THE LIFE AND TIMES

OF

KAMA CHUNGWA

1798 - 1875

THESIS

Submitted in Fulfilment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
MASTER OF ARTS
of RHODES UNIVERSITY

by

DRUSILLA SIZIWE YEKELA (née LUSU)

August, 1988

ABSTRACT

Few students of History understand the derivation and/or origin of the Gqunukhwebe oath "Ndifung' uChungw' efel' emnyameni: I swear by Chungwa who is lying dead at Mnyameni (Alexandria)." A desire to elucidate this point and other related facts inspired me to undertake a close examination of the history of the Gqunukhwebe people, selecting as my main theme the life-work of Chief Kama.

In the first chapter I am discussing the creation of the Gqunukhwebe Chiefdom under Khwane by the Xhosa King, Tshiwo. The central theme here is the Black-White confrontation of the 17th - 18th centuries on the Cape Eastern Frontier. As a result of the collision the Gqunukhwebe people were forced to make a home on the banks of the Thwecu River along the east coast. It was here that Kama reached early manhood.

The second chapter describes the establishment of Wesleyville Missionary Station by William Shaw in 1823, the first Methodist Missionary Institution in all Xhosaland.

In chapter three the discussion centers on the significance of Kama's conversion. An unforeseen outcome of his public profession of the Christian faith was that it not only stigmatized the latter religion as a force destructive of the old order in Xhosa society, but it also reshaped Kama's political image for the good of his religious life. He not only fled from the neighbourhood of his relations and sojourned in a strange land, but also reinforced the Colonial forces in the contemporary frontier struggles. His integrity, self-sacrifice and pro-Colonial inclination eventually won him Middledrift.

Chapter four opens with Kama's settling in Middledrift. The theme here is two-pronged. It presents the 'Cattle-Killing' delusion as a source of new trials for the 'priest-chief', and at the same time exposes the Colonial Government's efforts to gain ascendancy above the Xhosa chiefs. Kama's land was the first testing ground in this respect, and the Chief was initially agreeable to the scheme.

Chapter five alludes to instances of Chief Kama's unco-operative attitude as signs that his compromising spirit had its limits. An atmosphere of disregard towards Kama pervades the period. But the adversities that threatened to dominate his later life did not by any means shake his Christian principles and convictions. The traces of his good works may to this day be seen in Middledrift, the traditional home of the Kamas.

CONTENTS

ILLUSTRATIONS AND MAPS:

ABBREVIATIONS

A.Y.B.	Archives Year Book
G.T.J.	Graham's Town Journal
B.P.P.	British Parliamentary Papers
R.C.C.	Records of the Cape Colony
S.M.M.	Story of My Mission
W.M.N.	Wesleyan Missionary Notices
BK	British Kaffraria
CO	Colonial Office
LG	Lieutenant-Governor
MS	Manuscript in Cory Library
GH	Government House (Dispatches from the Governor to the Secretary of State in London)
C.H.B.E.	Cambridge History Of The British Empire
R.M.O.	Resident Magistrate Office

P R E F A C E

Chief Kama Chungwa is undoubtedly an important figure in the history of the Blacks of Southern Africa because of his role as a Christianized community leader and a 'Charlemagne' of the times in which he lived. His life's story complements accounts of the Christian Mission in Southern Africa, the Frontier Wars and the Cattle-Killing delusion in Xhosaland. Furthermore, the study of Kama, a non-Christian turned Christian, throws light particularly on those Xhosa customs and traditional practices which were not compatible with the Christian religion. And yet nothing has been written exclusively on Kama as a history maker. Apart from Alfred Ngani's novels Ibali LamaGqunukhwebe and Ubom Buka-Kama and information pieced together by Rev W.C. Holden, possibly in Kama's old age or even posthumously, the professional historians have contentedly ignored him. This omission cannot be attributed to the fact that many of his descendents are still living, for his is a story to be proud of. The problems likely to be encountered in collecting accurate information about the origin of the Gqunukhwebe have most probably been a discouraging factor. Peires's comment will elucidate this point:

> "One of the great barriers to historical understanding is that the more distant the event, the harder it is to grasp, partly because our sources of information deteriorate and partly because the earliest times are least like our own."[1]

---

1. J.B. Peires: The House of Phalo (Johannesburg, 1981), p. viii.

In addition, the fact that Ngani's novels pay little attention to the dates of some crucial events related to Kama's life, has been another likely obstacle. However, I accepted these possible limitations as challenges when I decided to embark upon research into Kama's life with the hope that historically minded readers will be able to pick out what is most probable and likely in those aspects of his story which are defective. This thesis is thus an attempt to produce a narrative of Chief Kama's life as it was portrayed in his political, social, cultural and religious activities.

The fact that I have in the end been able to complete this work I owe to many people. These are Dr Jeff Peires, my supervisor, whose diligent guidance cannot be easily measured. His interest in my subject of research has been a constant source of motivation and encouragement. Without his assistance and scholarly criticism the success of this study would never have been realised. Mr Michael Berning, Sandy Fold, Jackson Vena and Anne Torlesse of the Cory Library (Grahamstown) took a lot of trouble on my behalf and were always ready to help me even at very short notice. The staff of the Government Archives and South African Library in Cape Town, the Kaffrarian Museum in King William's Town and Margaret Fouche of the Africana section of the Fort Hare Library also rendered invaluable help. I am greatly indebted to my oral sources C.W. Sigcbi, a retired school teacher, H.H. Mdledle a retired teacher and court interpreter and J.C. Tunyiswa, a retired agricultural officer. Mr R.G.S. Makalima has been a source of great inspiration. Ann Harrison is especially thanked for her readiness to edit my language and also Wendy Lloyd for her neat and efficient typing. I also wish to record my appreciation for financial help I got from the Human Sciences Research Council in 1986.

I thank God for the lives of my mother, Elizah Popi Lusu, my sister, Jessie, my brothers, Welsh, Humphrey and Michael with their spouses, my cousins, Monde and Erick also with their spouses. Their moral support made me feel very optimistic.

Mazizandile, my husband, has been from the beginning of the project to the end, both a pillar of strength and a source of confidence.

I cannot but imagine that if my late father, Douglas Lusu, had had the opportunity he accorded all his children he would have been a historian himself, for he had a natural propensity to correlate dates and events with precision. We, his children, would not have achieved the little we have if it were not for his self sacrifice, inspiration and motivation.

Lastly I wish to dedicate this work to my children, my nieces and nephews in the hope that from it they will derive everlasting inspiration.

CHAPTER ONE

THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE GQUNUKHWEBE CHIEFS UP TO THE ARRIVAL OF THE BRITISH SETTLERS OF 1820 IN SOUTH AFRICA.

The designation GQUNUKHWEBE is the historical name of the offspring of both the XHOSA commoners and GQUNUQHWA Khoi.[1] Long before the coining of the national name there were in the TSHAWE-XHOSA kingdom of Togu "clans of Khoi origin and descent either as subjects or as fully-fledged citizens."[2]

The birth of the Gqunukhwebe chiefdom is related in various ways, and though the stories differ in details the general facts agree that the kingdom came into being during the reign of Togu's grandson, TSHIWO. The Xhosa then occupied the country between the MTHATHA and MBHASHE rivers in the east and west respectively.[3] On this basis therefore the rise of the Gqunukhwebe nation is a legitimate chapter in the history of both the Xhosa chiefdoms and of the land beyond the NCIBA River. An historical event of importance occurred in the said land, on the eastern side of the Mbhashe River, when a famous warrior, a favourite councillor, KHWANE, was appointed by the Xhosa King, Tshiwo, to execute all those condemned of witchcraft. The much-trusted councillor systematically spared life with the greatest secrecy,[4] hiding those smelled out as wizards in the land of the Gqunuqhwa Khoi.

