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“WHEN SHOULD WE EXPECT A REASONABLE RETURN ON OUR INVESTMENT MR RHODES?” THE BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA COMPANY SHAREHOLDERS AND THE PROFIT MOTIVE, 1890 TO 1923.

“If the sole object of the establishment of the Chartered Company has been to try and develop a prosperous colony, the Directors have succeeded most admirably. But the vast bulk of the shareholders, of who I am a representative, are commercial men, who subscribed the money – millions for the chartered Company and its vast number of subsidiaries throughout Rhodesia in the hope and full expectation that we would get a very handsome return for our money after waiting a certain time. While the colony was struggling to establish itself, we were content to keep spending money to make up administrative deficiencies and developments. But as soon as Southern Rhodesia where we had spent our millions began to show a surplus of revenue, we naturally expected to get a dividend”. Dudgeon-A disgruntled BSAC shareholder.

ABSTRACT

The British South Africa Company (BSAC), like any other chartered company in the colonial period, has been chiefly viewed in the context of empire building. This is mainly because most colonial powers in the late nineteenth century turned to chartered companies to provide cheap administration and development in the colonies. This article argues that contrary to the generally accepted view of the BSAC as an instrument of imperial expansion, the company was driven by the profit-making motive. It contends that the BSAC was financially backed

by a group of men whose desires to obtain a profit from their business venture were more paramount than any imperial designs attributed to the company. It posits that colonial administration and everything associated with it was frowned upon and seen as an albatross to their profit-making desires. The study, therefore, attempts to illuminate the BSAC's proprietors and financiers' profit-making aim and how their desire for such is revealed in the interfaces between the shareholders and the directors of the company. Through the interactions of shareholders, the Colonial Office and company directors, this article attempts to reveal and analyse the expressions of such desires. The paper seeks to do this by unpacking the conversations between shareholders and company directors and demonstrating how such interactions assist in revealing the operational parameters of the BSAC as a Chartered company.

Keywords: chartered company, British South Africa Company, profit, administration, shareholders, empire

1. INTRODUCTION

This study examines the BSAC directors and shareholders' interfaces around the contentious issue of dividends.¹ It analyses the expressions of such desires through the numerous interactions between the shareholders and the directors of the Company. The paper does not claim to bring a novel argument on the operations of the BSAC in Southern Rhodesia. Instead, it is a window into the interactions of shareholders and directors of the BSAC, which was the nerve centre of the Company's survival. This is a new insight into the corporate history of the BSAC in Southern Africa. The article gets to be a window into the BSAC's power dynamics by marshalling, retrieving and bringing to life the voices of the company directors and its shareholders through a nuanced analysis and interpretation of the Company's annual general meetings, newspapers and other works that followed the activities of the BSAC at the time.

Indeed, the leading platform where struggles around the need for the realisation of dividends found vocal expression was the Company's annual general meetings. These articulated desires are essential as an analytical frame of the BSAC operations primarily in the context of claims made by different scholars that the primary object of the BSAC was not financial but

1 The British South Africa Company (BSAC) was chartered in 1889 following the amalgamation of Cecil Rhodes' Central Search Association and the London-based Exploring Company Ltd, which had originally competed to capitalise on the expected mineral wealth of Mashonaland but united because of common economic interests and to secure British government backing. The company received a Royal Charter modelled on that of the British East India Company. Its first directors included The 2nd Duke of Abercorn, Rhodes himself and the South African financier Alfred Beit.

political. The Company was to be an instrument in the expansion of the empire.² This position gained currency as early as 1900 when F Verschoyle made the bold assertion that the Company's objectives as a financial enterprise were postponed to the,

Higher degrees of its creation and the shareholders have felt deeply the influence of the strong imperialists who captain them that they have been willing to wait till the full discharge of its imperial duties allows the attainment of that ultimate financial success.³

Verschoyle's position was also backed and popularised by many scholars who argued for the imperial motive of the BSAC.⁴ This study examines the dynamics surrounding the claim that Cecil John Rhodes and his Board of directors successfully managed to convince the company shareholders "to wait till the full discharge of its imperial duties allows the attainment of that ultimate financial success".⁵ It questions the integrity of the claim that Rhodes and his Board of directors were driven by imperial desires more than profit and used their influence to convince profit-seeking

2 One of the earliest sources to put forward that claim is F Verschoyle, *Cecil Rhodes, Political Life and Speeches, 1890 – 1900* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1900).

3 Verschoyle, *Cecil Rhodes, Political Life and Speeches, 1890 – 1900*.

4 Among the many works for the BSAC and Rhodes are RP Lander, "The British South Africa Company, An essay on its commercial History", *Heritage of Zimbabwe* (11), 1992, pp. 17-27 which analyses the commercial history of the BSAC but focusses on the company's efforts at capitalisation; JS Galbraith, *Crown and Charter, The Early Days of the BSAC* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975) describes the operational environment of the Company, the interrelationship between Rhodes, the London Directors and the Imperial office. Galbraith looks at the formative and early years of the BSAC (the first four years of the company); D Litvin, "A warlike tribe: Cecil Rhodes and the British South Africa Company". In: D Litvin (ed.), *Empires of Profit: Commerce, Conquest and Corporate Responsibility* (New York: Texere, 2003), pp.43-70. His book focuses on a chronological succession of commercial empires, starting with the East India Company followed by the BSAC, through to Royal Dutch/Shell and the Murdock empire and their dealings with and profound misunderstandings of 'indigenous peoples'. Recognising the BSAC as one of the first of the giant multinationals, it accessibly discusses its conflicts with the Matabele and Shona. However, it fails to look closely at the commerce, corporate and profit aspects in any depth; C Newbury, "Out of the pit: The capital accumulation of Cecil Rhodes", *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* (10), 1981, pp. 25-49. A discussion of the earlier years of Rhodes, mining and De Beers which proposes that his activities initially in Natal and then in Kimberley were more important than finance capital for the early years of Rhodes' business experience and capital accumulation; IR Phimister, "Rhodes, Rhodesia and the Rand", *Journal of Southern African Studies* (1), 1974, pp. 74-90. An important discussion of the thesis that the economy of southern Africa over the period at the end of the nineteenth century has to be considered as a regional system around Rhodes' controlling interests in Kimberley diamonds, Rand gold, and southern Rhodesian (Zimbabwean) land and mining.

