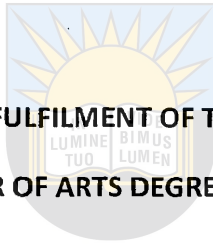


**THE IMPACT OF MISSIONARY ACTIVITIES AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF VICTORIA EAST,
1824-1860**

By

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**THE DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
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APRIL 2012

DECLARATION

I the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in any part submitted it at any university or other institution for a degree



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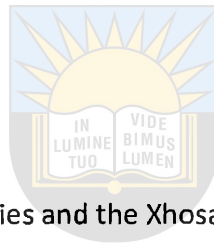
ABSTRACT

This thesis covers a period of drastic change in that part of Xhosaland later known as Victoria East. Chapters One and Two deal with the clash between the Glasgow missionaries at Lovedale and the amaXhosa who were expected to simply discard their way of life in favour of the new dispensation. Chapter Three explains the arrival in the Eastern Cape of the amaMfengu, formerly called abaMbo, and their role in the divisive policies of the colonial government. Chapter Four recounts the brief interlude (1836-1846) during which the colonial government tried but ultimately rejected a more equitable model of cross-border relations known as the Treaty System. The final chapter deals with the introduction of direct rule over the newly-created district of Victoria East, and with the policies of Henry Calderwood, its first magistrate, which were artfully constructed to perpetuate 'Divide and Rule' so as to maintain a comfortable life for the white settlers in the border area.

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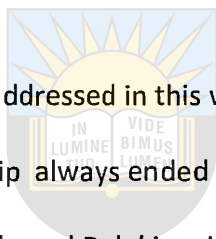
PREFACE

When I first came to Alice many, many years ago, to register as a student at Lovedale (then a Teacher Training College), I met the then Rector, late Mr R. Sigabi, who referred me to the University of Fort Hare, also in Alice. That is when a bond developed between me and Alice, with its rich mission history – as a student at Fort Hare and, later, as a teacher at Msobomvu village. I just knew that, if ever I were to do some historical research, it would definitely be on Alice. Whenever I introduced myself, the minute I said I was from Peddie, and that my clan name is “Gasela,” people would ask “Ungowase Ngqushwa, uyiMfengu?” (are you an iMfengu from Peddie?) I would then wonder ‘what is wrong about Peddie and amaMfengu?’ I came to a decision that my research would also be on amaMfengu, who they were, where were they from, and what is it that they did in the past, to cause such uneasiness among amaXhosa whenever the word ‘iMfengu’ is uttered?

My research is therefore an attempt to unearth the rich history of Alice, paying particular attention to the contribution of the missionaries, especially the Glasgow Missionary Society in Education. A lot has been written already about the missionaries but not much about the reaction of the indigenous people to their influence. This study, therefore, also looks at the impact of the missionaries on the people of Alice and Victoria East. It is known that when two cultures meet, there is bound to be a clash, especially if the newer one imposes itself on the

older, established one, and especially if the newer one undermines the older one. This clash of cultures, therefore, also constitutes the essence of this study. The missionaries, as the harbingers of the new culture, much as they brought positive things, clashed with the custodians of the old culture, precisely because they failed to compromise. They wanted people to discard their own culture and assume a new one – this was unacceptable to indigenous people.

The whole question of amaMfengu is also addressed in this work inasmuch as the amaXhosa/amaMfengu/Colonial relationship always ended up with warfare and the usurpation of Xhosa land. Here the old notion of 'Divide and Rule' inevitably comes up on the part of the Colonial government.

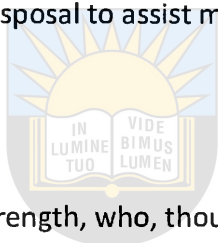


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Finally, I came to realize that nothing much has ever been written on the history of Alice despite it being the greatest centre of black education in Southern Africa where many African leaders drank at the fountains of education, Lovedale and Fort Hare, including former South African President Rolihlahla Nelson Mandela, and President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe. These two stalwarts of the liberation of Africa represent all the leaders who studied at Lovedale or Fort Hare at one time or another. This work therefore aims to put this little town, so huge in terms of its cultural and educational contribution, in its rightful context on the historical map of South Africa.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In 2009, I happened to attend the Womens Day commemoration of 9 August. In the course of her speech, one lady speaker advised us that 'If you put God in the centre of all your endeavours, everything else falls into place.' How very true! First and foremost, I dedicate this work to God, for the strength and courage He has given me to continue my studies against all odds, and for all the people He put at my disposal to assist me.



I thank my family, my father, my pillar of strength, who, though not at all educated, saw the value of education and, deviating from the old belief that it is not wise to educate a female child (for she will get married and develop the family into which she is married), saved his money and sent me to the University of Fort Hare – Tata, this work I dedicate to you. To my late mother, the embodiment of self-discipline, good morals, respect, dedication, diligence – this work is the result of your upbringing, for who and what I am today I thank you Gcwanini, Miya, Sibewu, Mja – may your soul rest in peace!

My late brother Mbuyiselo "Speli," memories of you, your advices, encouragements, these have all given me strength to further my education. To my brother Thamsanqa, this work is as a result of your love for education, you were always by my side, encouraging me all the time – this work is for you bhuti wam. My eldest brother, Vuyisile, it is because of you that I came to

know about Lovedale, you would tell us everything about Lovedale every time you came home for the holidays – this work is for you too, bhuti wam. And Khuthala – this is my younger sister “ndalishiyela yena ibele kumama” – you know you are just my everything. I leave home for weeks, going to the state Archives in Cape Town, to Cory Library in Grahamstown for a whole week, but you never complain that the boys are too much for you, you just become their second mum, indeed you are. For everything that you are to me, my source of strength, inspiration, confidante – this work would never succeed without you, thank you.



Last but not least of my family, my three boys – Khwezi, Liyabona and Buqaqawuli. This big three, they are my everything, my “bodyguards,” my inspiration, always there for me when I come home from the Fort Hare Library, Cory, Archives – jumping all over me (and I know I dare not show my exhaustion because they are just delighted that I am back home.) Thank you guys, this work is for you as a starting point, take it forward!!

I thank the Library Staff at Fort Hare, starting from Mr Clarke (bhuti Phil) at Howard Pim for his readiness to assist me (with my computer illiteracy) in getting material, to the Main Library staff members, Mr Mavuso (bhuti Bhele), Mr Mginywa (Bhuti Tshawe), Mr Khembe (Manxele), Mr Hlakanyana (Sandile), Mrs Bhokhwe, and others. The Department of History at Fort Hare, headed by Mrs D.S. Yekela, my former History Lecturer, thank you “mam wam,” for believing in me, your confidence in me that I can do this, I could write a whole book tabulating your

contribution in making this work a success, but please accept a big thank you from the bottom of my humble heart. Ms Maliza (Sisi Nozo), we did History in our days as Fort Harians together – thank you for your words of encouragement, and you Mrs April.

The Cory Staff, headed by Professor Jeff Peires. Mrs Liz De Wet, my work would not be typed if you had not found me the very efficient MS Deidre Fouche, thank you so much. Louisa Verwey, for helping put my work on a flash, thank you, for any problem relating to technology, I now know where to turn to. Mrs Vathiswa (Vathi) Nhanha – my first born daughter at Cory – many thanks ntombi yam – your assistance getting me material, especially when it came to using the computer – and you did all with a smile, thank you. Cory Library has become my second home, I use their fridge to keep my lunch fresh, and use their microwave to warm it the following day. Mr Gacula (bhuti Victor) always ready to assist me with anything to be photocopied. Even if close to 5 o'clock you were always ready to assist, thank you so much. Mr Lucky Ndzoyiya helped so much with the maps. Mr Vena (Cory Library veteran), thank you for all your words of encouragement.

To the Head of Cory Library and my Supervisor, Prof Jeff Peires – thanking you, Sir, will be my topic for my Ph.D. Dissertation, because this little paper cannot contain the thanks due to you. You have been my Supervisor, my big brother, my friend, my mentor, and again my supervisor. Thank you for your assistance, without you this work would never have taken off the ground.

You believed in me, you encouraged me – this boosted my morale, and propelled me into producing this work. Your approach in doing things, the way you put forward your ideas, even when correcting a major mistake when exchanging ideas with you, you did it in such a good, polite way that I never felt intimidated by your red pen on any page of my work because I knew it was for a good cause, and I also told myself that I would never want to attach your name to a “third rate” piece of work. To me, you are disciplined, dedicated, hard working, diligent and honest (I knew the first time I discussed my work with you that I would never cheat on you with even footnotes), thoroughness, and, Sir, for the very easy person (yet very strict) it has been to work with you, please accept many thanks from the bottom of my humble heart. Brace yourself, Sir, for after scholars read this about you, even those who already have their PhDs, they will be tempted to go back to Honours just so as to be supervised by you. Knowing that you never like to be sung praises, though you deserve much more thanks – I don’t have enough words to do so – let all the words I would have used under normal circumstances to thank you be incorporated into the fact that, because I would never have succeeded without you, I therefore dedicate it to you!!

My thanks also go to the staff members at the Cape State Archives in Cape Town. Without their friendly assistance, I would not have unearthed all that primary evidence stacked away on their shelves. Miss Lizeka Titi (Sisi Lizi), for extending your home to me on my visits to Cory Library, thank you. Your warmth, friendliness and hospitality has made it easy for me to concentrate on

my work when in Grahamstown. Even when you were bereaved, you never chased me away, you will always be my big sister – thank you so much.

My nieces and nephews, Aviwe, Phumeza, Vuyokazi, Sandiswa, Athenkosi, Siphelele, Siyamthanda, Qhama, Chuma, Dumisa and Nolitha, and my entire Maxengana family, thank you for your good wishes and prayers. My cousins, Lungisa, Mkhanyisi, Vuyisa, Luyanda, Mthobi, Noluvuyo, Mava and Samkelo, you are everything to me, bantwana bakamalume, thank you for what you are to me and us all at home.



To my colleagues at my school, headed by Siphumle Mbane (Msuthu), all the students and former students, Mr Mqulwana (our former principal) – thank you for your best wishes. Mr Manditha (Skhomo), educator at Amathole Museum in King Williams Town, for your encouragement in my studies, thank you so much.

Alice, the surrounding villages, including Msobomvu where I work, here is my little contribution, to make sure that even the future generations know the History of Alice, which is part of our Heritage, thank you for everything; Alice is to me home away from home, very few people know that I come from Peddie.

CHAPTER ONE: THE IMPACT OF THE MISSIONARIES AND THE XHOSA REACTION

The coming of missionaries to Africa in general and to southern Africa specifically introduced a new era in this part of the continent. It may be that they came for a good cause, depending, of course, from which angle one looks at the whole question, but the pattern was always the same – it culminated in the loss of land on the part of the indigenous people.¹ This pattern would probably be summed up by the old saying “they came, they saw, they conquered.” On the other hand, however, the cultural impact of the advent of missionaries was very positive in some ways. For example, they reduced Xhosa language into written form. The little printing machine brought by Ross took the whole cake; this resulted in the printing of many Xhosa grammar books, the translation of the Bible into Xhosa, etc. This, in combination with the introduction of agricultural implements and more scientific ways of farming and agriculture – technology, in short – made the coming of the missionaries an asset, introducing a whole new era in Xhosaland.

Another highlight about the missionaries was the introduction of formal education, without which the converts would not have been able to read and understand the scriptures, the primary purpose of the missionaries. The coming of the missionaries should therefore be

¹ The classic indictment of missionary activity in South Africa remains N. Majeke (pseudonym), *The Role of the Missionaries in Conquest* (1952). One problem with this approach is that it ascribes much too passivity to African communities. I must prefer the far more interactive interpretation of which J. and J. Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution*, Vol.I (Chicago: University Press, 1991) is the best-known example. A fair overview of Christian mission activity in the Eastern Cape may be found in L. Switzer, *Power and Resistance in an African Society: the Ciskei Xhosa and the Making of South Africa* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1993), Chapter 4.

seen as two sides of the same coin. Whilst, on the one hand, they undermined the culture of the indigenous people, resulting in their detribalization, on the other, they brought technology, education, etc, which were highly beneficial to the African continent and its people.

One might ask why did the missionaries venture beyond the borders of their own countries. Was everybody Christian[ized] in their home countries? Why did they bother to change people across the seas! Then one stops and probably decides that the whole thing centred around racism, the whole question of superiority and inferiority of races, which was also at the core of colonization. F. Welsh, in his *History of South Africa*, puts it correctly when he states that the aim of missionary work 'centred around the Anglo – American belief that it was [their] specific responsibility to influence, if not to rule, the rest of the world.'² In his introduction to R.H.W.Shepherd, *Lovedale, South Africa, the story of a Century, 1841 – 1941*, Jan. H. Hofmeyer, Deputy Prime Minister of the then Union of South Africa correctly states that 'it is the missionaries who above all others *have* made South Africa safe for European civilization.'³ Germany, Holland, Denmark and, later on France, did much missionary work in Africa but Britain did so much more that the Parisian press regarded the whole business as an imperialist plot on the part of perfide Albion.⁴

² F. Welsh, *A History of South Africa* (London: Harper Collins, 1998), p.289.

³ R.H.W. Shepherd, *Lovedale, South Africa, The Story of a Century, 1841 – 1941*, p. vi.

⁴ E.A. Walker, *A History of Southern Africa*, 3rd ed., (London: Longmans, 1962), p.145.

It is remarkable to note that the whole missionary enterprise in the UK was initially not intended to go beyond the confines of that country, at least not before every single British person was enlightened gospel wise. This is depicted by a resolution passed by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Churches of Scotland of 1796.⁵

To spread abroad the knowledge of the Gospel amongst barbarous and heathen nations seems to be highly preposterous in so far as philosophy and learning must in the nature of things take the precedence while there remains at home a single individual without the means of religious knowledge, to propagate it abroad would be improper and absurd.

Despite this general attitude of the Scottish Church towards the mission cause, a minority element within the church (represented at this meeting by a certain Dr. Erskine, who quoted from Mathew 28: 18-20) decided to establish a Missionary Society, as an outlet 'for those in whose hearts burned the flame of missionary enthusiasm.' The Glasgow Missionary Society and the Scottish Missionary Society were formed against a backdrop of antagonism towards the spread of Gospel abroad.⁶

The London Missionary Society had already been formed in 1795, at a time of great unrest in Europe and elsewhere. The founder members were encouraged by the work of William Carey in India following the publication of his pamphlet two years earlier, "An Enquiry into the obligations of Christians to use means for the Conversion of the Heathen," and his preaching which centred around the words, 'Expect great things from God. Attempt great things for God.'

⁵ J. du Plessis, *A History of Christian Missions in South Africa* (London: Longmans, 1911), p. 182

⁶ Ibid., p. 183.

The LMS was the outcome of a meeting held at the “Castle and Falcon” in Aldersgate Street on 21 September 1795, which resolved as their purpose, quite contrary to the resolution of the Presbyterian Church of the previous century, that “the establishment of a society for sending Missionaries to the heathen and unenlightened is highly desirable.” The Acting Secretary of the new society was John Love, a Presbyterian Minister at Hoxton, after whom Lovedale mission would later be named.⁷

Van der Kemp was the first missionary to be sent by the London Missionary Society (LMS) abroad. A philosopher and medical doctor from Holland and a linguist (it is said he was proficient in 16 languages), trained in medicine at Edinburgh. Van der Kemp offered his services to the LMS after his wife and son were drowned on holiday. He was ordained as a minister and designated for missionary service at the Cape. He arrived at Cape Town on 31st March 1799 where he was instrumental in the formation of the “South African Society for promoting the spread of Christ’s Kingdom, residing at the Cape of Good Hope.”

After some time, Van der Kemp proceeded to the Eastern Cape to work among the amaXhosa. At this time King Ngqika dominated between the Kei and the Fish river, and Van der Kemp settled on the Mngqakhwebe River near his Great Place, near where Pirie mission is today. Ngqika permitted him to choose a site and build a school. He collected the people of Hoho, the Khoikhoi chieftainness after whom the Hoho mountain is named, and a few other families of a

⁷ Shepherd, *Lovedale 1841-1851*, pp. 1-5

mixed Khoikhoi and Xhosa blood. Van der Kemp made a good first impression among amaXhosa, and Ngqika visited him frequently, watching him build his house of raw bricks.⁸ His attraction to them also emanated from the fact that he was unarmed; this was a sign that he was a man of peace. The respect the amaXhosa had for Van der Kemp is signified in the name he was later given “Nyengane, derived from a verb meaning “to put down secretly”, ukuthi nyenge. AmaXhosa saw him as one who had secretly left his own people to “to bring them the light” from above (enyangweni).” Much as he condemned some of amaXhosa customs, yet Van der Kemp never undermined their culture so as to alienate them from it, nor did he try to replace it with European values and consciousness.⁹ Very soon this status among amaXhosa was elevated to that of being a rainmaker; this was because of his presentation of the Word in the form of prayers, hymn – singing, reading and writing. This status was reinforced during the drought of 1800, when Ngqika’s raindoctors failed to bring about rain he asked Van der Kemp to ask his God for rain, and when it rained the following day, the missionary’s reputation was reassured.¹⁰

Unfortunately, certain Europeans influenced Ngqika against Van der Kemp and the latter, fearing for his life, decided to leave Ngqika’s territory at the end of 1800. The missionary had become unpopular with Europeans because of his non-racial character, crowned by his

⁸ I.W. Wauchope, *Selected Writings, 1874 – 1916*. Ed. J.Opland and A.Nyamende (Cape Town: Van Riebeeck Society, 2008), pp. 49-51

⁹ J. Hodgson, ‘A Battle for Sacred Power: Christian Beginnings among the Xhosa,’ in R.E. Elphick and R. Davenport (eds), *Christianity in South Africa, a Political, Social and Cultural History* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1997), pp. 69-70.

¹⁰ Hodgson, p. 70.

marrying a slave girl more than 40 years his junior. He went and settled in Bethelsdorp near the later Port Elizabeth.¹¹ It is interesting to know that Isaac Wauchope's grandmother, Ngo (Mina), together with her mother, Tse, accompanied Van der Kemp to Graaf Reinet and back to Bethelsdorp in 1802.¹² He died in Cape Town on 15 December 1811. For 15 years after Van der Kemp left Ngqika's territory no missionaries were accepted in Xhosaland.

It was during this period of absence of missionaries in Xhosaland that Nxele (Makhanda) appeared as a prophet among amaXhosa. He had visited Bethelsdorp and came into contact with some missionaries of the LMS. Through contact with the Boers, he had become acquainted with the Dutch language. He was regarded by amaXhosa as a prophet, and he seemed well versed with such Biblical topics like the Fall of Adam, the Crucifixion of Christ, eternal punishment, etc. He aligned himself to Ndlambe against Ngqika at the Battle of Amalinde in 1817 where Ngqika was routed and sought colonial help, resulting in the Fifth Frontier War of 1818 – 1819, Nxele led the attack on Grahamstown. This time Ndlambe was defeated and Nxele was sent into exile in Robben Island where he died in 1820 trying to escape. Nxele had been preaching about "Dalidepu, who was actually superior to "Thixo", the God of the Europeans and who would eventually destroy all the Europeans – this proved that Nxele's preaching's were against the teachings of the missionaries, Nxele was actually in favour of

¹¹ Shepherd, p.11.

¹² Wanchope, p. 51.

adultery and polygamy, maintaining that witchcraft was the only sin of Blacks, whereas, on the other hand, Europeans had many great sins.¹³

Ntsikana, Nxele's contemporary and rival is said to have heard Van der Kemp preach when he was a young boy. Unlike later converts, Ntsikana continued to live among his own people. He also maintained cultural continuity by filling elements of the Xhosa tradition with Christian content, most notably in his Great Hymn. He used his own hut as a Church, his followers included Old Soga who was one of Ngqika's councillors. He died in 1821.¹⁴

The British decided to allow the Rev. Joseph Williams, also of the LMS, to enter into Ngqika's territory in 1816, as a government missionary. These were trying times for Williams, because, apart from his Christian duties as a missionary, he had to act as a "spy" for the colonial government, feeding the government with information concerning the amaXhosa – a difficult position as it could result in his losing the trust and confidence of his prospective amaXhosa converts. Williams brought with him Dyani Tshatshu, a young chief of amaNtinde who had been educated at Bethelsdorp. Tshatshu was to become the first black evangelist in Xhosaland.¹⁵ Much as Joseph Williams did not make the same impact as his predecessor, yet

¹³ D. Williams, 'The Missionaries on the Eastern Frontier of the Cape Colony, 1799 – 1853,' (Ph.D. Thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 1959), pp. 289 – 290.

¹⁴ Hodgson, p. 72.

¹⁵ Shepherd, p. 21.

his coming heralded the beginning of permanent missionary work in Xhosaland, not from the LMS, but from the missionaries of the Glasgow Missionary Society (GMS.)

The GMS was formed on the 9th February, 1796 at a meeting held in the Chapel-of-Ease session – house, Albion Street, Glasgow, under the chairmanship of Rev. Alexander Pirie, after whom Pirie mission was named. Rev. Robert Balfour (after whom Balfour was named) was appointed as Secretary. Rev. John Burns (after whom Burnshill was named) was also present. The GMS was formed ‘for propagating the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in heathen countries.’ The Society declared its willingness to cooperate with other societies or individuals sharing their cause. They encouraged working together with other Christian churches without interfering with the principles of any religious denomination. Consequently, they immediately worked closely with the LMS, corresponded with Dr. Love, and sent representatives to the LMS’s annual meetings. They even encouraged cooperation among different missionaries who happened to work in the same country. The vision of the GMS is enshrined in the twelve points as appearing in the document prepared by the Rev. Thomas Bell, and dated ‘Glasgow, March 1st, 1796.’¹⁶

The GSM insisted that all missionaries first learn the language of their “flock’. The society’s instructions about missionary attitude were clear, “superior”, but not arrogant. They stated that missionaries “must not ridicule the pagan idols, nor their manner or worship, but calmly reason with them always showing the utmost benevolence, that they ought not to expose the

¹⁶ Ibid, pp. 24 – 26..

innocent customs of the country, but as far as possible become all things to all men, that they may save some.”¹⁷

The first twenty-four years of the GMS operation was marked with failure and disappointment. The attempt to establish a mission in Sierra Leone was an utter failure. Then, in 1820, when the Board was seriously considering establishing a mission in India, they were diverted to South Africa. It so happened that there was a dire need of ministers for the Dutch Reformed Church in the Cape Colony and the Cape Colonial Government authorised Dr George Thom, the Presbyterian Minister of Caledon, to obtain church ministers and teachers from Scotland. The timing could not have been more perfect for the Directors of the GMS. After two Scottish reverends were recruited for the Dutch Reformed Church, the Rev. William Ritchie Thomson, who had been accepted by the Glasgow Mission as a candidate for the foreign field, now changed course and proceeded to South Africa, as the Cape Government missionary. He was given funds for the purchase of agricultural implements, as the government plan was the establishment of an industrial mission ‘on the confines of Kaffraria.’¹⁸

Reverend Thomson and John Bennie, a catechist, were the first Scottish missionaries sent by the GMS to the Africans of South Africa. They settled at Tyhume Mission (Gwali), where the

¹⁷ Ibid, p.25..

¹⁸ Du Plessis, p. 183.