Soga locates the Khoi community in the inaccessible and forested MNGAZI region west of the MZIMVUBU River.[5] Mngazi is about sixty kilometers from Mthatha along the Wild Coast. Derricourt's location of the San people, the earliest known associates of the Khoi, in the region of the upper Mzimvubu from as early as the mid-seventeenth century strengthens Soga's point.[6]

---

1. J.H. Soga: The AmaXhosa Life and Customs (Lovedale, 1931), p. 11.
2. J. Milton: The Edges of War (Cape Town, 1983), p. 19.
3. J.H. Soga: The South Eastern Bantu (Johannesburg, 1930), p. 116.
4. W.C. Holden: The Past and Future of the Kaffir Races (London, 1866), p. 156.
5. Soga: South Eastern Bantu, p. 116.
6. C. Saunders and R. Derricourt: Beyond the Cape Frontier; Studies In The History of The Transkei and Ciskei (London, 1974), p. 73.

Further, the fact that the land of refuge was not far away allowed for easy contact between the pseudo-chief Khwane and his chiefdom which was continually being augmented. Such details lend credence to the oral tradition.

Khwane's gesture obviously constituted a breach of faith and was no less than an act of disloyalty to his chief although the victims could not have been ungrateful to him for his greatness of heart. Noteworthy is the fact that because they owed him their lives, they were obliged to honour and respect him, almost according him the dignity of a potentate. It is also possible that they paid him tribute. While Khwane secretly played the dual role of being both a councillor and a pseudo-chief, the superiority of the Tshawe clan in the land was one day challenged. Tshiwo's tottering kingdom was justification enough for a declaration of independence by GABA, the NGQOSINI clan leader. In the ensuing hostilities Khwane brought forth an army from his hidden kingdom, members of which had, by then, intermarried extensively with the neighbouring Gqunuqhwa.[7] Khwane's army appeared in complete war-kit "a hundred young warriors, with spears, shields and war plumes,"[8] thus giving an idea of the duration of its growth and survival. The scales were immediately turned in favour of Tshiwo, whereupon he rewarded his lifesaving councillor with chieftainship over these once rejected people:

> "Mandivakalise ukukholiseka kwisenzo sakho, nto kaKhwane;
> Ngokulondoloza, ugcine isizwe esilixabiso kangaka;
> Namhla ke uyinkosi.

---

7. Peires: Phalo, p. 25.
8. Milton: Edges of War, p. 19.

Let me proclaim the pleasure I derive from your act Khwane;
For having safely guarded and protected such a valuable nation;
Today you are a chief."[9]

The popular applause which ensued at this point obviously signified approval, especially from those for whose benefit the chieftainship was being created and perhaps by those who could not but admire the man who had spared their relatives the pain of unjustifiable death.

"Yiba yiyo ke phezu kwaba bantu wabalondolozayo;
Yamkela nantsi intshuntshe;
Yohlala ingumqondiso wokuba uyinkosi emiselweyo;

Be you the one over the people you have protected;
Receive this assegai;
It will always symbolize that you have been lawfully installed as a chief;"[10]

Tshiwo installed Khwane as chief and at the same time raised the newly created chieftainship to a level with his kingship by giving Khwane power and authority to take up arms against him too, if needs be:

"Uyinkosi nje wobinza nakum ndakuza ngobutshaba.

As a chief you may raise your assegai against me as well if I come to you with enmity."[11]

Gqoba, whose work is more of a historical record than Ngani's creative piece, reiterates the above facts and adds further that:

---

9. M.A.P. Ngani: Umkhonto kaTshiwo (This is a play based on oral tradition. Its writer, M.A.P. Ngani who is the son of the author of Ibali LamaGqunukhwebe, is dramatizing an historical event), (Johannesburg, n.d.), p. 88.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.

"Wabanikela indwe yalomabandla bawaphetheyo,

He adorned them (Khwane and his co-executioner, Gaba) with the crane feathers of their regiments"[12]

thereby rewarding them for their outstanding bravery,

"Wabanxiba ubuhlalu ... ukuba bawathethe bawagqibe amatyala, (noko awokubhena ebeya kuya kuye ...)

He dressed them with beads thus giving them authority to preside over lawsuits, (with the exception of appeals which would be referred to the King)" [13]

a suggestion of the latter's seniority over the former.

"Ize nayo yonke iminikelo ebisenziwa komkhulu, enje ngokwindla: ulibo, uvalo lwemvubu, isifuba sempofu, izintsu zengwe, indwe, inamba, izizi, bazamkele.

They could therefore, from that day accept all the dues and privileges of chieftainship, dues for instance pertaining to autumn (kwindla): first fruit, entrails of hippopotamus, eland's brisket, leopard's skins, crane, python and criminal fines." [14]

Acceptance of the above dues was an exclusive prerogative of a chief. An ordinary headman or even an acting chief would be required to pass them on to the chief, and failure to do so could result into war. Therefore formal chieftainship replaced the informal chieftainship of Mngazi forest, and Khwane was chief indeed after this historic moment. The Xhosa King personally acknowledged the new chieftainship by giving Khwane authority to choose an area that would be under his sole jurisdiction:

---

12. W.B. Rubusana: ZemK'inKomo Magwalandini (W.W. Gqoba: UmKhondo wamaGqunukhwebe) (London, 1906), p. 160.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.

"Hamba uye kuma apho uthanda khona.
Uzinze kwezinye zeentlambo zam.
Usifunqule njengoko isizwe owazikhulisela sona.
Ndiligweba njalo ityala lokuwudela umyalelo wam.

Go and establish yourself on the land of your choice.
Settle comfortably in some of my valleys.
You take with you the whole nation whose growth you've personally nurtured.
That is my judgement on your crime of disobeying my command." [15]

Establishing under Tshiwo's immediate guardianship would not have made it possible for Khwane to enjoy the autonomy of chieftainship. Even settling in a remote valley of the king's domains still bore an element of junior status. Nonetheless, Khwane's unfaithfulness had, instead of bringing about his downfall, elevated him to a higher rank, ironic justice! Responding to the king's request the GQUNUQHWA-KHWANE kingdom immediately saluted their chief "Ah Sobantu" [16] (Yise wabantu- father of the people).

An alternative rival tradition traces Khwane to a VUNDLE clan in LESOTHO whence he is said to have come.[17] On arrival in Tshiwo's land he ingratiated himself with the king, and eventually was appointed the hangman of all those condemned for witchcraft. Tshiwo who was known to have been very frightened of witchcraft, must have hoped that a stranger, a foreigner, would fraternize less with the condemned people. The fact that few Xhosa would have been willing to perform this task on their fellowmen makes this tradition the stronger. Apparently Khwane faithfully served his master in

---

15. Ngani: Umkhonto, p. 88.
16. Ibid., p. 89.
17. J.C. Tunyiswa: Interviewed by D.S. Yekela, Annshaw Location (Middledrift), 7.7.85.

this regard until a certain young man pleaded desperately for his life. From that day Khwane ceased killing,[18] and instead helped found a budding nation, over which he was later made chief.

