

BIG FIVE[®]

TOURS & EXPEDITIONS

Enriching Lives Through Distinctive Journeys

Destination Information Guide

Zimbabwe



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Welcome to the World of Big Five!

The following general outline offers practical information, suggestions and answers to some frequently asked questions. It is not intended to be the definitive guide for your trip.

Big Five Tours & Expeditions is pleased to welcome you on this exciting adventure. We take great care to insure that your travel dreams and expectations are well met. Our distinctive journeys allow you to experience the finest aspects each destination has to offer. We also aim to provide you with a deeper understanding of and appreciation for the places you'll visit and the people you'll meet.



Harare, Zimbabwe Elevation: 4930 feet Latitude: 17 55S Longitude: 31 08E

Average Temperature

	YEAR	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
°F	67	71	70	70	68	64	59	59	62	68	70	72	71

Average High Temperature

	YEAR	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
°F	76	78	77	79	77	73	69	69	72	79	80	81	79

Average Low Temperature

	YEAR	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
°F	57	63	62	62	59	54	49	49	50	56	59	62	63

Bulawayo, Zimbabwe Elevation: 4349 feet Latitude: 20 01S Longitude: 028 37E

Average Temperature

Years on Record: 9

	YEAR	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
°F	69	74	73	73	69	65	60	60	64	70	72	74	73

Average High Temperature

Years on Record: 9

	YEAR	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
°F	79	83	82	82	78	75	71	71	75	81	83	84	82

Average Low Temperature

Years on Record: 9

	YEAR	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
°F	58	64	64	63	59	54	49	49	52	58	61	64	64

WEATHER

Although located in the tropics, temperate conditions prevail all year in Zimbabwe as the climate is moderated by altitude and the inland position of the country. The hot and dry season is from August to October, and the rainy season from November to March. The best months to visit are April to May and August to September. Night-time temperatures can fall below freezing.

Victoria Falls: The best time to see the falls is during July or August, midway between the end of the rainy season and the end of the dry season. From March to May, after the rains end, the volume of water is at its peak, but this is a poor time to go because the force of the falling water at the base sends mist shooting up to a height of more than 500 feet, obscuring the views. At its driest around the end of October, water flows at only about a third of its crest, and it is just not as impressive as it is in July or August. But even during the dry season, you get wet from the mist, which remains strong enough to support a lush forest of ebony and mahogany on the opposite side of the gorge, even when the rest of the countryside is parched.

TIME ZONE: GMT + 2.

PASSPORTS / VISAS

All nationals visiting Zimbabwe require a passport valid for at least six months beyond date of departure from Zimbabwe. **Passport Note:** All visitors to Zimbabwe must be in possession of return tickets (or funds in lieu) and sufficient funds to support themselves. The granting of a visa is not a guarantee of entry.

Important: Please look at your passport to insure that:

- 1) Your passport is valid for at least six months after your departure date from Zimbabwe.
- 2) You have sufficient blank pages for visa stamps that will be added as you travel in and out of various countries.

Please note: Zimbabwe requires **THREE BLANK PAGES**. Pages reserved for amendments and endorsements at the back of the passport **cannot** be used for visas.

VISAS: Required by US citizens, and a 90-day visas can be obtained on arrival in Zimbabwe. Visas must be paid for in US Dollars cash. Change is often not provided; so it's best to have exact amounts. Traveler's checks and credit cards are not accepted for this purpose.

AIRPORT FORMALITIES

Upon arrival, proceed through immigration, baggage claims and customs. Big Five personnel or their representatives will meet and assist with your baggage. They will escort you to your hotel, and help with check-in formalities. As of this writing, the **Departure Tax is US\$35** for all guests flying out of Zimbabwe. Guests traveling on Air Zimbabwe or a charter flight must pay this fee direct at the airport in US\$ cash. Those traveling with other scheduled airlines will usually have this fee included in the ticket cost and paid at the time of its issue.

There is also a **US\$10 Domestic** Passenger Service Fee, which applies to internal flights from any registered, manned airport. These include Harare, Bulawayo, Kariba, Hwange and Victoria Falls airports. This fee must be paid direct at the airport in US\$ cash.