Rev, John Brownlee, previously of the LMS but then a “Government” missionary, had founded a station in 1820.¹⁹

John Ross, who joined Thomson and Bennie in 1823, was the first fully qualified and ordained minister of the Church of Scotland to go to Africa. He arrived at the Tyhume with a small printing – press, the forerunner of the Lovedale Press. AmaXhosa had no written form of their language. The early missionaries had, therefore, first to acquire the language and master the clicks, and then to adapt their alphabet to represent the unfamiliar sounds of the Xhosa language.²⁰ One of Bennie’s first tasks was to devise orthography for isiXhosa.²¹ He revealed a talent for languages and was soon teaching through the mediums of Dutch and Xhosa. With Thomson, Bennie played a major role in the establishment of isiXhosa as a written language. He compiled a systematic vocabulary of the isiXhosa language in 1826 and eventually produced the first isiXhosa spelling book, word list and grammar, and wrote several readers. His original grammar entitled “Grammar of the Kafir Language” is still found at the University of Fort Hare and is still invaluable.²² He and Ross made a start with the translation of the New Testament. Fifty of his hymns were included in the isiXhosa Presbyterian Song-book.

¹⁹ G.C. Oosthuizen, *Shepherd of Lovedale* (Johannesburg: Kearsland, 1970), p.39.

²⁰ C.P. Brownlee, *Reminiscences of Kafir Life and History*, 2nd ed., (Lovedale: Lovedale Press, 1916), p. 348.

²¹ R.H.W. Shepherd, *Lovedale and Literature for the Bantu: a Brief History and a Forecast* (Lovedale: Lovedale Press, 1945), p.1.

²² N.M. Kili, ‘A Critical/Comparative Study of the Biblical Studies and Religious Education Syllabi in Ciskeian Secondary Schools with Special Reference to Teacher Training in these Subjects,’ (M.Ed. Thesis, University of Fort Hare, 1988), p.40

In 1823 it was arranged that Bennie and Ross should open a new station. After careful consideration of the country, it was decided to inaugurate such a station on Ncerha River, about twelve kilometres South East of Tyhume. Bennie and Ross took up their new abode in November of that year. After the death of Dr. Love on the 17th of December 1825, one of the missionaries at Ncerha wrote:

We think it the very least tribute of respect due from us to the late Dr Love, that able minister of the New Testament, and the zealous promoter of this mission, to perpetuate his memory in the name of this Mission Station in Caffraria. We have therefore dropt its former name, Incerha, and have called it Lovedale.²³

Up to the 1830's the work at Lovedale made slow progress. The water supply provided by the Ncerha stream was deficient and as a result amaXhosa did not settle in large numbers in the vicinity. The slow growth was not without an advantage. Bennie, who was in charge of the station, was devoting a considerable portion of his time and thought to translating the Bible and producing Xhosa literature. At the same time, progress was satisfactory enough as to warrant, in 1832, the erection of substantial stone buildings in place of the temporary structures first put up.²⁴

In 1827, the Rev. William Chalmers, also from Glasgow, joined the GMS missionaries in Xhosaland. He was accompanied by Messrs. Weir and Alexander, M' Diarmid, who were mechanics. For the extension of the mission, the older missionaries removed to other spheres

²³ *Report of the Glasgow Missionary Society for 1827*, p.8.

²⁴ Shepherd, *Lovedale, 1841-1941*, p. 83.

of usefulness and left Chalmers to carry on the work at the Tyhume. Chalmers had one perpetual round of preaching and teaching. Not content with working in a circle and immediate Tyhume station, he established four elementary schools at neighbouring homesteads, which were respectively named Burnett's, Swanstons's, Mitchells and Struther's, as the teachers received an annual grant of £ 10 from the congregation of three Scottish clergymen and from a Glasgow merchant bearing these names.²⁵

The school named after the Rev. Struthers of Glasgow was at the village of Soga, an important counsellor, and was taught by his eldest son, Festiri. When the scholars were able to read they were sent to the central school. Among the first thus promoted to a higher stage were Tiyo, a younger son of Soga, and his two half-brothers. Eventually, Tiyo Soga would become the first ordained Xhosa Minister.²⁶ Between 1828 and 1830, further GMS stations were established at Balfour, Burnshill and Pirie.

At this juncture, we need to look at the activity of the missionaries, but maybe even before that, what were their views about the indigenous people in the name of whom they decided to leave their homes countries? Their basic aim was to convert 'the heathen Natives to Christianity,' and, in the same breath, they sought to inculcate a new system of morals and general behaviour conforming to European ideals using education as an instrument through which the 'Natives' could learn to read the Gospels. They further undertook the secondary task

²⁵ J.A. Chalmers, *Tiyo Soga: a Page of South African Mission Work*, (Edinburgh: Andrew Elliot, 1877), p. 18.

²⁶ Ibid.,

of uplifting the people by promoting general social and material advancement. The missionary concept of Christianity, however, went hand in hand with doing away with everything ‘savouring of heathenism,’ which, in the eyes of the missionaries, included polygamy, ‘inheritance of widows,’ lobola, initiation, and other ‘heathen ceremonies,’ whether or not contradictory to the teachings of the Gospels. Some missionaries went so far as to insist on complete abstention from beer drinking and smoking.²⁷

There was, however, a general agreement among the missionaries that amaXhosa had a religion, albeit different from Christianity. The indigenous religion of the amaXhosa made no clear distinction between natural and supernatural. The ancestors, the spirits of the dead members of the lineage, were believed to take a continuing interest in those still living, and they were therefore the focus of ritual activity in daily life. Religious specialists, such as rainmakers, and diviners – were all important in the Xhosa understanding of religion. They used different names for God, like uMdali, uMenzi, Inkosi yeZulu, and the names borrowed from the Khoisan, Qamata and Thixo.²⁸

Donovan Williams concurs in his thesis, mentioning that Van der Kemp discovered that amaXhosa identified God as ‘UTHixo osezulwini.’ Hence he informed them, during his teaching visits to Ngqika, that ‘he was bringing that very being.’ Even the name “Qamata” was used at

²⁷ I. Schapera, *The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa: an Ethnographic Survey* (London: Routledge, 1937), p. 361.

²⁸ Hodgson, p. 69.

Ngqika's Great Place during the time of Van der Kemp. The same applied with the GMS at the time they started their work at Chumie. The mission amaXhosa residents were familiar with the name 'Uhlanga', which they said referred to a Supreme Being who made the sun, moon and the stars. Bennie was of the opinion that it was derived from the Xhosa name of the sun, 'ilanga'. Thus the missionaries did not have to create the idea of a Supreme Being, amaXhosa already had one, they had the concept, the only difference was in His name.²⁹

The attitude of the chief had a big impact on the success of the missionaries. If a chief opposed Christianity outright, conversions were relatively few, but if he accepted, his example was sufficient to bring over many of his subjects.³⁰ The missionaries needed permission from the local chiefs to establish stations in Xhosaland, but knowing that the former had the backing of the Colonial government, the chiefs had no other alternative but to comply. Granting land to missionaries, however, did not necessarily mean that the chiefs were ready to convert to Christianity, nor did it mean they bowed to missionary authority. Again, whilst, on the one hand, the missionaries preferred their stations to be close to chiefs for protection, the latter were wary of having missionaries too close to their homesteads, correctly fearing their interference.³¹

²⁹ Williams, pp. 290 – 291.

³⁰ Schapera, p. 36.

³¹ N. Erlank, ' Re-examining initial encounters between Christian missionaries and the Xhosa, 1820 – 1850,' *African Historical Review*, 31 (1999), pp. 8 – 9.

The mission stations comprised of the missionary house (which sometimes acted as a church and school room), the houses of converts, huts of the less staunch converts, the gardens of the missionary and the land worked by the converts. Irrigation canals were run from the local source of water ³² (mission stations were generally established where there was availability of water and wood for self-sufficiency).

Mission stations were part of the much bigger picture of the British presence in Xhosaland, and missionaries were of strategic importance to the Colonial government. Apart from their being the eyes and ears of the Colonial Government in so far as what the Xhosa were doing in their territory, they also acted as instruments or agents of persuasion whenever this was to the advantage of the government. For example, the case where the Rev. Joseph Williams was asked to convince King Ngqika to meet with the Colonial officials is worth mentioning. To prove that having missionaries staying and working amongst the amaXhosa was advantageous to the colonial government, some missionaries were appointed as government missionaries, being on the government's payroll, the Rev. John Brownlee is a good example.³³ This position , of being a government informer, cost him the trust of King Ngqika.

The way of life of amaXhosa informed the methods used by the missionaries in imparting the Gospel to them. AmaXhosa were agricultural and pastoral people. Generally they occupied

³² Ibid., p. 10.

³³ N. Tisani, 'Gender Relations in Mission Stations,.' Unpublished paper presented to the Conference on People, Power and Culture (University of the Western Cape, 1992), pp. 4 – 5; Hodgson, p.74.

areas where water and grazing were in abundance, and would remove when the water on their streams dried up and the veld was overgrazed to where there was sufficient quantity of water and grass, to what they called “cattle places.” Hence the missionaries devised a method which would ensure that the teaching and preaching of the Gospel reached the people wherever they were – itineration – just like Jesus Christ used to do.³⁴

Consequently, the missionaries at Chumie (Tyhume) divided the countryside around Tyhume into districts for regular itineration. By virtue of its nature, it meant that non-residents only received limited exposure to mission Christianity. In addition, schools were established, church services were held and isiXhosa was reduced to a written language so as to translate portions of the Bible. Thus began a thorough and intensive teaching of the station residents, preparing them to be “civilized” people.³⁵

It was perhaps fortunate that the missionary Joseph Williams was not well educated. He was a carpenter and didn’t know much Xhosa, that is why he had Dyani Tshatshu (Jan Tzatzoe) as his interpreter. He was also a trained carpenter and an evangelist), having interpreters was peculiar to the pioneer missionaries – interpretation of sermons by indigenous evangelists made a great impact on the amaXhosa audience. King Ngqika, for example, was quite

³⁴ MS 3126, Draft Report to Directors of Glasgow Missionary Society [John Ross, n.d.], Cory Library, Grahamstown.

³⁵ Erlank, p. 11.

impressed to see Tshatshu praying in Xhosa, he had always assumed the Dutch language was 'part of the white's privileged access to their God.'³⁶

At first communities were interested in the Gospel, but this soon changed and people started to dodge the missionaries avoiding contact with them as often as possible by moving to their cattle places (these were alternative grazing for cattle, generally away from their homesteads and used when local grazing was insufficient) whenever they felt they had had enough of the missionaries.



Avoiding the missionaries was just as easy with non-station residents; the chiefs simply used their authority to distance themselves from the missionaries. When visiting chiefs at their Great Places, the missionaries were often kept waiting until they finally understood the message, that they were not welcome. A good example is when John Ross wanted to establish an out station of Lovedale in 1830, it cost him a lot of visits to different chiefs and a lot of travelling before he could get a place to establish a station that would be named Pirie.

Whilst on the one hand the missionaries might have increased their number of converts, the attitude of some of them towards the culture and religion of the Xhosa deprived them of a large following. Joseph Williams, for example, condemned outright African customs like the use of the red ochre for decorating the body, the paying of lobola, ancestor ritual, dancing. He was

³⁶ Hodgson, p.74.

equally rigorous in trying to introduce western clothing, respect for the Sabbath, in fact, to him, Christianity was equivalent to western civilization. Hence at one stage Ngqika complained of missionary cultural interference, saying:³⁷

You have your manner to wash and decorate yourselves on the Lord's Day,
and I have mine the same in which I was born and that I shall follow.
I have given over for a little to listen at your word but now I have done for it.
I adopt your law. I must entirely overturn all my own and that I shall not do.
I shall begin to dance and praise my beast as much as I please and I shall
let all who see who is the lord of this land.

The missionaries, however, soon discovered that they were not making much impact on amaXhosa, they were saddened by the fact that they (amaXhosa), especially the chiefs, 'should be so insensible to the truths of God's word.' Again, not everybody who resided at the mission stations was converted, as shown by the statistics of candidates for baptism for 1828, there were on 22 communicants and 22 candidates for baptism, out of a station population of 300 at Chumie (Tyhume) and 116 at Lovedale.

One might ask the question as to why the stations held so much attraction for people, if not for conversion, to be close to those who disseminated the Gospel? People went to reside at the mission stations for many different reasons and because of the benefits they offered. Stations were havens for those who were marginalized by their societies. For example, those accused of witchcraft would run to the stations to avoid being killed. Some young girls would run to the safety of the stations to escape forced marriages. Another benefit of mission stations was easy

³⁷ Quoted Peires, *Phalo*, p.78.

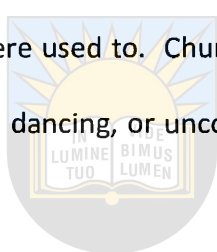
access to land and irrigation. This means that some mission residents looked at the material gains that stations could offer, rather than their spiritual side – their primary purpose, hence missionaries sometimes commented that some mission residents ‘are lovers of themselves more than lovers of God. It was again the question of the material benefit of the stations which caused a rise in the number of converts after the Cattle-Killing tragedy of 1856 – 57, not Christianity per se.’³⁸

Even when the majority of missionaries lacked formal education, they sought to fill this void with ‘zeal and a determination to better themselves through disciplined application of the Protestant work ethic.’ The Scriptures were their authority for belief and practice; their message was salvation, the fallen state of man, the wages of sin, and redemption from eternal damnation. This differed totally from the indigenous religion of amaXhosa. They did not have concepts like “sin”, “damnation” and “redemption.” They believed in a closed system of cause and effect that excluded change, had a worldly need for rain, food, prosperity, fertility, healing, strengthening, protection from evil and misfortune, as well as restoring and maintaining of harmony and balance between people, their ancestors, and nature. Their religion addressed immediate practical concerns like rainmaking and survival. The missionaries failed to understand this indigenous form of religion and instead of attempting to integrate it with Christianity, made the enormous mistake of condemning it as outright heathenism, undermined it and portrayed amaXhosa as uncivilized barbarians, in the process alienating the

³⁸ Erlank, pp. 13-21

very people to whom they had come to disseminate the Word of God. In other words, they failed to profile the concept of a supreme being, which both religions acknowledge; instead, they pushed forward the superiority of their own religion, an attitude which was not acceptable to amaXhosa.

The whole of station life was totally different from the African way of life, starting from the ringing of the bell at sunrise for devotions, to daily labour and the buildings which were different from the round huts amaXhosa were used to. Church was attended regularly. Often services were enlivened with loud weeping, dancing, or uncontrollable laughter in unexpected response to the missionary message.



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In line with the civilizing and Christianizing of the mission station people, they were expected to adopt the European mode of dress. The missionaries' wives taught women to knit, sew gowns and shifts, and plait straw for hats. The missionaries regarded the adoption of western clothing as residents' acceptance of "the thoughts and feelings of civilized life." Christian names soon followed, they were symbols of new identities, Biblical names or names of staunch leaders of mission societies were favourites, among them were Joseph Butterworth, John Love, Richard Watson, Richard Balfour, John Barr. The Christianizing of the mission station residents, therefore, went hand in hand with their westernization, and their detribalization in the process.

Mission religion centred on the written word. Hence education was vital in the whole process of conversion, converts had to be able to read the Gospel. Ross and Bennie played a big role in

this regard – with their printing and translation and reducing Xhosa into written form, leading to the translation of the Bible. Tiyo Soga, the first black South African to be ordained as a priest, also made his mark in the revision of the Xhosa Bible in the late 1860's.

Mission stations soon clashed with the Xhosa rulers, as one ruler, noticing their invasion of his sovereignty, complained, “when my people become Christians, they cease to be my people”.³⁹

Education was another vital aspect of missionization, after all, the converts had to be educated to understand the Gospel, and the missionaries, by virtue of their knowledge, inevitably became the first teachers. At first they taught whoever showed the inclination to learn. The whole question of missionary education, however, will be dealt fully in the next chapter.

In their report of 1827, the GMS described the duties of missionaries as of two kinds – mental and manual. Under the first might be arranged study for personal improvement, preaching, teaching and translating. Under the second, building, fieldwork, gardening and a variety of other things, which required either their personal exertion or superintendence, or both.⁴⁰

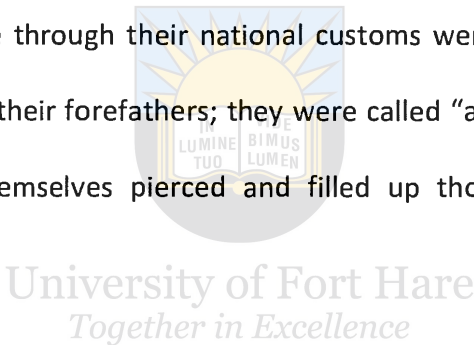
As has already been indicated, conversion went hand in hand with westernization. For amaXhosa, this meant assuming a European way of life, starting with wearing European clothes.

³⁹ Hodgson, pp. 71-79

⁴⁰ Report of the GMS for 1827, p. 15.

There was a marked advancement in this westernization, for example, in Lovedale, hence Mrs Ross commented, 'the people here have of late become desirous of clothes to wear. The women have worked for gowns and shirts, and girls sew for frocks, ... It is agreeable to see them adopting the dress, as well as the thoughts and feeling of civilized life.'⁴¹

As amaXhosa came under the influence of the teaching of the missionaries, as well as the realities of colonial rule, they began to abandon red clay in favour of European clothing. The African Christians who first broke through their national customs were despised and treated like renegades to the customs of their forefathers; they were called "amagqobhoke", meaning "the perforated." They had themselves pierced and filled up those holes with western civilization.⁴²



The awkward situation of the converts was more apparent during war times. Those who repeatedly refused to fight on amaXhosa side during the frontier wars, and some of whom took refuge with the missionaries were caught between two loyalties: one to their own communities, and the other to the white missionaries who taught them. From this conflict of loyalties sprang a cleavage between the traditionalist or "red" people who continued to anoint themselves with red clay, and the Christian converts who attended school and wore European clothes. As elsewhere in Africa, in the early stages of mission work, converts were accommodated on land allocated to the mission, and exempted from the jurisdiction of chiefs.

⁴¹ *Report of the GMS for 1827*, p. 16.

⁴² Brownlee, p. 348.

Mission stations became places of refuge, not only during war, but for also those accused of witchcraft, in fact, mission stations housed a diverse population with their different agendas. This policy presented many difficulties, as the missionary became, in one sense, the rival of the chief, and there were endless arguments as to whether or not the missionary should exclude from mission land those who failed to live a Christian life.⁴³

Voicing his opinion about Christian religion, and at the same time indicating its irrelevance to amaXhosa, one Xhosa old man said that he had listened to the missionaries a few times, but since he could not understand what they said, he had therefore discontinued his visits, though he believed them to be quite harmless. What the missionaries targeted most were some of amaXhosa's most valued social institutions, and they met with outright opposition. By attacking "witchcraft" they in fact attacked witch finding, which for amaXhosa, was "like denying the existence of disease and suggesting the elimination of the medical profession." Preaching against polygamy and lobola was another mistake on the part of the missionaries. Lacking the concept of "sin" (and being punishable by hell fire), amaXhosa could not understand the missionaries objections to dancing and "nudity".⁴⁴

Some amaXhosa felt that the Gospel had deprived them of their country. The missionaries were to blame for everything, the annual hut tax, their certificates of citizenship, etc. They

⁴³ M. Wilson and L. Thompson (eds): *The Oxford History of South Africa: South Africa to 1870*, Vol I, (Oxford: University Press, 1969) , p. 265.

⁴⁴ Peires, *Phalo*, p. 75

came, they saw, they conquered. They were spies who came to discover the fat of the land. They received grants of land from chiefs for mission stations, but soon hailed their countrymen who came across the sea in such numbers that the mission station grew into towns. The land was lost forever and the missionaries were responsible. Despite all this they were urged to accept an alien religion, this was the unkindest cut of all.⁴⁵

Christianity could not hope to replace the Xhosa traditional religion as the latter was bound up with the life cycle of birth, maturity and death. There were questions that amaXhosa could find no answers for in Christian religion. “How did those words get in the book (referring to the Bible) you tell us about? “, they asked, “How did the first man who wrote them know them?” A favourite remark of Xhosa sceptics was that “if God was all powerful and the Devil the author of all sin, God should simply convert the Devil and save everyone trouble.”⁴⁶

There was, however, something good out of the missionaries. From the start they sought to offer the skills of European husbandry. They taught the use of the plough and the hoe and most important of all, the value of dams and irrigation channels that tapped the rivers and streams, and allowed a wide range of crops, and year-round planting. But the instruction the missionaries offered was inseparable from their effort to convert amaXhosa, they were

⁴⁵ *Kaffir Express*, 6 March 1871, p.3.

⁴⁶ Peires, *Phalo*, p.76.

distrusted because of that. Their success, therefore, was mainly confined to the converts they gathered around their mission stations.⁴⁷

Another point worth mentioning about the missionaries was the construction of water-courses in Xhosa territory. When Balfour was established, Ross and Mc'Diamid worked almost alone to construct a water course. Stretch realized the importance of these furrows for the survival of the missions, hence his financial and labour assistance towards their competition (the furrow below the Alice Police station is still intact). Working on the construction of watercourses gained those amaXhosa who were involved prestige in the eyes of their countrymen. Native agents were not popular among amaXhosa in those days. Festiri Soga, from the Tyhume mission station, therefore welcomed the opportunity of being sent by the mission to help in the cutting of a furrow for a group of non-mission Xhosa, who had noted that 'the watercourse is a very good thing. He noted that 'if we are prosperous in making it (the watercourse) my teacher will send me to teach there.'⁴⁸ It can, therefore be seen that the technical knowledge gained at mission stations could also benefit amaXhosa outside of the mission community.

The missionaries, therefore, played a significant role in westernizing amaXhosa. However, as the Comaroffs claim, their function as emissaries of their mother countries was the "colonization" of the mind..⁴⁹ Although the Comaroffs deal specifically with abaTswana, their

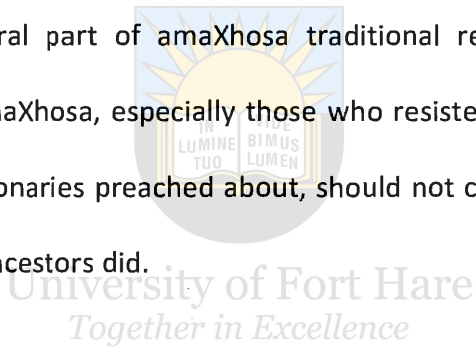
⁴⁷ N Mostert, *Frontiers: The Epic of South Africa's Creation and the Tragedy of the Xhosa People* (London: Pimlico, 1992), pp. 947-948.

⁴⁸ Williams, p.68.

⁴⁹ Comaroff, pp. 11-13.

ideas are applicable to virtually all the black people in the continent of Africa. The missionaries came to spread the Gospel, but in so doing they undermined the traditional religion of amaXhosa. That is why they met with defiance from the majority of amaXhosa. Much as they succeeded in converting others, the new dispensation was questioned by the majority.

In trying to Christianize amaXhosa, they failed to persuade amaXhosa to see Christianity as but an extension of their own religion. They simply condemned important social institutions like polygamy that formed an integral part of amaXhosa traditional religion as heathen and punishable by hell fire. Some amaXhosa, especially those who resisted conversion, could see no reason why the God the missionaries preached about, should not convert the Devil and let them live happily, the way their ancestors did.



