

YOU CAN TAKE IT ALL WITH YOU!

By Paul M. Riley MD: FACS

Hotsaw was a multi-millionaire. He was the richest man in the Transkei area of South Africa. Edwaleni Mission, where the Riley children grew up, was surrounded on three sides by the Transkei, bordered by a hairpin bend in the Umtamvuna River. Greenville Mission Station was in the Transkei, about a three mile walk or a thirty mile drive from Edwaleni.

Hotsaw's ancestors had practiced herbal medicine for very many generations so he was taught how to make extracts of roots, leaves, bark, and other parts of plants. He was very smart and studied hard and did well in school. At first he wanted to be a doctor so he studied Physics, Botany, Chemistry, Biology, and Economics at Fort Hare University. However he became more and more interested in the medicinal properties of the herbal remedies developed by his ancestors. He started his own practice and became famous for his herbal medical cures. He developed a network of agents who collected the plants he needed and had them delivered to his workshop. People started coming to his clinics from further and further away.

South African traditional "doctors" can roughly be divided into three groups. The witch doctors believed that all diseases and injuries were caused by evil spirits or by an enemy. The witch doctor (Umtakati or Sangoma) would do "divinations" and "smell out" the culprits and sell charms or poisons to counteract the influence of the enemies. The medicine man (Nyanga) would use many substances including herbs, witchcraft, and even non-sterile injections of outdated medicine stolen or discarded from hospitals and clinics. The herbalists, such as Hotsaw, believed in just herbal remedies. Their formulas were trade secrets! Some of their medicines seemed to be quite effective.

Hotsaw's reputation finally spread throughout Southern Africa! People were willing to pay any price for his medicine. The Africans who had no money expected to pay a goat to be seen, then would pay a cow or steer if they were cured! Hotsaw had to do something with all the money and livestock he was accumulating. He bought more and more farm land for his livestock. He had a large house built with a small bank vault in the center of it so he could keep his money safer.

Even some White People were bypassing Mission and Government Medical Facilities to be treated by Hotsaw. Some people were claiming that his herbal remedies were better than the White Man's medicine. Some even claimed they were cured of cancer! Patients often wanted make sure they got better, so they would first go to Dr. Rice at Greenville Mission Hospital, then go to Hotsaw. If they got better, then Hotsaw would claim the credit. If the patient was not cured, then Dr. Rice's medicine would be blamed! So it was often a no win situation for the Mission! Paul heard these claims and decided to be a surgeon, since not even Hotsaw could equal the success of modern surgery.

Hotsaw soon had to trust banks and opened several bank accounts. After World War II, the General Motors Assembly Plant in Port Elizabeth went into full production. At the big Rand Show in Johannesburg, several brand new Cadillacs were on display, all different colors. Hotsaw appeared and bought every Cadillac, paying cash and arranged delivery to his various properties. He was later seen in many parts of South Africa driving different Cadillacs. It was noted that he always wore a tailor made suit matching the color of his car! Deserving people would be slipped envelopes of cash! He avoided the

limelight as much as possible! The Apartheid Government tried to use Hotsaw to show the success of their Bantu Homeland Development Policies. After all, he was a Black Man who was financially more successful than any White Person in that area.

After Hotsaw was well established, socially and financially, he married and raised four sons. He was determined to give his sons the best education possible. They attended a private school. Special tutors were hired. Initially, his sons excelled at school. Plans were made to send his sons to England for University training when they finished high school. But the more Hotsaw tried to help his sons get ahead in life, the more disrespectful they became. No matter how much money their father gave them, the sons demanded even more! Hotsaw agreed to support them until they were through university; otherwise their support would be cut off when they turned eighteen. However, one by one his sons dropped out of school. He bought them cars and got them good jobs but they soon wrecked their cars, stopped working, and demanded bigger and better cars. They wanted to drink and party all night and sleep all day. When they began to order their mother around like a slave, swear at her, threaten her, and call her bad names, their father forced them to move out of his house and stopped supporting them. The boys finally had to work for their support, but kept scheming how to get their hands on their dad's money.

When he was an old man, Hotsaw began to plan his retirement. Gradually he sold his livestock and farms and downsized his medical practice and put the money in his bank accounts. He became ill, then his wife died. He gave up his practice entirely and hired a nurse to be his care giver. His sons were elated to see their dad's declining health. They were told that their father had a terminal illness! By tradition, they would inherit all of their dad's wealth. Hotsaw finally sold his Cadillacs and other valuables or gave them to worthy friends.

His sons were even more excited when an armored car was hired to bring all the money from his banks and stack it in his vault. The house had already been sold but Hotsaw could live in the house as long as he was able. His sons were so happy! "When the old man dies all we have to do is go in and divvy up the money", they exclaimed. They made sure that one of them watched the house day and night to make sure no one sneaked out with the money. The money totaled about five million pounds. (About fourteen million U.S. dollars!)

A few days later the boys saw smoke coming out of the chimney. They were even happier. "Our old man is cold in the middle of summer! He doesn't have long to live!" they exclaimed. The smoke continued for several days then finally stopped. A few days later Hotsaw died.

As soon as the body was removed from the house, the four sons rushed in. They couldn't find the key and combination to the vault. After several days they finally broke into the vault. All they found was a pile of newspapers and a large cardboard sign saying; "I WORKED HARD FOR MY MONEY. NOW IT IS YOUR TURN"

YES, HE TOOK IT ALL WITH HIM!

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