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Modern African Wars (1): Rhodesia 1965-80: Rhodesia, 1965-80 No. 1 (Men-at-Arms)

Men-at-Arms

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Modern African Wars (1)

Rhodesia 1965-80



Peter Abbott & Philip Botham • Illustrated by Mike Chappell



Synopsis

The Rhodesian War of 1965â€“80 is the battle for control of present day Zimbabwe. The former British colony of Southern Rhodesia rejected British moves towards majority rule and on 11 November 1965 the Rhodesian Prime Minister Ian Smith announced his country's Unilateral Declaration of Independence from Great Britain. That act sparked a series of violent encounters between the traditional colonial army and the African guerilla insurgents of the Patriotic Front. This book examines the successes and failures of the counter-insurgency campaign of Smith's security forces and the eventual bloody birth of a modern African nation.

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Customer Reviews

This book gives a good overview of the conflict, focusing only on what is important and detailing the units and major actions. The authors' prose is delightful, making it hard to drop the book once you start reading it. For its size, Peter Abbott and Philip Botham did manage to put a lot of useful information on this 48 page MAA. Unfortunately, as this book is from 1986, all photographs are Black&White. The authors did a decent job at presenting the Rhodesian badges and insignias, but missed the opportunity to add the famous badges of the RLI, the SAS and the Selous Scouts as insets on the plates. Another problem is Peter Abbott's preference for showing walking out and

cerimonial uniforms at the expense of combat uniforms, and the appearance of the plates do not reflect the actual appearance of the fighting men while "in the bush". The single biggest mistake of this book is to have only one plate of an RLI "Troupie", and using the Army Greens instead of the usual shorts with chest pouches and the typical field cap modelled after the French "Big Beard cap", with the Rhodesians using both locally manufactured and Portuguese ones. This fault is worsened by Abbott's choice to include a Zambian soldier in ceremonial dress; a plate that is very detached from the subject. Another major blunder was to add Joshua N'Komo as a plate. Also, only two guerrillas are depicted, none using the almost universal "ChiCom" chest pouches, which is not depicted in any plate at all! The Selous Scout in plate C3 is unconvincing, as every picture about this unit shows heavily bearded men and they were nicknamed "Armpits" because of that, and the soldier depicted completely lacks facial hair.

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