The advantage of having missionaries in their country was, however, seen by both converts and non-mission Xhosa. The construction of water furrows was seen as beneficial to everybody, so was husbandry and crop rotation. The chiefs who allowed the presence of missionaries in their midst surely wanted to gain more than religious teaching. Noting that the missionaries had the military backing of the colonial forces, King Ngqika decided that by allowing them in his territory, he could secure indirectly the support of the colonial troops against his rival Ndlambe.

The position of the missionaries among amaXhosa was not always secure. The peculiarity of their position was noticeable during the Cape-Xhosa wars. The fact that they were used as the medium of communication between the chiefs and the colonial authorities proved to be very

embarrassing for them. It meant that they had to be extremely careful in handling this communication. To aggravate matters, it did not necessarily mean that they had military protection. An example of this is the fact that they were left defenceless during the 1834-35 Cape-Xhosa war, hence they decided to leave their mission stations and seek sanctuary in the colony.

Lastly, this whole process of “civilization” of the Xhosas by the missionaries went hand in hand with the dispossession of amaXhosa of their land. The Cape-Xhosa wars were in most cases the result of this “Civilization”. As a punishment for having been the “cause” of the war, substantial parts of amaXhosa territory was taken from them and only those amaXhosa who had not participated in the specific wars were allowed to stay in such territories – as British subjects. In trying to regain their lost land amaXhosa engaged in further wars, resulting in their dispossession of yet more territory – and so this went on until they were, despite their best efforts, subjugated. It all started, therefore, with the missionaries, who came, saw, and conquered.

CHAPTER TWO: ESTABLISHMENT OF THE LOVEDALE INSTITUTION

Where the missionary goes, the school follows. He prefers to preach, but finds he must also teach.”⁵⁰ This perhaps sums up the operations in the mission institutions, Lovedale included.

Though the Lovedale Institution is still operational today, nearly two centuries after its establishment, it originally served a different purpose. It was established as a station of the Glasgow Missionary Society (GMS) in 1823, it has been used for upgrading teachers, now it is an FET College with diverse curricula, opening doors to a variety of careers. The Lovedale buildings which we see today, however, is the second Lovedale, the first one, called “Incerha” and established on the Ncerha River, was destroyed during the Frontier War of 1834 – 1835. The second Lovedale, on its present site on the Western side of the Tyhume River, was established in 1836 and opened a seminary for Africans in 1841. Operating the Lovedale Press, this mission also played a major role in establishing Xhosa as a written language. Later, newspapers like *Ikhwezi* and *Isigidimi Samaxhosa* came into being.

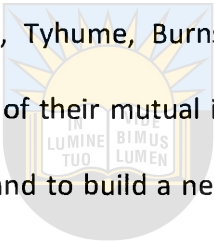
We will deal with the causes and consequences of the 1834-5 Frontier War in later chapters. Here it is sufficient to note that many of the GMS missionaries fled from their stations as a result of that War, including Bennie of Lovedale, Ross of Pirie and Laing of Burnshill. This station was near the great place of Sutú, the principal widow of Ngqika, who had offered

⁵⁰ J.Stewart, *Dawn in the Dark Continent* (Edinburgh and London: Oliphant Anderson & Ferrier, 1906) , p. 178

protection to the missionaries Chief Maqoma also promised safety to these missionaries.⁵¹

None were harmed, though the mission stations themselves were destroyed, except for Burnshill which Sutu protected.

By November 1835, the missionaries of the GMS were back at their stations. But at Lovedale, Bennie discovered that the printing press and all the mission buildings, with the exceptions of two small apartments and the little church, had been destroyed. Towards the end of 1836 the missionaries of the four stations Lovedale, Tyhume, Burnshill and Pirie, who had formed themselves into a board for the discussions of their mutual interests, decided to abandon the site of old Lovedale on the Ncerha Stream and to build a new station bearing the same name closer to the Tyhume River.

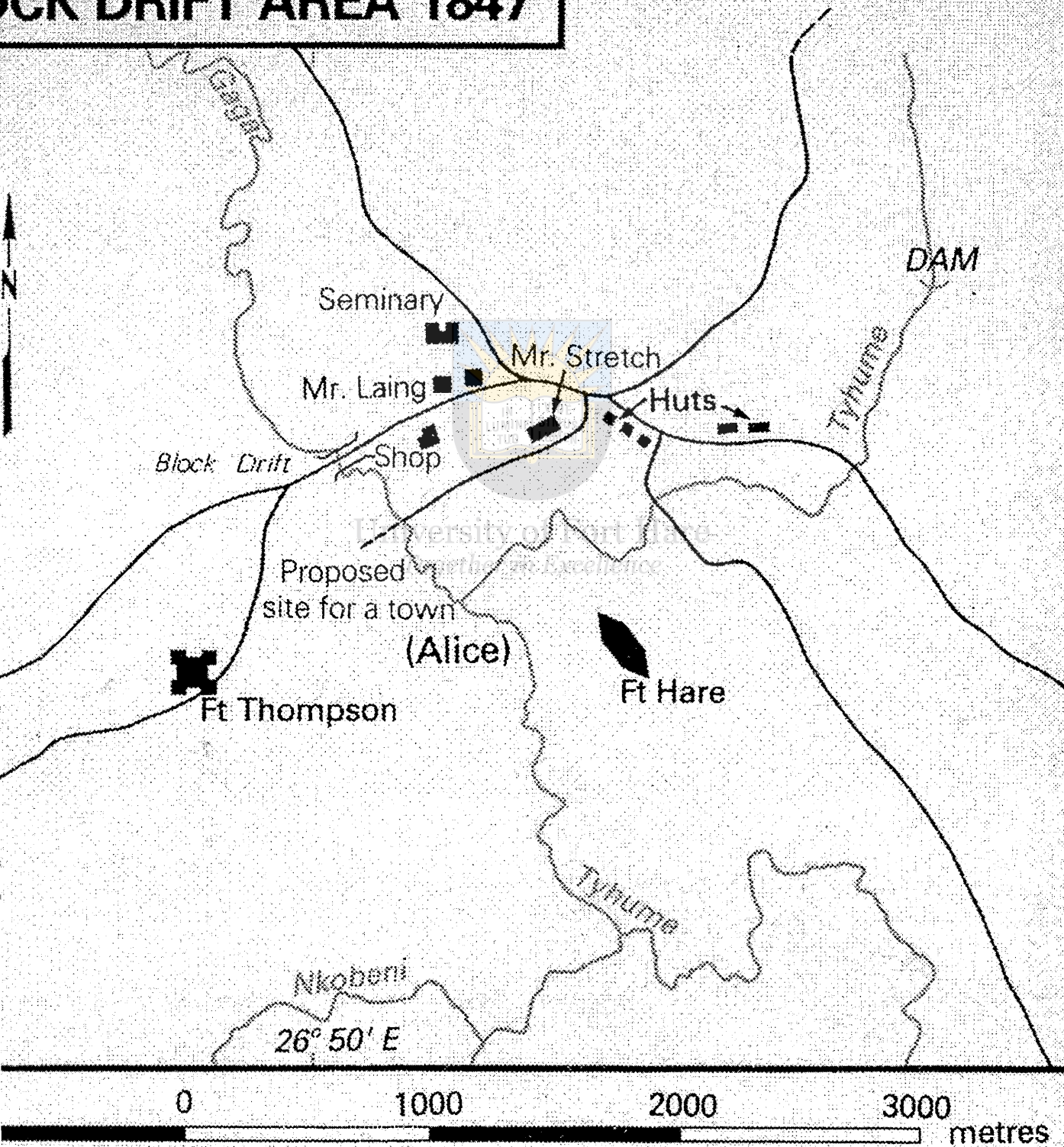


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It was initially thought to build the new station east of the Tyhume, but an offer came in from Resident Agent Charles Lennox Stretch, known as Xolilizwe ('the peacemaker'), who was responsible for implementing the treaty agreements between the Colony and the Ngqika Xhosa (discussed in Chapter 4). Stretch had been granted the title to this land, known as "Block Drift" or "Edikeni" in 1840 by the Chiefs Maqoma, Tyhali and Sandile, together with their counsellors (amaphakathi) (see Map). The grant was about 100 morgen and was made without fee or reward, except that the words "we know Stretch will use the land for the benefit of our

⁵¹ Shepherd, *Lovedale, 1841-1941*, pp. 82-88.

BLACK DRIFT AREA 1847



children’ were inserted in the title. Stretch now granted a portion of this land to the GMS, and invited Rev Weir, acting for John Bennie, to erect on it the “second Lovedale.”⁵²

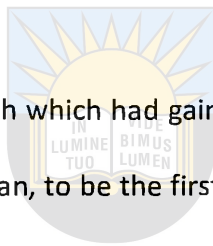
From early in the 1830’s, the missionaries had been motivating the establishment of a centre at which Africans could be trained as teachers and catechists and at which also their own children could receive suitable education. In 1837 a memorandum, largely prepared by the Rev. John Ross, asked the Directors in Scotland to send them a licentiate who would form an educational establishment for the training of school masters and catechists. At a meeting of the Board on 7 May 1839 it was agreed that the site of the seminary should be at Lovedale.⁵³ The seminary two-storied building was not completed till the first half of 1841. When completed it contained the tutor’s house and classroom, a library, kitchen premises with servants quarters, and ten rooms for students boarders. The missionaries were helped by a little band of Xhosa converts, among who was Tshuka, who served the missionaries with an unblemished record for many years.

The endeavour to find a tutor fell to the Directors in Scotland, but it was now a very different GMS to the one that had built the first Lovedale. The so-called “Ten Years Conflict” by which the Presbyterian Church in Scotland was divided into two camps, consisting of those who supported a “State Church” and those who espoused the “voluntary” principle led to the break-up of the original GMS. Consequently, two competing missionary societies emerged. They were the

⁵² C.L. Stretch, *Block Drift* (Cape Town: G.J. Pike, 1855), p.9.

⁵³ Shepherd, *Lovedale 1841-1941*, p. 89.

Glasgow Missionary Society, adhering to the Free Church of Scotland, and the Glasgow African Missionary Society, adhering to the United Presbyterian Church.⁵⁴ The missionaries and their African helpers were left to decide for themselves to which society they would adhere. At a meeting held at "New Lovedale" on the 17th May 1838, it was agreed to dissolve the Missionary Board. Missionaries Bennie, Ross, Laing and McDiarmid, controlling Lovedale, Burnshill and Pirie, adhered to the old GMS, while Niven and Chalmers of Tyhume and Iqhibira joined the Glasgow African Missionary Society.



The Directors of the GMS, that is, the branch which had gained control of Lovedale, appointed William Govan, a thirty five year old Scotsman, to be the first Principal of Lovedale. Govan was ordained to the ministry in 1840 and arrived at Lovedale in January 1841.⁵⁵ The seminary building was still under construction when Govan arrived and it being impossible to admit any pupils at the time, Govan spent the few months learning isiXhosa language. The Institution was opened on Wednesday 21st July 1841, the first anniversary of Govan's ordination. The opening of the Seminary was a big occasion, the opening service being conducted by the Rev. Thomson, the first ordained missionary of the GMS appointed to South Africa. The Rev. Bennie translated into isiXhosa for the benefit of amaXhosa who attended the occasion. The address on the subject of the Seminary was given by the Rev. James Laing. He explained the principles of the

⁵⁴ It is worth pointing out, more especially for the light it shows on the untrustworthiness of R.H.W. Shepherd, that Shepherd (followed by Du Plessis, p. 188) is quite wrong to comment that 'all the missionaries .. threw in their lot with the Free Church.' Shepherd, *Lovedale 1841-1941*, p.104. The full story is given by Williams, pp.104-114 Tiyo Soga adhered to the United Presbyterian Church.

⁵⁵ Shepherd, *Lovedale, 1841-1941*, p. 93.

proposed seminary, particularly that of allowing and enabling the educated Africans 'to drink at the English fountains of the literature, science and practical godliness,' and thereafter importing this knowledge to their fellow countrymen in their own language.⁵⁶ Accordingly, education at Lovedale was designed to be 'an atmosphere, a discipline, and a life.'⁵⁷

This was the gist of the missionary work, the essence around which it revolved. The educated and "civilized" Africans, the "white black gentlemen", the elite in their own societies, were to be used as "tools" of spreading English civilization to their own societies. The old concept of undermining African culture comes to the fore again here. Imparting the knowledge they gained in English education and English civilization to their fellow Africans would, the missionaries thought, ensure that the whole of Xhosa society was fully exposed to the English version of civilization. Coupled with Christianization (as Christianization and education were intertwined), the old dream of the Colonial government, a peaceful eastern frontier, would materialize. If at the end of the day amaXhosa were exposed to education, Christianity and civilization, then peace would reign supreme in the frontier; there would be no more frontier wars, as "gentlemen" and "Christians" do not fight. Above all, this would ensure a skilled and semi-skilled cheap labour force for the settlers, resulting in a comfortable and prosperous lifestyle for them, thereby maintaining their so-called "high standard" of living.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 96.

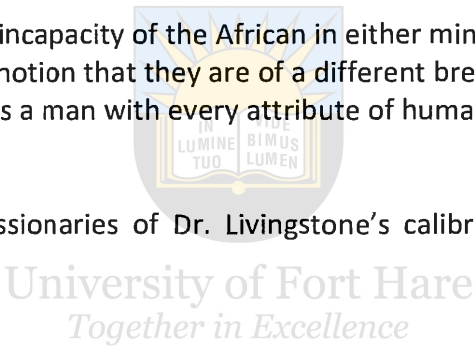
⁵⁷ *Lovedale Appeal*, Issued by Authority of the Governing Council, July 1926, [Cory Library, SA Pamphlets Vol 50], - p.9.

This, in a nutshell, was the whole point in letting the educated Africans 'to drink at the English fountains of literature, science and practical godliness'.

Citing the "Guiding Principles" of missionary work, David Livingstone, much earlier, showed he had a different opinion of Africans than his contemporaries at Lovedale. He definitely had not come into contact with the theories of pseudo-scientific racism, according to which some races are superior than others. He maintained:

"We do not believe in any incapacity of the African in either mind or heart. We have seen nothing to justify the notion that they are of a different breed or species from the most civilized. The African is a man with every attribute of human kind."⁵⁸

Africans needed more of the missionaries of Dr. Livingstone's calibre, with his man-were - created-as equal-approach.



The missionaries met on the evening of the opening day to examine those who had been proposed for admission. Certain principles were agreed upon. It was arranged to require of those who entered the institution that they should not be under twelve years of age, should be good readers of their own language, should have made some progress in writing and arithmetic, and that they should be of such capacity and character as to warrant the hope of their profiting by a higher course of education for the benefit of their countrymen. It was understood that students, whether black or white, who belonged to congregations connected with the GMS, if found worthy of admission, should have board and education free of charge.

⁵⁸ Lovedale Appeal, 1926, p. 9.

Students of other denominations would be admitted but would pay for board and education. Students of European parentage, not connected with the GMS, were to be admitted as non-residents at £4 per annum ⁵⁹

The first intake of students at Lovedale consisted of twenty boys, eleven Africans and nine Europeans (all but one of whom were missionary children). The Institution's attitude to racial division evolved over time, but must be dealt with now. R.H.W. Shepherd, citing Andrew Smith who taught at Lovedale in the late nineteenth-century, explained it like this:⁶⁰

They are in the same Classes; in the same Literary Societies; and they sit in one Dining Hall. They are entirely separated in dormitories, and at dinner they sit at separate tables. In games they are usually separate, being allowed to please themselves, but they meet in the grounds. It will be seen that they are brought into a true relationship with each other, and also that they are not mixed up.

The African, like the rude country lad who goes to a city to mix with young gentlemen at college, learns civilized usages from the European, while the latter, separated as the British officer from the private by the strict regulation of Mess, loses nothing by contact.

⁵⁹ Shepherd, *Lovedale 1841-1941*, p.99.

⁶⁰ Ibid, pp.98-99.

The whole question of racism can never be separated from missionarism in general and Lovedale in this particular case. The seating arrangement in the dining hall, as mentioned in the previous paragraph, is a vivid example of this racism. It was inculcated in the white pupils that they were superior to their African counterparts, the irony is for the missionaries to be the principals of this indoctrination - they being the champions of equality and philanthropism, two of the criterial attributes of the Christianity they were preaching. This racism was in fact encouraged by the GMS itself. It was one of the principles of the GMS as soon as it was founded, that their missionaries abroad should maintain their superiority, though they should not be arrogant. This was the origin of racism and segregation in South Africa, as elaborated the following century by Hendrik Verwoerd, the apartheid Prime Minister, when he crushed missionary education for allowing the African child to be the greener pastures of European life, as he [African Child] had to be taught at a very early stage that equality with Europeans was not for him. Verwoerd was advocating a separate, inferior education for Africans, differing from the missionaries who offered the same tuition to both races.

On the morning of the 22nd of July 1841, those admitted were again assembled and addressed by the visiting missionaries who were about to leave, particularly Messrs Thomson, Ross, M'Diamid and Rodger. The ordinary routine of duty now entered upon by Mr Govan and described by himself as follows:⁶¹

⁶¹ Autumn Quarterly Intelligence' *Glasgow Missionary Society*, 1841, p. 5.

We met at 7 o'clock in the morning for an hour, which is wholly devoted to the Scriptures and Shorter Catechism. After an interval of another hour, which is taken up with breakfast, we again meet, and with the exception of another interval of about three quarters of an hour, between eleven and twelve, we continue at studies till about half-past one. The young people work a little for the sake of exercise and amusement in the afternoon on the grounds, and in the evenings they prepare their lessons for the following day. At 7 o'clock I meet the servants in the schoolroom, regarding them as also forming part of my charge. ...

With the opening of the Lovedale Seminary, the Mission Library was also begun, though the missionaries had only a small selection in this department, particularly with regard to works on travels, missions and religious biography. In a letter to a private friend, Govan addressed his problem thus:



Although a mission library has been commenced here and though I have myself a pretty good collection, there are comparatively few works ... that are well adapted for the instruction of the young. And looking forward to the time when my Kaffre pupils will be able to read, I anticipate some difficulty in supplying them with proper books.⁶²

From the commencement of the seminary it was decided to have agricultural operations connected with the institution. It was hoped by the missionaries that a colleague from Scotland would be appointed for this department, but this hope was not fulfilled and so an African who had had some training in agriculture in the colony was given the post.⁶³ For agricultural purposes over forty acres of good land were available. An arrangement was made by which Stretch would extend the water furrow at Block Drift so as to take in also the land belonging to

⁶² G.M.S., 1841, p. 7.

⁶³ Shepherd, *Lovedale, 1841-1941*, p. 90. His name, most unfortunately, was not recorded.

the village and the seminary. The water course or furrow, two miles in length and cut from the Tyhume River, was constructed at a cost of £ 619, of which £ 319 was paid by Stretch and £ 300 by the GMS or collected by James Backhouse and George Washington Walker, who visited the country in 1839.⁶⁴

Tuition at Lovedale was initially carried on by two teachers and three pupil-teachers. The two teachers were paid by the Foreign Mission Committee of the Free Church of Scotland. The pupil-teachers, who were at the same time continuing with their own studies, received each from government an annual allowance of £4. Tuition was arranged under three departments, each headed by a teacher: (a) English (including translation from English to isiXhosa and vice versa), English Grammar, Geography, History and elements of Science (b) the Commercial, including writing of Arithmetic and Mathematics; and (c) the Classical including Latin and Greek.

A certain number of African day and evening scholars, who were not far advance as to rank with any of the classes in the seminary proper, were taught mainly by the pupil-teachers. Boarding and tuition of Africans was the responsibility of the Institution, their parents or guardians provided clothing. All the boarders were required to work on the lands of the Institution, two hours in the afternoon during the week days and three hours on Saturday afternoons.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Ibid, p. 91.

⁶⁵ G12 -'58, p.2

In 1844, Govan proposed to the other GMS missionaries that they should offer to receive two pupils from other denominations free of charge. This proposal was adopted, and the neighbouring missions of the United Presbyterians and the London Missionary Society were invited to send candidates to write competitive examinations for these two places.⁶⁶

Reverend Chalmers of the United Presbyterians sent two of his scholars, Tiyo Soga and Ngxomboti, as competitors. Tiyo was by no means the most advanced pupil in his school, but he was a great favourite because of his truthfulness, meekness and patience. Tiyo did not succeed, having received the fewest advantages of all the competitors. Convinced that Tiyo as a lad of good character and promise, and morally far superior to those who had surpassed him, Chalmers arranged for his education. Govan cordially accepted the charge.⁶⁷ Thus Tiyo was admitted into the Lovedale Seminary, and it was a new era in his life.

Unfortunately for Govan, his attempt to establish Lovedale on a broader basis by admitting pupils of other missions was disapproved by the Foreign Missions Committee of the Free Church. Govan therefore felt that he could not continue, all the more because opening the doors entailed very little expense to the home church. He, therefore, offered to resign. It turned out that When the War of the Axe (Seventh Frontier War) broke out in April 1846, Govan departed for Scotland, taking Tiyo with him, and also the two sons of the Rev. John

⁶⁶ J.A. Chalmers, *Tiyo Soga: a Page of South African Mission Work*, (Edinburgh: Andrew Elliot, 1877), p.25.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 26.

Ross. Govan's resignation was thus the stepping-stone by which Tiyo Soga entered upon his illustrious career.⁶⁸

Because of the War, all Europeans (missionaries and traders) were ordered to leave Xhosaland. The Lovedale Institution was again broken up, the pupils were dispersed, while the missionaries, took shelter at Fort Armstrong in the Kat River Valley for safety. Lovedale itself was converted into a fort, a contingent of soldiers being stationed at Captain Stretch's house nearby.⁶⁹ They stayed there until 1847, when they moved out to the newly-established Fort Hare. The buildings were again in ruins, and the colonial government offered £100 to fix them up, provided that the seminary resumed. They also offered to provide a salary of £12 a year for every black teacher who qualified from Lovedale.

This was just as well because the General Assembly of the Church in Scotland was considering a proposal to abandon Lovedale for financial reasons. With the new support however, the situation was saved and the pro-mission element in Scotland committed itself to accept financial responsibility for the next five years. They insisted however that Govan should return, and he did so in February 1850.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Chalmers, p. 38

⁶⁹ H.L. Henchman, *The Town of Alice with Lovedale and Fort Hare* [Lovedale, 1927], p.32.

⁷⁰ Shepherd, *Lovedale, 1841 – 1941*, p. 119.

One important result of the War of the Axe was the annexation of the so-called British Kaffraria, between the Keiskamma and the Kei Rivers. It was becoming ever more clear that the colonial state needed to 'inspire in the Bantu a desire to cultivate their lands by ploughing and to induce them to follow habits of industry, the first step to civilization and equally so to embracing the Christian Faith.'⁷¹ When the Cape was granted representative government in 1854, special funds were reserved for governing the indigenous people of British Kaffraria. These trends were enhanced by the appointment of Sir George Grey as Governor of the Cape. Grey felt that the education as then given to Africans was too bookish and he wished particularly to encourage the training of African artisans.⁷²

Grey's attitude towards the indigenous people of British Kaffraria did not, of course arise out of benevolence or love, but to benefit the settlers. He did want to make a difference to indigenous people, but to uplift them for their own advantage was far from his aspirations for the eastern frontier. Teaching them skills would of course be a good idea, but the essence of Grey's whole scheme was that these skills should be of benefit to the settlers. In other words, skilled Africans would not only ensure a peaceful frontier, but would also provide the settlers with semi-skilled cheap labour.

