
IV. WORK ON THE HEALTHY UPLANDS . . . . .	61
A closed field (Mpunzi)—Through the forest—Mkoma and a hearty welcome—Lions and leopards.	
V. THE HEART OF THE MISSION . . . . .	75
A gathering of chiefs—Mvera, the head station—A look round—Work educational—Work agricul- tural—Work industrial—Medical work—A meal in native fashion.	
VI. DAILY LIFE AND TRAVEL IN THE FIELD . . . . .	89
Kongwe—Fresh plagues—A burrowing insect—More torments—A rough country—One hundred and fifty miles by donkey—A day's march.	

CHAP.	PAGE
VII. "IN JOURNEYINGS OFTEN" . . . . .	103
A journey to the West—The Chief Sante—A friendly people—The Bua River, a hunter's paradise—A long road—Magwero—Fort Jameson—Madzimoyo.	
VIII. TOWARDS THE SETTING SUN . . . . .	117
Westward Ho!—My band of retainers—An unknown route—Physicking the men—Petty worries—Over tough roads.	
IX. ON THE BANKS OF THE LUANGWA . . . . .	131
A deserted post—Through the trackless forest—Forest sights and sounds—Tropical vegetation—The food question again—A waterbuck hunt.	
X. TOWARDS THE ZAMBESI AND ACROSS . . . . .	145
A typical day—Journeying at random—Denizens of the forest—Wading through the Luangwa—Crossing the Zambesi—The loss of Jacko—Nearing civilisation.	
CLOSING WORDS—RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT . . . . .	163
APPENDICES . . . . .	171
1. List of Missionaries of Dutch Reformed Church (1904).	
2. Statistics of Central Angoniland Mission (1903).	
3. Glossary of Native and Dutch words.	