Dugmore's version depicts Khwane as "a man very popular with the tribe (amaXhosa) at large ... a great favourite with his chief (Tshiwo), and ... employed by him on most matters of importance."[19] Beside Khwane there was another councillor "of great influence with the chief, but a man of a very different character."[20] The two councillors were entrusted with the execution of sentences against those accused of witchcraft. The sentences involved both the confiscation of the cattle and the massacre of the parties involved. Whenever the councillor other than Khwane had the management of the proceedings the sentences were carried out relentlessly. Khwane, on the contrary, spared life, and further left the victims with a few head of cattle with which to subsist. The Xhosa king's favourite councillor continued with his life-saving mission for years until a quarrel with his co-executioner threatened him with exposure. When things had gone this far Khwane boldly assembled his forest kingdom and thereafter showed up at the great place "avowing what he had done, and putting it to the old chief as to whether he had not better served his interests by preserving the men alive, than he would have done by putting them to death."[21] Tshiwo responded by investing Khwane with chieftainship over the people he had saved.[22]

---

18. Tunyiswa: Interviewed by Yekela, 7.7.85.
19. Rev H.H. Dugmore's Papers (J. Maclean: Compendium of Kaffir Laws and Customs (Grahamstown), 1906), p. 22.
20. Ibid.
21. Ibid., pp. 22-23.
22. Ibid.

Gqoba's version, which is similar to the above, proposes two councillor-executioners, but it lays no stress on the character differences which, in Dugmore's account, prescribed the manner in which the executioners discharged their duties and subsequently their political careers. Furthermore it is rather doubtful that any king would show such a high regard for an unfaithful councillor, at the expense of a loyal councillor unless Khwane had performed an heroic feat, one that made such an impact on Tshiwo that he was obliged to demonstrate wholehearted gratitude. It is likely that Dugmore's story-tellers tampered with the real facts to avoid damaging the image of the founder of their nation whom they had every reason to admire and adorn and who in any case had, by confessing, made good his guilt. They obviously did not want it repeated by generation after generation that their chieftainship had come into being as a result of the disloyalty of a much trusted councillor. Dugmore's account also refers to Tshiwo's awarding to Khwane "blue crane's wings for war plumes for his bravest warriors."[23] This further weakens the basis of the latter's chieftainship, because the blue crane feathers are traditionally conferred by a chief upon warriors as a reward for outstanding bravery. It is thus hard to believe that Tshiwo could have adorned his favourite councillor with chiefly insignia simply because the latter had acknowledged his disloyalty and faithlessness. Whatever the true facts of the story are, all the accounts

---

23. Dugmore's Paper's (Maclean: Kaffir Laws), p. 23.

seem to adopt the view that an individual who did not belong to the family of hereditary chiefs was raised to the rank of head of a chiefdom.[24] Khwane, a commoner, perhaps originally a foreigner in Xhosaland, adopted the Tshawe clan name as the Great Chief of the Gqunukhwebe in recognition of the connection between the Gqunuqhwa and Khwane's wards.[25] Significantly Khwane's adoption of the Tshawe clan name did not connote blood relationship between the two Tshawe groups. Hence, to this day the original royal Tshawe are designated AmaTSHAWE emiDANGE as opposed to AmaTSHAWE kaKHWANE,[26] a fact which allows for intermarriage within the Tshawe clan. A descendent of Khwane, KAMA, took NGQIKA's daughter NONGWANE to be his only wife. NONDWENDWE, Chief SISEKO Kama's daughter, recently married a descendent of the Xhosa Chief GCALEKA namely, Chief SALAKUPHATHWA of QAMATA (St. Marks).

Khwane, the founder of the Gqunukhwebe chiefdom was first in the line of the national chiefs, although his personal ancestors had in no way been chiefs:

GQUNUKHWEBE
↓
SISHINDE
↓
NTIBANA
↓
LUNGANA
↓
TEBO
↓
KHWANE[27]

---

24. G.M. Theal: Compendium of South African History and Geography (Lovedale, 1877), p. 118.
25. Peires: Phalo, p. 26.
26. Tunyiswa: Interviewed by Yekela, 20.4.86.
27. Resident Magistrate Office Records : Middledrift.

His kingdom rapidly increased in numbers and importance becoming a formidable foe of the Colony later on.[28] After Tshiwo's death the king's house was plagued by succession struggles,[29] thanks to Mdange, who stood firm against the pretensions of Gwali and his satellite, Ntinde,[30] thereby forcing them to seek shelter from a Khoi chief, Hintsathi, who was established on the western side of the Fish River.[31] By giving shelter to the Xhosa rebels Hintsathi had committed a blunder of the first magnitude. Mdange did not rest until he had annihilated and incorporated the latter's kingdom into the Xhosa.[32] Thereafter he yielded the royal authority to the rightful heir PHALO, after which exercise he crossed the Kei River. Peires claims that while living west of the Kei Mdange "ruled in the name of the king,"[33] thereby proclaiming the sovereignty of Phalo in the area. Ironically Mdange's removal ruined rather than consolidated Phalo's kingship. It signalled a general hiving off by minor chiefs from the nuclear political unit.[34] Friction and discontent arose from the obligations of being a minor chief, a desire to enjoy autonomy at a distance and a wish to escape from constant warring since this often led to losses of stock and manpower. There was also the need to search for areas with rich grazing land and abundant game. The Gqunukhwebe were no exception to this pattern and Harinck claims that "after the defeat of Gwali, the Gqunukhwebe chief TSHAKA fled with his followers."[35] Tshaka's point of departure was

---

28. Theal: South African History, p. 118.
29. L. Thompson (ed): African Societies In Southern Africa (G. Harinck: Interaction between Xhosa and Khoi: emphasis on the period 1620-1750) (London, 1969), p. 159.
30. W.G. Bennie: Imibengo, (Lovedale, 1971), p. 110.
31. Ibid., p. 113.
32. Peires: Phalo, p. 45.
33. Ibid., p. 46.
34. R. Elphick & H. Giliomee (eds): The Shaping of South African Society 1652-1820 (H. Giliomee: The Eastern Frontier, 1770-1812) (Cape Town, 1979), p. 294.
35. Thompson (ed): African Societies (Harinck: Xhosa and Khoi), p. 159.

