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## AN IMPERIAL HISTORIAN OF EMPIRE: INSIGHTS FROM THE PHILIP WARHURST PAPERS, KILLIE CAMPBELL AFRICANA LIBRARY

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*This research note recovers the career and personal papers of Philip Warhurst, a British historian who taught at universities in Rhodesia and South Africa from the 1960s until the 1990s. The note simultaneously reviews the extent of the holdings of the Warhurst Papers at the Killie Campbell Africana Library in Durban while also exploring the insights the collection offers on Warhurst's views on race relations and his positionality vis-a-vis the British Empire and the Commonwealth. As the collection is open but unprocessed, this note aims to provide a guide that will assist scholars in navigating the collection. The collection will particularly appeal to scholars interested in Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence era (1965-1979). Warhurst was at the frontline of numerous political developments in the colony during this time. Materials document conditions at the University of Rhodesia following political disturbances in 1966 and 1973 and Warhurst's desire to maintain academic freedom at the university. Warhurst was also a senior official in the Centre Party, a comparatively moderate political group that sought to increase black political participation in Rhodesia, but which expressed opposition to black majority rule. The collection also holds extensive materials of a less overt political nature, primarily documenting Warhurst's ecumenical activities and support for Scouting in both South Africa and Rhodesia. Finally, the papers hold extensive scholarly notes by Warhurst concerning his review of archival and published material as well as several unpublished lectures and papers.*

**Keywords:** Rhodesia, Zimbabwe, colonialism, racism, intellectual history, education, Scouting

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Philip Robert Warhurst (1933 – 2006) was a British-born, (predominantly) British-trained historian who spent most of his professional career in two white supremacist states that had severely strained relations with the United Kingdom: South Africa and Rhodesia (colonial Zimbabwe). His personal papers are housed at the Killie Campbell Africana Library (KCAL) at the University of KwaZulu-Natal in Durban, South Africa. The collection provides fascinating insights, at both a macro and micro level, on the rapidly shrinking British imperial world that Warhurst encountered after his family immigrated to South Africa in 1946. Warhurst was resident in Rhodesia when that colony declared its unilateral declaration of independence (UDI) from Britain in 1965. He moved to South Africa in 1979. Although he travelled extensively and maintained a secondary base in Harare, he primarily resided in Durban for the remainder of his life and saw Apartheid give way to democracy and the country's return to the Commonwealth in 1994.

This report covers two main spheres. At its most fundamental level, it explores the diverse array of academic, political, cultural, and civic materials in the Warhurst collection. It simultaneously unpacks the individual-level insights these holdings reveal on his ideological and professional navigation of a fraught region in which Warhurst was among the last generation of British immigrants to reap the privileges of empire. Following further introductory context, the first part of this note explores the insights the collection's biographical revelations on Warhurst hold for scholarly efforts to understand late-stage British imperial networks in Africa and Rhodesian UDI. Warhurst settled and made his way in Africa amidst an era of great change. His perspectives on this dynamic era help explicate why white rule in southern Africa proved intractable. The second section more deeply examines the collection's various components and their significance to the scholarly community.

## 2. BACKGROUND

The KCAL acquired the Warhurst Papers six years after his 2006 passing.<sup>1</sup> After nearly a decade as a primary and secondary school teacher, Warhurst spent the last 30 years of his career as a university lecturer, primarily studying the consolidation of British and Portuguese rule during the “scramble for Africa”. Warhurst's last professional position was with the University of Natal.<sup>2</sup>

1 Email: S Mkhize to B Marmon, 13 April 2022. RE: Philip Warhurst Papers.

2 Following a merger, that institution became the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) in 2004, a decade after Warhurst's retirement. KCAL is administered by UKZN.

The collection remains unprocessed a decade later. The contents currently officially consist of 29 jumbo-sized boxes, although at least two boxes consist of multiple sets. A considerable amount of material will be pruned during processing (superfluous items like receipts for cleaning Warhurst's videocassette recorder are not uncommon). Nonetheless, even the processed collection once transferred to more standard sized containers will probably number about 30 boxes.