5 Verschoyle, *Cecil Rhodes, Political Life and Speeches, 1890 – 1900*.

shareholders to postpone their hopes for turnover for the greater good of imperial glory.

This study contends that most of the shareholders cared less for imperial designs and more for the fortune they saw themselves accumulating from the venture. Antithetical to Verschoyle's labelling of the Company's leaders as "Imperial Captains", evidence abounds that many of these characters were fortune seekers. The directors and a lot of the shareholders viewed imperial duties of administration as an impediment to profit-making. This work, therefore, supports the view shared by scholars like Ian Phimister and others. They argue that rather than seeing Rhodes as primarily motivated by imperial convictions or the drive to power, the evidence supports the view that Rhodes was pursuing his financial interests.⁶

It is, therefore, the position of this study that not much has been done to illuminate the expressed desires of the BSAC's financiers with regards to their need for profit. The article seeks to do this by unpacking the conversations between shareholders and company directors and demonstrating how such interactions assist in illuminating the operational parameters of the BSAC as a Chartered company. It acknowledges that a lot has been written about the BSAC's administrators' keen interest to ensure that the colony developed as a white men's country.⁷ Therefore, a lot has been presented on the Company's activities to promote various economic, social and political conditions meant to attract European immigrants as settlers.⁸ What has received little attention are the expressed hopes and aspirations of company directors and shareholders concerning the BSAC as a profit-making vehicle. The paper's position is that shareholders and backers' sentiments and concerns regarding their desire for profit went a long way in shaping not only the nature of the relationship between directors and shareholders but also the operations of the Company.

The paper maintains that an appreciation of Rhodes and his colleagues' drive and ambitions, as expressed through their interactions with the shareholders, help understand the BSAC both as a profit-seeking Company and as an imperial project. Indeed, the study sees the BSAC as an expression of the enterprise and determination of Rhodes and partners. It maintains that Rhodes, together with the other partners who helped structure the Chartered Company, were intent on using the BSAC as a vehicle for financial gain more

6 Phimister, "Rhodes, Rhodesia and the Rand", pp. 74-90.

7 Such works include among others: IR Phimister, "The Reconstruction of the Southern Rhodesian Gold Mining Industry, 1903-10", *The Economic History Review* 29 (3), pp. 465-481, 1976, LH Gann, *A History of Southern Rhodesia: Early Days to 1934* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1965). Other historians who have discussed the colonisation of Southern Rhodesia also make brief references to this.

8 AS Mlambo's article "Building a white man's country: Aspects of white immigration into Rhodesia up to World War II", *Zambezia* 25 (2), 1998 effectively handles this discussion.

than the much talked imperial or colonial expansion. In the words of Frederick Rutherford Harris, who became Secretary of the Company in South Africa, the object was to "place our finger waiting for the practical development which is sure to come in any areas where treaties with African chiefs could have any show of validity".⁹ Rhodes and Company were presented with such a treaty in the form of the Rudd Concession. This treaty prompted these characters to put their business ambitions into gear, resulting in the procurement of a Royal charter granted to them by the British government on 29 October 1889.¹⁰ This, in itself, buttresses the fact that the BSAC, from the onset, was an enterprise avowedly dedicated to seeking a profit for its creators and backers. The business of colonial administration was just a condition imposed, by the British Colonial Office, on a company whose directors and shareholders alike were, in the main, preoccupied with the pursuit of a profit.

Rhodes' remarks in 1895 at the Company's annual general meeting attest to the profit drive, the hallmark of the BSAC's creation. He claimed that he had "acquired on behalf of shareholders, a vast territory in South Africa which is a valuable liquid asset".¹¹ He even went on to pronounce to his company shareholders that the "sole purpose" of the BSAC should be to expand "our commerce".¹² Undeniably, in as much as Rhodes and Company cherished the dream of acquiring land on behalf of Britain and consequently building a white men's country in what became Rhodesia, fortune making was also uppermost in the minds of the company directors. This message was emphasised to the company shareholders and backers right from the onset. A statement by Mr Killion, a shareholder, summarises the hopes, aspirations and view that the company's backers had regarding the operations of the BSAC.¹³ For Killion, the BSAC "was not a philanthropic institution but

9 Quoted in, Galbraith, *Crown and Charter: The Early Days of the BSAC*, p.i.x.

10 A royal charter is a formal grant issued by a monarch under royal prerogative as letters patent. Historically, they have been used to promulgate public laws. Between the 14th and 19th centuries, royal charters were used to create chartered companies – for-profit ventures with shareholders, used for exploration, trade and colonisation. Early charters to such companies often granted trade monopolies, but this power was restricted to parliament from the end of the 17th century.

11 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Proceedings at the 4th Annual general Meeting of the BSAC, 19 January 1895, BSAC Report of General Meetings, 1891 - 1939.

12 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Proceedings at the fourth Annual general Meeting of the BSAC, 19 January 1895, BSAC Report of General Meeting s, 1891 - 1939.

13 Please note that all shareholder names in the BSAC Reports of Annual General Meetings only have surnames and no first names.

a commercial undertaking".¹⁴ He saw the BSAC as a "business concern in which he invested in and expect to get some return from".¹⁵

One question that historians are yet to contend with is whether the BSAC would have taken up territorial administration as a central part of its operations if a condition to that effect was not imposed on it by the Royal Charter. Clause 25 of the Charter clearly stated that "the government or administration of any territories" was to be one of the Company's objectives if it entertained any desire to establish and operate a company in the area that Rhodes wanted.¹⁶ As such, it is not far fetched to argue that it was because of the stipulation of this clause that the BSAC took over the extra task of administering the territory. The administration of the territory was placed on a company whose providers had merely approached their mother country, seeking legitimacy for their company's operations. Unfortunately, for most of the company's shareholders and backers, the BSAC was hamstrung with what a majority of its shareholders and directors considered an arduous and annoying administration task. These directors and shareholders alike never ceased to express their misgivings regarding this "unnecessary burden" right from the first meeting of the BSAC until the burden of administration was offloaded in 1923. Right from inception, most of the BSAC shareholders saw the colony's administration as a major hindrance to the ability of the Company to make a profit and a dividend for them.