KHWANE

TSHAKA (Ndlunkulu) TYARHA (Kunene)[36]

possibly the region east of the Mbhashe River, and it is probable that he most urgently wanted to escape from the centralising incorporative tactics of Mdange. The above probability is reinforced by Burns-Ncamashe's view (supposedly derived from the Gwali tradition) that Gwali was Tshiwo's son by Khwane's sister.[37] This view justifies the Gqunukhwebe's flight from the vicinity of Mdange's influence, and it also implies the possibility of amaKhwane having fought side by side with amaGwali and amaNtinde against Mdange's contingent. Despite varying suppositions, 19th century tradition still bore testimony to the association between the Gwali and the Gqunukhwebe in the fact that Khwane's descendent, Kama, had, in his original pick of councillors, a Gwali headman, named TELE[38] who outlived his chief.[39]

The date of the first Xhosa settlement west of the Fish River has been hotly debated in South African historiography. There can, however, be no doubt that the Gqunukhwebe were resident west of the Bushmans River by January 1778.[40] Later on, the Gqunukhwebe claimed that they had purchased the Zuurveld (the land between the Sundays and the Fish Rivers) from

---

36. H.W. Pahl: Interviewed by D.S. Yekela, Fort Hare, 6.5.86.
37. S.M. Burns-Ncamashe: A Synopsis of the History of the AmaGwali Tribe (Fort Hare, 1969), p. 1.
38. Ibid., p. 6.
39. Tunyiswa: Interviewed by Yekela, 20.4.86.
40. Peires: Phalo, p. 54.

Ruiter, the leader of the Hoengiqua Khoi.[41] This claim was hotly contested by the Colonists, but whatever the truth of the matter, it is indubitably true that the Gqunukhwebe were living west of the Fish before the Plettenburg 'treaty of 1778 was concluded.'[42]

Tshaka's removal from the neighbourhood of other Xhosa chiefdoms soon turned out to be a mere exchange of ambitious neighbours. The Zuurveld region was soon to be turned into a theatre for the exercise of different governmental policies over people of completely different cultures and standards of civilization. Paradoxically the interests of the semi-nomadic groups of Boers, Xhosa and Khoi converging upon this region were identifiably similar, having common practices and goals, though stemming from widely differing backgrounds which in turn affected their outlook on life.

Marais traces the source of the fragmentation of the nucleus of the Boer community to the search for better pasturage.[43] As early as 1743 Dutch East India Company officials had tried in vain to prevent the pastoralists from crossing to the east of the Brak River. In 1770 the Government further abetted neglect of law by extending the eastern boundary to the Gamtoos River.[44] Possibly by this date Tshaka was already living to the west of the Fish River. The failure of the authorities to effectively enforce law, was, without their being aware, hastening the inevitable collision between

---

41. Thompson (ed): African Societies (Harinck: Xhosa and Khoi), p. 159.
42. Peires: Phalo, p. 54.
43. J.S. Marais: Maynier and the First Boer Republic (Cape Town, 1801), p. 1.
44. Ibid., p. 2.

the pastoral groups. The Government's eastern boundary had, by 1775 been proclaimed as the Fish River in the north and the Bushmans River in the south.[45] Still the Colonists pushed eastwards. As they advanced they "induced the people of Kabeang and Ruiter to enter their service, and extended themselves to the extremity of the Zuurveld.[46] The Boer advance inevitably created a frontier, the Cape Eastern Frontier, a place where Black and White jostled each other in their efforts to legitimize their claims to the land of the Khoi. With the latter overwhelmed and subjugated in this way by the Colonists, what would become of Tshaka and the neighbouring Xhosa chiefdoms? The Gqunukhwebe leader would obviously not be keen to sacrifice the independence he had gained after such a hazardous journey, especially as he was only then beginning to enjoy it. Marais' remark that "Here the Boers were to encounter more formidable resistance than anything they had met with so far"[47] suggests an even balance in the strength of the parties involved. The weak Colonial Government could barely sustain itself in the face of such effective resistance. Thus the subsequent mixing of the habitations of Boer and Xhosa must be seen as exploiting the weakness of Company rule.

The fact that the Xhosa and the Colonists lived side by side was both a nuisance and a disadvantage in the authorities' eyes,[48] and both the common interests and cultural differences of the parties involved complicated the situation all the more. While the ill-fated intercourse continued the

---

45. Marais: First Boer Republic, p. 3.
46 J. Sutherland: Memoir On The Kaffirs, Hottents and Bosjemans of South Africa (Cape Town, 1844), p. 243.
47. Marais: First Boer Republic, p.3.
48. Ibid., p. 5.

Colonists suddenly discovered that the cattle they had failed to get from the Xhosa by cajolery could still be cheaply procured from the same source with beads, copper and iron.[49] According to Monica Wilson the D.E.I.C. itself sought to monopolise the cattle trade.[50] In the interim, however, they decided to discourage contact between the two races.[51]

In no time the Government's fears were confirmed, for the Boers had started complaining about the evils resulting from the proximity of the Xhosa to their settlements.[52] The Colonists residing behind the Bruintjieshoogte, including the Prinsloo family, mainly complained of stock theft. The landdrost of Stellenbosch, De Wet, writing to the Governor, referred to the "hostilities ... chiefly caused by the violence and annoyance committed against the Kaffirs by these inhabitants ..." [53] Later on in the same letter he asserted that

> "the family of W. Prinsloo, ... are mischievous inhabitants of the country, who cause disquiet; and will not fail to do all that is possible to have the Kaffirs removed thence, in order to enlarge the extent of their own farms." [54]

---

49. Elphick & Giliomee (eds): South African Society (Giliomee: Eastern Frontier), p. 301.
50. M. Wilson & L. Thompson (eds): The Oxford History of South Africa 1 (M. Wilson: Co-operation and conflict: The Eastern Cape Frontier) (Oxford, 1969) p. 237.
51. Marais: First Boer Republic, p. 4.
52. Ibid., p. 7.
53. D. Moodie: The Record or Series Of Official Papers Relative To The Condition And Treatment Of The Native Tribes Of South Africa, Part III, De Wet - Van Plettenburg, 13.3.1780, (Cape Town, 1838) p.93.
54. Ibid.

This state of affairs inevitably brought about reciprocal hostility between the two racial groups. Thus Governor Plettenberg's proclamation of the eastern Colonial boundary in 1778 can be seen as a response to the Prinsloos' complaints.[55] Plettenburg persuaded some minor Swali chiefs "to keep themselves on the other side of the Bushmans River mountains and thus outside the districts of our colonies."[56] The object was to create a no man's zone between the two parties that were forbidden to have contact.[57] Noteworthy is the fact that Tshaka, the Gqunukhwebe leader had not been one of the contracting parties. Peires's argument on Van Plettenberg's boundary line completely dissociates the Gqunukhwebe leader from the stipulations of October 1778:

> "the boundary intended by Van Plettenberg did not run along the entire Fish River, but along a more or less direct north-south line linking the upper Fish with the Bushmans and excluding the area between the Bushmans and the Fish, which does not seem to have been inhabited by the Colonists."[58]

The Government, however, in trying to legitimize its claim above that of Tshaka argued that Ruiter's children denied the former's purchase altogether.[59] But what if the transaction had been valid, but that Ruiter's children, wanting to make a double gain from the sale, decided to deny the

---

55. Marais: First Boer Republic, p. 6.
56. Ibid., pp. 5-6.
57. Moodie: The Record, III, De Wet - Van Plettenburg, 13.3.1780, p. 92.
58. Peires: Phalo, p. 54.
59. A. Stockenstrom: The Autobiography of the Late Andries Stockenstrom (Cape Town, 1887), p. 9.