While the collection illuminates Warhurst's transnational ties to the United Kingdom and his experience as an academic in Apartheid South Africa, the undisputable highlight is an array of material on Rhodesia, where Warhurst resided from about 1961 to mid-1979. The Rhodesian documentation spans the late 1950s to the early 2000s. Most prominently, it includes correspondence pertaining to Warhurst's research and administrative activities at the University of Rhodesia and his role as Joint Political Secretary of the Centre Party (CP), a moderate political group. However, Warhurst was an assiduous accumulator. The collection also contains various printed materials from third-party organisations that shed light on the cultural and political life of the renegade British colony. While Warhurst shared some of his research material with scholarly colleagues during his lifetime, the author of this note is not aware of any published work that has drawn on the collection as constituted at the KCAL. Warhurst circulated in similar circles as Diana Mitchell, a more liberal Rhodesian politician and writer and even more voracious record keeper.<sup>3</sup> Her personal papers at the University of Cape Town suffered significant water damage during a devastating fire in 2021.<sup>4</sup> If the papers can be restored, the Warhurst collection makes a valuable complement to them. Alternatively, the KCAL material constitutes a critical replacement if much of the Mitchell Collection is irretrievably damaged/lost.

### 3. WARHURST AND THE BRITISH EMPIRE

The collection richly documents Warhurst's place in the British Empire (and from 1979, his residence in a former Commonwealth nation). Warhurst was born in Glossop, England, a town in Derbyshire, and appears to have retained connections there following the family's immigration to Africa; the collection holds printed items pertaining to cultural life in the town, such as a 1959 playbill and a 1966 programme of Glossop's centennial celebrations.<sup>5</sup> One of the earliest materials in the collection is a 1945 programme from Glossop

3 K Law, "Liberal women in Rhodesia: A report on the Mitchell papers, university of Cape Town", *History in Africa* 3, 2010, pp. 389-398.

4 Email: M Singer to B Marmon, 1 December 2021. RE: Diana Mitchell Papers.

5 Killie Campbell Africana Library (KCAL; Durban), Philip R. Warhurst Papers, Box 29.

Grammar School's Speech Day in 1945, which records that a young Warhurst won a prize.<sup>6</sup>

Interspersed throughout the collection are materials from the Union-Castle shipping line indicating the Warhurst's maintained occasional physical links with Europe.<sup>7</sup> Phillip emerges as the Warhurst most dedicated to Africa. The holdings contain some correspondence between Philip and his younger brother Geoffrey, who permanently returned to England around the time of UDI.<sup>8</sup> Warhurst's father, Meredith, retired from the Lamson Paragon paper company at the end of 1972. Upon retirement, Warhurst's parents promptly decamped from Africa for England.<sup>9</sup> An image of a flat in Cheltenham records that both the elder Warhurst's resided there until their deaths.<sup>10</sup> Unfortunately, beyond scattered correspondence with Geoffrey, the papers hold limited correspondence between Warhurst and his family in the UK, obstructing efforts to recover how broader family ties between Europe and southern Africa were sustained.

When the Warhurst family immigrated to South Africa in 1946, the country was led by Jan Smuts, an internationally renowned statesman. Smuts and the United Party suffered an unexpected defeat at the 1948 general election, giving way to the National Party which pursued Apartheid and a programme of Afrikaner nationalism. The collection is silent on these important political changes in the late 1940s and early 1950s, containing little beyond Warhurst's notebooks as a young student and teacher.<sup>11</sup> The rise of the National Party was the catalyst for significant white immigration from South Africa to Southern Rhodesia.<sup>12</sup> The Warhurst family appears to have been representative of this movement. Warhurst's parents immigrated to Salisbury, the capital of Southern Rhodesia in 1956. Philip Warhurst was himself quite mobile during the second half of the 1950s. Sandwiched between BLitt studies at Oxford (he obtained a DPhil from the same institution in 1970), Warhurst traversed what was in the twilight of the empire still known as "British Central Africa".<sup>13</sup> One of Warhurst's earliest teaching positions was at Blantyre Secondary School in Nyasaland (colonial Malawi). He next

6 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 5: Glossop Grammar School – Annual Speech Day (programme).

7 See especially: KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 5.

8 Interview: Author with Barbara and Mark Warhurst, Harare, Zimbabwe, 12 June 2022.

9 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 22: M Warhurst – H Jervis, 23 August 1972 (letter).

10 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 5: photo of flat.

11 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 5.

12 A Mlombo, *Southern Rhodesia – South Africa relations, 1923-1953: Political, social, and economic ties* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020), p. 186.

