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The 1893 Anglo-Ndebele War

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The **1893 Anglo-Ndebele War** or **War of dispossession** was a war between the [British South Africa Company](#) and the Ndebele under [King Lobengula](#). The Ndebele were defeated and Lobengula fled his capital in Bulawayo.

Lobengula tried to avoid the war as he realised the advantage the Settlers had in their superior weapons like the Maxim gun. Lobengula had 80,000 spearmen and 20,000 riflemen, armed with Martini-Henry rifles, which were modern arms at that time. The British South Africa Company had no more than 750 troops in the British South Africa Company's Police, with an undetermined number of possible colonial volunteers and an additional 700 Tswana (Bechuana) allies.

Causes of the War

The causes of the 1893 War between the whites and the Ndebele were borne in the relationship that existed between the two groups. On the other hand, Ndebeles wanted the whites out of Mashonaland while on the other hand, the whites wanted the Ndebele nation destroyed. Matters came to a head when Lobengula approved a raid to forcibly extract tribute from a Mashona chief in the district of the town of Fort Victoria, which inevitably led to a clash with the Company.

[Chief Gomara](#)

Between 1891 and 1892 Lobengula avoided raiding Mashonaland as it had been placed under the BSAC's protection. This changed when Chief Gomara in the Victoria District refused to pay tribute to Lobengula. Gomara's argument was that he was now under the protection of the laws of the settlers and had no reason to pay tribute to Lobengula. In a bid to assert his authority, Lobengula send a raiding group. The raiding party destroyed many villages and killed a lot of people in the process. The British South Africa Company saw it necessary to intervene after an appeal from the Shona. The company officials ordered the Ndebele raiding party to leave Mashonaland but the refused in the tension the Ndebele lost about 40 men. The Ndebele had invaded the Victoria district under strict orders not to kill any white people. Lobengula had given a stern warning to his fighters when they started the raid. "If you shed one drop of the white man's blood on this raid into Mashonaland, I will have every one of you killed when you return".

Breakout of the War

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For almost two months (August to October) Jameson was mobilising troops and corresponding with Rhodes who was in Capetown. BSAP columns rode from Fort Salisbury and Fort Victoria, and combined at Iron Mine Hill, around the centre point of the country, on 16 October 1893.

Destruction of Bulawayo

On 3 November, Bulawayo was reached by the Victoria column from Mashonaland, accompanied by Jameson and Sir John Willoughby. By this time, Lobengula and his warriors were in full flight towards the Zambezi. An attempt was made to induce Lobengula to surrender, but no replies were received to the messages. The United Salisbury Column later arrived in Bulawayo, and on 13 November, Major Patrick Forbes organized his column and started in pursuit of Lobengula.

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About Pindula

Pindula is a place to find information about local things on the internet. We do it a lot like Wikipedia, except everything is hyper-local. We started work on Pindula because we needed something like it. There's so little useful information about local things online and we're working to change that

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