



Modern times - Bulawayo Railway Station, circa 1900



View from Leopard's Hill Ranch



An early photo of a Susman Brothers store at Mwandia

The Pioneers

The Jews who arrived in the then colony of Northern Rhodesia from Eastern and later Southern Europe and elsewhere were inspired by the hope of building a new life for themselves in a still developing land filled with promise and opportunity. Many settled in the country towns along the line of rail. Some owned boarding houses, hotels, general dealerships, butcheries, and cinemas. Others became cattle drivers, butchers, storekeepers, and taxi drivers. Some practiced professions. A few rose to political prominence.

Emerging Jewish communities established synagogues, burial societies, and charitable organisations. Later these would include Zionist institutions, youth movements, and cultural associations.

THE ARRIVAL OF JEWISH TRADERS

Having been excluded from the professions in Eastern Europe, Jewish immigrants in Southern Africa had to depend upon trade and often started out as peddlers travelling to remote country districts and trading in anything from haberdashery to hardware to cattle. Over time, successful traders set up their own stores making their mark on the supply chain and thereby helping to pioneer commerce and industry in Northern Rhodesia.



Oscar Susman on the Zambezi, circa 1943



The Old Drift, the original location of Livingstone