13 Warhurst's BLitt resulted in the publication of his only book to date: *Anglo-Portuguese relations in south-central Africa, 1890-1900* (London: Longmans, 1962). The collection records (Box 26) that James Currey declined to publish his revised DPhil in 1973 and

lectured at Mufulira High School in Northern Rhodesia (colonial Zambia). The collection does not contain much written material documenting these sojourns, but there is some tourist/publicity material of Mufulira as well as the May 1957 edition of the Blantyre Secondary School magazine.<sup>14</sup> Warhurst joined his parents in Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia around 1960/61 when he secured his final secondary appointment at Mount Pleasant Boys' High School. From 1953 to 1963, these three British colonies were joined together as the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, a grouping which nominally upheld the ideals of paternalist racial cooperation and "partnership" that were integral to Warhurst's worldview as a British settler in Africa. Although the Federation collapsed, Warhurst remained in Rhodesia for nearly two decades.

Warhurst's meticulous recordkeeping offers insights on life as a transient late imperial colonist. There are numerous pictures (probably taken by Warhurst) of festivities associated with the Queen Mother's 1957 visit to Zomba, the capital of Nyasaland.<sup>15</sup> Warhurst does not appear to have spent any substantial time thereafter this teaching stint, but the collection contains numerous tourist publications trumpeting late colonial Nyasaland. He intellectually returned to the colony in the early 1970s with the publication of a book chapter on Portuguese attempts to control the southern part of Nyasaland.<sup>16</sup>

More substantively represented is Warhurst's exposure to British cultural ties in Salisbury in the early 1960s. The collection contains programmes of several military parades marking the Queen's birthday in the early 1960s.<sup>17</sup> The reverse of a small black and white picture is annotated with the note, "the last day the Union Jack flew in Rhodesia".<sup>18</sup> There is also a programme documenting Salisbury's memorial service for Winston Churchill. Imperial ties are also captured in sport, a souvenir programme records a match in Salisbury between Southern Rhodesian footballers and the Scottish side, Dundee United.<sup>19</sup> It is evident that Warhurst made numerous visits to the UK for research purposes. Aside from his 1993 participation at a University of Cambridge conference on "The Anglo-Portuguese Alliance in History,

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Warhurst does not appear to have made any further attempts to publish that work. According to his family, a posthumous book is forthcoming.

- 14 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 6: Blantyre Secondary School & Box 9: Mufulira – Gateway to the North (pamphlet).
- 15 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 28: Assorted pictures.
- 16 PR Warhurst, "Portugal's bid for southern Malawi". In: GW Smith *et al.*, (eds.), *Malawi past and present: Selected papers from the university of Malawi history conference* (Blantyre: Christian Literature Association in Malawi, 1971), pp. 20-36.
- 17 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 5: Souvenir programmes cover the years 1961-63.
- 18 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 5.
- 19 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 5.

1373-1993: Reappraisals', these journeys are not well documented in the collection. Support for the monarchy and British eminence is also evident in a communication to Warhurst from the former Federal Minister of Home Affairs, Malcolm Barrow, requesting his continued moral support for the beleaguered colonial governor, Humphrey Gibbs, who opposed UDI.<sup>20</sup>

Rhodesia became a republic in 1970 and formally severed its ties with the monarchy. South Africa withdrew from the Commonwealth in 1961. By the end of the 1960s, references to empire in the Warhurst collection become scarce. However, Warhurst maintained his interest in the Commonwealth. His colleague and fellow historian at the University of Rhodesia, Ray Roberts, recalls that Warhurst was "a staunch supporter of the Crown and the Commonwealth" and a "keen member of the Royal Commonwealth Society".<sup>21</sup> His status as a British citizen in Africa shaped his activities long after the end of the British empire in Africa. A contact in the UK dispatched a programme of service in Westminster Abbey welcoming South Africa back to the Commonwealth in 1994 after an absence of more than three decades.<sup>22</sup> Warhurst also appears to have been a key conduit between the CP and British officials. In 1975 he was part of a CP delegation that met with two British MPs and asked that the latter remind Ian Smith, the RF Prime Minister, "that her Majesty's Government was the only authority empowered to grant Rhodesia de jure independence".<sup>23</sup> The draft of a 1976 letter from Warhurst to the British Foreign Secretary, Anthony Crosland, advocating a more gradual transition to majority rule, began by invoking their shared background as products of Oxford's Trinity College.<sup>24</sup>

Alongside his British heritage, Rhodesia (and later Zimbabwe) competed for Warhurst's allegiance. UDI, the end of the empire, and South Africa's withdrawal from the Commonwealth rendered Warhurst's status in southern Africa more ambiguous than that of his predecessors. He could variously be seen as a colonist, expatriate, or immigrant. He became a Rhodesian citizen (while maintaining his UK passport).<sup>25</sup> This second citizenship appears to have lapsed at some point after Zimbabwe's independence. The collection documents exchanges between Warhurst, Zimbabwean academics, and staff at the National Archives of Zimbabwe as he struggles to navigate the

20 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 3: Barrow – Warhurst, 30 October 1967 (invitation).