In 1855 Governor Grey visited Lovedale. In a conference with the missionaries, he approved their desire to give Africans an education which would allow them to become teachers, but suggested the addition of an Industrial Department, and generously promised that the

⁷¹ Ibid, p.130

⁷² Ibid, p.132.

government would give them a grant of money to meet the necessary expense. The additions in the shape of workshops took place in 1857, and added considerably to Govan's responsibilities.⁷³ Grey had adopted the broad strategy of promoting the westernisation of the African through those mission bodies already in operation. A very large amount of work, which could not be well done by him, would remain for the missionary bodies to do in their own way.⁷⁴

In addition to the educational department, a trades department was introduced including carpentry, masonry, bricklaying, wagon making and blacksmithing. Each of these was in charge of a master tradesman, at an annual salary of £125. A manageable number of apprentices were placed under each master tradesman. The aim was not to afford a defective training to a large number, but to train a comparatively small number to be really skilful and expert artisans. The apprentices, besides their being provided with board, lodging and washing, got 9s per month, the first year; this was increased by 3s per month in subsequent years. In the wagon-making and blacksmiths departments almost the whole of the work done was for customers, and it was a rule that prices of work done be paid on delivery. Wagon making was particularly popular among the boys. Government assistance was utilised to supply wagon wood and iron for the wagon-making and blacksmith departments, as well as, salaries of the masters for 18 months, after which no further government assistance would be available. But it was hoped that before the government assistance phased out, there would be an adequate supply of material

⁷³ *Lovedale Past and Present: a Register of Two Thousand Names*, (Lovedale, 1887), p.ix.

⁷⁴ H. Calderwood, *Caffres and Caffre Missions* (London: Nisbet, 1858) , p. 139.

in stock, and dwelling houses for the masters would be erected. The educational department, however, was the priority at Lovedale.⁷⁵

Apart from the 15 apprentices, Lovedale taught 62 African and 14 European scholars in 1856 divided into ten classes. The studies of the most advanced class were Latin, Greek Algebra and Geometry. They read such texts as Virgil's Aeneid, Caesar's Commentaries and Lucian's Dialogues. The studies of the second class were in Latin, Grammar and Grammatical Exercises, British History and Arithmetic. The studies of the third class were Latin Rudiments, Latin Delectus, Geography, English Grammar, History and Elementary Science.⁷⁶

One would argue that the curricula at Lovedale were not exactly relevant to Africans, it would hardly benefit them, Greek or Latin would hardly be useful to them except in training for Church ministry, nor would their societies benefit in terms of social upliftment. But, it would definitely make the Lovedale scholars into very 'white' blacks, a polished class of the African elite, the envy of every "uncivilized" persons in their home communities. In them, people would actually see the fruits of education and civilization, and, with the right amount of mimicking the ways of 'educated' and 'civilized' people, 'savagery' might be minimized on the frontier. Such an end result was most definitely the desire of the Colonial Government.

From July to December 1857, there were 56 boarders, 51 Africans and 5 Europeans. During the same period there were 29 day scholars, 22 African and 7 Europeans. None were admitted as

⁷⁵ G13- 57, Report of the Progress of the Native Industrial Institution at Lovedale, p.3.

⁷⁶ G13 – 57, p. 4.

boarders unless they could read Xhosa fluently. It was intended to gradually raise the standard of admission. The standard of admission at Lovedale exerted a perceptible influence on the schools from which the supply of students was obtained. The field of supply was not limited to the stations of the Free Church Mission. There were four from Port Elizabeth; several from the neighbourhood of King Williams Town and others from more distant parts of British Kaffraria and the Colonial Frontier.⁷⁷



It was soon discovered, however, that the industrial departments opened through the influence of Sir George Grey were more costly than had been anticipated. Sir Philip Woodhouse, Grey's successor, appointed Dr Langham Dale, in 1859 as Superintendent-General of Education, to visit the Institutions which offered industrial training, with a view to revising the government subsidy given to each institution. Coming to Lovedale, Dr Dale was impressed with the huge success in both departments – educational and industrial, and so suggested a continuance of the annual government subsidy of £250 per year granted to Lovedale. He, however, recommended a revised scale according to which aid had to be granted, Lovedale accepted the revised scale, consequently, whilst all the other institution discontinued with their industrial departments, Lovedale did not. Thus the industrial courses remained a prominent feature of the work at Lovedale.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ G12 – 58, Report of Native Industrial Institution at Lovedale, p.1.

⁷⁸ R.H.W. Shepherd: Lovedale, South Africa..., pp. 134 - 135

Lovedale's successes, both academic and industrial, were praised by the Rev. Henry Calderwood, missionary of the London Missionary Society and later Government Commissioner of Victoria East, in his book published in 1858, *Caffres and Caffre Missions*⁷⁹ Along with Lovedale's successes may be mentioned teachers of high quality such as Rev. Robert Templeton (after which Templeton School in Bedford was named), as well as students who carried the legacy of Lovedale, like Richard Solomon (later to become the Union of South Africa's High Commissioner in London),⁸⁰ Tiyo Soga, the first African Missionary who later founded the Mgwali and Tutura Mission Station. The register of each student at Lovedale, long as it was and which included those who came from outside the borders of South Africa, included many who made a success of their lives. Here we can mention only a few from the period with which this thesis is concerned. Balfour Ngqaba, from Balfour in Stockenström district, may perhaps be taken as typical. He attended preparatory school at Lovedale taught for a time at Gqumahashe in Victoria East, and spent the rest of his life on the mission station. Balfour Ngqumba, from Port Elizabeth was more successful. He entered Lovedale in 1856 and completed his apprenticeship in wagon-making over a period of four years. Afterwards he set up his own business at Kama's location, worked for a while with a white Wagon-maker in Alice, then moved to Stutterheim.⁸¹

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 147.

⁸⁰ R.H.W. Shepherd; Lovedale, South Africa, ..., p. 148.

⁸¹ *Lovedale Past and Present: a Register of Two Thousand Names*, (Lovedale, 1887), p. 12.

A more notable student was Jacob Bokwe who attended Lovedale from its reopening in 1841. He later taught the junior classes at Lovedale until the War of the Axe, after which he was appointed as Interpreter to the Magistrate in Alice. Two of his sons became successful graduates of Lovedale. The oldest, Candlish, entered the institution in 1854 and spent the rest of his life as a teacher and interpreter at various places in the Eastern Cape. John Knox Bokwe, the younger son, though out of our period, deserves a mention as one of the outstanding products of the Lovedale Institution. He was a teacher, a book-keeper, a publisher and a composer of music .⁸² Other well-known Lovedale students include Peter Tyamzashe, Walter Rubusana, Rev. Mpambani Mzimba , and Rev. Elijah Makiwane, among many more who were at one stage or another, at Lovedale.



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It was only in 1867 that a Girls School was founded at Lovedale under Miss Jane Waterston, or “Noqakatha” as she was affectionately called. But because this period falls outside the scope of this work, it will be left with other researchers to unearth and unpack everything the girls were doing at Lovedale.

⁸² Ibid, p. 22.

CHAPTER 3: THE ARRIVAL OF THE ABAMBO

The political geography of the Ceded Territory (the lands between the Fish and the Keiskamma rivers) was dramatically altered in 1835 by the arrival of the abaMbo, later known as amaMfengu. These words are sometimes used interchangeably, as in the well-known book by Ayliff and Whiteside, *History of the abaMbo generally known as Fingo* (1912).⁸³ Here we will use the term abaMbo to discuss the history of these people in their country of origin, and reserve the term amaMfengu for the history which followed their scattering during the Mfecane upheaval around 1820.

“Imbo” was the name given to a precious stone which the amaHlubi dug out of the ground for trade purposes, and which is mentioned for example in the proverb which says: “Ungalahli imbo yaklio ngo Poyiyana” (“Don’t give away something precious for something which may turn out to be worthless”) !⁸⁴ The original home of the abaMbo is normally described as “Tukela”,⁸⁵ by which should be understood not only the Thukela river itself, but the valleys of its many tributary rivers rising in the Ukhahlamba mountains, especially the Mzinyathi. We will here list the names of the different abaMbo peoples, using a contemporary list by the missionary John Ayliff (1835)⁸⁶, updated by oral traditions collected by R.T. Kawa (1929):

⁸³ J. Ayliff and J. Whiteside, *History of the AbaMbo, generally known as Fingo* (Butterworth: Gazette, 1912).

⁸⁴ R.T. Kawa, *Ibali lama Mfengu* (Lovedale, 1929), p.9.

⁸⁵ Kawa, p.39,

⁸⁶ *Grahamstown Journal*, 12 August 1835.

a) AmaHlubi

AmaHlubi occupied the land North East of modern Durban on Mzinyathi River. They were broken up by Matiwane in about 1825. After the death of Chief Mthimkhulu (the circumstances surrounding his death will be mentioned later in this chapter), his son, Chief Mhlambiso, with the remainder of this people and a few cattle, reached King Hintsa (of the amaGcaleka) country, sent him a present of oxen, and asked for a dwelling place. Hintsa gave him a river called Esixwoxweni, where he resided at the time of the 1834 Frontier War.

b) AmaZizi

AmaZizi resided on the Tukela River, North East of Durban, as well as, according to Kawa, on Ncome and Sandlulube mountains.⁸⁷ They were destroyed as a nation by Matwane. Their chief in Hintsa's country was Njokweni (jokwini), according to Ayliff.

c) AmaBhele

AmaBhele resided on the INadi River, a tributary of the Thukela, rising in the Lenge mountains. Before they dispersed, they were a big nation, as numerous as Hintsa's people; afterwards they were also destroyed by Matiwane. These were the people to whom Reverend Ayliff felt in part indebted for the preservation of his family and mission station at Butterworth, during the 1834 Frontier War). Their chief, Nkwenkwezi, was converted to Christianity, and he urged his people to do likewise.

⁸⁷ Kawa, p.39.

d) AmaGobizembe

AmaGobizembe resided on Nkuzi River which falls on the Thukela North East of Durban. They were destroyed by the Hlubi chief Mthimkhulu. Their chief was Cwara.

e) AbaseKunene

AbaseKunene resided in Dake River which also falls on the Tukela River North East of Durban. They were destroyed by Matiwane. To keep in favour with Hintsa, their chief, Hliso, professed to be a rainmaker.

f) AmaNtozakhe

Resided on the Mhlabatshane river, which falls into the sea West of Durban. They were destroyed by Tshaka. In Hintsa's country, their chief, Nontshantsho, was in charge of Hintsa's cattle place on the Shixini.

g) AmaReledwane

AmaReledwane, with their chief Matomela, resided high up the river Busali, which falls into Durban bay, they were destroyed by Matiwane.

h) AbaShwawo

AbaShwawo resided on the Mzimkhulu, West of Durban. They were destroyed by Madzikane, the chief of the amaBhaca. In Gcalekaland their chief was Nkwali.⁸⁸

⁸⁸ *Grahamstown Journal*, 12 August 1835.

The rivers in the land of abaMbo were the Pongolo, Mfolozi, Thukela, Nkomanzi, Mzinyathi, Inadi, Mzimkhulu, Nkunzi, Ngangani, Mvoti, Mgeni, Mhlatuza, Mhlanga, Manzimtoti. The mountains were Ulundi – Kwahlamba – Drakensberg, Lange, Nduweni, Sandlulube, Hlobane.⁸⁹

It is most probable that the abaMbo would never have been transformed into amaMfengu if they had formed a united front against their attackers. Unfortunately, they lacked solidarity, and did not understand that if people are united, they stand, but divided they fall. Most probably, abaMbo would never have been scattered by the wars of “Mfecane”, but because different nations laughed at each other whenever one of them was attacked and never thought of helping one another, they ended up being destroyed and ran away from their homeland. According to Kawa, amaBhele and amaZizi displayed cowardice, as they simply ran away without putting up a fight, as soon as they realized they were the only ones left in eMbo country, after the other abaMbo nations had left, following the killing of the amaHlubi King, Mthimkhulu.⁹⁰

The term “Mfecane”, meaning “clubbing”, describes the upheavals that occurred among the African population of South Africa in the 1820’s and 1830’s. These upheavals began in Natal

⁸⁹ Kawa, p.40.

⁹⁰ Ibid., p.41.

and Zululand, spread to the Highveld and made an impact that was felt as far north as Tanzania.⁹¹

The term “Mfecane”, however, has become questionable. It has been questioned by professional historians ever since Julian Cobbing’s controversial article, “The Mfecane as Alibi”, published in 1988.⁹² Alan Webster, one of Cobbing’s students, extended his argument with specific reference to the amaMfengu.⁹³ Webster argued that the majority of “Fingos” did not originate in KZN, but were people enslaved by the British during the War of 1835. It is not possible to get into details, but it should be sufficient to point out that Webster did not consult even one isiXhosa language source. R.T. Kawa, K.K. Ncwana⁹⁴ and others expended much energy identifying the precise nations which later became known as amaMfengu, and everyone of them originated in KZN. Kawa was born in 1854, a mere twenty years later, and was well familiar with the generation which endured the Mfecane. He was moreover profoundly disillusioned with colonialism, and we may be sure that he would have blamed the British for the enslavement of the amaMfengu if any such had taken place.

⁹¹ R.A. Moyer, ‘A History of the Mfengu of the Eastern Cape, 1815-1865,’ (Ph.D. thesis, School of Oriental and African Studies, 1976), p.72.

⁹² J Cobbing, ‘The Mfecane as Alibi: thoughts on Dithakong and Mbhompho,” *Journal of African History*, 29 (1988).

⁹³ A. Webster, “Unmasking the Fingo: the war of 1835 revisited,” in C.Hamilton (ed), *The Mfecane Aftermath* (Wits Univ. Press, 1995) pp. 241-276.

⁹⁴ K.K. Ncwana, *Amanqakwana Ngeminombo Yezizwe Zase-Mbo* (Lovedale Press, 1953).

Were Kawa alive in 1988, he most definitely would have rejected the “Cobbing hypothesis” in the strongest terms. Kawa lists all the chiefs of the different nations of abaMbo and their genealogies, he mentions where each resided before their dispersal, he would have resented to have the chiefs he respected so much being called “collaborators and opportunists, who were prepared to follow British orders on the management of the Fingo”, as well as challenge Cobbing on his idea that amaMfengu had no authentic chiefs.”⁹⁵

The raids of the amaNgwane of Matiwane, however, need to be dealt with, as their killing of the Hlubi king, Mthimkhulu II, set the amaHlubi in motion to the South and West. History has it that when war between Dingisayo’s amMthethwa and Matiwane’s amaNgwane became imminent, the latter sent their cattle to Mthimkhulu II, for safe keeping until after the war was over. Matiwane was defeated, and to secure peace, he made arrangements to pay tribute and to give his sister, Magenge to Dingiswayo in marriage. Paying tribute necessitated the return of his cattle but, to Matiwane’s surprise and anger, Mthimkhulu refused to release them.⁹⁶

Mthimkhulu had made wrong calculations, assuming that amaNgwane would come back from the battle defeated, crushed and disintegrated – how wrong he was! Matiwane retaliated by sending his Impi against the amaHlubi, with the disastrous results, being their defeat and the killing of King Mthimkhulu. Some amaHlubi fled southwards and westwards –the amaNgwane then occupied their territory, but not for long. Fearing an attack from Tshaka, the amaNgwane launched a second attack on the remaining amaHlubi, causing them to flee and, in turn, the

⁹⁵ V. Nhanha and J. Peires, “introduction” to R.T. Kawa, *Ibali/amaMfengu* (new ed. Cory Library, Grahamstown, 2011), pp XV – XIX).

⁹⁶ Ayliff and Whiteside. p 11.

amaNgwane themselves fled. It was the flight of both amaHlubi, led by Mpangazita and amaNgwane, which set the majority of amaBhele and amaZizi in motion. Each of these chiefdoms, in turn, caused others to flee.⁹⁷ The amaHlubi ceased to exist as a united entity and their survivors were scattered like the fragments of an exploded shell.⁹⁸

Matiwane's amaNgwane attacked any nation they came across with on their southward movement, but their invasion of Thembuland marked the end of their career of destruction.

Matiwane had now entered the country neighbouring abaThembu, by the source of the Mthatha River and settled on the mountainous region called Mbholompho. Both Ngubenguka, the abaThembu king and Hintsa, King of amaXhosa, knew about the warlike amaNgwane.

Feeling unsettled by their presence so close to them, they sought help from the Colony, their neighbour. The result was the defeat of the Matiwane and his "Fetcani" (as amaNgwane were called because of their marauding habits) by a combination of the Colonial forces under Colonel Somerset and abaThembu and amaXhosa of Ngubengcuka and Hintsa respectively at the Battle of Mbholompho near the Mthatha river, in August 1828.⁹⁹

After Mbholompho, Matiwane and a very small remnant of his people finally returned to Zululand, only to be killed by Dingane, Tshaka's successor, who feared him as a rival. The amaNgwane who remained in Transkei fragmented. Some settled in Pondoland where a

⁹⁷ Moyer, p.95.

⁹⁸ Ayliff and Whiteside, , p.11

⁹⁹ Ayliff and Whiteside, p.16

community of their descendants can be found today.¹⁰⁰ Some joined amaMfengu in Gcalekaland. Others were taken into the Colony by white soldiers, “to avoid a massacre” and distributed among the whites as labourers. After the multitudes of amaMfengu entered the Colony in 1835, the whites apparently no longer distinguished amaNgwane from amaMfengu.

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R.T. Kawa, in his book, “Ibali lamaMfengu”, concurs that abaMbo were not dispersed by Tshaka from Tukela, but that they fled after Mthimkhulu was killed by Matiwane. They crossed Umkomanzi River to Pondoland, Thembuland and Xhosaland. The first to flee was Zulu Mafu, chief of amaRaule-Hlubi and his people, then followed chiefs Zimbi, Mhlambiso, Monakali, Matomela, Zimema, Msuthu, Mbilase, etc. Realising they were the only ones left on the land, amaZizi and amaBhele followed suit, without knowing the cause of the flights. Away fled Njokweni, Xengxe, Qegu, Xabadiye, Nollazi, Wulana and Mdingi (a very young boy at the time, but the senior chief of all amaZizi – he died at the Battle of Mgwangqa during the War of the Axe in 1846). These people stayed for a while at Mkomanzi, where chief Mabandla was circumcised.¹⁰²

From Mkomanzi they settled for a time in Pondoland, at the time under Faku, Sicawu’s grandfather. After a brief sojourn the amaMpondo, abaMbo proceeded to Thembuland and Gcalekaland. They were well treated by the abaThembu king, Ngubengcuka, received all civil

¹⁰⁰ Moyer, amaMfengu, p.96

¹⁰¹ Moyer, p.96

¹⁰² Kawa, p. 43

rights and even became councillors. When the majority proceeded to Xhosaland, some remained, for example, the people of Menziwa, a prince of amaZizi.¹⁰³

The whole movement of the abaMbo from Natal was not an easy one, they endured untold hardships. Defeated and broken, thousands of men, women and children travelled hundreds of kilometres, without food, except wild fruit and bulbous roots dug out of the ground. Many died on the way, and survivors became walking skeletons. Since Africans did not take any census of their numbers, their accurate number is not known. More or less 35 000 survived and sought refuge with the abaThembu and amaXhosa. With their sparsely populated country, abaThembu were greatly strengthened by abaMbo refugees. They were kindly treated and enjoyed all the civil rights their hosts had. AbaMbo were also valued for their skill in the use of herbs as medicine for both man and beast. The greater number of abaMbo moved into Gcalekaland, south of the Bashee River, here they were also given a warm welcome by the amaXhosa King Hintsa.¹⁰⁴

On arriving in Transkei, abaMbo refugees, according to George Pamla, son of Charles Pamla, who was the first “Mfengu” to be ordained as minister by the Wesleyans, must have said something like “singamamfengusa” to describe their wretched condition and their peaceful intent. This would probably be accompanied by the phrase: “Ithongo malindebeke, ndafela

¹⁰³ Ibid., p.44

¹⁰⁴ Ayliff and Whiteside, p.15.

ecaleni kwendlela,” “God must look upon me here, I die along the roadside.” A sympathetic chief would offer hospitality and perhaps an opportunity for settlement.¹⁰⁵

Another credible version is that offered by James Ayliff, Reverend John Ayliff’s son and himself for a long time a government official among amaMfengu. He has it that Mgayise, leader of a band of refugees, on arriving in Transkei, met Ngubengcuka, the King of the abaThembu, who asked him who he and his people were and where they were going. Mgayise replied “Si ya fengusa sifima nikongo,” “we are wanderers seeking service.” Ngubengcuka then replied, “Ku umgili nzakuba yemfengu yam.” “All right, then you will be my Fengu.” This meant he was welcoming them in Thembuland – as prospective abaThembu.¹⁰⁶

Thus the name “Mfengu” was derived from the phrase “singamamfenguza.” Simply translated, this would be “we are wanderers seeking service.” By “service” is implied a situation where iMfengu would work for an individual in return for food, shelter and an opportunity to acquire wealth, mainly cattle and eventually economic independence. Slavery or indentured servitude, as practised by Europeans, simply did not exist among abeNguni and the “state of servitude” mentioned in J. Ayliff and J. Whiteside’s “History of AbaMbo can by no means be equated with slavery.”¹⁰⁷

This is reiterated in K.K. Ncwana’s *Amanqakwana Ngeninombo Yezizwe zaseMbo*. The name “Mfengu” is not anybody’s name, nor any leader of a nation amongst those uprooted by the

¹⁰⁵ Moyer, p.75.

¹⁰⁶ Moyer, p.76

¹⁰⁷ Ibid, p.74

wars of Mfecane. The saying “singama Mfengu siyamfenguza” (we are destitute people seeking service) is just like saying “Uinkosi wena mna ndiyinja yakho” (you are King and I am your dog), which should not be given a literal meaning which would take away the dignity of one who humbly seeks help – which is the exact meaning of “[uku] mfenguza”. So the name “Mfengu” was not anything like the name of an ancestor of any of the nations from eMbo. This name just means a state of virtually having nothing, thus affecting your dignity as well.¹⁰⁸

The majority of abaMbo went to Xhosaland where on arrival, they were given a new name amaMfengu. They were welcomed and showered with hospitality by the Xhosa King Hintsa, “Zanzolo” (his praise name), who called them his fellow brothers.¹⁰⁹

It is apparent, however, that abaMbo/amaMfengu did not arrive in a whole body in Gcalekaland, some came as individuals or in small leaderless groups, while others came in large groups with hereditary leaders.¹¹⁰ One example was a band of amaMfengu who came to Lumlilo, a subordinate Gcaleka chief, who resided at the Shixini River, and asked for shelter. He then informed King Hintsa that some “thin” people had arrived in his village and requested instructions as to what to do with them. Hintsa instructed him to treat them well, give them food, clothes and shelter, to help them “forget their poverty.” After sometime Hintsa sent for the amaMfengu as he wanted to see them. They, however, did not reveal their true chiefs, for fear of their assassination by Hintsa, hence they pointed Njokweni , a commoner, when asked

¹⁰⁸ Ncwana, p.47.