Please ensure that you have the exact amount of US Dollars in cash (change is usually not provided) before you leave your home country as you cannot **get any US\$ within Zimbabwe**. Please note that large denomination bills such as US\$50 or US\$100 bills are not accepted. Traveler's checks and credit cards are also not accepted for this purpose. Children under two years and transit passengers (within 24 hours) are exempt.

All government fees and charges are subject to change without notice.

CUSTOMS INTO ZIMBABWE

The following items may be imported into Zimbabwe without incurring customs duty: Goods up to a value of US\$250 per person, inclusive of tobacco, perfume and gifts. For persons of 18 years of age or older, 5l of alcoholic beverages (up to 2l of which may be spirits).

Prohibited Imports

(a) The import of drugs, honey, pornographic or obscene literature, toy firearms, flick knives and lockable knives is prohibited. (b) Permits are issued on arrival for firearms and ammunition. (c) Agricultural products including seeds, bulbs, fresh meat and drugs require an import license.

Note: Souvenirs may be exported without restriction but game trophies such as tooth, bone, horn, shell, claw, skin, hair, feather or other durable items are subject to export permits.

U.S. CUSTOMS

Returning U.S. residents are allowed to bring back \$800 worth of merchandise duty-free. There are limits on some items. Regulations frequently change. For a list of exempt items and more information contact your nearest Customs office or write the U.S. Customs Service, Box 7407, Washington, DC 20044.

HEALTH

Visitors to Africa should be in generally good health. Talk with your personal physician about any shots or boosters recommended depending on your personal health profile and your itinerary. Tetanus and polio vaccines should be up to date. Be prepared to take precautions against sunburn with sunscreen and lip balm.

Yellow Fever: Yellow fever inoculation is required if one of the following applies:

- If you are coming from any area other than the United States, Europe, or Canada.
- If you plan on visiting more than one African country, including Zambia.

Malaria: Malaria prophylactic is recommended for travelers to most areas in southern Africa. It is important to bear in mind that malaria may be contracted despite taking tablets, especially in areas where chloroquine resistance has been reported. Please remember that the best insurance against contracting malaria is to try to prevent being bitten, so use mosquito repellents liberally.

Wear long-sleeved shirts and trousers or slacks in the evenings. You should spray your room prior going to dinner with an insecticide that will kill any mosquitoes. Mosquito coils are also effective. If you become ill on your return, while still on prophylactics or even once you have stopped, make sure that your doctor does everything necessary to establish that your illness is not malaria. Malaria is not a serious problem if people are sensible and take basic precautions.

Other Risks: Avoid swimming and paddling in fresh water; swimming pools which are well chlorinated and maintained are safe. HIV/AIDS is a high risk throughout the country and precautions should be taken. Vaccinations against tuberculosis and hepatitis B are sometimes advised.

Medical facilities are good in the major towns and there are well-equipped clinics in most outlying areas, although medical costs can be high. There may be drugs shortages in public hospitals. Health insurance is essential; adequate medical provision is often only provided privately, especially in urban areas. Private

hospitals may require health insurance or a cash payment before admission.

Health insurance is strongly advised during any foreign travel. Please check the latest regulations with your local health office or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention hotline for international travelers at 1-877-FYI-TRIP (1-877-394-8747); fax: 1-888-CDC-FAXX (1-888-232-3299), or their main telephone number in Atlanta, 404-332-4559. Or, visit the CDC Internet home page at <http://www.cdc.gov>.

CLOTHING

*For general clothing information, please review the **Travel Handbook** in your pre-departure materials. See pre-departure information for general packing check list.*

Bring light- to medium-weight clothing with warmer clothes for evenings and rainwear for the wet season. Dress for comfort and ease. If you are going on safari, you need cool, loose clothing for both men and women. Avoid camouflage-type clothing. Bright-colored clothes are not recommended on safari because we want to blend in with the background.

Laundry can be done at most camps usually for a nominal fee. The camp staff will not wash underwear, due to prevailing local traditions in the country.

