

The Philately and Postal History of Southern Africa

The Macloutsie Post Office and Its Postmaster Bechuanaland Protectorate 1892

The Post Office of Macloutsie and its first and only postmaster occupies a special role in the early postal history of southern Africa for a couple of reasons. First, the banks of the Maklutsi River in the north-eastern-most Bechuanaland Protectorate became the focal point for the Mashonaland occupation forces that crossed the river in 1890. Second, as the newly appointed postmaster to the police settlement of Macloutsie, J.E. Symons, writes in 1892 a couple of detailed accounts for the British Post Office Magazine about his travel to Macloutsie and the daily workings of the post office. Already in late 1892, however, the mail routes changed and the post office downgraded to an agency and the postmaster no longer needed. Symons, after about nine months at Macloutsie, is then re-assigned to the office in Vryburg. Later we loose evidence for his whereabouts. That is until 1900, when he appears in Kimberley at its Telegraph Office. He there takes part in the defense of the town during the Boer siege and also takes up his old spare-time occupation of writing for the British Post Office Magazine.

This booklet reprints his writings for the Post Office Magazine and offers a general introduction to the postal history of the area and to the life of Postmaster Symons as we know it.

J.E. Symons

Edited & Introduced By
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Third Edition



Symons and the Macloutsie Post Office