¹⁰⁹ Kawa, p.44

¹¹⁰ Kawa, p.44

who was their chief. To their surprise, Njokweni was welcomed as a fellow chief, was given land near his “great place”, cows and people to “milk cows.” Hintsa then directed his people to give amaMfengu work so they could earn cattle. Seeing the welcome Njokweni had received, the true chiefs revealed their identity and were also welcomed.¹¹¹ Like Njokweni, they were given land where they could reside with their followers, and were loaned cattle and were permitted to govern within prescribed limitations. Confirming what Moyer says, Kawa further specifies the land given to amaMfengu chiefs. For example, Njokweni was given Mgomanzi and his younger brother, Malangeni, Mpenduza. Mabandla was given Cegcuwana, whilst Matomela and Mhlambiso were taken and supported at the “Great Place”, where they ate from the same dish with Sarhili, Hintsa’s son. Sarhili was told by his father that he must never leave food in the dish for Matomela and Mhlambiso when eating with them, for by so doing, they would usurp his chieftainship from him.¹¹²

Hintsa and his principal chieftains first took as many amaMfengu as they thought fit to take, thereafter other people, took as many as they required. Thus Hintsa not only got an increase of people in his otherwise thinly populated country, but also obtained an increase of servants to attend his cattle and cornfields. In return, amaMfengu were allowed to use the milk to support themselves and their families. They took the greatest care of the cows lent them. They gave particular attention to the calves lest any should die; for this they would lose the milk of the mothers. They chose the most remote parts of the country for their huts and cattle kraals,

¹¹¹ Moyer, p. 120

¹¹² Kawa, p.45.

where the grass was abundant, so that under their care the cows gave liberal supply of milk. After the lambing or calving period, men were given an agreed upon number of beasts as a type of payment. These cattle remained theirs so long as they remained with the amaGcaleka. If iMfengu proved acceptable and rehabilitated himself, he acquired greater independence within the community and was eventually granted full membership. AmaMfengu were given the opportunity to acquire wealth in Gcalekaland. But naturally they had to go through a period of social inequality with amaXhosa, but the ultimate aim was for them to be independent, after getting rid of the status of being “busa clients.”¹¹³

In addition to cultivating for their employers, amaMfengu also cultivated for themselves, though part of the produce of the lands they farmed was sometimes seized from them. It must be understood, however, that this was not the general habit of amaXhosa, but just isolated cases by certain individuals. Sometimes, amaXhosa would raid an amaMfengu village and take away whatever quantity of corn they chose from their corn pits. If a Mfengu woman or girl took wood or a skin to a trader to see, and was met by iGcaleka, the wood or skin would be confiscated even if the buying and selling transaction was in progress, much to the annoyance of the trader, as well as loss to iMfengu.

Since amaMfengu could call nothing their own, they protected themselves with the “defensive armour of deception”.¹¹⁴ To acquire property was their first priority. They cultivated tobacco extensively and had learnt a method of preparing and packing it in small rush baskets. When

¹¹³ J.B. Peires, *The House of Phalo* (Johannesburg; Ravan Press, 1981), p. 88.

¹¹⁴ Ayliff and Whiteside, pp.18-19.

enough tobacco was ready, the Mfengu, under the pretence of visiting some friends or relatives residing at a distance, would make up a party of peddlers, and visit that part of Xhosaland where they were not known, and where this commodity was in demand, which they would sell for cattle (many bags or baskets of tobacco for one small beast). After disposing of their wares, they would hide the cattle from the Xhosa employer, and then at the first convenient opportunity they would get to a trader and exchange the cattle for ornaments, spades, shoes iron, or cooking utensils – not for their own wearing or use, but for trading purposes. Thus in the fashion they accumulated a good number of cattle but were able to conceal their wealth in cattle from the Xhosa by mixing them with those of friendly neighbours. Thus they perpetually kept the Xhosa in ignorance of the extent of their wealth in cattle.

Poppy Fry, in her article “Siyamfenguza: The Creation of Fingo-ness in South Africa’s Eastern Cape, 1800 – 1835,” also cites this Mfengu “life of trade”, as described by Ayliff.¹¹⁵

On the cultural front, in due course amaMfengu were assimilating into amaXhosa. For example, assimilated Dlamini-Zizi became amaGcaleka of the Dlamini-Zizi clan. AmaMfengu were required to adopt some amaGcaleka customs, but, while modification of particular customs may have been regretted, they were not particularly drastic. Most cultural differences, such as the time of day when a boy was circumcised or the length of confinement a girl underwent during intonjane rites, were minor. One Xhosa customary practice which the amaMfengu particularly disliked was “uphundlo”, a sexual play involving young girls and counsellors during intonjane rites. AmaMfengu were also victims of amaXhosa traditional

¹¹⁵ P.Fry, “Siyamfenguza: the Creation of Fingo-ness in South Africa’s Eastern Cape, 1800-1835,” *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 36 (2010)

doctors' charges of being the cause of sickness of individuals through witchcraft, and by the same means of driving away the rain, and for these charges they were horribly punished, sometimes lost their possessions, even life. They, however, also believed in witchcraft.¹¹⁶

It was against this background that the Wesleyan mission arrived in Gcalekaland. After initially refusing missionary presence in his country, Hintsa allowed Reverend W.J.Shrewsbury, of the Wesleyans, to establish a mission station in 1827. Probably this time Hintsa thought a missionary would be a convenient liaison officer between him and the government, and would add to the dignity of this place. He took Shrewsbury in his care, and sent him an ox with the message 'here is a cake of bread from the house of Kauta, the great ancestral chief of the Gcalekas. Hintsa adopts you into the same family, and makes the mission the head of the house.' A resident population soon settled on the station to hear the Word of God. According to Ayliff and Whiteside, Hintsa would enter the church when service was being held, and, after listening a bit, would then leave, saying, "This word may suit my dogs, the Fingos, but I and my people will not have it." We need not take this literally, but it did so happen that the church, which was initially established for the amaGcaleka, became crowded at every service by amaMfengu.¹¹⁷

The relationship between amaMfengu and missionaries at Butterworth opened a new and highly sensitive chapter in the history of amaMfengu. The presence of the missionaries offered amaMfengu an alternative to their African situation, something they could not have foreseen.

¹¹⁶ Moyer, p.121; Ayliff and Whiteside, p.21; *Grahamstown Journal*, 17 August 1835.

¹¹⁷ Ayliff and Whiteside, p.20.

Without the presence of the missionaries, maybe amaMfengu could have assimilated with amaXhosa. Unfortunately our knowledge depends on the biased missionary writings. We will begin with the narrative essentially as presented by the Reverend Ayliff. Afterwards, we will correct this by looking at the broader picture later on.

When Reverend John Ayliff arrived in Butterworth in 1828, he found the amaMfengu community very receptive of the Gospel, the kindness of the mission family, educating their children, and sometimes, protection against different types of amaXhosa oppression. This all resulted in the missionary gaining the confidence of many amaMfengu. AmaMfengu started attending church services in earnest, and sent their children to school. This new state of affairs caused friction between Hintsa and the mission family. The Christianization of amaMfengu, as far as amaGcaleka and King Hintsa was concerned, was tantamount to the missionary taking amaMfengu from them, and, consequently, relations between the King and his principal men, on the one hand, and the missionary, on the other, soured.¹¹⁸

AmaMfengu also obtained cattle through seeking employment with the missionary and English traders; they used their remuneration to buy the same. These early positive encounters with whites, encouraged the amaMfengu to get closer to the colonists. No wonder they were attracted by the missionary church, where a white man, Rev. Ayliff, was the minister. Hintsa quickly noticed this Mfengu inclination towards whites. He was angered by the amaMfengu children attending the Day and Sabbath schools, thereby acquiring the skills of reading. He began to view the missionary with suspicion. His anger was aggravated by the sight of the

¹¹⁸ MS 1110 Cory Library. J.Ayliff, 'History of the Wars producing the dispersion of the Fingoes.'

several amaMfengu being administered the sacrament of baptism, one Sabbath he entered the church. He was furious as he stormed out of the church, saying, “how dare Ayliff throw water on my dogs. I will make him take it off, and then I will kill him.” He then resolved to remove amaMfengu from the influence of the missionary.¹¹⁹

Early in 1834, Hintsa determined to move up to the Indwe River, and issued an order that the whole coast country should be evacuated, on the pretext that the area was infested with some insect, which was dangerous to the cattle. The real reason was probably his wish to remove amaMfengu from the vicinity of Butterworth, and therefore from the influence of Ayliff and his teaching. Most amaMfengu, especially those in charge of the King’s and his principal men’s cattle, reluctantly obeyed the order to move. They, however, pleaded that their wives remain to look after the houses and the corn, which was about to be harvested.

It is clear that there was a marked deterioration in the relations between Hintsa and the missionary and amaMfengu, especially those residing at the mission station. Hintsa’s change in attitude may have been caused by extraneous factors, including the deteriorating relationship between whites and amaXhosa west of the Kei. In case of an eruption of another war, Hintsa had to secure his own chiefdom.¹²⁰ Hintsa’s anger against Missionary Ayliff and his converts was further aggravated by the role of Nkwenkwezi, a Bhele chief, in providing information to

¹¹⁹ Ayliff and Whiteside, p. 21.

¹²⁰ Moyer, p.144.

the Colonial government concerning the murder of a trader named John Purcell. He regarded these acts as espionage.¹²¹

Almost immediately the war of 1834 – 35 started, the amaMfengu pledged to stand by Ayliff, to protect the mission station, and never to side with amaXhosa against the Colony. Ayliff got reports of Hintsa’s intentions of destroying the station and “killing me [Ayliff] with his own assegai,” where upon amaMfengu assured him that if “[he, that is, Ayliff] died it should be behind their shields.” Feeling that it was increasingly dangerous to remain at the station, Ayliff decided to flee together with other whites, to Clarkebury Mission Station in Thembuland, where the Thembu Regent Vadana had pledged to protect all the whites. Thus amaMfengu were left to their plight by Ayliff. They were saddened by Ayliff’s decision to depart, but they steadfastly remained in Butterworth until the British army invaded Gcalekaland in mid-April 1835.¹²²

At the commencement of the war Chief Tyhali, of the amaNgqika Xhosa in the Ciskei, had allegedly urged Hintsa to kill and destroy amaMfengu in Gcalekaland, lest they be treacherous like the amaMfengu who resided among his people but had sided with the whites as soon as the war started. On hearing that the English were approaching the Kei, amaMfengu sent to Ayliff in Thembuland for advice as to what to do, as they did not wish to be mistaken for amaXhosa.¹²³

¹²¹ Ayliff and Whiteside, pp. 23-24.

¹²² Moyer, p.155.

¹²³ *Grahamstown Journal*, 17 September 1835.

In April 1835, D'Urban invaded Gcalekaland for no valid reason. Hintsa had not openly engaged in the war, although it was alleged that he had received stolen cattle and harboured fugitives. D'Urban ordered Hintsa to restore the colonial cattle and to stop assisting amaRharhabe, and marched to Butterworth to enforce his orders. Receiving no reply from Hintsa, he declared war on him, and in a few days captured over 19000 head of Gcaleka cattle.

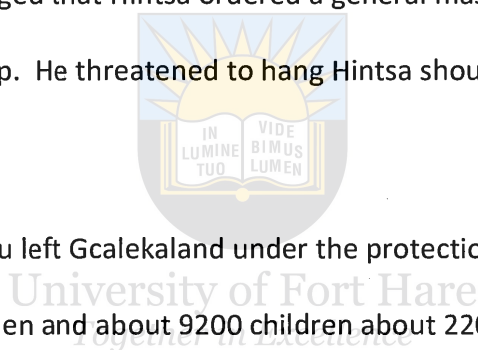
Meanwhile, Ayliff had communicated to D'Urban that the amaMfengu were requesting to be delivered from "bondage" in Gcalekaland. Ayliff gave Makalima (whose name does not appear anywhere among the chiefs listed by Kawa or in Ayliff's own manuscripts) his suit, and pieces of white calico for each of the different amaMfengu groups. He advised Makalima to dress in this European suit, accompanied by the men holding pieces of calico. They should approach the advancing English army, and ask the Governor, Durban, to accept them as British subjects. The plan worked perfectly, marking amaMfengu "deliverance from bondage" by the amaGcaleka under King Hintsa.¹²⁴ As part of the preparations to evacuate Gcalekaland in 1835, the Mfengu herdsmen started round off amaXhosa cattle, preparing them to leave Gcalekaland. Mavata (a Mfengu) killed Mbondi, one of Hintsa's councillors, who clearly had a good relationship with Mavata. Mavata's party then proceeded to Bikitsha, whose employer was Nxala, another councillor of Hintsa, but Bikitsha would not kill Nxala, instead he warned him to run away with his people.

¹²⁴ For the Colonial version of these critical events, see Government Notice 14 of 3 May 1835, issued by Governor B. D'Urban, quoted Ayliff and Whiteside, pp. 28-30. For a version by the later Mfengu leader, Veldman Bikitsha, see W.T. Brownlee, 'Sir Benjamin D'Urban, Hintsa and the Fingoes,' in *The Critic* (Rondebosch), 4 (June 1936), pp. 157-163.

No sooner had amaMfengu requested British protection than D'Urban immediately designed a scheme for the settlement of the frontier. The "hostile" amaRharhabe were to be driven over the Kei to settle among amaGcaleka, whilst AmaMfengu would be brought over the river and settled under Colonies protection between the Fish and Keiskamma Rivers.

D'Urban wasted no time in putting his plan into operation. He took Hintsa his brother Bhurhu and son, Sarhili hostage at the camp in Ndabakazi and forced Hintsa to accept ignominious terms of peace. D'Urban later alleged that Hintsa ordered a general massacre of amaMfengu; about 35 were killed near the camp. He threatened to hang Hintsa should the killing of amaMfengu not stop.

On 9^h May 1835, many amaMfengu left Gcalekaland under the protection of Colonel Somerset - about 2000 men, about 5600 women and about 9200 children about 22000 cattle (some of which were taken from their Xhosa employers), goats, calves and as many of their possessions as could be carried by their pack oxen. The movement of this great multitude, their fording the Kei River, and the skirmishes they suffered from amaXhosa who were from behind (amaMfengu repulsed most of these attacks, at one time Colonel Somerset sent his soldiers to help drive away amaXhosa attackers) is vividly described in the *Grahamstown Journal*, in an article written by John Ayliff. Suffice to say the journey was long and tedious, but amaMfengu arrived safely west of the Kei on 14 May 1835.¹²⁵



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¹²⁵ *Grahamstown Journal*, 17 September 1835.

Ayliff and Somerset called amaMfengu leaders together under the “mqwashu” tree (a particular milkwood tree to which many amaMfengu have since attached great historical and symbolic significance), where they were told their rights and obligations as “British subjects.” In return, amaMfengu chiefs made the “three pledges”:- (a) to be faithful to God (b) to be loyal to the British king (c) and to support their missionaries and educate their children.¹²⁶ These pledges inextricably bound amaMfengu to the British government and the Cape Colonial community.

At this juncture the question of amaMfengu slavery in Gcalekaland should be revisited. It should be pointed out that Mfengu slavery myth was a missionary myth. It did not originate with the black people. R. T. Kawa, in his book, *Ibali lamaMfengu*, rejects in no uncertain terms the allegation of the enslavement of amaMfengu by amaGcaleka.¹²⁷ He maintains that it was Ayliff’s plan to create bad blood between “Mtungwa’s children, the fact that amaMfengu were enslaved, “elo liqinga labase”Lenye” xa bengxamele intiyano, incaswano no vundi pakathi kwaba bantwana babini baka Mtungwa, baka Ntu.” He goes on to say that the whole question of Mfengu enslavement should be accepted “cum grano salis.” After all, even the word “Mfengu” did not originate with amaGcaleka, it was first uttered by Goceni and Mvundlela, the first amaHlubi to arrive in Gcalekaland. When asked where they came from, who they were and what they wanted, they answered, “Siyamfenguza.” This illustrates the fact that it is not true that amaMfengu were enslaved in Gcalekaland, as the argument in the pages that follow show.

¹²⁶ Kawa, p.51; Ayliff and Whiteside, p.34.

¹²⁷ Kawa, p. 47.

When amaMfengu first came to Gcalekaland they were given a very warm welcome by King Hintsa. When Njokweni was pointed at as a chief, Hintsa welcomed him as a fellow leader, and gave him land and cattle. He did the same to all the others, such as Matomela and Mabandla, as soon as they revealed themselves. If he had wanted to, he would have had them killed, for fear of their rivalry at a later stage.

Apart from the land amaMfengu were given by King Hintsa, they were granted the freedom to observe their customs. The mere fact that they were settled nearer the Great Place, show King Hintsa’s intention to protect them more effectively. AmaZizi were settled at Ceru, amaBhele at Ezolo, a small tributary of the Tsomo River near Ngqamakwe, amaHlubi near Teko Springs; others at Zinqayi near Ibeka. They were given both the freedom to control their own domestic relations under their chiefs, as well as constitutional freedom. Whoever had a grievance had a right to seek justice at the King’s Court, as depicted in S.E.K. Mqhayi’s classic work *Ityala Lama Wele* [The case of twins] Surely this is far from slavery? Who, then, was responsible for the idea that amaMfengu were enslaved by amaGcaleka? At some stage some amaMfengu reported some ill treatment by some amaXhosa, whereupon Hintsa asked, “were you not men in your own country?” “Were there no forests with sticks on the Tugela? These Xhosa have bodies just the same as you. When they hit you, hit them back.”¹²⁸ This shows there was no discrimination against the amaMfengu; they enjoyed equality before the eyes of the law just like amaGcaleka did.

¹²⁸ Kawa, p.45.

AmaMfengu were expected to abide by the amaXhosa customs only when they had fully become members and had assimilated with them. For example, “upundlo” was a custom, which was only observed at “intonjane” (a rite which prepared amaXhosa girls for womanhood). It is not true, as Ayliff suggests in his *History of Abambo* that Mfengu girls were singled out for this custom. Girls were not even enforced to succumb (when girls who attended an intonjane were collected to entertain a chief and his attendants, in a separate house). At the end of intonjane girls were checked by chaperones, and, if a girl was discovered to have been violated, her male partner was liable to pay a fine in cattle).¹²⁹

John Ayliff, it is clear, was a missionary with an agenda; he was quickly turning into a government agent, and was also responsible in nurturing amaMfengu discontent in Gcalekaland. It was natural that Hintsa should later look at him with suspicion. Hence his order to evacuate Butterworth and to move to the “Ameva” (Indwe River), he wanted to put an end the missionary’s influence on amaMfengu.

The question one needs to ask is, ‘Why did the amaMfengu decide to leave Gcalekaland if they were not slaves?’ Again, Ayliff comes in here. He told them they would have their land and chiefdoms back. It is understandable that, to serve under somebody is not the same as being independent. As Mbovane Mabandla put it in R.T. Kawa’s *Ibali lamaMfengu*, Mabandla, Njokweni and other amaMfengu chiefs left Hintsa country not because of ill treatment, but

¹²⁹ J.H. Soga, *The Ama-Xosa: Life and Customs* (Lovedale: n.d.), p.223

because they were promised that they would get their own land and chiefdoms such as they had possessed at the Thukela.¹³⁰

Even the attacks on amaMfengu just before they left Gcalekaland, for which D’Urban was ready to hang Hintsa at his camp, is something that amaMfengu had brought on themselves. For example, when amaMfengu started rounding up amaXhosa cattle, preparing to take them with out of Gcalekaland in 1835, Mavata killed Mbondi, one of Hintsa’s councillors, who up to that point seems to have had a good relationship with him. Mavata’s party then proceeded to Bikitsha, whose employer was Nxala, another councillor of Hintsa, but Bikitsha would not kill Nxala, instead, he warned him to run away with his people. This clearly shows that there was no slavery of amaMfengu in Gcalekaland. They were regarded as warriors, free to carry weapons, like Mavata. In killing amaMfengu, therefore, amaXhosa were reacting to incidents like this of Mavata and his party.

Another big question appears to be, why did D’Urban suddenly come out to be a knight in shining armour for amaMfengu in Gcalekaland? Was he trying to camouflage something he had done, of which he didn’t want the home government in Britain to know about? So that they would simply see in him a kind Governor, ready to extend the work of the British Humanitarians in South Africa, by setting free a poor people [amaMfengu], from the bondage of slavery? One needs to look at the way D’Urban conducted the war west of the Kei, taking the Xhosa land, the so-called “Ceded Territory”, between the Fish and Keiskamma Rivers. Perhaps most important, one needs to look at the circumstances under which King Hintsa died. Hintsa was

¹³⁰ Kawa, pp. 46-47.

killed, even when he was helpless and asking for mercy, nothing other than just cold blooded murder, aggravated by the mutilation of his body. All of this became known in Britain,¹³¹ and D’Urban was anxious to argue, as he did, that he was upholding ‘the true spirit of the sweeping emancipation (of slaves) so recently made in the Mother Country.’¹³²

There were other benefits to be gained in the “deliverance” of amaMfengu. D’Urban saw amaMfengu as a cheap labour force for the white colonists who were constantly demanding labourers, particularly now that slavery had been abolished. Many of amaMfengu entered the Colony and got employment as farm labourers, cattle and sheep herds. From their usefulness at those places, they received encouragement, and thus the settlers obtained what they greatly desired – cheap labour. Some amaMfengu acquired a considerable number of livestock, as the result of their thrift. Others migrated to frontier towns where they were employed; they lived in locations placed on the adjoining commonage.¹³³

D’Urban also thought they could be in the Eastern Cape militarily, what the “sepoys” were in India. He decided not to settle them deep in the Cape Colony, as they wanted, but between the Fish and Keiskamma Rivers where he thought they could act as a “human buffer” between the settlers and amaXhosa. This area had always been a bone of contention between whites and amaXhosa, as far back as when it was made a “no man’s land” by Lord Charles Somerset after the 1819 war. D’Urban was counting on the animosity between amaXhosa and amaMfengu,

¹³¹ Peires, *Phalo*, p.115.

¹³² Government Notice 14, quoted Ayliff and Whiteside, p. 29.

¹³³ See Moyer, Chapter 4.

hoping it would last, and that there would never be a rapprochement between these two peoples to the detriment of the whites. He was therefore, applying here the old rule of “divide and rule” – very convenient indeed for him. This was to be proved by the later frontier wars between amaXhosa and whites, where amaMfengu sided with the whites, fulfilling on of their pledges – to always be faithful to the King of Britain. These were those of 1846 (War of the Axe – Imfazwe ye Zembe 1846-7; War of Mlanjeni - Imfazwe ka Mlanjeni, 1851-53; and War of Ngcayechibi 1877.

AmaMfengu fought so effectively in these wars, precisely because they were used in the fighting methods of amaXhosa, which is why the whites depended largely on them to ensure victory over amaXhosa. AmaMfengu were placed in the most dangerous situations during these wars, and they proved invaluable in the defence of Grahamstown in the 1846 war – guarding the town by night for possible surprise attack by amaXhosa (white soldiers guarding during the day – very convenient.)¹³⁴

Back to the exodus of amaMfengu. They were finally left in the “Ceded Territory”, the Field Commandant, Fisher, was stationed there for their protection and the Ref. J. Ayliff worked amongst them but for a short time, as their missionary. To consolidate the British party, D’Urban build Fort Peddie. He also appointed a Commission, consisting of Mr J.M. Bowker, Captain Halifax, Lieutenant Moultrie and Ref. J. Ayliff, to carry out his instructions as to the boundaries of the country given to amaMfengu, the arrangement of the people in clans and families, the healthiness of the locations to be selected, the guarding of the forts of the Fish and

¹³⁴ Moyer, Chapter 6.