21 Email: R Roberts to B Marmon, 9 May 2022. RE: PR Warhurst.

22 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 28: Service to Welcome South Africa Back Into the Commonwealth, 20 July 1995 (programme).

23 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 6: The Centre Party: General Report of Political Planning Committee, Undated (report).

24 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 26: Warhurst – Crosland, 13 April 1976 (letter). Both of Warhurst's Oxford degrees were from Trinity.

25 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 22: Warhurst – Gazeteer, 14 August 1974 (letter).

cumbersome bureaucratic procedures required of any scholar lacking a Zimbabwean identity document.<sup>26</sup> However, Warhurst's ties to the country remained strong. In a 1990 letter to a Durban newspaper, Warhurst described himself as "a Zimbabwean working in this country".<sup>27</sup> He maintained ownership of his home in Salisbury following his departure. His son continued to live in Harare and Warhurst and his wife made numerous return trips to the country. The collection indicates that Warhurst mulled retiring to Zimbabwe in the mid-1990s; it is not clear why he ultimately decided to remain in Durban.<sup>28</sup> However, his affinity for the country remained undiminished, in late 2001 he wrote to a South African-based British consular official, stating Zimbabwean President "[Robert] Mugabe is the new [Ian] Smith" and urging his home country to take stronger action against abuses committed by Mugabe's government.<sup>29</sup>

Warhurst's life experiences resulted in him curating a collection that illuminates the precarious position of a cosmopolitan British imperialist in Africa amidst an explosion of both black and white nationalism. Warhurst was a participant in empire from childhood and white domination for nearly his entire life, but found the British presence in southern Africa on the retreat as he became an adult. He opposed the racist practices of his compatriots, but generally supported the discriminatory system they upheld. He extolled Lusotropicalism, a philosophy which upheld that Portuguese imperialism was more assimilationist.<sup>30</sup> His insecurity and apparent inconsistency illuminates the British empire's lack of resilience in southern Africa. Furthermore, these seemingly contradictory views fundamentally shaped how Warhurst approached the crisis in Rhodesia engendered by the white-led rupture with Britain, a backdrop which permeated his experience in the erstwhile British colony.

#### 4. WARHURST AND RHODESIA'S UDI

Warhurst described himself as a "moderate liberal".<sup>31</sup> A one-time colleague at the University College of Rhodesia and Nyasaland's (UCRN) history department, Ian Henderson, called him "a liberal who believed in democracy,

26 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 13: Warhurst – Mashingaidze, 16 November 1990 and other various letters in this box.

27 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 14: Warhurst – Editor, *The Mercury*, 17 May 1990 (letter).

28 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 22: Made – Warhurst, 3 November 1994 (letter).

29 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 2: Warhurst – Pearce, 7 October 2001 (letter).

30 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 14: Warhurst – Editor, *The Rhodesia Herald*, 13 January 1968 (letter).

31 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 3: Warhurst – Editor, *Times Higher Education Supplement*, 5 October 1973 (letter).

but who believed in gradualism as well”.<sup>32</sup> In the context of southern Africa white settler society, this nonetheless placed him left of centre. Warhurst was politically engaged and if the KCL materials are biased towards his years in Rhodesia, then they also demonstrate that a particular interest at this time were efforts to secure a resolution to UDI. Scholars will be particularly interested to review Warhurst’s ideological struggles and his generally conservative approach to this problem, which nevertheless was perceived by many of his white colleagues as overly liberal. A 1974 column in the right-wing *Financial Gazette* by a correspondent who attended a public talk by Warhurst found him so alarmingly critical of the RF that the columnist speculated he might be deported.<sup>33</sup>