A statement by the President of the BSAC board in 1903 is very representative of the feelings and position of the BSAC shareholders and directors regarding the BSAC as a prospective profit-making enterprise. The Duke stated that it was "only natural that those who have invested their money in various enterprises in our country should be anxious to receive returns upon their capital as early as possible".¹⁷ A feeling which the President concluded was "common to human nature".¹⁸ Suppose such an open desire for a quick profit was what the shareholders and backers of the BSAC had, in that case, it is sufficient to investigate how the Company Directors managed to deal with such a powerful sentiment for 34 years. As early as 1903, the

14 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503. Proceedings at the 25th Annual general Meeting of the BSAC, 1 March 1923, BSAC Report of General Meetings, 1891 -1939.

15 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503. Proceedings at the 25th Annual general Meeting of the BSAC, 1 March 1923, BSAC Report of General Meetings, 1891 -1939.

16 Extract of the Royal Charter in, DO Malcolm, *The BSAC*, Publication details are not available but the book is deemed the property of the BSAC on its cover. The book was however written in 1924 and was later published in 1939.

17 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Report of Proceedings at the 8th annual General Meeting of the BSAC, 15 July 1903.

18 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Report of Proceedings at the 8th annual General Meeting of the BSAC, 15 July 1903.

President of the Board of the BSAC set the tone for what was to be a modus operandi of the BSAC Directors in their dealings with shareholders anxious for a profit. He was quick to downplay the anxiety for gain amongst the shareholders by highlighting the “difficulties” that the Company was going through, which had led to its failure to realise a profit.¹⁹ The President implored the shareholders to “consider the facts of the situation dispassionately and realise the difficulties with which our gold mining industry has had to contend in the past”.²⁰ The President encouraged the shareholders to be sustained by “hope for the future and to exercise patience in the presence”.²¹

It is essential to state, from the onset, that the Company never realised a profit from 1890 to 1923, a year which coincided with the BSAC’s abdication of administrative duties. Instead, the company directors continued to ask their shareholders and backers for more capital so that they would be able to sustain the Company. There is a need to understand how the Directors continued to convince its shareholders that their desire for a profit was not a “pipe dream” after all. The answer to this conundrum lies in the nature of the interactions of the BSAC Directors with its shareholders, which helps in understanding how shareholders’ hopes for returns were sustained and prolonged for the 34 years that the Company did not realise a profit. Indeed, the only financial benefit accrued from the BSAC was to gamblers and speculators of the stock exchange who benefited from the speculative machinations of chartered shares.

2. SETTING THE STAGE FOR BOARDROOM INTRIGUE: FROM FOUNDATION TO 1923

In the section above, statements made by the Duke of Abercorn illuminate three major issues that characterise the nature of the relationship between the shareholders and the company directors going forward. First and foremost, it explains the expectations for a profit within the shareholders. It also captures what the Company was willing to do to keep the hopes for profit amongst the shareholders alive. It thus went to great lengths to try and excuse its failure to realise returns by any means it could master. More significantly, the statement accounts for the character that the company shareholder meetings took. The meetings were turned into an arena of demands for returns

19 These said difficulties are looked at in detail later in the study.

20 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Report of Proceedings at the 8th annual General Meeting of the BSAC, 15 July, 1903, However, for a more detailed analysis of the mining industry under the BSAC see, I Phimister, *An Economic and Social History of Zimbabwe 1890 – 1948, Capital Accumulation and Class Struggle* (London: Longman, 1988).

21 Phimister, *An Economic and Social History of Zimbabwe 1890 – 1948*.

by the shareholders, which in most cases provoked a string of excuses from the directors as they tried to explain the Company's failure to deliver dividends. The company directors also went to great lengths to appease their shareholders. Such means included glowing speeches, silencing of vocal shareholders, manipulating some of them, and exploiting Rhodes's larger than life character.

2.1. The venture will eventually pay: BSAC use of infancy to calm expectant Shareholders

At the Company's inception, and for three years after, the directors explained the failure to realise a dividend due to the Company's involvement in taking possession of and opening up its new territories.²² In fact, in this period, the directors were protected from their shareholders clamouring for a dividend by a clause inserted into the BSAC's prospectus when it was floated. The clause stated that its shareholders and backers were not to expect dividends for the first two years of the Company's operations.²³ As such, at least for the first two years, the shareholders had no legitimate expectation for a profit from the BSAC.

However, it should be noted that, despite this stipulation, in the Company's prospectus, as early as 1891, the shareholders were already demanding a dividend. An explanation for such demands can be found in the character and calibre of the BSAC shareholders. In 1891, the Company President described them as a "body of eminently practical men, intent more upon the praiseworthy desire to secure and support a dividend earning venture than actuated by any high political or philanthropic motives".²⁴ As such, these practical men were bound to need a return on their investment as early as possible. Such early demands for payment from the shareholders provoked the vice-chairman of the BSAC, the Duke of Fife, to criticise them. He admonished them as "hasty and impetuous individuals who expect that, on the day that they laid upon African soil, they are going to make a fortune in the space of a few weeks".²⁵ However, despite such rebukes, a Mr Gilbert Elliot, a holder of 1 500 shares, was in the same meeting, on record as having demanded to know when the shareholders could expect a dividend from

22 Phimister, *An Economic and Social History of Zimbabwe 1890 – 1948*.

23 The prospectus was referred to by The Duke of Abercorn in 1892 when he was giving a rundown of the BSAC to the shareholders.

24 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Report of Proceedings at the 1st annual General Meeting of the BSAC, 22 December 1891.