LUGGAGE

*For general baggage information, please review the **Travel Handbook** in your pre-departure materials.*

While on safari, the amount of luggage you may take is limited to one bag. Weight allowed ranges from 27 to 44 pounds, which depends on your itinerary. If your itinerary includes light aircraft sectors and you need to bring more luggage than the stipulated allowance, you may have the option of buying an extra seat which will allow an additional 70 kg's (soft bag only). The additional cost of this varies depending on your flight schedule so please contact your agent for further details.

MONEY

Currency: The currency in Zimbabwe is the Zimbabwean Dollar (Z\$). You are restricted to a maximum of Z\$5000 in cash brought in or taken out of the country. Please be aware that you cannot exchange Z\$ outside Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe has adopted a Controlled Foreign Currency Auction system, which means that tourists are able to obtain realistic rates for their foreign currency at the banks.

All the bureau de changes have been closed and hotels are not able to change money for guests. Thus all currency conversion transactions are carried out by the banks at the official exchange rate only, which is determined by the auction system that occurs several times a week. This system has effectively killed the black market in hard currency.

Banks in Zimbabwe are open during the following hours: 08h00 – 15h00 Monday, Tues, Thurs., Fri.
08h00 – 13h00 Weds; 08h00 – 11h30 Sat.

At hotels, guests are obliged by law to settle their “extras” account in foreign currency, either by cash, credit card or traveler's checks. Most hotels quote all “extras” in Z\$ but once you divide this by the auction rate, you will see that most items are very good value for money. Some hotels (most notably the ZimSun portfolio including the Victoria Falls properties The Kingdom, Victoria Falls Hotel and Elephant Hills) have recently agreed to quote all extras in either US Dollars or South African Rands; therefore, a guest visiting one of those establishments will be comfortable knowing that they will receive their extras account in either of those currencies on check-out (it is always helpful mentioning to the receptionist at the front desk that you will be settling your account in the currency of your choice on check-out).

Credit cards are sometimes accepted though there are some vendors who don't accept these (if you want to shop at the market, take cash only). Visa is usually accepted throughout Zimbabwe at the larger hotels but American Express and Diners Club are often not, and MasterCard is not accepted at all. **Traveler's Checks:** May be difficult to exchange. The most common currencies accepted are US dollars and Euros. *Please note that the above is subject to change without notice.*

COMMUNICATION

The official language is English, with Shona and Sindebele dialects. Telephone Country code: 263. Mobile Telephone coverage is limited to a few urban areas. Internet cafes can be found in Harare and in Mashonaland.

ELECTRICITY

220/230 volts AC, 50Hz via 14 amp, square-pinned fused plugs. Camps are by their nature are situated in remote areas and have to generate their own electricity. There are no 220v or 110v power points in camp. If you need to have a battery recharged, ask if they can help you while you are out on an activity. Bring at least one a spare for use while the other is being charged. These systems are simple but perfectly functional.

FOOD & DRINK

All water should be regarded as being a potential health risk. Water used for drinking, brushing teeth, cleaning contacts, or making ice should have first been boiled or otherwise sterilized. It is very important that you drink plenty of water especially during the warmer months. It is generally recommended that one drink at least 2 to 3 liters of water per day to limit the effects of dehydration. This excludes tea, coffee and alcoholic beverages, which act as diuretics and can contribute to dehydration. The water in Victoria Falls is generally safe, but it is best to stick to bottled water or soft drinks everywhere.

TIPPING

Tipping should be done at your discretion and as a reward for good or exceptional service.

For general tipping guidelines please refer to:
www.cntraveler.com/travel-tips/travel-etiquette/2008/12/Etiquette-101-Tipping-Guide

SHOPPING

For shopping or paying for activities, “cash is still definitely king” (US Dollar's especially) and so you are encouraged to bring as much US\$ cash as possible for your stay in order to get the best prices (small denominations only as \$100 bills are not accepted). Please note that anything bought from registered dealers in local Zimbabwean cash is subject to 15% VAT (which is not refundable on departure). A sales tax between 10 to 22% is added to all purchases, the higher rate being on luxury items, except those which are to be exported.

Special purchases include copper, wooden and soapstone carvings, leather products, pottery and basketwork. At Victoria Falls, souvenir hunters can scout the line of curio stalls near the falls, where there's an excellent selection of crafts. Sellers on both sides of the falls are keen to barter for things like T-shirts, batteries, shoes, or anything that is hard to get.