Keiskamma Rivers, the land to be used for agriculture, and the obligations of amaMfengu to obey the laws. He emphasized that the dwellings of amaMfengu on the border should be constructed with a view to defence, and should be surrounded with strong stockades, within which their houses and their cattle would be secure at night.

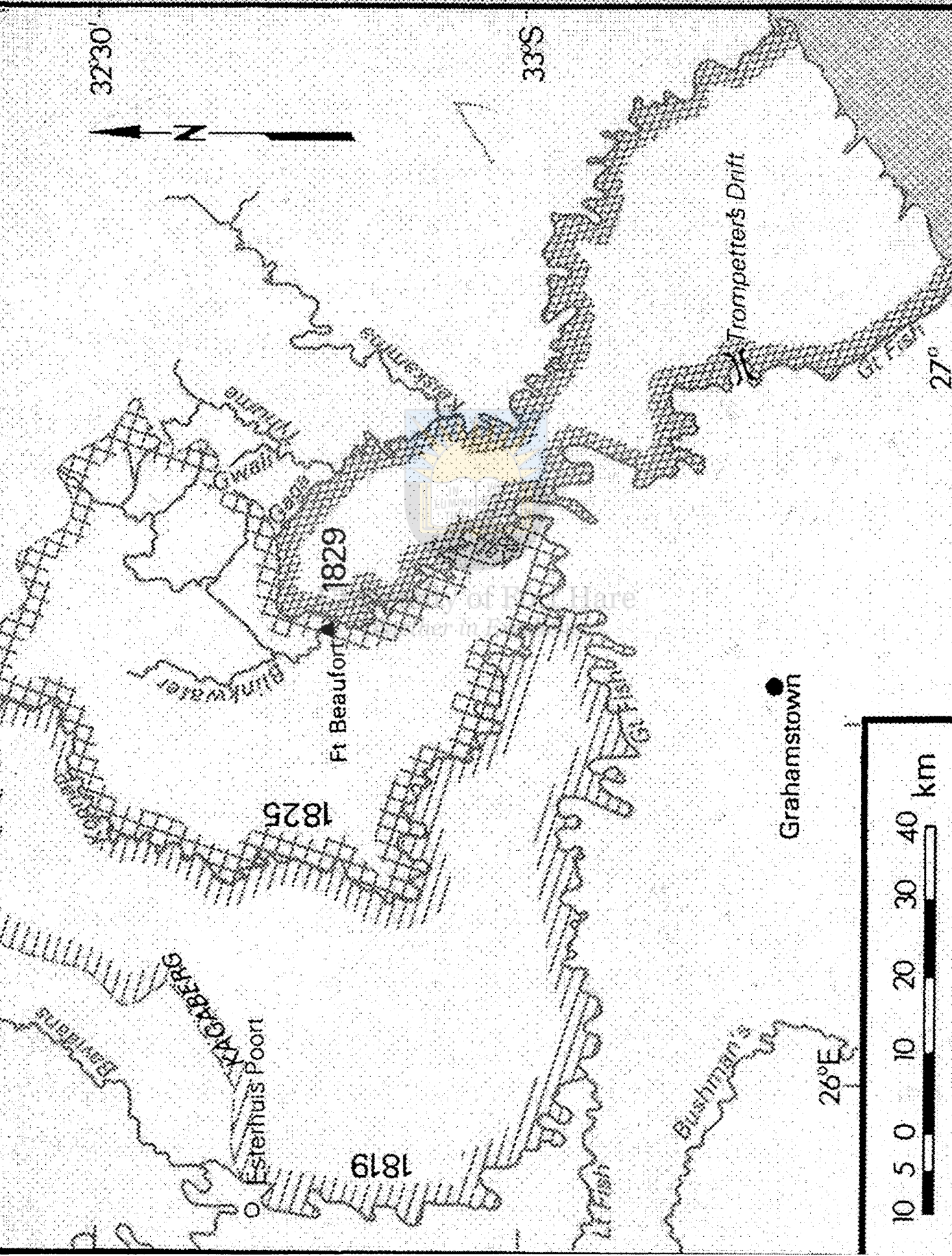
AmaMfengu soon discovered that Peddie was not suitable for the cultivation of corn. This made them very unsettled, and many stole off at every opportunity, some to King William's Town, some to surrounding military posts. The change of food caused amaMfengu to suffer from dysentery and many died. Chief Mhlambiso himself nearly died of the same. This aroused the fears of the amaMfengu, and they attributed the disease to witchcraft, believing that amaXhosa had bewitched the waters.¹³⁵ The settlement of amaMfengu at Peddie, how they lived and developed there, deserves a chapter on its own. But, in the short term, the priority of amaMfengu was to get out of Peddie and establish themselves in the more fertile lands around the Tyhume and the Gaga. It is on this account that the history of amaMfengu converges with the history of the Lovedale missionaries and the later Victoria East.

¹³⁵ Moyer, pp. 193-194.

CHAPTER 4: THE POLITICS OF THE EASTERN FRONTIER, 1835 – 1846

Since 1779, the Eastern Cape Frontier was characterized by conflict between the black indigenous people and the white settlers backed by the Cape Colonial Government. These conflicts emanated from accusations of cattle theft, and often culminated in a war followed by usurpation of Xhosa territory. The 1819 Frontier War was no exception. This war originated with the battle of Amalinde (October 1818) in which Chief Ngqika was defeated by his uncle and rival, Chief Ndlambe, supported by King Hintsa. Even though Ndlambe was defeated by a combination of Ngqika and the white forces, Ngqika's triumph did not bring him any happiness, especially as he was informed by Governor Lord Charles Somerset that he must forfeit the territory between the Fish and Keiskamma Rivers, henceforth to be called a "neutral belt", to "keep Xhosa and trekboer apart." According to Xhosa custom, Ngqika, although the senior chief in western Xhosaland, had no right to cede any land occupied by his people. He protested in vain, only to be informed that he and his people must in future occupy only the territory between the Tyhume and Keiskamma Rivers.

From the beginning, Somerset had no intention of respecting the "neutralising of the zone", as he regarded the area as having been "ceded" to the colony. We therefore refer to it as the Ceded Territory (see Map). He also believed that a close white settlement of the colonial side of the boundary would solve the problem of Xhosa encroachment on the colony. Thus in July



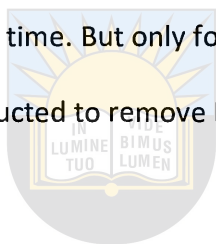
1819 the House of Commons in Britain voted £50,000 towards an emigration scheme to the Cape. Even then, there were people, like Captain Charles Lennox Stretch (the engineer who organised the reconstruction of earthworks and fortifications to protect Grahamstown after the Battle of Grahamstown) who had some reservations about this scheme and felt that the arrival of the British settlers would exacerbate rather than solve the problem of the frontier.¹³⁶

The settlement proceeded, nevertheless, and the amaXhosa were confronted for the first time with a concentrated white presence on the land, which they had always viewed as their own. Led by the sons of Ngqika, especially Maqoma, the amaXhosa began to reoccupy the land seized by Somerset. Part of this contested territory was given to the Khoikhoi (Kat River settlement, 1829), but tensions between Xhosa and settlers escalated elsewhere on the frontier. In September 1833 Tyhali was expelled from the Mankazana Valley to the east bank of Gaga River, the same happened to Maqoma who had in 1832 been allowed to reoccupy his old homestead near Fort Willshire.¹³⁷

¹³⁶ C.L. Stretch, *The Journal of Charles Lennox Stretch*, ed. B.A. Le Cordeur (Grahamstown: Rhodes University, 1988), p. 7.

¹³⁷ Stretch, p. 14.

Divisions among the colonial authorities only made matters worse. For example, Colonel Henry Somerset, the Commander of the Frontier, called Maqoma and Tyhali in February 1834, and informed them that they could return to the land from which they had been expelled on condition that they suppressed stock theft. Should they fail, the Colonial government would send them back across the official colonial boundary. Effectively, this restored the colonial/Xhosa boundary beyond the Fish River to the Keiskamma/Tyhume line. This concession was made with the knowledge of Governor Sir Benjamin D'Urban because of the extreme drought that was ravaging the country at the time. But only fourteen days later, the concession was countermanded and Somerset was instructed to remove Maqoma and Tyhali yet again.



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At the same time that the amaXhosa were losing the best part of their land, they were also suffering under the reprisal or commando system.¹³⁸ Under this system colonial patrols seized two or more Xhosa cattle for every one, which the colonists claimed as stolen (and in most cases these had not been stolen), arguing that colonial cattle were of more value than those of the Xhosa. In most cases colonists provoked amaXhosa into wars so as to enrich themselves territorially.

It was against this backdrop that the 1834 – 1835 Frontier War broke out. It is clear that the settlers stood to gain from a war – the so-called compensation for losses they incurred meant

¹³⁸ Stretch, pp.15-16.

grants of land wherever they wanted. By December 1834, the precarious situation at the eastern frontier was ready to burst into flames. The reprisal system was at its height, the loss of Chief Maqoma's Kat River land still made him furious, and, with a few exceptions, Xhosa chiefs were "ripe for war."

What aggravated the situation was the wounding of Chief Xhoxho by a patrol while in the process of taking away Chief Tyhali (his brother)'s cattle. It was a minor wound, but, as Chief Maqoma questioned, "shall the blood of a Ngqika chief be shed, and shall we not avenge it? There must be war.'¹³⁹ The wounding of Xhoxho therefore was the torch that sparked the 1834–35 war (Sixth Frontier War).

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The invasion of the Colony began on Monday 22 December 1834. By this invasion, the colonists lost approximately 115,000 head of cattle, 162,000 sheep and goats, 57, 000 horses¹⁴⁰ – they lost a lot, but Sir Benjamin D'Urban and his military commander, Sir Harry Smith told themselves that these losses would be recovered. There were battles fought in the amaThole mountains, with casualties on both sides. While the war in the Amathole was still raging, D'Urban decided to invade Gcalekaland,¹⁴¹ as he believed King Hintsa had orchestrated the

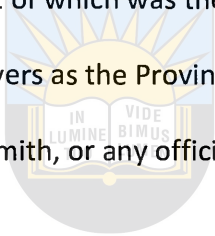
¹³⁹ J. Milton, *The Edges of War: A History of Frontier Wars (1702-1878)* (Cape Town: Juta, 1983), p. 101

¹⁴⁰ Ibid, p. 114.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 114-116

war. The invasion of Gcalekaland led the British army to facilitate the exodus of the amaMfengu to Peddie as already described in Chapter 3.

At the end of the Sixth Frontier War (1834 – 35) D’Urban signed a Treaty with the amaNgqika Chiefs Maqoma, Tyhali, Ngeno and Suthu, the mother of Sandile. The terms of the Treaty, tabulated clearly in G.M. Theal’s “Documents Relating to the Kaffir War of 1835”, definitely favoured the Colony and the settlers, the gist of which was the annexation of the entire territory between the Keiskamma and Kei Rivers as the Province of Queen Adelaide. The chiefs had to deliver up their weapons to Colonel Smith, or any official appointed to accept the same.¹⁴²



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Just one example, with particular relevance to the future Victoria East, shows how the settlers gained by the frontier wars. Captain Bain applied for the grant of a farm at the confluence of the Tyhume and Gaga Rivers (where Alice is today). Endorsing the application, D’Urban said, “it is very desirable besides being due to his deserving, that Captain Bain should have an allotment of land where he desires.” He was granted 300 morgen; he built himself a cottage and constructed an irrigation furrow.¹⁴³ He was definitely not the only one to be granted land.

¹⁴² ‘Articles of a Treaty of Peace, 17 September 1835, in G.M. Theal, *Documents Relating to the Kaffir War of 1835* (London: For the Government of the Union of South Africa, 1912), , p. 389.

¹⁴³ A.G. Bain, *Journals of Andrew Geddes Bain*, ed. M.H. Lister (Cape Town: Van Riebeeck Society, 1949), p. 164

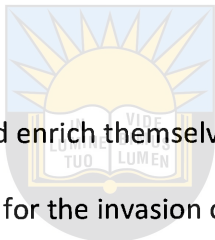
D’Urban’s system was so attractive as to offer the settlers vast lands virtually free as compensation for war losses. Many petitions for land were received in the new province.¹⁴⁴

But, with the appointment in Britain of a Parliamentary Committee on Aborigines, headed by Thomas Fowell Buxton (also responsible for the enactment of the abolition of slavery), the writing was on the wall for D’Urban’s policy in the Cape Colony. The Province of Queen Adelaide, was bound to be relinquished. The proceedings of the Parliamentary Committee and the responses of the witnesses led Buxton to conclude that the Sixth Frontier War (1845-34) resulted from the highest degree of provocation against the amaXhosa. The settlers were seen as the aggressors, and all the circumstances pertaining to the war proved this. The reprisal system, the burning of amaXhosa homesteads – these acts of provocation confirmed the missionary Dr John Phillip’s version of the origin of the war. D’Urban’s cover-up of the murder of King Hintsa, D’Urban’s insistence that Hintsa had been the ‘inspiration’ behind a grand conspiracy” against the Colony, was repudiated by the Colonial Office. All in all, the decision of Lord Glenelg, the British Secretary of State for the Colonies, about the reversal of the Province of Queen Adelaide was arrived at after much deliberation by the officials of the Colonial Office, and approved by the entire cabinet.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁴ Peires, *Phalo*, p.123

¹⁴⁵ J.S. Galbraith, *Reluctant Empire: British Policy on the South African Frontier, 1834-1854*, (Los Angeles: California University Press, 1963), pp. 126 – 127.

D’Urban was instructed to return the land he had taken from AmaXhosa, between the Fish and Keiskamma Rivers. In a dispatch to D’Urban, dated 26 December 1835, Lord Glenelg tabled his reasons why the Province of Queen Adelaide had to be returned to its rightful owners. To Glenelg, Durban had furnished him with no clear and comprehensive explanation of the causes, which provoked the invasion of the colony. In his opinion, the seizure of the “Ceded Territory” between the Fish and Keiskamma Rivers after the Frontier War of 1819, and the expulsion of its Xhosa inhabitants, provided the amaXhosa with a sufficient justification for the invasion of the colony.¹⁴⁶



The reprisal system which the colonists could enrich themselves with the cattle of amaXhosa was also seen by Glenelg as a justified cause for the invasion of the colony. Nor did he concur with D’Urban’s view that amaXhosa were “irreclaimable savages” – they lived with missionaries in their midst, they sent their children to school, they attended church services, so, how could they be “irreclaimable savages?” The missionaries of both the LMS and the GMS, contrary to what D’Urban reported in his despatch to Glenelg (25 January 1835), considered the 1834 – 1835 invasion as a “natural reaction on the part of [amaXhosa] against a series of extreme and intolerable oppression.” They further suggested a policy towards amaXhosa of which “kindness, conciliation and justice should form the basis”.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁶ Glenelg-D’Urban, 26 December 1835, *Imperial Blue Book*, 279 of 1836, pp. 64 – 65.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid

Glenelg also came out strongly in his condemnation of the colonial attack on King Hintsa's people and country with no valid reason, and stressed that the latter's captivity had been uncalled for. It was due to these above – mentioned arguments that Lord Glenelg decided that the province of Queen Adelaide should be relinquished. He did not accept D'Urban's assertion that this province would serve as an indemnity against the expenses of the war. He ended by saying a Lieutenant-Governor (Andries Stockenstrom) would be appointed for the eastern districts, and that government agents would also be appointed to reside with amaXhosa, to safeguard the rights of both amaXhosa and European traders in their midst. As a result, Captain Charles Lennox Stretch became the government agent of amaNgqika with his residence at Blockdrift¹⁴⁸, on the Tyhume River at the present town of Alice.

In 1836, with the appointment of Lieutenant-Governor Stockenstrom, Bain was deprived of his land. Captain C.L. Stretch was allowed to move from Fort Cox to Fort Thomson. At first he lived in Bain's cottage, but later built Domira¹⁴⁹, at Blockdrift, where Maqoma, Tyhali and Suthu granted him 1000 morgen of land between the Tyhume and Gaga Rivers.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁸ Ibid

¹⁴⁹ Bain, p. 164.

¹⁵⁰ G.B. Crankshaw, 'The Diary of C.L. Stretch – a Critical Edition and Appraisal,' (M.A., Rhodes University, 1960), p.5.

To digress briefly from the political to the socio-economic history of the Tyhume valley (future Victoria East): One interesting incident which Bain relates in his Journal concerns early amaXhosa use of the plough. Noticing how clumsily they were going about it, he introduced them to a Khoikhoi to show them how to do it properly. This Xhosa person was none other than old Soga, Ngqika's counsellor and the first Xhosa to utilize a plough. After that, Chief Tyhali himself became interested in using the plough, whereupon Bain wanted to assist him as well. He sought assistance from the British authorities in King William's Town who were so delighted to assist this leading chief. But before the arrangement could be finalised, the Province of Queen Adelaide was returned to the amaXhosa. Bain had also identified a precise spot at Tyhali's place where a water furrow could be constructed for irrigation. He had even started training Tyhali's oxen to the plough. But with the reversal of D'Urban's policy, Tyhali changed his mind, saying to Bain, "[Tyhali] has altered his mind since he got his land back again. [Tyhali] is a .. son of [Rharhabe], and he is not going to spoil his oxen with ploughing while he has plenty of wives to till the ground for him." In addition, Tyhali demanded compensation for the training of his oxen; "you must now pay me a cow for having my oxen so long in your plough." Refusing Bain's offer of money, he said, "I do not want a cow that I can put in my pocket but one that can walk on its legs," Bain had no alternative but to pay him a cow for having trained his oxen. Thus ended the Xhosa experiment of 1836. Stretch was disappointed, saying, in a letter to Bain, "the use of the plough would have the male population employment and subvert the degradation system of keeping women for such purpose ... " He continued that if the government encourage the use of the plough, the use of women for ploughing, and thieving would be minimized, for, "to keep up a harem is one of the most prominent causes for

coveting their neighbour's cow to [pay] for such women who perform the drudgery of gardening.”¹⁵¹

The Glenelg system, intended to be implemented by Stockenstrom, was based on two major propositions. Firstly, treaties had to be entered into with Xhosa chiefs as sovereign rulers, regulated through Government Agents. Secondly, the problem of cattle theft should be solved within the Colony itself, and not in Xhosaland. The bottom line was for the Colonists to be extra vigilant in herding their cattle, better still, they should even arm their herdsmen.”¹⁵²



The settlers, however, at least the majority of them, denounced the treaty system, maintaining that amaXhosa could never understand or abide by treaties. Some even saw the Treaty System as a contributory factor to the Great Trek.¹⁵³ Ultimately, the settlers wanted nothing less than the total scrapping of the Stockenstrom treaties, as these deprived them of all the benefits they would have enjoyed under the D'Urban policy. Stockenstrom was so unpopular that only two officials, Hougham Hudson, the Agent-General, and Lennox Stretch, the Agent of the amaNgqika, were executing his policies, otherwise, the bulk of the officials on the eastern frontier supported a return to the D'Urban system. At one stage Stockenstrom was forced to

¹⁵¹ Bain, pp. 187 - 189

¹⁵² Peires, *Phalo*, p. 119

¹⁵³ Crankshaw, p. 15.

defend his tarnished reputation by suing the Civil Commissioner of Albany for spreading a rumour that he had once shot a Xhosa in cold-blood. He lost the case which deprived him of all credibility.

The new Governor, Sir George Napier, politely released Stockenstrom by making him a baronet. He was succeeded as Lieutenant-Governor by Colonel John Hare, who distrusted the amaXhosa and had no confidence in the treaty system. Napier and Hare slightly amended the treaties in 1840. But, unfortunately, these amendments brought back the abuses that the Stockenstrom treaties tried to prevent, namely that right of settlers to demand cattle from amaXhosa by making unsubstantiated accusations of theft. Commenting on such claims, Stretch called them 'a debt against Caffreland.' Maqoma observed, 'Our people steal oxen and cows, but the government steals with the pen.'¹⁵⁴

What the settlers did not get from Governor Napier, a total reversal of the Stockenstrom treaties, they got from the next Governor, Sir Peregrine Maitland. Bent on satisfying the settlers at the expense of the amaXhosa, he praised a military incursion of the former Ceded Territory, then reoccupied by amaXhosa as per the treaties, by Lieutenant-Governor John Hare, during peacetime. This followed after the death of a Boer, shot in Xhosaland while on a commando into the said territory, looking for a horse. Hare demanded the alleged murderers

¹⁵⁴ Peires, *Phalo*, pp. 126 - 127

from Maqoma and Sandile. Ultimately these supposed murderers were proved innocent by the Grahamstown courts. Despite his disappointment, Hare claimed that he had struck 'terror into our troublesome and deceitful neighbours and forcing them to compliance with my just and reasonable demands.'¹⁵⁵

This "judicious" action by Hare caused Maitland to rush to the frontier with all the interventions of showing amaXhosa who held the reins. With all the pomposity of an authoritarian, he called a meeting of Chiefs Mhala of the amaNdlambe, Phatho of the ama Gqunukhwebe and Nqeno and Stokwe of the amaMbalu. To everybody's surprise, he then unilaterally announced the cancellation of Stockenstrom's treaties. This was definitely too hasty an action, more especially because Maqoma and Sandile of the amaNgqika, the most influential of all the Xhosa chiefs, were deliberately not invited. Maitland even turned down Sandile's offer of a meeting, leading that chief to comment that, 'I have not confidence to enable me to assure my people that peace exists in the country.' This was followed by Maqoma's sarcastic remark that 'I cannot understand what has been thrown over my body that makes me so offensive in the eyes of the Government.'

¹⁵⁵ Mostert, , pp.842-3.

The terms of Maitland’s unilateral treaties are given in detail in Noel Mostert’s *Frontiers*,¹⁵⁶ and it would be pointless to repeat them in this work. But what can be mentioned is the contradictory reaction of the two opposing nations and the frontier, amaXhosa and white settlers. Whilst, on the one hand, the settlers were elated by the cancellation of the treaties, as depicted by their “celebrations” in Grahamstown and Fort Beaufort, where Stockenstrom and Dr Philip were burnt in effigy, on the other hand, amaXhosa could see there was war looming ahead, for their insight told them it all had to do with the lands of their fathers. This sense of impending war was also portrayed by Maitland’s entourage at the meeting with the amaXhosa – swords and dragoons.¹⁵⁷



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By January 1846 the situation on the frontier was so tense it needed one to tread very lightly, lest the “cold war” deteriorate into a hot conflagration. Lieutenant-Governor Hare had established a military post called Post Victoria in the Ceded Territory, but it was problematic in times of drought due to the inadequacy of the water supply. Hence that post had to be abandoned.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ Milton, pp. 153 - 154

Because of this, the British military crossed the boundary into Xhosaland, erected tents on a site close to Stretch’s residency, at Blockdrift, and prepared a survey. This nearly ended the “cold war” that was so far prevailing at the frontier. Sandile demanded the removal of the tents with immediate effect; He then demanded the removal of all military posts in Xhosaland, calling Stretch and the Governor “rascals.” This brought the Lieutenant Governor and the military to Blockdrift, followed later by a meeting with Sandile, who also came with his councillors and his military, likewise armed to the teeth. The government side could see they were outnumbered, and therefore needed to handle the situation with delicacy. The situation was saved but only temporarily.