25 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Report of Proceedings at the 1st annual General Meeting of the BSAC, 22 December 1891.

their investments.²⁶ As a demonstration of the popularity of this sentiment, his speech was reportedly accompanied by elated applause from the rest of the shareholders.

2.2. Rhodes turns on his charm: Rhodes and persuasion

The BSAC also made use of Rhodes' acclaimed ability to be persuasive. A report by the local media about his performance at a meeting in 1895 demonstrates many characteristics that Rhodes possessed that enabled him to convince a lot of people to be loyal to the BSAC. *The African Review of December 1895* reported that Rhodes' speech to the shareholders displayed "an artist, a man of imagination".²⁷ It further described him as a man with a "cheerful, convincing smile who when face to face with an audience, make good his points by a mild method of persuasion admirably seductive as it is admirably subtle".²⁸ The reporter concluded that it was "easy to see how men who are associated with him fall considerably under his spell".²⁹ It was such a "spell" that Rhodes usually turned on when the Board was faced with the task of keeping the shareholders' dream of fortune making alive.

Rhodes' persuasive talents were also referred to by one shareholder, Mr Dudgeon, later on in 1912. He recalled that he heard Rhodes making those "inspiring speeches by which he aroused the patriotism of every English man. And the shareholders were led to expect great benefits from the developments out of the country".³⁰ Most interesting, however, Dudgeon felt that in as much as these speeches, "still animate the shareholders, they have never yet had a dividend".³¹ In as much as Dudgeon commented about the company directors who were also in the habit of using glowing speeches to entice shareholders, the statement also reveals a lot about Rhodes' persuasive ability, which was still in the memory of the shareholders almost ten years after his death.

A wide-ranging report of Rhodes' attempt to persuade the shareholders was contained in *The African Review* of December 3, 1892. The newspaper expressed disappointment in Rhodes' speech, which reported having lacked enough stress "upon the dividend-paying capacities and prospects of his great

26 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Report of Proceedings at the 1st annual General Meeting of the BSAC, 22 December 1891.

27 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR,S/AF65, *The African Review*, 3 December, 1865.

28 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR,S/AF65, *The African Review*, 3 December, 1865.

29 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR,S/AF65, *The African Review*, 3 December, 1865.

30 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Proceedings of the 17th Annual General Meeting, 22 February 1912.

31 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Proceedings of the 17th Annual General Meeting, 22 February, 1912.

African corporation”.³² Such lack of “stress on the subject,” the paper reported, “had disappointed many of his hearers”.³³ Indeed it was the opinion of *The African Review* that Rhodes’, “ statement on the subject should have been quite sufficient to satisfy the most expectant investors”, but “the fact remains that a huge proportion of shareholders attended the meeting in the full hope that Mr Rhodes would make a definite promise on the subject of dividends”.³⁴ Such was the great expectations for a financial reward that most shareholders were willing to hear Rhodes verbally confirming them.

However, despite Rhodes’ attempts to persuade, the shareholders were disappointed as Rhodes mentioned little related to the Company’s prospects for profit. He went only as far as reassuring them that their capital was not being misused. The Company’s liability in excess of £300 000 was only “due to the expenses of occupation” and not due to the Company’s misuse of funds.³⁵ Rhodes also tried to allay shareholder fears of having their capital used mainly for political or colonising purposes. He claimed that such a move would be “contrary to the traditions and the views known to be most strongly and consistently held by the company’s board representing the financial rather than the political objects of the company”.³⁶ He reiterated that the board members were “successful men of business” and were “fully alive to the fact that nothing can be done with a disconcerted body of shareholders”.³⁷ He also claimed that “the only way to deal with shareholders was to pay out regular and satisfactory dividend”.³⁸ Indeed, Rhodes further raised the shareholders’ expectations by stating, without “any reasonable doubt”, that regular dividends were in store for “chartered shareholders at a comparatively early date, and dividends too of a nature to please even exacting investors”.³⁹

Rhodes’ address is vital in many ways. It highlights major points of interest about the nature of the Board and the shareholders. First, it acknowledges the dominance of the financial interests in the Board’s

32 National Archives of Zimbabwe, S/AF65, *The African Review of Mining, Commerce and Finance*, 3 December 1892.

33 National Archives of Zimbabwe, S/AF65, *The African Review of Mining, Commerce and Finance*, 3 December 1892.

34 National Archives of Zimbabwe, S/AF65, *The African Review of Mining, Commerce and Finance*, 3 December 1892.

35 National Archives of Zimbabwe, S/AF65, *The African Review of Mining, Commerce and Finance*, 3 December 1892.

36 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Report of Proceedings at the 1st annual General Meeting of the BSAC, 22 December 1891.

37 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Report of Proceedings at the 1st annual General Meeting of the BSAC, 22 December 1891.

38 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Report of Proceedings at the 1st annual General Meeting of the BSAC, 22 December 1891.

39 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Report of Proceedings at the 1st annual General Meeting of the BSAC, 22 December 1891.

composition as opposed to the political. Secondly, the speech also acknowledges the business acumen of the men who made up the Board. Thirdly, the address also alluded to the pertinent issue of dividends, and Rhodes acknowledged the centrality of paying dividends to shareholders who deserved these "regular and satisfactory dividends". All in all, Rhodes' address to the shareholders was meant to be encouraging. In as much as it can be taken as a representation of Rhodes and the Board's belief in the future prospects of the Company, it can also be seen as one of the many ways the Board utilised to calm down an agitated and expectant body of shareholders.

