



A Walk Against The Stream: A Rhodesian National Service Officer's Story of the Bush War

Tony Ballinger

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A Walk Against The Stream takes a look at the experiences of a young national service officer in the Rhodesian army. This is a true story, encompassing all eighteen months the author spent at Victoria Falls, Rhodesia, facing enemy territory just across the Zambezi river in Zambia. Initially allocated to 4th platoon, 4 Independent company Rhodesia Regiment (RR) as a subaltern and later on as a 1st Lieutenant in support company 2RR, the story starts with the author's training and subsequent deployment to the operational area. The events that unfold contain interesting military encounters, with battles against the Zambian army and local terrorists clearly depicted. The style of writing flows easily and graphically, drawing the reader into a half forgotten world. But there is also another aspect to the story: the human side of it. It is an examination of the author's love of a country falling apart and the relationship that he forms with a local woman in the village; their love, hope and dreams snatched away by unfolding events. This is a riveting personal tale, interspersed with interesting facts and dozens of photographs. All the names and places are real, including the battle scenes with ZIPRA and the Zambian army."

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From Reader Review A Walk Against The Stream: A Rhodesian National Service Officer's Story of the Bush War for online ebook

Brigitte says

This is an interesting account of the Bush War from the perspective of a young man fighting for Rhodesia. It is thought provoking and offers some sobering insights into this complex war. Considering the sad state of Zimbabwe today the futility of war is all the more poignant.

Ryan K. says

I was surprised by how much I actually enjoyed this book.

After binge reading a ton of material on the more famous units and battles from the Rhodesian bush war, it was refreshing to hear about those part time soldiers who did their national service, how they could be posted into different units, be sent to very different parts of the country, and the different levels of professionalism encountered through this country's trying times.

This is also a very different individual story as the author spends a significant amount of time in one area and in turn, goes into great details about the personal relationships he develops with people in the town and also his own personal life. Tony Ballinger was able to put a very human and relatable face to this war story which I found to be the great hook. While he certainly details the military life and operations very well from his POV, I found myself actually caring about what happens to him near the end of the war and wanting the best for him. Not a lot of the military non-fiction books i have ever read manage to do that for me. Most of the time its just the standard account of pre-conflict life / training, the deployment, post-deployment changes / reflection, the end. This book added another layer of sadness to an already incredibly sad history of Rhodesia.

Highly recommended to those interested in this conflict and for those who seek a well written and very personal chapter to Rhodesia's tumultuous history.
