ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My published scholarship has gone from a history of prostitution to a study of rumors to a book about an assassination in Zimbabwe's liberation movement to this, a book about white soldiers fighting against African nationalism in the 1970s. This trajectory makes perfect sense to me. With the exception of *The Comforts of Home*, which began life as my dissertation, these studies did not begin with questions about a specific past or place but with my nearly obsessive interest in a body of evidence, oral or written, that I sought to write with and about. What that has meant in practice was that that "big picture" that everyone but historians demands was sometimes absent but most often came late to the table. This book is no different: I had found the memoirs of former Rhodesian soldiers and the contests around their publication and reception fertile subject matter: I was less interested in adjudicating who won and who lost this war and why than I was in studying how soldiers understood the war and their place in its conduct. As someone schooled in the importance of microhistory, I believed that the small was important in and of itself; it might offer insights into other places and other times, but the joy and despair and ambivalence soldiers found in this conflict offered me a critical way to understand this war. It was only after I began to think about these memoirs critically and in a broader context that I began to answer questions about who won and who lost this war and why.

This has been a slow journey. I first went to Zimbabwe in the mid-1990s with a very different project. I was fortunate to have financial support from the Social Science Research Council and the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research and intellectual support from the Department of Economic History at the University of Zimbabwe and from my township-savvy assistants, Joseph Seda and the late Simba Handesani. My first serious engagement with these war memoirs was when I was a fellow at the Center for African Studies at the University of Kyoto in 2000, where Esei Kurimoto and Matoji Matsuda were especially thoughtful interlocutors. I wrote most of the manuscript when I was a fellow at the National Humanities

Center in 2016–17. I had been there before, in the early 1990s, largely due to the great generosity of Kent Mullikin, so it was a special honor to return to the Center as the Kent Mullikin Fellow. I was thrilled to be there, to talk and think out loud with my fellow fellows, and to be pampered by the extraordinary librarians. Brooke Andrade and Sarah Hughes laughed at me when I said that I thought finding a complete run of *Soldier of Fortune* might be a challenge. In between those fellowships there were research trips, and I am grateful to the friends who sheltered me in different countries. For decades Helen and Robert Irwin have put me up in London, and Murray McCartney and Irene Staunton have been a refuge and a home in Harare since the last century. In other places and at other times I have been the fortunate houseguest of Diana Jeater in Wick, Megan Vaughan in Oxford, Judy Butterman and Roger Tangri in Gaborone, the late and sorely missed Bill Freund in Durban, Anne Mager in Cape Town, and Jon Hyslop, Isabel Hofmeyr, and David Moore in Johannesburg. Jon was my companion in Johannesburg's wide range of secondhand bookstores, where I first discovered the density of Rhodesian soldiers' memoirs.

The rest of my source material came from archives and libraries. I had the good fortune to do research in the Rhodesian Army Association papers—barely cataloged and arranged in the order in which they were put in storage lockers in South Africa in February 1980—at the British Empire and Commonwealth Museum in Bristol before it closed in 2011. The staff was unfailingly accommodating during my several visits. Jennifer Betts of the Hay Library at Brown University helped me get the most out of a short stay, and Dorothy Woodson was an enthusiastic host during my visit to the Zimbabwe Collection at the Sterling Memorial Library at Yale University. David Easterbrook welcomed me to the Africana collection at Northwestern University many times. Without fail, archivists and librarians have been exceptionally helpful throughout this research, but none so much as Ivan Murambiwa in the National Archives of Zimbabwe and Dan Reboussin at the University of Florida. For more than twenty years UF has been my home, and a good one from which to write. As I began to think about writing this book, chairs and associate chairs in the Department of History encouraged me to teach courses about war and war memoirs. The university's Center for African Studies (CAS) has been one of those charmed spaces that every academic should experience. It has and has had a wide, interdisciplinary group of scholars who like each other, who care deeply about the future of the continent we study, and who respect each other's intellectual traditions: we know how to publish, and we know how

to party. I am grateful to the directors who supported this project with goodwill and even better humor—Michael Chege, Leonardo Villalon, Abe Goldman, and Brenda Chalfin—and to the associate director, Todd Leedy. The Center allowed me to organize a large conference on war in Africa at UF in 2005 and provided the bulk of funds for a 2013 conference I organized with Miles Larmer at Sheffield University. The papers and discussions from both events have informed this book. The Center for Humanities and the Public Sphere of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at UF funded a workshop I organized with Alioune Sow on the production of memoirs in Africa, and its Rothman Endowment provided a generous subvention for the publication of this book.

Three scholars deserve special thanks. I first got to know Len Smith when we were both fellows at the National Humanities Center in 1993–94. I'm not sure I would have even contemplated writing about soldiers had it not been for his example of what kind of history a history of a military could be. Over the years he has been patient with my questions while proving beyond the shadow of a doubt that you could write about armies and still be one of the cool kids. Steve Davis began the doctoral program at the at the University of Florida in 2003. The very fact that this book exists owes a great deal to working with him on his dissertation (now a book) about Umkhonto wa Sizwe in South Africa. I like to joke that we grew up together as military historians of the region, but the fact is he matured much faster than I did. In 2011 I moved offices in the Center for African Studies and found myself next door to Alioune Sow, a scholar of Francophone African literature. As our daily greetings and gossip turned to our research, I became fascinated by his work on prison memoirs in Mali and his attention to their publication. When I began this book, I realized that those casual conversations made for more careful writing about memoirs.

My fellow Zimbabwe scholars have been generous with references, newspaper clippings, encouragement, and really, really good company. Historians of Uganda in the 1970s went beyond the call of collegiality when I was trying to find out about Zimbabwe guerrillas trained in Idi Amin's Uganda in the late 1970s. I am grateful for the help and enthusiasm and not infrequent legwork of Alicia Decker, Mark Leopold, Derek Peterson, and Edgar Taylor. Chris Cocks and Chas Lotter were exceptionally generous with photographs. Jacob Dlamini helped me track down court transcripts and judgments. Greg Mann has routinely asked the kinds of questions that helped me keep my feet on the ground, and Patricia Hayes is perhaps the only person I know who was truly happy to spend hours talking about

pseudo gangs with me. Over many years many former combatants from all the armies in this war have been willing to spend time with me, answer my questions, and offer suggestions and reading lists and photographs. As with my previous books about this period, I have not named informants but cited my field notes because these were conversations, often casual, that at the time I did think would become a book. Once again let me thank the men and women who were not cited. They will see their impact on my thinking, if not their names.

At Duke University Press, Elizabeth Ault's enthusiasm was infectious: it got me to finish this book. Before I was done, however, friends and colleagues read all or various chapters: Jeffrey Adler, Jocelyn Alexander, Gary Baines, Mathew Booker, Brian Child, Samuel Fury Childs Daly, Steve Davis, Michael Hagermann, Douglas Howland, Nancy Rose Hunt, Jon Hyslop, Benjy Kahan, Corrine Kratz, Greg Mann, Fiona McLaughlin, Dee Mortensen, Francis Musoni, Steven Pierce, Tim Scarnecchia, Leonard Smith, and Alioune Sow. I am grateful for the careful and critical readings they gave my work. I hope I didn't let them down.

I started working in Zimbabwe in 1995. My visits there have coincided with what is euphemistically known as Zimbabwe's "decline." Talk about this war and its heroes and villains has accompanied this decline. I do not intend this book to change the importance of this war or to claim that various heroes and villains have been mislabeled, but I hope that it will occasion another way to think about the war and the meaning of its conduct.