Rhodes also turned on the charm on numerous occasions when he was faced with the difficult task of making these expectant shareholders part with more money in times of need. Indeed, Rhodes' spell is also reflected by the claims made by the Duke of Fife. The latter is on record as having admitted that he had personally fallen "victim" to the spell when Rhodes convinced him of the vast possibilities for enterprise. This was after Rhodes had sketched out his plan to the Duke, to which he later confessed to have been "impressed with Rhodes and thus the reason for him agreeing to sit on the Board of the BSAC."⁴⁰

At the meeting in 1895, Rhodes went to great lengths to dispel shareholder fears of a loss and, at the same time, raise their hopes of making huge profits. He gave a high sounding description of how the Company had gone about "conquering savage territory". He attributed that task to the shareholders, who he described as "practical people" who liked to be "connected with practical business".⁴¹ The reported cheering and applause that this statement by Rhodes attracted is indicative of how he was able to work his charm to get to the shareholders. Rhodes also used the same meeting to give a very appealing rundown of the position and prospects of the BSAC. He further cemented this description with his solemn declaration of the "bright future ahead".⁴² Such tendencies by Rhodes aided in making the different characters involved with the BSAC have faith in its paying capabilities. James Gordon McDonald agrees with this contention and identifies the attention and respect that Rhodes got from the English business community as a testimony of the attraction that the BSAC commanded.⁴³ McDonald identifies Rhodes as the secret behind the BSAC attracting such

40 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Proceedings of the second Annual General Meeting, 18 November 1892.

41 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Proceedings of the 4th Annual General Meeting, 19 January 1895.

42 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Proceedings of the 4th Annual General Meeting, 19 January 1895.

43 JG McDonald, *Rhodes a Life* (London: Philip Allan & Co, 1927) , p.57.

public support, “so strongly and so surprisingly swiftly when its shares were first placed on the market”.⁴⁴ As such, the perceived ability of Rhodes as an entrepreneur coupled with his oratory talents made shareholders and the investing public readily trust his forecast and declarations.

2.3. “All that glitters is not gold”: The BSAC and exaggeration of the Company’s prospects

The clause that prevented shareholders from having any legitimate demands for a dividend was only for two years from the date the Company started operations. As such, after the two years had elapsed, the directors had to find other means to appease their shareholders. One of the most popular means through which the BSAC directors used to calm and convince them was the use of glowing speeches and the postponement of the shareholders’ expectations. The Board was also in the habit of blaming the failure of the Company to perform on “unforeseen circumstances” which presumably disturbed the smooth flow of the company operations. Shareholder confidence was enhanced by, among other things, reports from the company directors, who expressed confidence in impending profits that would “accrue to the company from its interests in the gold and mineral of the country”.⁴⁵ Indeed, the BSAC directors were fond of giving blown statements about their expectations from the Company, and they competed with each other to provide a “heavenly” description of Southern Rhodesia. Such tendencies had the effect of attracting investors and keeping the shareholders hooked to the promise of making a fortune from the BSAC.

In the face of shareholder demands for a profit, the Company continued to play lip service to such requests by encouraging shareholders to pin their hopes on the unrealised potential of the Company. For example, the Duke of Abercorn expressed confidence in the “intrinsic value of the properties in our charge, and that they will well repay fostering care”.⁴⁶ Rhodes also added his voice to these attempts to use the unrealised potential of the BSAC as a trump card to win over the patience of the shareholders. In 1892, for instance, he reportedly told the company shareholders that they had in their possession “a huge expanse of territory with unparalleled commercial potential”.⁴⁷

This tendency to give glowing speeches and descriptions of the position and prospects of the BSAC was widespread within the BSAC Board.

44 McDonald, *Rhodes a Life*.

45 McDonald, *Rhodes a Life*.

46 McDonald, *Rhodes a Life*.

47 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Report of Proceedings at the 2nd annual General Meeting of the BSAC, 29 November 1892.

At an extraordinary general meeting of the Company in 1904, the Duke of Abercorn still expressed "hope in the progress and commercial success of the BSAC".⁴⁸ This was the case even though the Company had reached its 14th year without realising a profit for its investors. Thus, the President used one of the other popular mechanism employed by the Company to explain its failure to make the investors' dreams of a fortune come true, namely, blaming "unforeseen circumstances". According to the Duke, the BSAC would have realised a profit for its shareholders had it not been because of "unforeseen obstacles to the speedy realisation of our hopes and dreams".⁴⁹ He claimed that the BSAC was not alone in these circumstances and blamed the "depression, which has lately existed in Rhodesia".⁵⁰ He, however, as was the habit of the directors of the Company, expressed the conviction that "there is no reason for despondency, and that ... we shall shortly emerge from this murky atmosphere and wonder how it was that we allowed our judgement to have been so obscured for so long".⁵¹

Such was the nature of the BSAC directors and whether or not these unforeseen circumstances were the reasons for the Company's poor performance: the Board used them to its full advantage. Indeed, the possibility of the negative impact of these "unforeseen circumstances" to the Company's operations cannot be entirely dismissed. It is, however, the extent to which the directors went to highlight them as the major causes for failure by the Company to realise a profit that is worrying.

The company directors also resorted to pleading and emotionally blackmailing the shareholders. For example, the Duke of Fife is on record as having said that he "should not have accepted the pressing invitation received to join this board had I not believed that this company has in view a great commercial object".⁵² In essence, such a statement meant to curtail the fear and anxiety of the shareholders, especially given the fact that the Duke had let it be known to them that he had never before accepted any previous invitations from other companies to join their boards.⁵³

48 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Proceedings of the 9th Annual General Meeting, 27 November 1904.

49 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Proceedings of the 9th Annual General Meeting, 27 November 1904.

50 Most historians have argued that this economic depression in Southern Rhodesia at the time was compounded by the First Chimurenga war.

51 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Proceedings of the 9th Annual General Meeting, 27 November 1904.

52 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Proceedings of the 9th Annual General Meeting, 27 November 1904.

53 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Proceedings of the 9th Annual General Meeting, 27 November 1904.