Please note that some items such as ivory, hides and skins, rhinoceros horn, elephant hair bracelets, crocodile handbags are illegal import into the US. Such items are subject to confiscation.

SOCIAL CONVENTIONS

Shaking hands is the customary form of greeting. European courtesies and codes of practice should be observed when visiting someone's home. It is best to avoid political conversations. Note that it is an offense to make derogatory or insulting comments about President Mugabe. Visitors should be aware that an open hand is the political symbol of the main opposition political party, the Movement for Democratic Change, and that a friendly wave may therefore be interpreted as a provocative political gesture. Casual wear is suitable for daytime and men are only expected to wear suits and ties for business meetings. Smart restaurants or hotel bars may require male guests to wear a jacket and tie. Smoking is common, although it is prohibited on public transport and in some public buildings. There are laws against indecency which equates to homosexual activity as being illegal.

Please note: Local authorities are very sensitive about taking pictures of governmental buildings, military installations and embassies.

VICTORIA FALLS

Englishman Dr. David Livingstone named his 1855 discovery of the falls after Queen Victoria. The Zambezi River forms the headwaters of the falls, which are actually comprised of five separate falls. Twice as high and one-and-a-half times as wide as Niagara Falls, Victoria Falls is truly one of the most spectacular natural wonders of the world. You see rainforests fed by the towering spray of silvery mists that earned the falls its Zambian name: Mosi Oa Tunya, (Smoke that Thunders). The placid Zambezi River, which is a mile and a half wide, turns into a ferocious torrent of water that cuts through a series of dramatic gorges as it plunges more than 328 feet into a sheer chasm separating Zimbabwe and Zambia. At the height of the flood season, these columns of mist can be seen from as much as 20 miles away as 546 million cubic meters of water per minute plummet over the edge of a cliff.

In 1900, Cecil John Rhodes commissioned the Victoria Falls Bridge. He never visited the falls and died before construction began, however, he expressed his wish that the "railway should cross the Zambezi just below the Victoria Falls. I should like to have the spray of the falls over the carriages."

The Edwardian bridge was completed in 1905. Today, it affords breathtaking, 360-degree views both down the gorge on one side and through to the falls on the other. From this perspective, visitors can fully appreciate the immense depth of the gorge, the shiny black-rock cliff face, the sea-green river below, and lush green foliage that surrounds it.

A path along the edge of the forest opposite the falls provides the visitor, who is prepared to brave the tremendous spray, with an unparalleled series of views of Victoria Falls. One special vantage point is across the Knife Edge Bridge, where visitors can have the finest view of Eastern Cataract and Main Falls. Here they also witness Boiling Pot, where the river turns and heads down into Batoka Gorge. Lookout Tree offers a panoramic view across the main falls. During the dry season, visitors may be able to walk along the lip of the falls. Sometimes the water is low enough to walk all the way across to Livingstone Island, the place where Livingstone had his first glimpse of the falls, one of the most magnificent views in the area. **Aerial view of the Falls:** To fully appreciate the incredible size of the Falls and the awesome power of the water as it charges into the gorges for nearly five miles, one must see it from the air. Microlite and fixed-wing flights are available. The breathtaking sight of this magnificent natural wonder is unforgettable. For the daring, parachuting, white-water rafting, and making the world's longest bungee-jump, 364ft, from Victoria Falls Bridge are all possible.

MOSI O TUNYA NATIONAL PARK

While it is only about 41 square miles, Victoria Falls / Mosi-oa-Tunya National Park includes Zambian side of the astonishing Victoria Falls, the mightiest cataracts in the world. The park is located on the southernmost edge of Zambia bordering Zimbabwe along the Zambezi River. The park is bounded by the river, Dambwa Forest Reserve to the north, the municipal area of Livingstone to the east, and trust land to the south. The park, including the falls, stretches from and includes the falls for almost five miles up river. It is home to numerous antelope species, zebra, giraffe, and the recently acquired white rhinos. These are the only rhinos to be seen in Zambia because its previously large population has been completely eliminated by poachers. Nearby Livingstone, 'Tourist Capital of Zambia', has luxury hotels, a casino, a railroad museum, and national museum that houses memorabilia and anthropological exhibits. The town dates from just after the turn of the century, springing up when the Zambezi Gorge was first bridged in 1904. Tourists were among the first to cross the bridge, and Livingstone remained the area's tourism hub for the next 70 years. The town of Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe eclipsed Livingstone for tourism in the 1970s, but Livingstone has been battling back since.