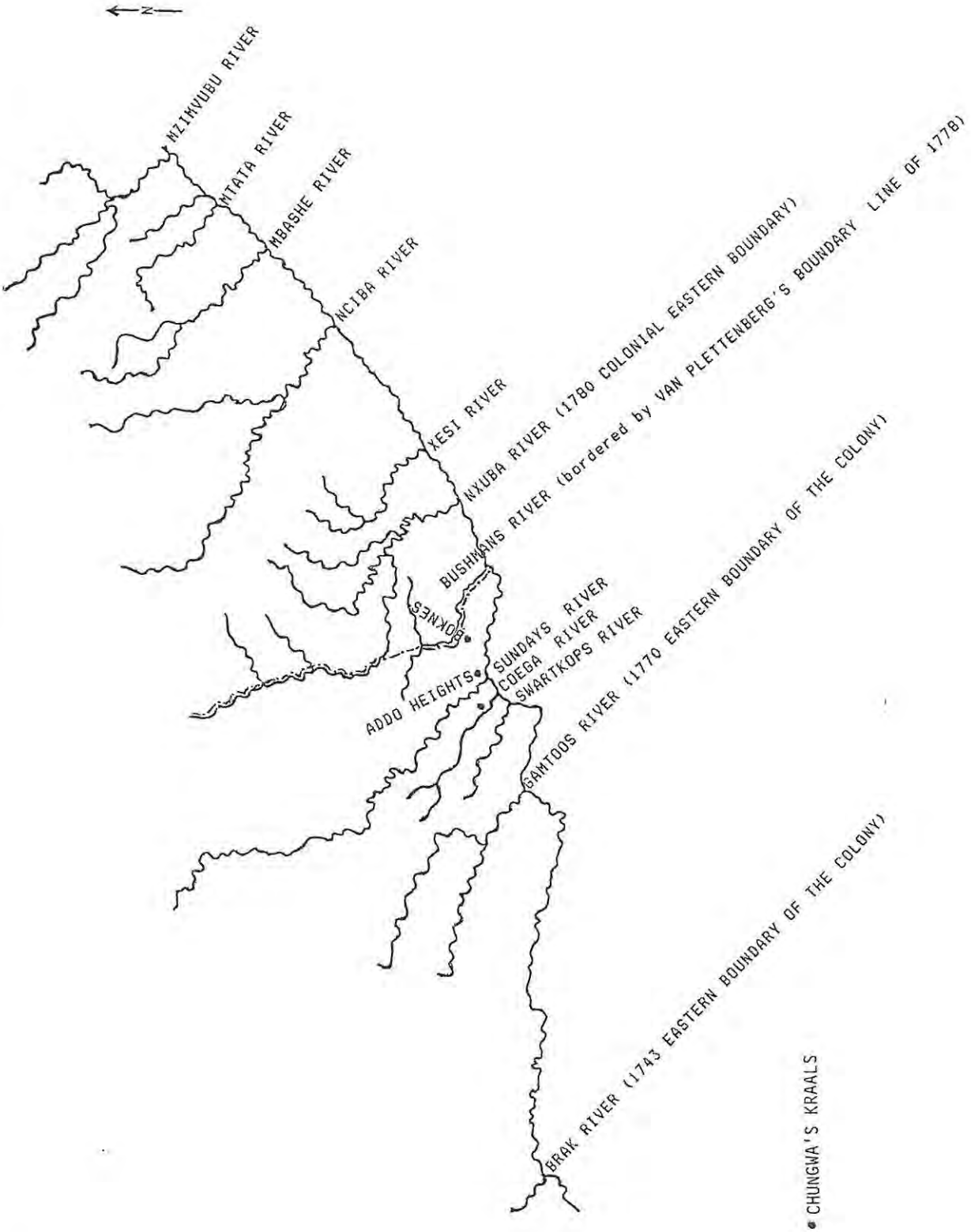
previous transaction? In any case, as we have already seen, irrespective of the validity of the Hoengiqua transaction, Tshaka was in occupation of territory west of the Fish River months before Van Plettenburg's arrangement.

To assert its claim the Council of Policy in 1780 proclaimed the full length of Fish River as the eastern boundary,[60] thereby implying that the Xhosa had no legitimate claim whatsoever to any point west of the Fish River. Accordingly Adriaan van Jaarsveld was appointed Commandant of the Eastern Cape with authority "to drive the Xhosa beyond the Fish River by force, if persuasion should fail."[61] The complaints of the Boers, whether genuine or not, had obviously driven the Government to take steps. Significantly, the alleged intruders, including the Gqunukhwebe leaders, wilfully defied the orders of the Commandant, and thereby invited coercive measures to oust them from the so-called Colonial land. Van Jaarsveld's clearing operations coincided with some internal disputes among the Xhosa. The Commandant, in one of his reports, referred to Rharhabe's request for military aid against "the hostile captains, who are properly his subjects and in rebellion against him."[62] This gives the impression that Rharhabe intended to establish his superiority over all autonomous chiefships west of the Kei River. His attack on Khawuta suggests that he still looked with envy at the Gcaleka Xhosa Great Place. Rharhabe's multifrontal manoeuvres, deriving from his ambition, eventually led to his death at Thembu hands circa 1782.

---

60. Moodie: The Record, III, Extract Resolution of Council, 14.11.1780, p. 99.
61. Marais: First Boer Republic, p. 8.
62. Moodie: The Record, III, Extract Records of Landdrost, Heemraden and Militia Court, 17.10.1780, p. 96.

THE BLACK WHITE FRONTIER FROM THE MID 18TH TO THE EARLY 19TH CENTURY



The death of Rharhabe brought forward his ambitious son, Ndlambe, whose immediate task was to complete what his father had left undone.

Technically the Xhosa chiefdoms west of the Fish River including the Gqunukhwebe, were enemies of both Ndlambe and the Colonists. Should these tribes be subjugated by Ndlambe the Government would be rid of the nuisance that they were. In 1786 Ndlambe's shrewd diplomacy was temporarily rewarded when the other Xhosa chiefs called in his help against the common enemy, the Colonists.[63] This gesture was destined to crown Ndlambe's political objectives, because it undermined the autonomy of Tshaka and Langa, who would then have to pay tribute to their powerful ally.

Despite these pressures, the Gqunukhwebe refused to retreat. In 1789 Tshaka's delegates explained to Landdrost Woeke that the land on the east of the Fish River was "old and destitute of game."[64] Shortly afterwards Chungwa, Tshaka's Great Son, told a Government Commissioner that "this tract (where he was established) of country was life to them, and that if they were to be deprived of it they would lose their life."[65] Nutritious pastures were good enough for their stock, and the game provided them with both sustenance and body-covering while they were also safe from the ambitious scheming of Ndlambe and the political disputes characteristic of the Xhosa chiefdoms.

---

63. Sutherland: Kaffirs, Hottentots and Bosjemans, p. 243.
64. Marais: First Boer Republic, p. 15.
65. Ibid.

After the interview the Gqunukhwebe Chiefs were allowed to remain provisionally between the Fish and Kowie Rivers,[66] obviously because they were paying no heed to the restriction. By March 1790 the same chiefs were reported to be "still along the coast up to the Bushmans River."[67] In June of the same year Field-Cornet Meyer reported that Ndlambe and his uncle, Langa, were fighting the Gqunukhwebe and thereby "throwing the whole of Kaffirland in a great commotion."[68] Possibly Tshaka and Chungwa had, on realizing that the autonomy of their chieftainships was threatened, decided to put up resistance to subjugation. It was no small wonder then that later in July Meyer reported that Chungwa was lying as far west as the Kowie "and so far I have understood his flight extends as far as the Bushmans River and also up to the Sundays River."[69] Obviously the Gqunukhwebe were the vanguard of the Xhosa westward advance, a further indication of their unwillingness to submit to Rharhabe superiority. This attitude, no doubt, derived from the fact that they owed their allegiance to the Gcaleka Great House which was the only superior chiefship that they acknowledged.

