



I. Pioneer writer of the social novel and the lives of the Zulu kings, journalist and newspaper editor, R R R Dhlomo was born in the Siam suburb of Edendale near PMBurg in 1900. He started school at Siam and then went on to Ohlange. Whilst still at school in 1918 he was encouraged by the editor of 'Ilanga' Ngazana Luthuli to write articles for the paper. He wrote these under the names 'Rollie Reggie' 'Amaxoxo omfo waseGoli'. In 1930 Dhlomo was approached by Luthuli to help him with Ilanga at Ohlange. In 1931 Dhlomo was asked by Selope Thema to write for 'Bantu World' which had just appeared. (later known as 'The World'.) He wrote articles in Zulu and in Xhosa. In 1935 Dhlomo's 'Indlela Yababi' was published. A pioneer social novel it will always be regarded as a lasting contribution to Zulu Literature. Here he depicts the seamy side of city life in Johannesburg. His style is clear and to the point and his characters strongly and clearly depicted. While working on the 'Bantu World' Dhlomo also wrote the Woman's page and had an amusing column in English 'R. Roamer Esq.' which was very popular in Johannesburg.

cartoon - working as a journalist on Bantu World.

2. In 1936 Dhlomo's first two biographical works on the lives of the Zulu kings were published. 'UShaka' and 'UDingane'. These two works which are vivid and dramatic narratives have since appeared in at least 10 editions each. His other works on the Zulu Kings are 'UMpande (1938), 'UCetshwayo'(1952), 'UDinuzulu'(1968). He also published a story of a hero who lived in the time of Shaka 'UNomalanga kaNdengezi' (1934) and a book of essays 'Izikhali zanamuhla' (1935). Much earlier on he had written 'An African Tragedy'(Lovedale) a work in English. During the wars years Dhlomo was left in charge of 'Bantu World' for a time while Selope Thema was away. He had to write articles on the events of the war - a difficult task.

3. In 1942 he took over the editorship of Ilanga from Luthuli. He remained editor until his retirement in 1962. However he continued to write articles for the paper until the year of his death - mainly political articles. He was the first Black journalist to cover the parliamentary sessions in Cape Town for a Black newspaper. He died at Edendale Hospital on the 11th May 1971. He has made a lasting contribution to Zulu Literature.

cartoon - covering parliamentary sessions at Cape Town.