ZAMBEZI NATIONAL PARK

In Zimbabwe, Zambezi National Park preserves 56,000 acres along the river. Fishing camps along the shore take anglers out after tiger fish. Wildlife can be viewed in cruises along the river and explorations into the park's interior. Downstream from the falls, the river offers spectacular white-water rafting. Adventures range from a day or two to a spectacular week of rafting all the way to Lake Kariba. This huge inland sea is adorned with submarine forests, open skies and spectacular sunsets.

VICTORIA FALLS FLORA & FAUNA

Altitude: 2,733 feet approximately (833m) to about 3002 feet (915m) at the top of the falls. When the Zambezi River is in full flood (usually February or March) they form the largest curtain of falling water in the world. During these months, more than 500 million liters of water plummet over the falls per minute! During November when the river is at its lowest, the flow may be reduced to around 10 million liters per minute. **Vegetation:** The predominant vegetation is mopane *Colophospermum mopane* forest with small areas of teak and miombo woodland, and a narrow band of riverine forest along the Zambezi. The riverine 'rainforest' within the waterfall splash zone is of particular interest, a fragile ecosystem of discontinuous forest on sandy alluvium, dependent upon maintenance of abundant water and high humidity resulting from the

spray plume. Tree species within this forest include ebony, ivory palm, muchiningi, African olive, date palm, and Cape and strangler figs. **Fauna:** Several herds of elephant occur in Zambezi National Park, occasionally crossing to the islands and Zambian mainland during the dry season when water levels are low. Small herds of buffalo and wildebeest as well as zebra, warthog, giraffe, and bush pig live in the area as do schools of hippos that frequent the river above the falls. Klipspringer can be seen in the gorges below the falls. Vervet monkeys and chacma baboon are common while lion and leopard are occasionally seen. Falcon, black stork, black eagle, peregrine falcon, and augur buzzard are all known to breed in the gorges. In the water below the falls, 39 species of fish have been recorded while 84 species have been found in waters above the falls.

CULTURAL HERITAGE

Stone artifacts of *Homo habilis* from three million years ago have been found near Victoria Falls. Stone tools indicate prolonged occupation of the area in the Middle Stone Age (50,000 years ago). Weapons, adornments, and digging tools found point to the presence of hunter-gather groups in the Late Stone Age (from 10,000 to 2,000 years ago). They were displaced by farmers using iron tools, kept livestock, and lived in villages.

SUGGESTED READING LIST

Many comprehensive and readily available guides produced by Lonely Planet, Fodor, Insight, The Rough Guide, etc., many books relating to East Africa. Here are a few selections we thought might interest you. Longitude Books at <http://www.longitudebooks.com> has an extensive collection of books, searchable by country.

WHEN A CROCODILE EATS THE SUN: A MEMOIR OF AFRICA

by Peter Godwin

After his father's heart attack in 1984, Peter Godwin began a series of pilgrimages back to Zimbabwe, the land of his birth, from Manhattan, where he now lives. On these frequent visits to check on his elderly parents, he bore witness to Zimbabwe's dramatic spiral downwards into the jaws of violent chaos. And yet long after their comfortable lifestyle had been shattered and millions were fleeing, his parents refuse to leave, steadfast in their allegiance to the failed state that has been their adopted home for 50 years. Then Godwin discovered a shocking family secret that helped explain their loyalty. Africa was his father's sanctuary from another identity, another world. *When A Crocodile Eats The Sun* is a stirring memoir of the disintegration of a family set against the collapse of a country. But it is also a vivid portrait of the profound strength of the human spirit and the enduring power of love.