In December 1791 there was a complaint that "Tshaka has always had the upper hand and up to the present still has his residence at the Bushmans River,"[70] an indication that the authorities were becoming impatient with his recalcitrance.

---

66. Marais: First Boer Republic, p. 15.
67. Ibid., p. 16.
68. Ibid.
69. Ibid.
70. Ibid.

Cornet Hurter's diary makes mention of the fact that "a section of Tshaka's Gqunukhwebe had been scattering among the Boers either as servants or as vagrants."[71] Tshaka's explanation that "it was impossible for him to keep all his people together since Langa had taken from him most of his cattle,"[72] was highly suggestive. Collecting in one place would surely aggravate destitution, while taking up service among the Boers would, in addition to alleviating want by begging, help them make up for losses suffered as a result of the recent harassment. The Boers certainly had plenty of cattle which Tshaka desperately coveted at that time. Hurter's instructing Tshaka "that those of his people who served Boers for food might remain among them, but that he must recall idlers"[73] suggests that he was well aware of how conducive idleness was to mischief. But Tshaka could hardly risk popularity with his following by interfering with the movements of those whose purpose he fully blessed and understood. Chungwa too, settled on the west of the Bushmans River, "refused point blank to move ... because Ndlambe was too powerful and helped Langa."[74] His explanation that "he and his people could not exist to the eastward, whereas here, in the bush, they could still find some game",[75] placed undue emphasis on the value of game to his people, a blind to his intention of remaining in an area which would shelter him fully in time of crisis. Any party looking for stolen cattle would surely be less acquainted with the geography of the bush than those who had made it their habitation. Confirming this view Hurter wrote in his diary:

---

71. Marais: First Boer Republic, p. 17.
72. Ibid.
73. Ibid.
74. Ibid., p. 18.
75. Ibid.

> "he lies there so well protected in the kloofs that had I one hundred armed men I should not be able to do much to him." [76]

Hurter's remark explains why Chungwa was, despite his defiant attitude, not interfered with at that time. To root him out required some military skill. Meanwhile he gave weight to Boer complaints by granting asylum to absconding slaves and Khoi "who were committing depredations on the Christians." [77] The Gqunukhwebe kingdom, by reason of its composition, could not be the last to ally with the Khoi. Secondly Chungwa certainly saw this as an opportunity to augment his chiefdom's defence force, more especially since the refugees brought guns with them, [78] thereby enhancing the Gqunukhwebe military power. This must have been an exasperating experience for the Boers, it is no small wonder that provoking incidents against individual chiefs characterized these years. C. Bezuidenhout is said to have "locked Captain Congo (Chungwa) up in the mill, and under severe threats ordered him to turn it in person." [79] The Boers complained that the Xhosa were "stealing their stock, eating up their pastures, killing their game and enticing slaves and Hottentots to leave their service," [80] while the Xhosa complained of "the maltreatment, greed, arrogance and predatory habits of the Zuurveld Boers." [81] In the light of this tension we should be able to understand the atmosphere which precipitated the Second Frontier War. Aggravating the already unhealthy atmosphere was the severe drought of 1792-93 which afflicted Black and White impartially. There was thus bound to be conflict over pasture, [82]

---

76. Marais: First Boer Republic, p. 18.
77. Ibid.
78. Ibid.
79. Ibid., p. 28.
80. E.A. Walker: A History of Southern Africa (Great Britain, 1957), p. 118.
81. Milton: Edges of War, p. 35.
82. Elphick & Giliomee (eds): South African Society (Giliomee: Eastern Frontier), p.308.

and the farmers, used to having their way wherever it suited them, were already petitioning the Government to "allow them to spend the winter with their stock in the land of the Xhosa."[83]

The new Landdrost of Graaff-Reinet, H.C.D. Maynier, known to have hated injustice and suffering, had been exposed to the native problem and Boer complaints prior to his appointment. On being appointed his immediate aim was to reconcile the warring chiefs, and thereafter induce those who were in the Colony to retire beyond the Fish River. At the same time, as a preliminary measure to arresting all intercourse between Black and White, the Colonists in Xhosaland were to return to the Colony.[84] Further, to bind the chiefs more closely to the Government, Maynier asked to be allowed "to distribute among them certain trinkets, which the nation is known to covet very much."[85] Maynier believed that this gesture would create a good atmosphere for the safeguarding of peace. Yet there is no disputing that, to the more impatient Boers, this appeared to be more of an appeasement policy. The Council of Policy wholeheartedly endorsed Maynier's proposals.[86] Meanwhile complaints intensified that "the Xhosa steal night and day, that they have ... stabbed their (Colonists') horses,"[87] - an indication that the Government was not only failing to protect the victims but also to punish the culprits effectively. Maynier's attitude was that it would be a good policy to avoid turning the Xhosa into an enemy even at the cost of tolerating some annoyance from them.[88]

---

83. Marais: First Boer Republic, p. 32.
84. Ibid., p. 36.
85. Ibid., p. 37.
86. Ibid.
87. Ibid., p. 39.
88. Marais: First Boer Republic, p. 40.

While Maynier was working diligently to postpone the outbreak of hostilities, it came to light that Barend Lindeque had acted independently:

> "Lindeque, assisted by his commando and Ndlambe's men, then went over Bushman's River and having fought with the Xhosa there and shot some of them, took about 800 cattle, half of which were given to Ndlambe".89

Ndlambe had obviously seen in this alliance an opportunity to test the strength of the Gqunukhwebe. But suddenly the Boers lost their nerve and withdrew,[90] much to Ndlambe's chagrin. Tshaka's counter-offensive was probably the cause of alarm and withdrawal, and Ndlambe's decision to cross to the eastern side of the Fish River[91] must be understood in the light of his fear of being overwhelmed by a combined force of the Mbalu, Gqunukhwebe and Khoi. The enraged Gqunukhwebe and Mbalu, however, no less infuriated by the Boer intervention in their domestic politics, retaliated by driving the Boers across the Zwartkops River.[92]

Maynier was forced to abandon his policy of compromise. He raised a commando with the aim of expelling the Xhosa from the Zuurveld, and took their cattle to indemnify the Boers for their losses.[93] The Second Frontier War (1793) had begun. It was not a success for Maynier, but nevertheless

---

89. Marais: First Boer Republic, p. 41.
90. Peires: Phalo, p. 51.
91. Marais: First Boer Republic, p. 41.
92. Peires: Phalo, p. 51.
93. Elphick & Giliomee (eds): South African Society (Giliomee: Eastern Frontier), p. 308.

the Gqunukhwebe and their allies were forced to withdraw from the Zuurveld. Tshaka made a desperate effort to find sanctuary among the Gcaleka Xhosa but was cut off by Ndlambe at the Tyolomnqa River.[94] Ndlambe had long been wanting the Gqunukhwebe leader to pay tribute to him, and Tshaka died at Ndlambe's hands[95] while fighting to retain his autonomy and thus rejecting the latter's overlordship. Chungwa, who had managed to reach the Gcaleka kingdom, soon returned to the Zuurveld as chief of the Gqunukhwebe in place of his father.[96] His return was obviously not destined to promote calm from the Colonists' point of view.