Although he primarily operated within the confines of respectable opposition in the white power state, Warhurst occasionally found himself in uncomfortable positions. A 1965 booklet for the Central Africa Historical Association, *Revisions in Central African History to 1953*, co-authored with Ian Henderson, was banned by the Rhodesian authorities.<sup>34</sup> A section on “race relations”, written by Warhurst, began, “the Pioneers [white settlers] did not regard the Africans as people entitled to any human rights...”<sup>35</sup> He dubbed the Rhodesian Front (RF), the party which declared UDI, “semi-fascist” and refused to honour a request from his church to commemorate George Rudland, a former RF minister and one of the signatories to the UDI.<sup>36</sup> The collection contains several letters to Rhodesian businesses where Warhurst expressed indignation about discriminatory practices he witnessed. A letter to the manager of Salisbury’s Delice Bakery threatened possible legal action against a white employee who had mistreated a black subordinate.<sup>37</sup> Another letter to Ok Bazaars, one of southern Africa’s largest department stores, criticised the retailer for segregating its records by race.<sup>38</sup> The collection also contains letters from Warhurst to a police commissioner and parliamentarian, expressing concern about racist practices within the security services.<sup>39</sup> There is also an illuminating exchange between Warhurst and the UCRN registrar documenting the former’s concern that 11 November, the anniversary of UDI/

32 Interview: Author with I Henderson, Zoom, 30 July 2022. RE: Henderson’s Stint in Rhodesia.

33 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 22: Warhurst – Gazeteer, 14 August 1974 (letter).

34 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 9: The Historical Association, 60<sup>th</sup> Annual Report, 1966.

35 I Henderson and P Warhurst, *Revisions in central African history to 1953* (Salisbury: Central Africa Historical Association, 1965), p. 16.

36 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 14: Warhurst – Cross, 14 September 1978 (letter).

37 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 22: Warhurst – manager, 16 January 1968 (letter).

38 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 22: Warhurst – manager, 12 June 1975 (letter).

39 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 26: Warhurst – Allum, 25 April 1979; Box 26: Warhurst – Landau, 9 September 1974 (letters).



Rhodesian independence, not be observed as a university holiday, despite its proclamation as an official public holiday.<sup>40</sup>

However, Warhurst's comparative cosmopolitanism had limitations. In a 1964 by-election, he canvassed for Roy Welensky (one of the earliest indications of Warhurst's direct political action), who was the candidate most amenable to constitutional rule in Rhodesia, but nonetheless an ideologue of white settler power as the former Prime Minister of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland.<sup>41</sup> By 1976, it was clear that a political change was near. Warhurst wrote, "the whites have a great deal to fear from premature majority rule, which is an inversion of the present deplorable white supremacy."<sup>42</sup> This fear was a recurring element in Warhurst's political thought. A 1973 journal article attributed the rise of the RF to "white backlash", a recurring term throughout the collection.<sup>43</sup> He was an executive member of the CP, which as its name indicated, sought to appeal to white moderates in Rhodesia. A 1972 radio broadcast that Warhurst composed for party president Pat Bashford announced support for a tentative political settlement the RF negotiated with British Foreign Minister Alec Douglas-Home. A royal commission was dispatched to the rebellious colony to assess popular support for its terms.<sup>44</sup> Blacks mobilised to express their opposition. Bashford's broadcast message, as authored by Warhurst, sought to subvert this and appears to have been primarily dedicated to converting blacks to support the settlement. Warhurst wrote that if the proposals were rejected, "there will be a white backlash. Even white liberals will be angry and the whites as a group will be furious with the African people".<sup>45</sup> The Commission duly announced that the majority of Rhodesia's black inhabitants rejected the settlement terms and the liberation war significantly escalated in the aftermath of the aborted initiative.

As late as 1977, Warhurst rejected black majority rule. The CP was dominated by whites but was an integrated political party; its only elected representatives in the Rhodesian parliament were black. In a memo to its planning committee, the historian wrote, "ultimately Rhodesia should become a full democracy but in the short-term if anything approaching universal suffrage is attempted without structural safeguards, all minorities

40 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 26: Cummings – Warhurst, 16 October 1967 (letter).

41 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 26: Welensky – Warhurst, 6 October 1964 (letter).

42 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 13: Centre Party Newsletter, "New Year Mail", January 1976.

43 P Warhurst, "The history of race relations in Rhodesia", *Zambezia* 3 (1), 1973, p. 19.

44 See: L White, "'Normal political activities': Rhodesia, the Pearce Commission, and the African National Council", *Journal of African History* 52 (3), 2011, pp. 321-340.