Some of the board members also used Rhodes' memory to appeal to the shareholders. In 1904, the Duke of Fife, appealed to the shareholders to remain calm in the face of hardships as this would "serve well Mr Rhodes' memory".⁵⁴ However, such attempts only raised nostalgic feelings amongst the shareholders who spoke of the "good times of Rhodes".⁵⁵ For example, one shareholder, Mr Humphreys, believed that the "current directorate was nothing to what it was in the time of Rhodes." Interestingly, Rotchford Maguire (who acted as Rhodes' alternate on the Board), agreed with Humphreys as to the value and irreplaceable nature of Rhodes. For Maguire, men like Rhodes were not to "be found every year or every ten years".⁵⁶ In 1906, another shareholder also expressed his feelings of loss for Rhodes, which for him, signified "the death of the hopes of thousands of small shareholders who put their money into Rhodesian gold and for the most part have lost it".⁵⁷

2.4. All we want is a dividend: Shareholder responses to the BSAC Directors

In many instances, the shareholders could see through the glowing speeches, and they occasionally questioned their substance and examples of such are many over the period under study. The shareholders' hopes of making huge profits from the Company had not been realised, and they were bound to be disappointed. The shareholders' disappointment in the Company is expressed mainly by the tone of the meetings from 1904 onwards. The meetings were very volatile, with extensive accusations, abuse and outright ridicule of some board members. An example of such statements was one in 1904 when one shareholder enquired about the role of all the Dukes and noblemen in the board "if they were failing to realise a profit". The shareholder had "expected the Dukes to gain the confidence of the British public: but now one of them had left".⁵⁸ He then turned on the remaining "noble man" whom he implored to "use their positions a little further and more materially than by reading a nicely prepared speech annually".⁵⁹

54 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Proceedings of the 9th Annual General Meeting, 27 November 1904.

55 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Proceedings of the 9th Annual General Meeting, 27 November 1904.

56 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Proceedings of the 9th Annual General Meeting, 27 November 1904.

57 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Proceedings of the 10th Annual General Meeting, 14 October 1906.

58 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Proceedings of the 8th Annual General Meeting, 27 November 1904.

59 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Proceedings of the 8th Annual General Meeting, 27 November 1904.

At the same meeting, Humphreys charged that "the board should take the blame for the position we are in today".⁶⁰ He let the board know that the shareholders were "not at all pleased with the board".⁶¹ Humphreys' emotional attack summarises the feelings of despair within a majority of the shareholders. The sense within most of the shareholders that their dream was not going to materialise turned into anger against the operations and ability of the board members. The situation was also exacerbated by the resignation of Lord Grey, who one shareholder described as the "only man who could adequately take the position of Mr Rhodes in appealing to the sentiments of the people of this country".⁶² The shareholder felt that "Mr Rhodes could not have obtained the many millions he did if he had not been a man who appealed to the British".⁶³ More importantly, however, the same shareholder claimed that it was due to Rhodes' ability and "our desire to make money out of speculation that we provided Mr Rhodes with the money he asked for".⁶⁴ For this shareholder, "patriotism does not shape itself into pounds, shillings and pennies".⁶⁵

The following address by Humphreys is essential as it captures this anger, disappointment and feelings of loss amongst the shareholders. Humphreys delivered the emotionally charged speech after the board communicated its desire to have more capital from the shareholders. He suggested that the Board:

Should venture to apply itself to increasing the sentimental value of Rhodesia. The other gentlemen on the Board, who are so able in finance and the management of the country, should continue their efforts to make it prosperous. But you cannot go on coming to us, with a capital depreciation of 50 per cent since the last meeting and with no one having made any money out of it except dealers in stocks and shares.⁶⁶

60 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Proceedings of the 8th Annual General Meeting, 27 November 1904.

61 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Proceedings of the 8th Annual General Meeting, 27 November 1904.

62 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Proceedings of the 8th Annual General Meeting, 27 November 1904.

63 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Proceedings of the 8th Annual General Meeting, 27 November 1904.

64 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Proceedings of the 8th Annual General Meeting, 27 November 1904.

65 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Proceedings of the 8th Annual General Meeting, 27 November 1904.

66 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Report of the 9th Ordinary General Meeting, 10 October 1904.

In a nutshell, the BSAC shareholders did not see any justification in the directors' attempts to get more capital from them when the Company had not been a paying venture to any of them except "dealers in stocks and shares."

Humphreys went on to castigate the boards' habit of just coming up with glowing but empty promises. It was his feeling that the shareholders would be perfectly "satisfied with the directors if they could say that during the last ten years, their dealing in Rhodesia had resulted in the loss of their capital".⁶⁷ For Humphreys' until the Board could find it possible to layout the Company's position and prospects clearly, "it is no good coming to us with a book full of platitudes telling us what is in the air".⁶⁸ In other words, Humphreys was encouraging, amongst the board members as the shareholders had "listened to all this sort of thing for the last five or six years", and thus "the company directors had better set their minds to do something practical, such as would be expected of you if the shareholders were better able to control the work you do".⁶⁹ Humphreys concluded his speech by letting the Board know that he was not satisfied "in common with other shareholders who have also lost money". For him, this was even though the "idea of empire is a grand idea, but the money-making one is at the bottom of this matter, and you cannot come and expect our approval unless you can give us dividends or an increase in the value of our capital".⁷⁰

Humphreys' speech represents three areas of concern to the shareholders. Firstly, it highlighted the issue of honesty, which the shareholders felt to be lacking amongst the directors. Secondly, the speech also illuminated the shareholders' need for results. The shareholders were not pleased to continue depending on empty promises without any dividends accruing to them. It was their feeling that if the directors would commit themselves to the operations of the Company; they would be able to turn around the Company's fortunes. Therefore, a commitment was the third concern that the shareholders had with the directors as they felt that the directors were not fully committed to the operations of the BSAC. One shareholder commended Humphreys for having the courage to speak out his mind, and it was his wish that they could be "many shareholders who would come here year by year and say what they mean and what they think as our

67 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Report of the 9th Ordinary General Meeting, 10 October 1904.

68 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Report of the 9th Ordinary General Meeting, 10 October 1904.

69 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Report of the 9th Ordinary General Meeting, 10 October 1904.

70 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Report of the 9th Ordinary General Meeting, 10 October 1904.

Humphreys has done".⁷¹ The despair and loss of hope in the ability of the BSAC to offer the shareholders a profit is also illustrated by Mr Lindley, a shareholder who concluded that "we shall never do business on satisfactory lines until our company, another company similar to our own, pays dividends and is economically managed".⁷² He attached the final loss of hope in the Company to the death of Rhodes.