It was soon evident that efforts to clear the Zuurveld of the Xhosa were both tiring, dangerous and counterproductive. The only alternative seemed to be to offer terms of peace to the chiefs since they continued to plunder the Colonists' property. According to Marais

> 'there was only one chief not included in the peace, namely Chungwa, ... His kraals were reported to be along the Kowie and at the mouth of the Bushman's."[97]

Later on Chungwa also sent messengers to ask for peace,[98] but Milton argues that although he agreed to recall his warriors he "spurned any suggestion that he should abandon the Sourveld."[99] Governing this attitude it must be remembered that Tshaka's death at Ndlambe's hands was still too fresh for Chungwa to make friends or even neighbours with him.

---

94. BPP 1826-36, XX: Collins's Journal, 23.1.1809, p. 335.
95. Peires: Phalo, p. 51.
96. BPP 1826-36, XX: Collins's Journal, 23.1.1809, p. 335.
97. Marais: First Boer Republic, p. 49.
98. Ibid.
99. Milton: Edges of War, p. 37.

Furthermore Chungwa could well remember how he had once been forced to drive a Boer's tread-mill,[100] and it is likely that an opportunity to administer an effective blow in retaliation, and in defence of what he believed to be his, by right, would be very welcome. By November 1793 the commandos had been dispersed,[101] and an uneasy peace settled over the Zuurveld. The state of insecurity persisted and it further stimulated Boer resentment.

Meanwhile the Second Frontier War had afforded Ndlambe an opportunity to realise his dream. It indisputably proved him to be the most powerful potentate to the west of the Kei River. But that very warrior reputation, was to bring about Ndlambe's downfall. His nephew Ngqika, the legitimate heir to Rharhabe's throne unexpectedly rebelled.[102] Ndlambe loved power too much to relinquish the regency without a struggle,[103] and thus the Rharhabe kingdom was plunged into a civil war. Ngqika emerged victorious from the struggle, and Ndlambe having been conquered, was taken prisoner by his nephew in 1796.[104]

In the midst of the uneasy calm Lord Macartney assumed duty as Governor of the Cape in 1796. Meanwhile Chungwa was, in the latter part of 1797, reported to be living in a forest near the Boknes River. Circa March 1798 he was living in the vicinity of Zwartkops, but by September he was back in

---

100. Marais: First Boer Republic, p. 28.
101. Ibid., p. 50.
102. Peires: Phalo, p. 51.
103. Theal: South African History, p. 137.
104. H. Lichtenstein: Travels In Southern Africa, V.R.S. 10 (Cape Town, 1928), p. 359.

the forest of Boknes.[105] Peires attributes Chungwa's patterned movements during these years to the chief's desire to shift his cattle between their summer and winter grazing,[106] a normal exercise, quietly undertaken. This cannot, however, disguise the chief's apparent determination not to vacate the controversial Zuurveld. Chungwa was obviously aggravated by the Government's interference in Xhosa domestic affairs, especially as the motive was to uproot him from what was his by hereditary right. He even forced some minor chiefs to stay with him by seizing their cattle.[107]

Meanwhile Ngqika, satisfied that he had entirely won over his uncle's heart, restored him to liberty and at the same time appealed to him "to behave as becomes a true and faithful subject." [108] Ndlambe nevertheless broke loose in 1800 and fled with all his family and adherents across the Fish River.[109] All the small chiefs in the Zuurveld submitted to the intruding refugee, except the Gqunukhwebe,[110] Ndlambe's one-time target. The latter's remarks about Chungwa's obesity [111] cannot be singled out to have influenced him against joining the Zuurveld Xhosa alliance. Possibly the death of his father, Tshaka, at Ndlambe's hands, was still fresh in Chungwa's mind. Further, Chungwa must have realised that his stay in the region would be prolonged by a quiet life and good conduct. Lichtenstein claims however, that Chungwa, the sons of Langa and other Xhosa chiefs fled to Ndlambe with all their people and settled in the coastal region west of the Great Fish River.[112]

---

105. Marais: First Boer Republic, pp. 96-98.
106. Peires: Phalo, p. 9.
107. Ibid., p. 57.
108. Lichtenstein: Travels, p. 360.
109. Peires: Phalo, p. 53.
110. Marais: First Boer Republic, p. 104.
111. Peires: Phalo, p. 57.
112. Lichtenstein: Travels, p. 360.

Whether Chungwa had held back or not, the accession of so much strength to Ndlambe implied the establishment of Rharhabe superiority over the Zuurveld Xhosa. This was certainly a disheartening fact to both Ngqika and the Colonists.

In November 1798 health problems forced Governor Macartney into retirement, giving way to Major-General Dundas.[113] Shortly thereafter, in December 1798, the Boers of Graaff-Reinet rebelled.[114] Consequential upon the latter events the British troops under General Vandeleur landed in Algoa Bay. The Boers, being unable to hold their ground against the British force, surrendered.[115] The Khoi labourers immediately took advantage of the chaotic situation by rebelling against their Boer employers, also collaborating with the British. To their disappointment Vandeleur disarmed them,[116] and instead marched his men through the Zuurveld to Algoa Bay. Along the route he met a

> "vast number of Xhosa with their cattle on the banks and among the thickets of the Sundays River, claiming to belong to Chief Chungwa."[117]

---

113. C.F.J. Muller (ed): 500 Years A History Of South Africa (M.C. van Zyl: Transition, 1795-1806), (Cape Town, 1981), p. 103.
114. J. Holland Rose, A.P. Newton, E.A. Benians (eds): The Cambridge History Of The British Empire 8 (V.T. Harlow: The British Occupations, 1795-1806), (Cambridge, 1936), p. 184.
115. Ibid., p. 185.
116. Muller (ed): 500 Years (van Zyl: Transition), p. 108.
117. Sutherland: Kaffirs, Hottentots and Bosjemans, p. 81.

Chungwa's inaccessible hide-out, possibly in the Addo Bush, certainly aroused the suspicions of Vandeleur, as much as the latter's appearance must have pricked Chungwa's conscience. On being advised to retire from the Colony Chungwa boldly stated that

> "the ground he stood on was his own, for that his father had been cheated out of by the landdrost of Graaff-Reinet".[118]

Vandeleur then resumed his march only to encounter surprise attacks along the way.[119] These seemingly unjustifiable ambuscades must be measured against Chungwa's motive which was to resist the progress of the British troops. He was prone to regard all moves by the government party as manoeuvres to drive him back across the Fish River, when all he wanted was to be left in peace on his own land.