45 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 6: PR Warhurst, "The Consequences of a 'No' Vote", 1972 (memorandum).

are doomed to impotence and possibly danger.”<sup>46</sup> This position did not have much distance from the policies of the RF. The CP’s support for the 1972 settlement proposals and the failure of a key party strategist to embrace a more progressive stance illuminates why the colony’s white moderates never assumed a more significant political status during the UDI era.<sup>47</sup>

In early 1978 the RF reached an agreement, known as the “internal settlement”, with several moderate black political parties willing to accept a disproportionate level of continued white control. The leading party to this settlement, the United African National Council, counted several lecturers at the University of Rhodesia among its ranks. Warhurst wrote to one of these academics cum politicians, Ernest Bulle, the co-Minister of Finance in this transitional dispensation, to express his concern “about parliamentary democracy and also about the position of minorities.” He added, “I should be wary of more radical solutions so I hope you will be able to sustain the Internal Settlement.”<sup>48</sup>

In mid-1977 the Centre Party merged with another erstwhile white opposition party, the Rhodesia Party, to form the National Unifying Force (NUF). Despite several entreaties from his former colleagues in the CP, Warhurst declined to join.<sup>49</sup> His career as a political strategist in Rhodesia was over and Warhurst appeared to be readying himself for a move out of the international pariah, which was beginning to feel greater effects from the armed liberation struggle. In May 1977, Warhurst resigned from the University of Rhodesia, but circumstances seem to have changed and the notice was quickly withdrawn.<sup>50</sup> The collection documents correspondence from Warhurst to state authorities concerning measures induced by international sanctions, such as petrol rationing.<sup>51</sup> Warhurst had young children and was a university lecturer, but he was not immune to police call-ups. His records contain a certificate of his service as a police reserve from November 1978 to January 1979.<sup>52</sup> Warhurst secured a new Rhodesian passport at the beginning of June 1979 and several weeks later used it to return to South Africa, his family’s original entry point on the continent.

46 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 25: Warhurst, Memorandum to Planning Committee, 5 April 1977 (memorandum).

47 For more on the CP, see: I Hancock, *White liberals, moderates and radicals in Rhodesia, 1953-1980* (London: Croom Helm, 1984).

48 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 14: Warhurst – Bulle, 13 August 1978 (letter).

49 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 25: Foggin – Warhurst, 19 April 1978 and others (letters).

50 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 26: Macquire – Warhurst, 14 June 1977 (letter).

51 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 26: Warhurst – Petrol Rationing Officer, 15 January 1974 and others (letters).

52 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 28: Certificate of Service, Police Reserve (certificate).

Despite his opposition to UDI and the RF's autocracy, Warhurst retained a nostalgia for the colonial society his British compatriots established in Salisbury. A 1996 letter to the editor of Zimbabwe's paper of record, *The Herald*, declared, "I should like to enter a plea for a more balanced approach to the colonial past...it is now time to give the whites credit for their achievement in creating the second most industrialised country in Africa."<sup>53</sup> Most scholars working in the Warhurst collection will likely use the material for broader insights on Rhodesian politics, African decolonisation writ-large, or the experience of a classically liberal academic operating amidst Apartheid policies. However, one of the most insightful aspects of the collection is that it shows how Warhurst, even with the advantages of his Oxford education and wide travels, personally struggled to accept the relatively abrupt collapse of imperial systems in Africa. He opposed the brazen excesses of the RF, yet he shared that party's fundamental goal of preserving white privilege in Rhodesia. His case helps to illuminate why the region's embrace of majority rule and a more democratic political system was so tortuous.

## 5. SIGNIFICANT ELEMENTS OF THE WARHURST COLLECTION

Warhurst appears to have been an inveterate stockpiler. In addition to his professional and personal correspondence, the collection contains a prodigious amount of printed matter that Warhurst accumulated while attending academic conferences, political and cultural events, and during his numerous travels, mostly in Europe and Africa. While Warhurst was a polyglot, with competency in Portuguese, French, Zulu, and Shona, the collection is almost entirely in English.<sup>54</sup> The material on Rhodesia, which forms the better part of the collection, predominantly focuses on Warhurst's affiliation with the University of Rhodesia and his primary extra-curricular activity, his role as a leading official in the opposition Centre party. When Warhurst joined the UCRN faculty in 1964 it was affiliated to the University of London and the degrees it conferred were from that institution.<sup>55</sup> UDI did not immediately disrupt this relationship and a steady flow of expatriate British lecturers, but the wider political crisis played out in a microcosm at the university. Material documenting Warhurst's tenure at the University of Rhodesia often veers into the political. Warhurst was a speaker at a "Week of Protest" teach-in organised

53 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 14: Warhurst – Editor, *The Herald*, 18 March 1996 (letter).