It was overwhelmingly clear that all was not well. It only required a minor incident to torch the entire frontier. This was provided by a certain Tsili, who stole an axe from a shop in Fort Beaufort. That led to the Seventh Frontier War (1846-1847) becoming known as ‘The War of the Axe’. But in reality the war had nothing to do with an axe, or anything else, but the land question.

CHAPTER 5: CALDERWOOD AND VICTORIA EAST (1847-1860)

The boundaries and the governmental structure of Victoria East resulted from the settlement which concluded the War of the Axe. As was usually the case after every frontier war, amaXhosa lost yet more of their land. Indeed, the frontier wars were not about anything else, but land – the case of a stolen axe was too trivial to have otherwise resulted in a war. The territory as far north as the Kei River was annexed and named British Kaffraria, and added to the British Crown with King William’s Town as capital.



By December 24, 1847, Sir Henry Pottinger and General Sir George Berkely, had left the frontier, and the new Governor, Sir Harry Smith, had arrived. He issued a proclamation to the effect that the “Ceded Territory” was annexed to the Cape Colony under the name of Victoria. He held a meeting with the amaXhosa chiefs in which he received the submissions, and announced the cessation of hostilities.¹⁵⁹

The territory to the west of the Tyhume, within which Lovedale stood, became known as Victoria East. AmaXhosa were evicted from this territory, and it was suggested that this area should be occupied by a large number of amaMfengu who had assisted the Government in the

¹⁵⁹ J. Appleyard, *The War of the Axe and the Xhosa Bible*, ed. J.Frye (Cape Town: Struik,1971) , p. 112.

War of the Axe.¹⁶⁰ Four military villages were founded in Victoria East, namely Juanasberg, Ely, Woburn and Auckland. Plots of land were allotted to old soldiers in these villages, on the understanding that, if necessary, they would be called out for defence purposes when the need arose. Henry Calderwood was appointed as the first magistrate of the District of Victoria East, with his seat in Alice.¹⁶¹

But before we can unpack Calderwood and see how and where he fits in the whole picture of Victoria East, we need to go back to Governor Sir Peregrine Maitland and the plan he had formulated for the “Ceded Territory” during the early part of the War of the Axe. Maitland’s intention was to evict the amaXhosa from this territory and replace them with amaMfengu and other peoples, but without white settlers. The rights of the amaMfengu were expressed in a Treaty of 2 January 1845, signed between Governor Maitland and amaMfengu chiefs Njokweni, Mabandla, Nkwenkwezi, Matomela, Khawulela, Phala and Jama. By Clause 6 of this treaty, the above chiefs were granted those parts of the Ceded Territory which they already occupied ‘in

¹⁶⁰ J.H. Soga, *The South-Eastern Bantu*, (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 1930), p. 211.

¹⁶¹ P.R., 1229, 1277, Cory Library, Grahamstown. The origin of the name ‘Alice’ is still controversial. One interpretation is that it was named after the second daughter of Queen Victoria. The other is that Sir Harry Smith named it after his sister, Mrs Alice Sargent. See also P.E.Raper, *New Dictionary of South African Place Names* (Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball, 2004).

perpetuity,' provided only that they did not forfeit it by starting a war or otherwise breaching the Treaty.¹⁶²

Maitland's intention to expel the hostile amaXhosa from the Ceded Territory was expressed in a dispatch, dated 18 September 1846, to the Secretary of State for Colonies in London. He was concerned about the security implications of the Fish River bush and the Amathole mountains which afforded the amaXhosa so many hiding places. He hoped to settling amaMfengu and other coloured people (such as Khoikhoi and Bechuana), people who would not hesitate to repel amaXhosa in case of an attack on the colony. These settlements would, however, be controlled by the government. There would definitely be no whites in the Ceded Territory apart, possibly, from traders and officials in the towns to be established. Maitland was recalled before he could implement his scheme, but the scheme had the blessings of Henry Calderwood, the first magistrate of Victoria East whom we have already mentioned. But who was this Calderwood, who seems to have been a controversial character?

Calderwood was born in Scotland in 1808, and educated at the University of Edinburgh and Divinity Hall, Glasgow. While Presbyterian minister at Kendal, he was accepted by the London Missionary Society (1838). In 1839 he arrived at Fort Beaufort and established Blinkwater

¹⁶² *Cape of Good Hope. Report of the Select Committee appointed on the 23rd May 1855, to examine and report upon .. the Lands in the Ceded Territory and on the Chumie*, p.1.

mission station on the Kat River, then in 1845 he moved and established the Birklands mission station (Healdtown).¹⁶³ He first started to advise Government during the War of the Axe. He resigned from the LMS in October 1846, after he was appointed to replace the liberal C.L. Stretch as Commissioner for the amaNgqika and other Rharhabe chiefdoms. With Charles Brownlee as his secretary, he settled on the property at Blockdrift which had been confiscated after Stretch's dismissal. Though Calderwood had started as a missionary, there is a marked controversy about what he stood for. He was always at loggerheads with Chief Maqoma who questioned his double standards, changing from being a missionary to being a magistrate. His role as Maitland's advisor during the War of the Axe, where he received the submission of the amaXhosa guns, seems to make him just one of the many white war-mongers.¹⁶⁴ After the recall of Maitland in December 1846, Calderwood continued to advise the new Governor, Sir Henry Pottinger, and his military commander, Sir George Berkeley.

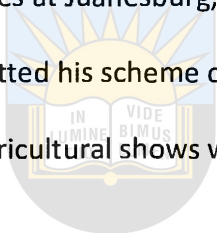
Calderwood was most concerned to guard against the perceived threat that the amaXhosa followers of Chief Sandile would make another attempt to win back the "Ceded Territory." In a memorandum to Sir George Berkeley, the British Commander, Calderwood tabled his plan to divide amaXhosa – by providing friendly Xhosa with land in the Ceded Territory, conditional on

¹⁶³ A.J. Lamont Smith, 'Calderwood, Henry,' in W.J. De Kock (ed), *Dictionary of South African Biography*, Vol. 1, (Cape Town: National Council for Social Research, 1968), p. 148

¹⁶⁴ T.J. Stapleton, *Maqoma: Xhosa Resistance to Colonial Advance* (Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball, 1994), pp. 136 – 137.

them betraying their chief Sandile. The targeted groups would be the missionary converts and the “Kaffir Police”.¹⁶⁵ Berkely, however, was too uncertain of himself to give Calderwood the go ahead.

In 1848 Calderwood was entrusted with the task of settling amaMfengu along the eastern frontier from Oxkraal and Kamastone, north of Amathole, down to Peddie in the South, and to supervise the establishment of military villages at Juanesburg, Auckland, Woburn and Ely in the Tyhume Valley. The following year he submitted his scheme on land tenure in amaMfengu locations, which advocated the holding of agricultural shows with the inducements of prizes for exhibits.



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Calderwood framed the regulations under which amaMfengu locations in Victoria would be administered. The hierarchical structure of authority was as follows: Villages were under the immediate charge of headman of their own people. These in turn were under the supervision of white superintendants, and, at the very top, was the Civil Commissioner to whom they were all answerable. The regulations themselves comprised of three parts: (1) the first pertained to the management of the locations and the civilization of their inhabitants; (2) directions for the guidance of the white superintendants; (3) lastly, there were regulations for encouraging

¹⁶⁵ B. le Cordeur and C. Saunders (eds), *The War of the Axe, 1847* (Johannesburg: Brenthurst Press, pp. 132-133.

agricultural practises among the people in the locations, with prizes to be offered for competitions.¹⁶⁶

From this very rigid hierarchical structure, it was clear what the government plan was. At the end of the day, the Civil Commissioner was to know everything in the locations, who was who and what everybody did and when. This was the government plan to check the “vagrancy” of the people. The agricultural competitions, in particular, would make sure nobody left a location before harvest, lest one lose the prize one might have got if otherwise he had remained in the location. Again, and probably the real reason for the establishment of locations, they were the source of cheap labour for the white settler farmers. No one would want to leave his plot of land in the location and thereby forfeit ownership of what they valued the most- land. Let them have a sense of ownership of land and that will ensure that they will always be available, as cheap farm labourers, and of course, as a defence system for the frontier.

The appointed Native Headmen were to be supplied with two suits of clothes of a particular colour, every year. They had to have some badge of office, and to be paid when on duty as Field-cornets. The three white superintendants would be nominated by the Civil Commissioner but appointed by the Governor, by whom only they could be removed from office, the Civil

¹⁶⁶ *Cape of Good Hope Government Gazette*, February 15, 1849.

Commissioner could, however, suspend them, but not without the knowledge of the Governor, who had to confirm such a suspension. Their salary was £ 100 a year.¹⁶⁷

Locations were to be under strict surveillance. The following were some of the regulations to this effect; (a) Rewards were offered for every captured thief, every spoor of stolen property traced into Xhosaland, or anywhere else, and for every Xhosa found travelling in the Colony without a pass. Any party refusing, when asked by a Headman, Superintendant, Field-Cornet or Magistrate, to assist in the pursuit of stolen property, would be fined. AmaMfengu or amaXhosa found far from their location without a pass stating the reason for their travelling, would be fined or punished. The Civil Commissioner could employ messengers, at a very low fee, to maintain lines of communication and to inform the Civil Commissioner of everything which was happening in the locations. A certain number of guns could be kept at each location by the Superintendants, but not the headmen.¹⁶⁸ Is it not interesting to note that amaMfengu

could handle guns for the defence of the frontier, whereas they could not defend their own locations and possessions? For the smooth running of the locations, the Superintendants had to follow strict regulations, of which were some of the following: they had to communicate with the Headmen and get a report of the state of affairs in each location at least once a week, and visit every village of kraal at least once a month. They had to keep a register of everyone and everything in the village or location, with people, separate columns for men, women and

¹⁶⁷ *Government Gazette*, February 15, 1849.

¹⁶⁸ *Government Gazette*, February 15, 1849.

children (males and females) and with property, livestock, wagons, ploughs, the value of whatever was under cultivation in different kinds of grain or whatsoever being cultivated, the quantity of seed used and an estimation of the produce – virtually anything and everything of value the people possessed. This was, as one might see it, an older version of modern totalitarianism, the people in the locations being controlled by the government in totality.

In so far as disputes in the locations were concerned, Superintendents were to settle all cases of disputes brought to them, as long as they were within their jurisdiction, otherwise, they were referred to the Magistrate. The people could, in any case, appeal. In settling cases, the Superintendent could consult the Headmen for advice, this would “please the Headmen, give more confidence to the people, and promote the general peace.” This is self-explanatory, the Headmen were made to feel important, that their input was needed, hence they could easily turn into trusted collaborators, at the end of the day, theirs was just to give “advice”, government made the final decisions.

The Headmen and “Kaffir Police” were also used in tracing the spoor of stolen property entering any location, detecting the thief and recovering the stolen property. Failure necessitated resorting to the “native Law of the People themselves”. This actually meant that

the person or people whose cattle or property obliterated the spoor had to account for it. This was one of the conditions on which the amaMfengu occupied their lands.¹⁶⁹

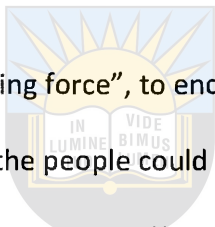
Put simply, amaMfengu had to ensure the safety of the settlers and their property and had to account for any loss of their property. This, in a nutshell, was what was meant by a peaceful, quiet and security of the frontier and it all depended on the efforts of amaMfengu in their respective locations – located for the safety and security of the white settler’s, and they had to loyally perform their duty, out of their blind loyalty to the pledges they made at “Emqwashini.”



It must not be forgotten that Calderwood was a former missionary, which is why his language was more often than not religiously oriented. Even education had to have a touch of religion. If, especially, amaMfengu were civilised, educated and converted, then peace would reign supreme in the frontier, as the Bible was against violence. It would seem that the doctrines of education, civilization and conversion became a cornerstone of Calderwood’s policy in Victoria East, and that amaMfengu were used as a means to an end of his policies as Civil Commissioner of this area.

¹⁶⁹ *Government Gazette*, February 15, 1849.

Schools were to be established in the locations as well as the military villages. Land had to be set aside for the schoolmaster, to be paid £ 150 annually who, in addition to his duties, had to offer a religious service on Sabbath and once or twice in the evening during the week. The people in the various villages were expected to assist in the erection of the school buildings, Calderwood estimated £ 800 to cover the whole enterprise, to be raised by letting the people pay at least £ 1 per man or head of a family.¹⁷⁰



Superintendents were expected, “without using force”, to encourage the children to attend the schools. While Calderwood recognized that the people could not be made religious by law and orders of Government and that it was not wise to even attempt that, yet Superintendents were expected to prevent the performance of ordinary secular work of the week on the Sabbath day. Any “heathen rites and practices’ that were detrimental to “decency” were to be discouraged. However, anything pertaining to Christianity and religious teaching had to rest with the teachers of Christianity and private Christian influence, that is missionary work. Superintendents were supposed to set an example to the people under their supervision, in other words, they were to be the embodiment of moral and religious influence. The success of Calderwood’s policy thus largely depended on the success of the Superintendents in their various locations, failing which the whole question of the security of the country at large

¹⁷⁰ CO 2851, Calderwood Memorandum, 7 June 1848.

would be at stake. Putting the people in locations was a necessity, for the sake of supervision and education, and, as far as possible, villages had to contain no less than twenty men.¹⁷¹

In the locations amaMfengu were allocated individual plots at a quitrent of £ 1 per year.

Headmen in the villages were given a small stipend. Boards were formed in the villages consisting of the Resident Magistrate, Superintendent of amaMfengu, and three inhabitants.

These Boards were to offer prizes for the best house, best and largest quantity of cultivated ground, best crop of wheat, barley or other European produce and the best stock or poultry.

This was, as mentioned earlier, as means by Calderwood of promoting the security of the frontier by combating vagrancy. AmaMfengu responded most positively to the scheme, such that in May 1849, they paid £ 475, 10s 0d (being 951 quitrents reduced to 10s each for the first year).¹⁷²

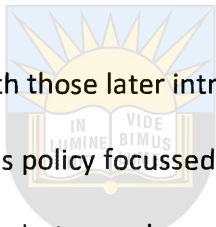
The work of the Board would, however, not conflict with that of the Civil Commissioner. Board members were themselves to be selected by the government from their experience in the treatment of African communities. The Board would also supervise the system of Elementary Institutions whose purpose was the advancement of the Africans in the “arts, customs and

¹⁷¹ LG 412, p. 14, Cape Archives.

¹⁷² A.E. Du Toit, “The Cape Frontier; A study of Native policy with special reference to the years 1847 – 1866”, *Archives Years for South Africa History*, I (1954), p. 263

industrial pursuits of civilized life.” Lovedale Institution was utilized in giving Elementary Instruction. African teachers, themselves products of the same Institutions as Lovedale, were under the supervision of their European counterparts, and depended on the latter for their improvement in the methods of teaching. The appointment of teachers, both European and African, remained the responsibility of the missionary societies working with the respective missionary institutions, the institutions being subsidized by the Government.¹⁷³

These programmes were definitely in line with those later introduced by Governor Sir George Grey, who arrived at the Cape in 1854. Grey’s policy focussed on “turning enemies into friends” by such projects as roads and other public works to employ unskilled Africans.¹⁷⁴



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To combat traditional beliefs, which he deemed “superstition, Calderwood encouraged the extension of Christian Missions, while traditional doctors were to be discouraged by the establishment of hospitals. He also proposed the introduction of Industrial training at the educational Institutions, hence, for example, an Industrial Department was opened at Lovedale, to train carpenters, shoemakers and wagon makers.

¹⁷³ MS 15, 384, H. Calderwood and W. Shaw Memorandum on Native Education, 10 December 1854.

¹⁷⁴ J.B. Peires, *The Dead Will Arise*, 2nd ed., (Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball, 2003), Chapter 2.

In addition, people in the villages were kept under strict surveillance. Superintendents granted passes, drawing columns stating the name of the person, the name of his chief, the reason for the journey, and the time allowed for such. “Unnecessary travelling to a distance” was discouraged.¹⁷⁵ This whole thing – had to be done in such a manner as not to anger the people. Passes had to be reported monthly to the Civil Commissioner’s Office. This was in addition to the overall monthly report of the state of the locations, the highlights, so to speak, and those noted for their exceptionally good or bad conduct had to be noted. The people were also to be encouraged to adopt European dress and to cultivate European produce.¹⁷⁶

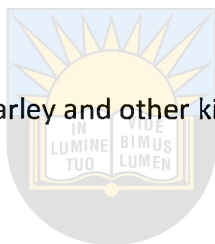


There were also regulations for the promotion of agricultural improvements among the amaMfengu and other African races. For this purpose Victoria District was divided into three sections: Alice, Peddie and Whittlesea. In each of these Districts a Board, comprising the Resident Magistrate, Superintendent of amaMfengu and three respectable inhabitants was formed, with the Resident Magistrate as President. The Board would examine its District at a given times, once a year, and award prizes for the best and second best for each of the categories to be herein mentioned. The results and names of the winners would be submitted to the Secretary to Government, who would in turn inform the Governor of the same, after which the names would be published for general information. The following were the categories for which winners were published; the best and second best: -

¹⁷⁵ LG 412, p. 14.

¹⁷⁶ *Government Gazette*, February 15, 1849.

1. most respectably and decently dressed man throughout the year.
2. Most respectably and decently dressed woman throughout the year.
3. The parents whose children's were the cleanest and best dressed.
4. Best and cleanest house (up to the third best in this category).
5. Best furnished house.
6. Best and largest quantity of cultivated ground.
7. Best fenced land.
8. Best wagon.
9. Best and largest quantity of wheat, barley and other kinds of European produce.
10. Best stock of poultry.¹⁷⁷



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The African Improvement Board of 1853 recommended that the lands occupied by Africans at the mission stations in Victoria East should be in the hands of trustees such as the Board. Each Mission would be given 100 acres of glebe and buildings, excluding the land occupied by amaMfengu. The land of amaMfengu would be divided into blocks of arable and building allotments with commonage. The Governor approved these proposals, and instructed the Deputy Surveyor-General to carry out the survey and issue the titles.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁷ *Government Gazette*, February 15, 1849.

¹⁷⁸ Du Toit, p. 264

Thus far, Calderwood’s plans. But Calderwood had to operate in an environment complicated by certain white farmers introduced by Governor Sir Harry Smith. It has already been mentioned that according to Maitland’s original conception, in the “Ceded Territory” no white settlers were allowed, apart from traders and missionaries. Governor Maitland had planned to settle amaMfengu and similar allies here; the hostile amaXhosa were to be evacuated. But before Maitland could implement his scheme, he was recalled and, Sir Harry Smith, who succeeded him, changed the scheme completely.



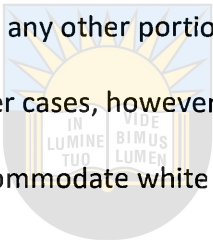
In 1848, 1849 and 1850, by Proclamations, Governor Sir Harry Smith sold by public auction part of the land allocated to amaMfengu, and gave out another portion in allotments to the European settlers.¹⁷⁹

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In a memorandum, dated 4 March, 1853, the Civil Commissioner, Henry Calderwood hints at how space was opened for settlers to get land in Victoria East in the amaMfengu village at Gaga. The idea was to extend the Gaga location so as to attract amaMfengu who were “inconveniently situated” upon the Kat River. By “inconveniently situation” it is meant that they lived scattered, in twos and threes (families) – this would not serve the purpose of Calderwood who needed them flocked in locations as a solid defence system. Calderwood suggested the addition of the abandoned military village Ely to Gaga. As he put it, Ely was

¹⁷⁹ *Cape of Good Hope. Report of the Select Committee appointed on the 23rd May 1855, to examine and report upon the papers laid upon the Table, by order of His Excellency the Governor, relative to the disposal of the Lands in the Ceded Territory and on the Chumie*

formerly occupied by military soldiers and “was a source of continual disturbance and of no public advantage.” Of concern here was the “advantage” that the addition of Ely to Gaga created. It left open the location of Zibi who was apparently resettled in the Amathole basin, as well as that of Zalo, who was relocated in the district of Fort Beaufort, and a location which was occupied by a small section of the people of Mavuso, which was separated from the main body. Calderwood identified this land, said to be very dry by amaMfengu, as could be occupied by white farmers, “as it connected with lands previously sold.” This land would, however, not be sold, but occupied on quitrent, together with any other portions of Government land in Victoria East not occupied by amaMfengu.¹⁸⁰ In other cases, however, such as that of Luzipho, amaMfengu were literally burned out to accommodate white settlers.¹⁸¹



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At least three senior government officials occupied land in Victoria adjoining amaMfengu locations by 1855:

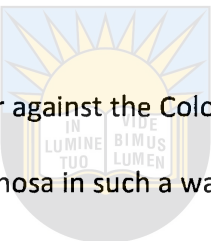
1. Mr Davies, Commanding the amaMfengu Militia, possessed +/- 4000 acres, a portion of which joined the Post Victoria Location (Sheshegu).
2. Mr Taylor, Resident Magistrate of King William’s Town, possessed about 3000 acres, a portion of which adjoined the Gaga location.
3. Mr Edye, Resident Magistrate of Peddie, possessed about 1000 acres adjoining the lands of Nkwenkwezi.¹⁸²

¹⁸⁰ CO 4394: Arrears, Governor to Lieutenant-Governor, Memorandum respecting Fingo locations in the Division of Victoria, Cape Archives.

¹⁸¹ *Eastern Province Herald*, 20 October 1849.

¹⁸² H. Calderwood-W.F.Liddle, 2 Feb.1855, in *Cape of Good Hope. Report of the Select Committee appointed on the 23rd May 1855, to examine and report upon the papers laid upon the Table, by order of His Excellency the Governor, relative to the disposal of the Lands in the Ceded Territory and on the Chumie*, p.5.

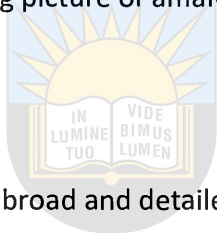
In spite of the progress of amaMfengu in Victoria East following the close of the Mlanjeni War (1850 – 1853), (where amaMfengu sided with the whites against amaXhosa), the Colonial authorities became alarmed shortly thereafter by the threat of an anti-Colonial alliance between amaMfengu and amaXhosa. This must have come as a big surprise after such a support they had been given!



There circulated rumours of an imminent war against the Colony and a possibility of cooperation between amaMfengu and amaXhosa in such a war. This was most unsettling and would have been disastrous for the Colonial government. It must be remembered that a perpetual animosity between these two black nations was always welcome to the government, it is basically what their security and that of the white settlers was based on, they had always counted on the support of amaMfengu (as per their pledges at eMqwashini) in the frontier wars against amaXhosa since their “deliverance’ from Gcalekaland in 1835. Any union of amaMfengu and amaXhosa would be highly detrimental to the Colonial government. AmaMfengu were by now powerful, armed (unlike amaXhosa at the end of the War of the Axe (1846), they were never required to hand over their arms by the government), and, for

amaMfengu, a union with amaXhosa would gain them the continuation of their customary practices (which the government was threatening to curtail in the due course.)¹⁸³

In the midst of these unsettling rumours, the government decided to appoint Henry Calderwood as a Special Commissioner to investigate the conditions of amaMfengu, not only in Victoria East, but in Fort Beaufort and Queenstown as well. Calderwood investigated for two months, and his report gives us an interesting picture of amaMfengu in Victoria East.