On the 2nd of November, 1905, the Standard Bank Director, Sir Lewis Mitchell, who also had vested interests in the BSAC, attempted to sweet talk the shareholders to rekindle their expectations in the BSAC. He chronicled his history of banking in Rhodesia that he claimed to have been impeccable and responsible for the establishments of "13 or 14 banking stations there".⁷³ Sir Mitchell thus claimed to be letting the shareholders on a "secret", which was that he had "never lost any money in Rhodesia".⁷⁴ Whether or not Sir Mitchell had done good business in Rhodesia, his "secret" was meant to heighten the shareholder anticipation and prospects in the BSAC. However, this attempt by Sir Mitchell could be taken as a failure if the subsequent reply by Comer, a shareholder, is to be considered. Comer felt that much as he envied Sir Mitchell's good fortune, he "had been in a long lane and a very rutty road, indeed, and I hope to get out".⁷⁵ He was of the opinion that if he could not "get out profitably," he hoped "to get out without so much loss as I stand to sustain today".⁷⁶

Comer raised a very significant point, which could help account for the continued presence of most of the shareholders in the BSAC despite the no profits. From Comer's sentiments, it can be deduced that the shareholders did not want to lose what they had invested in the Company. Therefore, they were waiting for an opportune moment to make a tactical withdrawal from the BSAC without losing much of their initial investment. This is confirmed by another shareholder, Hedges who later in 1917 admitted that he had contemplated selling his shares and thus cut his ties with the BSAC but could not do that as

71 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Report of the 9th Ordinary General Meeting, 10 October 1904.

72 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Report of the Proceeding of 10th Ordinary General Meeting of the BSAC, 2 November 1904.

73 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Proceedings of the 9th Annual General Meeting, 20 October 1905.

74 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Proceedings of the 10th Annual General Meeting, 20 October 1905.

75 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Proceedings of the 10th Annual General Meeting, 20 October 1905.

76 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Proceedings of the 10th Annual General Meeting, 20 October 1905

yet because, “as it is, I have now about half the amount I put into the company, for that is what the present price of the shares means”.⁷⁷

In 1910, the chairman of the Board, the Duke of Abercorn spoke at length about what he termed “the third stage of the company career” characterised by complete changes in its financial outlook. He termed this a period of “reproductive expenditure”.⁷⁸ Instead of the chairman’s speech attracting applause and joy amongst the shareholders, it was met with scepticism and ridicule. One shareholder, Dudgeon’s reply to the chairman, summarises the board’s shareholders’ scepticism and mistrust. He replied:

If the sole object of establishing the Chartered Company has been to try and develop a prosperous colony, the Directors have succeeded most admirably. But the vast bulk of the shareholders, of who I am a representative, are commercial men, who subscribed the money – millions for the chartered Company and its vast number of subsidiaries throughout Rhodesia in the hope and full expectation that we would get a very handsome return for our money after waiting a certain time. While the colony was struggling to establish itself, we were content to keep spending money to make up administrative deficiencies and developments. But as soon as Southern Rhodesia, where we had spent our millions, began to show a surplus of revenue, we naturally expected to get a dividend.⁷⁹

Dudgeon had not seen any benefits to the shareholders in what the chairman had said. For him, nothing had been said about “paying the long suffering shareholders a dividend”. All he saw was “a very rich Board of Directors” that was quite “content to pass on the thought of dividends to their grandchildren” while the rest of the shareholders remained poor as they did “not receive fees and emoluments as the directors”.⁸⁰

At the annual meeting in 1913 on 27 February and in response to Leander Jameson’s speech to the shareholders, Mr Neville congratulated Jameson for a “brilliant and clever speech” but admitted that it had done nothing to inspire him and had brought “no tidings of comfort and joy”.⁸¹

Another example of the worsening relationship between the board and shareholders was in 1916 when a shareholder labelled the board members

77 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Report of Proceedings at the 21st Annual General Meeting of the BSAC, 5 July 1917.

78 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Report of Proceedings at the 15th annual General Meeting of the BSAC, 28 February 1910.

79 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Report of Proceedings at the 15th annual General Meeting of the BSAC, 28 February 1910.

80 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Report of Proceedings at the 15th annual General Meeting of the BSAC, 28 February 1910.

81 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Report of Proceedings at the 19th annual General Meeting of the BSAC, 27 February 1913.

an "illiterate board".⁸² He went further to say that the directors knew so little commercialisation and business".⁸³ Indeed for some shareholders, their disappointment and anger was transformed into regret. One such case is a shareholder in 1917 who expressed regret for having invested in the BSAC.⁸⁴ The shareholder felt he would have been in a better position if he had invested his "money in something else rather than in the chartered company".⁸⁵ He believed that if he had invested somewhere else rather than the BSAC, his money "would have been trebled".⁸⁶ Such instances demonstrate the anger and disappointment amongst the shareholders that drove them to go all out in attack against their directors. These expressions of anger, disappointment and regret signify the feelings of loss amongst the shareholders who had banked on making huge dividends from the BSAC.

Some of the shareholders were also in the habit of comparing the BSAC with other companies that they deemed were making profits for their shareholders to highlight to the directors the failure of the BSAC. One favourite example with the shareholders was the Hudson Bay Company, which they pointed out as a "classic case of a paying enterprise".⁸⁷ In 1912, another shareholder was to pick the same Company which he argued was making money, "whilst we have never had a penny dividend, though this is our 18th annual meeting".⁸⁸

2.5. The BSAC plays dirty: Attempts to silence demanding shareholders

In the face of repeated expression by the shareholders on what they expected from the BSAC, the Company resorted to dirty, underhand and sometimes oppressive methods of handling shareholder expectations. One of the most popular ways the company directors dealt with shareholder hopes was the suppression of the voices of shareholders who opposed the views and policies of the company board. The Company devised a habit of not acknowledging or

82 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Report of Proceedings at the 20th Annual General Meeting of the BSAC, 6 April 1916.

83 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Report of Proceedings at the 20th Annual General Meeting of the BSAC, 6 April 1916.