54 Interview: Author with Barbara and Mark Warhurst.

55 K Kirkwood, "The earlier history of the university of Rhodesia: A review", *Oxford Review of Education* 5 (1), 1979, p. 24.

by university students perturbed by the colony's political direction.<sup>56</sup> Highlights of material on the University of Rhodesia include extensive documentation around major student protests in 1966 and 1973.<sup>57</sup> Material on the former disturbances includes a report commissioned by the university, a supplemental report independently produced by university lecturers at their own initiative, and various statements on the crisis by university faculties.<sup>58</sup> Also pertaining to the turmoil at the university in 1966 is correspondence between Warhurst and his former colleague, Ian Henderson, who was deported to the UK by the RF government that year.<sup>59</sup> Documentation pertaining to the latter disturbances includes various statements on the university's response, Warhurst's correspondence with the *Times Higher Education Supplement* concerning its coverage of the disturbances, and circulars from Warhurst to students in the history department who were disciplined by the government as a result of their engagement and unable to continue to fully pursue their studies.<sup>60</sup> The collection also contains considerable material on two political science lecturers, Ashley Dixon and Kenneth Good, who were deported shortly after the 1973 student protest.<sup>61</sup>

The collections hold a wide swathe of assorted press releases, circulars, and meeting minutes. Literary scholars will be interested in records of meetings of the university disciplinary committee that considered charges against Dambudzo Marechera, who subsequently achieved renown as one of Zimbabwe's best known (and eccentric) writers.<sup>62</sup> Historians will be drawn to an extensive collection of seminar papers delivered to the History Department.<sup>63</sup> The Warhurst Papers also include extensive published matter pertaining to the University of Rhodesia. Much of this is promotional material geared toward students, such as an extensive collection of annual prospectuses dating back to 1956.<sup>64</sup> Scholars will be more interested in the

56 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 22: A McAdam and TI Matthews, "We Protest! Proceedings of the Week of Protest, May 18-21, 1969" (Salisbury: Unitas Press, 1969), p. 3.

57 On the 1973 protests see: AS Mlambo, "Student protest and state reaction in colonial Rhodesia: The 1973 Chimukwembe student demonstration at the university of Rhodesia", *Journal of Southern African Studies* 21 (3), 1995, pp. 473-490; also D Hodgkinson, "Subversive communities and the 'Rhodesian sixties': An exploration of transnational protests". In: C Jian *et al*, *The Routledge handbook of the global sixties: Between protest and nation building* (New York: Routledge, 2019), pp. 39-52.

58 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 3.

59 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 26: various correspondence from Henderson to Warhurst between 1966 and 1973, dispatched from the UK and Zambia.

60 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 3.

61 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 3.

62 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 22: "Disciplinary Committee – CWD Marechera", 3 October 1972 (circular).

63 Most of these are identified as constituting part of the Henderson Seminar Series.

64 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 17.

rare copies of various student and faculty publications. Holdings include ten consecutive issues of *Black and White*, a short-lived leftist student monthly that emerged in the second half of 1966. There are also occasional issues of *Spectator*, a roughly contemporaneous periodical which expressed the views of more conservative students. A related holding is a substantial number of issues of *Dissent*, which was primarily produced in the late 1950s and early 1960s by Terence Ranger and John Reed, two UCRN lecturers.<sup>65</sup> The collection does not contain extensive direct correspondence with other academics, but in addition to Henderson, the most robust exchanges are probably with Ranger and Ray Roberts. There is also correspondence with some of Warhurst's former Rhodesian students who became US-based academics such as Ken Mufuka and Henry Moyana.<sup>66</sup>

The other strength of the collection is material documenting Rhodesia's political scene. Warhurst preserved extensive minutes of meetings of the CP's executive committee and published material from the Rhodesia Constitutional Association, an anti-RF pressure group that was a CP predecessor.<sup>67</sup> A key insight from the CP minutes is that they show the extent to which it was dominated by white executives, although its only elected officials were black. There is substantial material on the CP's consideration of possibly dissolving following a disastrous showing in the 1974 general election (they did not). Also of interest are CP perspectives on the possibility of merging with another white opposition party, the Rhodesia Party (they did).<sup>68</sup> Warhurst also collated newsletters and various published material from both the CP and Rhodesia Party.<sup>69</sup>

The collection extends beyond the preserve of "moderate" white dominated opposition politics. It contains a number of printed government and political party materials dating back to the late 1950s. This includes statements of principles and policy from the more mainstream, white-led parties and transcripts of speeches by senior RF officials reproduced by the Rhodesian Ministry of Information. The collection also contains a folder of Warhurst's regular missives to the editor of *The Rhodesia Herald* spanning political and academic issues.<sup>70</sup> Another especially intriguing folder contains meeting notices and correspondence of The '60 Group, a liberal private society functional in the early 1960s that sought to provide opportunities

65 All of these publications can be found in KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 3.

66 Mufuka: KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 26; Moyana, Box 11.

67 Material on the parties/movements appears throughout the collection but is particularly pronounced in boxes 4, 6, 9, 13, and 25.