Calderwood’s 1855 report on amaMfengu is broad and detailed, touching every aspect of the life of the people in the three districts he investigated, namely, Fort Beaufort, Queenstown and Victoria East.¹⁸⁴ Much of the report, however, was based on the statistics of the previous year, 1854. All the three districts had an amaMfengu population of approximately 36 198, of which approximately 8752 possessed and capable of using arms. In Victoria East there were 16 amaMfengu locations, 4 missions’ stations and several out-stations. In Fort Beaufort there were 8 locations and one mission station, the same applied to Queenstown. Taking all three districts together, the amaMfengu possessed 40 714 cattle, 2001 horses, 2401 sheep, 7709

¹⁸³ G.E. Cory, *The Rise of South Africa*, Vol VI (1853-1857), (1940; facs. reprint: Cape Town: Struik, 1965), pp 5-6.

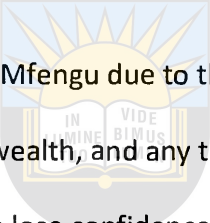
¹⁸⁴ Cape of Good Hope. .G 7 – 55. Report of H. Calderwood Esq, Special Commissioner to inquire into the Present State of the Fingo Locations on the Eastern Frontier

goats, 93 wagons, and 66 ploughs.¹⁸⁵ This clearly shows that they were now thriving, pursuing modern ways of farming and definitely no longer the destitute people who came to Gcalekaland nearly three decades ago. To make sure the white settlers were protected should another war occur, Calderwood, in a very subtle way, suggested a plan whereby amaMfengu would create camps to cover their gardens and farms of the settlers, for mutual protection, as well as to ensure amaXhosa would not pass through their locations in order to attack the Colony. AmaMfengu immediately pledged their fidelity and expressed their heartfelt sorrow that the government should doubt their loyalty. Once again, amaMfengu would act as a human buffer – a very reliable one. This assured Calderwood of the safety of the white settlers, and, as far as the “war scare” was concerned, his two months stay among amaMfengu assured him that it had been an unpleasant, unfounded rumour, all evidence (cultivated lands, their friendliness, utterances of their loyalty and trustworthiness, passes they continually took to work in white farms, their continued services in the Colony, etc) proved that it was not a genuine threat but only a ‘war scare.’

The amaMfengu did, however, have complaints, especially pertaining to land. They raised complaints that the white settlers were encroaching on their locations, and that their cattle were impounded. Their case was handled by the Local Government and the Special Commissioner Calderwood, Chief Commissioner Maclean and amaNgqika Commissioner Brownlee – all these officers were well versed with the location of amaMfengu in the disputed

¹⁸⁵ Ibid, p.2

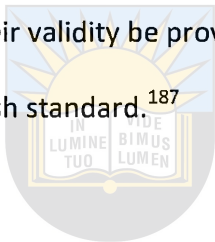
territory. AmaMfengu complaints were not attended during Sir Harry Smith's regime, but after the end of the Mlanjeni War things changed. It would seem that the government had broken the trust of amaMfengu, as depicted by Chief Njokweni's message to King Sandile, now that it was peacetime amaMfengu were of no value to the Colonial Government. Njokweni even allegedly alluded to the government's interference to their culture, ie: reference to the alleged intention of the colonial government to limit amaMfengu husbands to one wife only.¹⁸⁶



The question of land is a touchy affair to amaMfengu due to their habits of life and importance they attach to cattle as their main source of wealth, and any tampering with the borders is such a visible breach of faith which causes them to lose confidence in the government, as they believed that now that the settlers had started encroaching on their land, they would continue unabated if the government did nothing to stop them, and sooner or later they would be pushed out of their land. Mr Brownlee confirmed that the amaMfengu complaints at Peddie, for example, were valid, as he had witnessed the Treaty of 1845, by which amaMfengu had been granted certain land in perpetuity, but that he had afterwards seen houses of white men erected on the land granted by the Treaty to amaMfengu. Because of such justified complaints by amaMfengu, the Cape Assembly appointed a committee chaired by Sir A. Stockenstrom to investigate. Stockenstrom's committee recommended that the colonial government should never encroach 'upon any right or title to any land once lawfully granted, or the government

¹⁸⁶ Statement before C.Brownlee, 26 October 1854, in *Report of the Select Committee appointed to inquire into the disposal of lands in the Ceded Territory and on the Chumie. Ordered by the Legislative Council to be printed May 1855*, pp. 28-29.

would appear unfaithful and unjust (it must be remembered that the government had not to lose the compliance of amaMfengu). Stockenstrom’s committee further implored the Governor to thoroughly investigate amaMfengu allegations, so as to redress where wrong had been done. This was very important to keep amaMfengu – Colonial government relations as harmonious as possible – for otherwise, they would leave the Colony as Njokweni allegedly said they were ready to do – this would be most disastrous for the Colony. The Committee stressed the fact that even “imaginary grievances” of the amaMfengu should be thoroughly investigated and redress be made should their validity be proved, so that they be made to feel it in their own interest to adhere to the British standard.¹⁸⁷



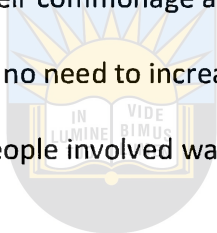
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Coming back to Calderwood’s report on the 1854 ‘war scare’: In another instance, four of amaMfengu locations, namely, Lower Gaga, Middle Gaga, Ely and Roxeni complained that they had much land for cultivation, but not enough for grazing. Calderwood readily proposed a solution of his own. The problem of land shortage, in his opinion, was caused by the chiefs themselves who invited more and more people into their locations. He therefore refused to collect hut tax from any of the newcomers, leaving them landless and therefore without grazing rights. Calderwood was more sympathetic towards Mfengu complaints of their cattle being impounded for trespassing. Moreover amaMfengu disapproved the application to Parliament

¹⁸⁷ *Cape of Good Hope. Report of the Select Committee appointed on the 23rd May 1855, to examine and report upon the papers laid upon the Table, by order of His Excellency the Governor, relative to the disposal of the Lands in the Ceded Territory and on the Chumie, p.8.*

by the all-white Municipal Commissioners of Alice to have the grazing lands of the Lovedale mission station and those of Alice Municipality amalgamated into general commonage.¹⁸⁸

AmaMfengu foresaw constant impounding of amaMfengu livestock, and, probably a long-term result, usurpation of amaMfengu land by alteration of boundaries. Interestingly, Calderwood saw this whole situation from the point of view of amaMfengu – this desire on the part of the Alice Municipal Commissioners to expand their commonage at the expense of the Lovedale lands. He voiced this opinion that there was no need to increase the Alice commonage, and that, even if there was, full consent of the people involved was a prerequisite.



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It is quite interesting to note Calderwood's seeming siding with amaMfengu in almost all of their complaints – what did he hope to gain, where was the catch? Can it be that he had amaMfengu's best interest at heart, over those of the white settlers? He did know, for example, that there was a small number of amaMfengu residing at Lovedale mission, and that some did not mind their grazing lands being added to those of the Alice Municipality in a common commonage, but he continued to back the Lovedale people, simply because Lovedale was a "central station, and if the station people should feel themselves aggrieved, a large body

¹⁸⁸ *Imperial Blue Book*, Further Papers relative to the State of the Kaffir Tribes, 1969 of 1855, Report of Special Commissioner, 22 January 1855, pp. 43 – 45.

of [other black] people will sympathise with them, and the Government will be blamed for having done them injury.”¹⁸⁹

In all the complaints of amaMgengu that have been cited above, Calderwood knew he had to be careful as not to anger them lest their estrangement cause him to lose them as a “human buffer” for the white settlers. AmaMfengu had to be kept happy, even if their land was not enough (as their land complaints were quite genuine), he ensured that each man got a small plot of land with a title – letting them own a little piece of land would make them happy, and would also make them feel indebted to the government forever, as the government was taking good care of them – hence the government was assured of their steadfast loyalty, which in turn, would result in the security and safety of the white settlers against amaXhosa.

On the same breath, one must not lose sight of what Calderwood was doing. Traditionally, black people owned land communally, with the chief as the trustee. People get land from the chief, this ensured the authority and power of the chief, the people were now getting land from the government and not from the chief, as it were, the government was good and powerful and protective and looking after the interests of the people – the chiefs could lose the support and respect of their own people – this fitted in very nicely with the Calderwood’s scheme, and he did it in a very polite way, he was very good at this, such a subtle, astute government agent. It

¹⁸⁹ Ibid, p. 47.

must be remembered that Calderwood had the background of being a missionary, so had had that smooth way of doing things, including bad things – a wolf in a sheep skin. So, it was not out of benevolence that Calderwood “befriended” amaMfengu, they formed part of a bigger picture of the government policy to ensure the safety of the Colony – with amaMfengu as a buffer.

In all the three Mfengu Districts, they occupied about 900 square miles, of which 7709 acres was under cultivation, with each man owing an average of 2½ acres – which Calderwood thought enough. 2013 pounds was paid as Hut Tax, there were, however, men who failed to pay. This suited Calderwood just fine, and would come in handy when amaMfengu complained about the shortage of grazing land. Calderwood’s solution was the decision not to accept the hut tax from other people (as paying was a ticket to land possession), to address the over crowdedness in locations.¹⁹⁰

In yet another instance involving land claim, Calderwood backed Chief Mavuso against the Alice Municipal Commissioners, when the latter claimed part of the chief’s land in 1855. He then instructed the Deputy Surveyor General to fix the boundary line so as to bring the chief’s kraal outside the Town lands. He did this to appease amaMfengu and their chief Mavuso,

¹⁹⁰ Ibid, pp. 43 - 45

Calderwood desired to harm no one, especially Chief Mavuso, as he put it, “The Chief is most friendly and loyal and deserves consideration”.¹⁹¹

This would seem to reiterate the argument put forward in this work that Calderwood did not wish to rub amaMfengu the wrong way, lest he lose their friendliness and loyalty, which would be detrimental to the safety and security they offered the white settlers.

Richard Southey, Colonial Secretary, fully concurred with Calderwood in his support for Chief Mavuso and amaMfengu against the Municipal Commissioners of Alice. He further made it clear that should the amended Municipal Regulations include any lands belonging to the amaMfengu chiefs, they would not be approved of by the government.¹⁹² Faced with this strong support for amaMfengu, the Town Commissioners had no choice but to back down. They instructed the Town Clerk to write to the Deputy Surveyor General, denying any attempt on their part to encroach on the lands belonging to Chief Mavuso.¹⁹³

This seeming support for amaMfengu, as had been alluded to, was part of a whole picture of ensuring continued loyalty of amaMfengu towards the government. Even if the settlers might have been hurt by Calderwood’s preference of amaMfengu over them, the bottom line was

¹⁹¹ LG 183 Cape Archives. H. Calderwood to R. Southey, 10 May 1855.

¹⁹² LG 170 R. Southey- H. Calderwood, 26 May 1855,

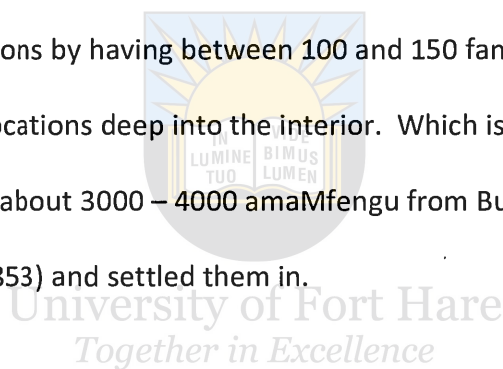
¹⁹³ LG 170 Town Clerk - R. Robinson, Deputy Surveyor-General,

that Calderwood wanted to keep amaMfengu happy, so as to ensure the settlers of a cheap labour force close by, and of course, a human buffer in times of trouble – if the settlers did not see that, well, they must have been blind.

Calderwood's argument was that, for the perpetual security and peace of the colony, amaMfengu support and cooperation was much needed, and to get these, these people had to be kept happy, they needed to be made to feel that they were important for the sustainability of the Colony, like the whites, they should do everything in the best interest of the Colony, put this way, amaMfengu would always be ready to defend the Colony. The best option would be the social upliftment and "civilization" of amaMfengu. There were, however, some obstacles to overcome to achieving this end, like slashing at the customs, especially their marriage laws, dancing and body painting. But Calderwood knew he could not forcibly detach the people from their traditions, that could cost him their loyal support for his agenda. Very cleverly, he convinced them that, especially the "indecent dances" and body painting were customs they copied from amaXhosa, and painting was "a badge of heathenism" and against Christianity. It must be remembered that amaMfengu were by now positive to Christianity, so, not wanting to do anything against Christian values, they agreed with Calderwood.

Another threat to Calderwood's scheme was the growing power of the Mfengu Chiefs, he knew he had to curtail this as a matter of urgency. In the various locations the Chiefs were inviting

more people, to get more support and therefore more power, but at the end of the day this resulted in an inconvenient overcrowding of the locations, which in turn, would cause complaints about the land shortage (as in the case of Chief Matomela of amaRheledwane at Peddie). It must be noted that chiefs preferred to give land to every newcomer, thereby gaining their allegiance, increasing his authority and power in the process – this was in direct conflict with Calderwood’s policy to undermine the power of the chiefs by having the people pledge their allegiance, not to their chief, but the government. His solution was to reduce the number of people in the locations by having between 100 and 150 families in one location, he even proposed new Mfengu locations deep into the interior. Which is why he was not happy when Sir Harry Smith brought about 3000 – 4000 amaMfengu from Butterworth by the end of the War of Manjeni (1850 – 1853) and settled them in.



There was also constant fear of a situation where amaMfengu and amaXhosa would come closer together, and judging from many things these people had in common, this was not far fetched – and that eventuality would be to the detriment of the Colony. That is why Calderwood was so bent on the general improvement of amaMfengu, suggested by the memorandum on agricultural and general improvement of amaMfengu, submitted and approved by the Native Improvement Board in 1855.

AmaMfengu had to be improved, be given titles for their small plots of land and be brought closer to the government – in this way, they would have a sense of permanent indebtedness to the government. As Calderwood cunningly put it “... most effectual measures that can be adopted for our improvement, prosperity, and security ..., for all to believe and act on the conviction that our interest are one, that the black must advance and prosper with the white or both must suffer together ... ” Calderwood’s Mfengu policy centred around this – make them believe they had a share in the country, and they will feel obliged to defend it – and that would suit Calderwood, the settlers and the Colonial government just fine.¹⁹⁴



The fact that amaMfengu in Victoria were more numerous than any other black people shows the extent to which they accommodated themselves to the government plan of making them a human buffer between amaXhosa and the settlers. According to a letter written by Calderwood, dated 4 August 1859, amaMfengu numbered 6693, as against amaXhosa, who numbered 1076, with the Hottentots approximately 100.¹⁹⁵

AmaMfengu men were recruited for the protection of the border. For instance, in 1857, on Calderwood’s instruction, Superintendent T.A. Cumming had to recruit 500 Mfengu men for the protection of the border, at six pence and rations per day. He managed to raise 130 men in

¹⁹⁴ *Imperial Blue Book*, 1969 of 1855, pp. 49 - 51

¹⁹⁵ LG 186, H. Calderwood, 4 August, 1859.

three days, owing to the fact that many had gone into the colony to shear and reap and had not returned. The only objection the Chiefs had was the enrolment of men with guns, as they required them for the protection of their stock and homesteads.¹⁹⁶

By 1860, Sir George Grey's project on amaMfengu upliftment had taken root, as proved by the Report of Superintendant of amaMfengu in December 1860. According to the Report, amaMfengu in Alice were advanced than in any other districts and this was attributed to the fact that they were "almost mixed up with Europeans" – visited daily by me or other missionary of Lovedale institution, they also had seven schools among them and had services at various locations every Sabbath day. Many of them had flocks of sheep and cultivated crops to sell and for their own consumption.¹⁹⁷ This clearly shows the extent to which amaMfengu had fully adapted to the European economy.

In the same year (1860), Alice was visited by H.R.H. Prince Alfred, the British Queen Victoria's son, after whom Port Alfred in the Eastern Cape was named. The Prince and his entourage were much impressed by the amaMfengu Gaga village, when passing through on their way to Alice, on their first visit to this part of the colony. The Royal party was welcomed in Alice by Mr Henry Calderwood, in his capacity as the Civil Commissioner of the division.

¹⁹⁶ LG 412, Cumming - Calderwood, 7 March 1857.

¹⁹⁷ LG 412, Report of Superintendant of Fingoes, Victoria, 1860, pp. 114 – 116, Cape Archives.

The Lovedale Institution was also visited. The Industrial Department proved a successful tool in furthering Sir George Grey and Calderwood's objective of "training up Native youths, not only in the arts of civilized industry", but also in academic advancements.¹⁹⁸

In reading about this beautiful picture of Alice, the advancement and progress of the amaMfengu at the Gaga River, one should, however, read deep into this apparent generosity, benevolence and paternalism on the part of the Colonial government towards amaMfengu and see the whole bigger picture underlying it. This was part of the old policy of "divide and rule", by which the Colonial government, through agents like Calderwood and Sir George Grey tried to ensure permanent animosity between amaMfengu and amaXhosa, the absence of which might be detrimental to the precarious security of the settlers.

¹⁹⁸ H.L.. Henschman: *The Town of Alice with Lovedale and Fort Hare* (Lovedale, 1927), , pp. 37 - 38

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

This dissertation begins with the year 1824, when the first Glasgow Missionaries founded Lovedale mission as guests of independent Xhosa chiefs. By the time it ends, in 1860, the situation has become utterly different. Lovedale mission itself has relocated less than twenty kilometres from its original site, but everything else has changed to a much more dramatic extent. A new population, the amaMfengu, has replaced the former Xhosa population and a new government, the Cape colonial government, has replaced the former Xhosa government. The one undeniable continuity is that of the missionary agenda as personified in the first magistrate of the newly-established district of Victoria East, the ex-missionary Henry Calderwood.

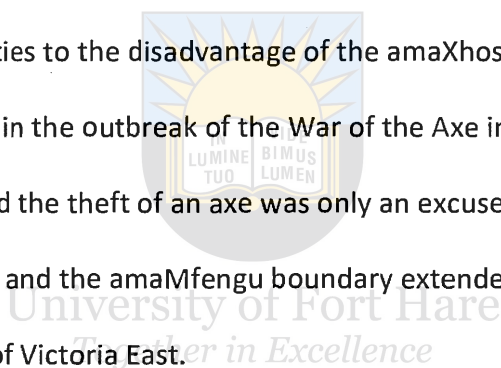


We opened with a discussion of the Glasgow Missionary Society which established itself at old Lovedale on the Ncerha river in 1824. Its intention was to spread the Gospel among the amaXhosa, but its approach was so arrogant as to make the whole concept of Christianity unwelcome. The missionaries viewed amaXhosa as people without any religion. The amaXhosa, on their side, felt that they could not accept a new dispensation which sought to undermine their beliefs, customs and culture. They saw the missionaries as but an extension of the white government whose ultimate goal was to get a foothold on their land, as well as cheap labour for the white settlers. In 1857, under the governorship of Sir George Grey, the mission took a new direction with the addition of an industrial school. This too aligned with the colonial attempt to 'civilize' black people, to tame them, to equip them with skills that would make

them a more useful workforce for the white settlers. The whole question of civilization and Christianisation was a means by the colonial government to make the amaXhosa more acceptable neighbours to the settlers, and thus maintain peace on the frontier.

A new factor entered the situation in 1835 with the arrival of abaMbo (later called amaMfengu) from Natal. Originally distinct chiefdoms, they acquired something of a common identity, having survived the wars of dispersion but suffering and impoverished as they came down. They were welcomed by King Hintsa in Gcalekaland, and were assisted in every possible way to make themselves independent respectable people again. The assertion that they were enslaved is nothing but a myth, completely unfounded and an attempt to sow division among these brother nations. It was perhaps however the desire of amaMfengu to be completely free, to have a country they could call their own, which made the idea of seeking British protection so attractive, and which eventually led to their evacuation of Gcalekaland, accompanied by the missionary John Ayliff. This fitted in with the agenda of the colonial government, expressed in the famous three amaMfengu oaths under the mqwashu tree at Peddie. These oaths tied the amaMfengu to the government, and the missionaries became the link through education and conversion. AmaMfengu became the obedient trustworthy human buffer the government needed on the frontier against the amaXhosa. They became a ready defence mechanism, and protectors of the settlers. Their attachment to the missionaries, entrenched by the mqwashu oaths made them more accepting of missionary teachings.

At this point (Chapter Four), we need to turn our attention to the political situation on the frontier following the establishment of the missionaries and the arrival of the amaMfengu in 1835 . AmaXhosa had returned to their lands following the conclusion of the war, and a new system known as the 'Treaty System' had been introduced to keep the peace. Specifically, the liberal Diplomatic Agent C.L. Stretch was employed at Block Drift near Lovedale to mediate between the settlers and the amaXhosa under Chiefs Maqoma and Tyhali. The system worked reasonably well, but the settlers agitated against it with the result that the colonial government unilaterally amended the treaties to the disadvantage of the amaXhosa. This stoked tensions on the frontier which resulted in the outbreak of the War of the Axe in 1846. This war had everything to do with land, and the theft of an axe was only an excuse. As a result of this war, the AmaXhosa were defeated and the amaMfengu boundary extended from Peddie to the new town of Alice and the district of Victoria East.



The final chapter looks at the first years of Alice and Victoria East, which may be seen as the unification of the missionary initiative and the amaMfengu presence. The dominant figure was Henry Calderwood, a former missionary whose ideas had impressed Governor Maitland during the War of the Axe. Calderwood was appointed first Magistrate of Victoria East with a mandate to implement missionary policies, such as quitrent ownership of land, villages under headmen, encouragement of schools and churches, agricultural improvement and so on. New taxes and pass laws were also provided to facilitate a flow of labour to the white farmers. Calderwood protected amaMfengu during the "Fingo War Scare" of 1854 and even supported Chief Mavuso

against the white settlers of the town of Alice. This was because he appreciated that amaMfengu must be somehow rewarded for their loyalty in order to serve as an effective buffer.

On the surface, amaMfengu were happy and progressive under Calderwood's policies. But if scrutinised, the same policies contained seeds of dissatisfaction because, as amaMfengu would eventually see that equality between themselves and the settlers was never going to happen, despite having fought side by side in the Frontier Wars. With the visit of Prince Alfred, the son of Queen Victoria, the work of the missionaries and the vision of the original Glasgow Missionary Society seemed to have come to fruition. Civilization, Christianity and education, as embodied in the Mfengu locations of Victoria East, reigned supreme. The settlers too were comparatively happy, leading comfortable and peaceful lives, defended by the presence of the amaMfengu nearby. Everything looked nice and good on the surface, but history would prove that the very education and civilisation which the colonial government promoted for the benefit of the white settlers would eventually be utilised by the people themselves to agitate for equal rights, rights which the whites were not prepared to share.

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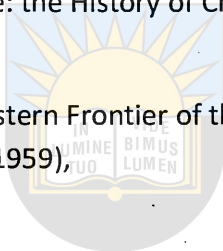
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