84 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Report of Proceedings at the 21st Annual General Meeting of the BSAC, 5 July 1917.

85 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Report of Proceedings at the 21st Annual General Meeting of the BSAC, 5 July 1917.

86 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Report of Proceedings at the 21st Annual General Meeting of the BSAC, 5 July 1917.

87 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Report of Proceedings at the 3rd annual General Meeting of the BSAC, 19 December 1893.

88 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Report of Proceedings at the 18th annual General Meeting of the BSAC, 22 February 1912.

quietening shareholders who dared speak out against them. One shareholder, Dudgeon, castigated this conduct and was of the view that at the “meetings of the company, very little patience is shown to shareholders who criticise the actions of the Board and shareholders and others who may be entirely depended on this company for their livelihood cannot be heard at all”.⁸⁹ Ironically, as if to confirm Dudgeon’s accusations, a director immediately moved a motion to the effect that Dudgeon be barred from speaking again. The motion was seconded by two of the Company’s directors.⁹⁰ A fellow shareholder, Marks, however, rose to Dudgeon’s defence and argued that it was the right of every shareholder to be heard. He pointed out that the purpose of the annual meetings was to “listen to the observation of the men who collectively have found the millions for the development of Rhodesia”.⁹¹

Dudgeon and Marks sentiments shed light on very pertinent facts about the relationship between the Board and its shareholders. First, the Board was not prepared to accept criticism from its shareholders, and it thus did everything it could to prevent the airing of such. Secondly, , it highlights the undemocratic nature of the BSAC annual meetings, where ample time was awarded to those shareholders who spoke good about the Company and those who dared to oppose or to question the company board were not tolerated. Thirdly and more importantly, it demonstrates that the Board was willing to do anything to suppress shareholder demands for a dividend, even if it meant using unsavoury tactics to achieve that goal.

In a very interesting turn of events, Humphreys, one of the most critical shareholders, paid a visit to Southern Rhodesia in 1910. Interestingly, he came back from Southern Rhodesia a convert as he was singing the same tune as the directors. He reportedly witnessed a lot of promise in Southern Rhodesia as epitomised by the “hum and bustle and so many people coming and going”.⁹² Humphreys also claimed to have spoken to many people who were “all exceedingly optimistic about the prospects of the company”.⁹³ Consequently, Humphreys encouraged his fellow shareholders to stick with the Company as he witnessed its potential. In 1912, Humphreys, was to congratulate the chairman for giving out a very optimistic report. This new

89 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Report of Proceedings at the 18th annual General Meeting of the BSAC, 22 February 1912.

90 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Report of Proceedings at the 18th annual General Meeting of the BSAC, 22 February 1912.

91 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Report of Proceedings at the 18th annual General Meeting of the BSAC, 22 February 1912.

92 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Report of Proceedings at the 15th annual General Meeting of the BSAC, 28 February 1910.

93 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Report of Proceedings at the 15th annual General Meeting of the BSAC, 28 February 1910.

convert admitted that he had come to the meeting prepared to confront the directors but had decided not to do so because of the chairman’s “good speech”.⁹⁴ Humphreys’ conversion is, however, questionable. The degree to which he suddenly converted from being the Board’s biggest critic to being its biggest admirer is highly suspicious and smells heavily of Board influence.

3. CONCLUSION

The hope that sustained the shareholders of the BSAC is summarised in a story that a certain Sir C. Metcalfe told the shareholders and Board of Directors in 1906. Sir Metcalfe told a story of an African called Babayau who came to Rhodes in the Matopos Mountain during the 1896 war and asked for grain for seed. Rhodes asked him what they were going to eat in the meantime as they were starving. Sir Metcalfe claims that Babayau answered, “if there was no grain in the ground and we had no grain to eat, we should die of starvation, but if the grain is in the ground, we know it is growing, we can live on hope”.⁹⁵ Sir Metcalfe then concluded his story by stating: “that is what the shareholders of the BSAC have been doing and I hope that we shall see our mealies come up, as they did in Babayau’s case”.⁹⁶ Indeed, such was the hope that sustained the shareholders of the BSAC. They hung on the BSAC, hoping that it would be their road to the accumulation of fortune, and their hope was also sustained by the continued promises, explanations and reports they were furnished with by the BSAC directors.

It should, however, be noted that in as much as the company board tried to convince the shareholders to “exercise patience”, the shareholders never ceased to express their expectations as far as returns were concerned. The Company’s shareholder meetings were turned into an arena where the shareholders echoed their expectations. The directors tried to do everything they could to explain the failure of the Company to make those expectations come true. The company directors also used these shareholder meetings to beg for more capital from the shareholders, a task that proved difficult, given the Company’s financial position.

More importantly, the meetings brought out interesting aspects about the Chartered Company. First, they demonstrated, from the onset, that the company was always geared towards making a fortune out of its newly

94 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Report of Proceedings at the 18th annual General Meeting of the BSAC, 22 February 1912.

95 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Report of the Proceedings of the 11th Ordinary General Meeting of the BSAC, 25 February 1907.

96 National Archives of Zimbabwe, BR503, Report of the Proceedings of the 11th Ordinary General Meeting of the BSAC, 25 February 1907.

acquired territory. In doing so, evidence from these meetings challenged the conventional wisdom in earlier scholarship that the BSAC, as a Chartered Company, was part of the British imperial architecture,⁹⁷ whose core function was to acquire territories for the British Crown. By taking a much closer look at the boardroom interactions between the shareholders and the Directors, the article refutes this notion. It demonstrates that the shareholders of the BSAC never had an interest in the imperial designs in which the company found itself entangled into. This explains why the shareholders incessantly questioned the directors on when they would receive dividends or return on their investment right from the start.

97 Verschoyle, *Cecil Rhodes, Political Life and Speeches, 1890 – 1900* seems to have pioneered that argument. Lander, “The British South Africa Company, An essay on its commercial History”, analyses the commercial history of the BSAC but focusses on the company’s efforts at capitalisation; Galbraith, *Crown and Charter, The Early Days of the BSAC*.