68 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 25.

69 Refer to note 68.

70 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 14. Handwritten notes indicate that several of the more "anti-establishment", letters were not accepted for publication.

for interactions of elites across racial lines.<sup>71</sup> The collection also contains a number of political campaign mailings that Warhurst received from electoral candidates and elected officials. One item of note is a letter from Ian Smith in advance of a 1969 constitutional referendum addressed to “fellow Rhodesians”, encouraging them to “sever the final strings which tie us to Britain”.<sup>72</sup> Finally, Warhurst preserved a modest amount of apolitical material on Rhodesia, including maps, postcards, and entertainment digests produced by the Salisbury Publicity Association.<sup>73</sup> In the latter stages of his academic career and into his retirement, Warhurst’s scholarly interests appear to have shifted away from European empire-making in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century and towards the rise of African nationalism. The collection contains research notes and unpublished papers on this theme, such as “African Trade Unions in Southern Rhodesia, 1948-56: Prelude to Mass Nationalism?”<sup>74</sup>

The collection does not offer the same level of insights on Warhurst’s South African life. In part, this may be the result of a 1986 firebombing on the University of Natal campus that destroyed the offices of Warhurst and several of his colleagues. A folder contains news clippings about the fire, condolences letters that Warhurst received, and correspondence between the affected faculty members and university administration.<sup>75</sup> However, researchers interested in the international treatment of a scholar opposed to Apartheid (Warhurst joined the Progressive Federal Party soon after moving to Durban) will glean some interesting insights, such as private communication surrounding the rejection of Warhurst’s attempt to register for the 1984 International Conference on Indian Ocean Studies as a result of his South African institutional affiliation.<sup>76</sup> The collection also holds extensive minutes of meetings of the Natal History Teachers Association during the latter stages of Warhurst’s professional career and illuminates his efforts to promote the historical discipline at local secondary schools.<sup>77</sup>

A final area of interest in the collection concerns Warhurst’s civic and religious life. The outstanding feature in this regard is Warhurst’s lifelong commitment to Scouting. Material on the Boy Scouts begins around the mid-1950s, focusing on Scouting activities in the Johannesburg area. There is considerable material (primarily newsletters and meeting minutes) concerning the Boy Scouts of Rhodesia in the 1960s and 1970s and Warhurst was also

71 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 14. Notable names associated with the group are Josiah Chinamano, Nathan Shamuyarira, Willie Musrarurwa, Claire Palley, and Frank Clements.

72 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 26: Smith–Fellow Rhodesians, circa 1969 (circular).

73 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Boxes 3 and 10.

74 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 13.

75 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 22.

76 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 26: Reeves – Warhurst, 15 June 1984 (letter).

77 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Boxes 12 and 14.

active with a local Scout troop whilst resident in Durban.<sup>78</sup> The other main activity in Warhurst's private life concerned his faith. Warhurst was an Anglican and the archivist for Salisbury's Cathedral of St Mary's and All Saints.<sup>79</sup> While Warhurst has preserved some programmes from church services that he likely attended, the largest amount of ecumenical material in the collection consists of various church and mission newsletters, again, primarily originating from Rhodesia.<sup>80</sup>

## 6. CONCLUSION

Philip Warhurst experienced a wide swathe of southern Africa in the twilight of empire and minority white rule. His papers offer penetrating insights on the broader dynamics underpinning this change, but also his personal interpretation of the unfolding erosion of white privilege in southern Africa. Critically, while Warhurst was outside the mainstream of white opinion in the region, his views still help demonstrate why whites in Rhodesia and South Africa were so resistant to change. Warhurst's concern with the position of minorities (whites) illuminates the pervasive nature of alarm and resistance to an abrupt transfer of political power. This collection of papers will be of interest to scholars tracking these issues, as well as those seeking broader insights on the social and cultural life of whites in late colonial Africa and the relationship of post-war white immigrants in Africa to their European homeland.

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78 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Boxes 19, 24 and 27.

79 KCAL, Warhurst Papers, Box 25: Warhurst – Director, National Archives of Rhodesia, 21 January 1979 (letter).

80 Ecumenical material is scattered throughout the collection.