GIRL NAMED DISASTER

by Nancy Farmer

A Girl Named Disaster is the humorous and heart-wrenching story of a young girl who discovers her own courage and strength when she makes the dangerous journey from Mozambique to Zimbabwe. Nhamo is a Shona girl living in a traditional village in Mozambique in 1981. When her family tries to force her into a marriage with a cruel man, she flees. What was supposed to have been a short boat trip across the border into Zimbabwe, where she hoped to find her father, turns into an adventure filled with challenges and danger that spans a year.

RAINBOW'S END: A MEMOIR OF CHILDHOOD, WAR AND AN AFRICAN FARM

by **Lauren St John**

In 1978, in the final, bloodiest phase of the Rhodesian civil war, eleven-year-old Lauren St John moves with her family to Rainbow's End, a wild, beautiful farm and game reserve set on the banks of a slowflowing river. The house has been the scene of a horrific attack by guerrillas, and when Lauren's family settles there, a chain of events is set in motion that will change her life irrevocably. *Rainbow's End* captures the overwhelming beauty and extraordinary danger of life in the African bush. Lauren's childhood reads like a girl's own adventure story. At the height of the war, Lauren rides through the wilderness on her horse, Morning Star, encountering lions, crocodiles, snakes, vicious ostriches, and mad cows. Many of the animals are pets, including Miss Piggy and Bacon and an elegant giraffe named Jenny. The constant threat of ruthless guerrillas prowling the land underscores everything, making each day more dangerous, vivid, and prized than the last.

After Independence, Lauren comes to the bitter realization that she'd been on the wrong side of the civil war. While she and her family believed that they were fighting for democracy over Communism, others saw the war as black against white. And when Robert Mugabe comes into power, he oversees the torture and persecution of thousands of members of an opposing tribe and goes on to become one of Africa's legendary dictators. The ending of this beautiful memoir is a fist to the stomach as Lauren realizes that she can be British or American, but she cannot be African. She can love it -- be willing to die for it --but she cannot claim Africa because she is white.

THE GIRL WHO MARRIED A LION: AND OTHER TALES FROM AFRICA

by **Alexander McCall Smith**

Gathered here is a beguiling selection of folktales from Zimbabwe and Botswana as retold by the best-selling author of *The No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency*. This treasury contains most of the stories previously collected in "Children of Wax" and seven new tales from the Setswana-speaking people of Botswana. A girl discovers that her young husband might actually be a lion in disguise, but not before they have two sons who might actually be cubs. Talking hyenas, milk-giving birds, clever cannibals who nonetheless get their comeuppance, and mysterious forces that reside in the landscape—these fables bring us the wealth, the variety, and the particular magic of traditional African lore.

BATTLE FOR ZIMBABWE

by **Geoff Hill**

Zimbabwe's ruling party is currently experiencing its most intense economic and political challenge in its 20-year history. This book, written in an easy-to-read journalistic style, charts these troubled times. Geoff Hill was born in 1956 and grew up in Malawi, South Africa and Zimbabwe, where he became fluent in the Shona language. In 1980, he joined the *Manica Post* newspaper on the border of Zimbabwe and Mozambique and, after the nationalization of the press in 1982, he moved to Australia and spent eight years with Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation. After working in Australia, the USA and UK, Geoff returned to Zimbabwe in 1997, where he worked as a journalist.

HOUSE OF STONE: THE TRUE STORY OF A FAMILY DIVIDED IN WAR-TORN ZIMBABWE

by **Christina Lamb**

Once considered an idyllic place to live, the beautiful land of Eastern Zimbabwe turned into a bloody battleground and center of a violent campaign in August 2002. One morning, white farmer Nigel Hough came face-to-face with a crowd of black war veterans at his gates, who demanded that he hand over his homestead or he would be killed. To his shock, he saw that the leader of this mob was his family's much-loved nanny, Aqui, who told him, "There is no place for whites in this country." The intertwined voices of Nigel and Aqui bring immediacy and emotion to the history of the brutal civil war and independence. In riveting interviews, readers learn about two people on opposing sides who were born within a few miles of each other—Nigel, who played cricket and piloted his own plane, and Aqui, who grew up in a mud hut and was often hungry. The personal accounts document the terrible trajectory of the last British colony to become independent.