With the passage of time it became clear that campaigning against the Xhosa was "inconceivably difficult, (being) carried on through almost impenetrable forests, over great hills, and through torrential rivers."[120] The stoppage of the supply of ammunition to the Graaff-Reinet Boers and the withdrawal of a greater portion of the garrison obviously gave the Khoi-Xhosa party courage to defy authority. It is against this background that we must understand the proclamation of peace in October 1799, between Chungwa and Dundas. Chungwa was thereupon granted the right to reside in the Zuurveld, provided he did not molest the Colonists. He accordingly

---

118. Sutherland: Kaffirs, Hottentots and Bosjemans, p. 81.
119. Walker: Southern Africa, p. 131.
120. Milton: Edges of War, p. 44.

resisted the attempts of the other Xhosa chiefs to involve him when the war resumed in 1801. His further turning back a rebel Boer attack on the Colony [121] proved that, far from being aggressive, Chungwa wanted to be a good neighbour, provided he was left in peace on his own land.

When the situation in the eastern Cape was in its greatest state of disorder the entire Cape was restored to the Dutch. By then it had become clear that though governments varied considerably in their approach to the frontier affairs, all believed in the regulation of contact and interaction between White and Black. There was now little likelihood of carrying the frontier further eastwards. Thus, General Janssens' first move was to make peace overtures to the Khoi spokesman Klaas Stuurman. At the same time a meeting of the Governor with the Zuurveld chiefs was arranged to take place at the Sundays River. [122] Chungwa repeatedly gave assurances that "he desired peace most ardently [123] thereby demonstrating his inclination to peaceful good neighbourliness with the Batavians. Ironically the Gqunukhwebe leader was more interested in achieving peaceful integration of the Xhosa and the Colonist within the Zuurveld than in separating the two groups: "there could be no true peace, if people might not have intercourse with each other." [124]

The Governor also made arrangements to see the Rharhabe leader, Ngqika. Suddenly however, there was a commotion among the Zuurveld Xhosa, resulting from an inexplicable misunderstanding between Ndlambe and his allies. In

---

121. Peires: Phalo, p. 57.
122. Lichtenstein: Travels, p. 376.
123. Ibid., p. 381.
124. Ibid., p. 386.

the course of the confusion Ndlambe's brother, Mnyaluza, prevailed upon Chungwa to join him in retiring into Ngqikaland.[125] Ngqika was understood to be preparing an attack on the recalcitrant chiefs. It is thus likely that the Zuurveld chiefs interpreted the Governor's errand to Ngqikaland as an attempt to reinforce the chief of that land, and thus decided to put up a show of compromise before being pushed headlong towards their overlord. According to Lichtenstein after the commotion there followed "an entire reconciliation between Ngqika, Chungwa and Mnyaluza."[126] Collins's view is that after the Governor's interview with Ngqika "Chungwa, ... and other chiefs ... removed to the Keiskamma; but finding that Ndlambe remained undisturbed within the (Colonial) boundary they returned within a few months."[127] If this was the case Chungwa's return possibly derived from the conviction that he had more right than Ndlambe and all the other chiefs to be in the Colony.

The Dutch had no brought about any effective solution to the frontier problems when the British recaptured the Cape in 1806. The chief living closest to the Colony at this time was Chungwa. His Great Place was to the east of the mouth of the Sundays River, and he made periodic attempts to establish homesteads west of the same river.[128] The fact that Chungwa and Ndlambe showed no intention of retreating on their own initiative across the Fish River immediately gave the British Government food for thought.[129] In the conversation between Colonel J. Cuyler, the landrost of Uitenhage and Chungwa in 1807 about the alleged thieving of the Xhosa,

---

125. Lichtenstein: Travels, p. 434.
126. Ibid., p. 439.
127. BPP 1826-36, XX: Collins's Journal, 23.1.1809, p. 335.
128. B. Maclennan: A Proper Degree of Terror (Johannesburg, 1986), p. 58.
129. Theal: South African History, p. 162.

Chungwa intimated that "now his people are mixed with Ndlambe's there is no getting at the thieves,"[130] thus shifting the blame to Ndlambe. Chungwa also expressed concern over Ndlambe's going to war against Ngqika as it would probably cause friction "he himself wishes to live peacefully with the Dutchmen and the English."[131] Chungwa possibly imagined that Ngqika would pursue Ndlambe right into the Colony and thereby complicate the stay of the Zuurveld Chiefs. In Cuyler's opinion however, the main disturbance of the peace was Chungwa's presence west of the Fish River[132] rather than Ndlambe's warring with Ngqika. Cuyler possibly thought of exploiting the absence of Ndlambe by pushing Chungwa over the Fish River. Chungwa's fear of Ndlambe, and his anxiety to retain his cattle, caused him to be a nuisance to the Colonists, who thought his movements were motivated by a desire for theft.[133]

Ndlambe's presence in the Zuurveld prolonged Chungwa's stay in the Colony a little longer for the Government would have to prepare well before attacking Ndlambe. The latter's forces were continually being strengthened by refugees from Ngqika. Landdrost Stockenstrom, the elder, possibly had this in mind when he advocated the establishment of "peace and harmony between Ngqika and Ndlambe. Should this be effected, the others would certainly join them on the opposite side, Chungwa perhaps excepted, but he might then easily be compelled."[134] Chungwa's presence was, however, less of a menace,

---

130. Moodie: The Record, Part V, Cuyler - Barnard, 26.9.1807, p. 59.
131. Ibid.
132. Peires: Phalo, p. 57.
133. Moodie: The Record, V, Cuyler - Barnard, 26.9.1807, p. 59.
134. Moodie: The Record, V, Stockenstrom - Bird, 19.10.1808, pp. 59-60.

because with the Khoi temporarily quieted he was attached to no other group. Ironically while Chungwa's refusal to join Ndlambe was meant to preserve his autonomy, it could not have been unwelcome to the Government because it divided the Zuurveld Xhosa. Noteworthy is the fact that Chungwa was at this time further west in the Colony, near Lang Kloof.[135] He was probably running away from Ndlambe who was possibly lying further to the east of the Colony. Cuyler had already in July 1809, urged that "more forcible measures might be taken to protect the unfortunate colonists," [136] thereby advocating the expulsion of Ndlambe and Chungwa by force. Another development at this time was the conclusion of an offensive and defensive alliance by David Stuurman and Chungwa. While Stuurman meant to increase his strength and to confirm his independence by this move,[137] the fact that Chungwa was reported to have invited the former to join him makes us view the union against the background of Cuyler's threatening tone. Cuyler had, in the words of Maclennan, "simply wanted Ndlambe and Chungwa to be given an ultimatum to move across the Fish or be hanged."[138]

In 1807 Caledon took office as Governor of the Cape and in no time he was innundated with demands to undertake immediate and vigorous military action against the Xhosa of the eastern frontier. Initially he urged a policy of reconciliation "it is better to submit to a certain extent of injury than risk a great deal for a prospect of advantage by no means certain." [139]This approach to the frontier situation could have been dictated, among other things, by Britain's involvement in the Peninsular

---

135. Moodie: The Record, V, Stockenstrom - Bird, 19.10.1808, pp. 59-60.
136. Maclennan: Degree of Terror, p. 63.
137. BPP 1826-36, XX: Collins's Journal, 23.1.1809, p. 339.
138. Maclennan: Degree of Terror, p. 63.
139. Elphick & Giliomee (eds): South African Society (Giliomee: Eastern Frontier), p. 311.

War. Finally Caledon was forced to act, and he sent Colonel R. Collins to investigate whether the Xhosa could be expelled from the Colony without resorting to force. Collins began his interviews in Gcalekaland, with Hintsa, a direct descendent of the creator of the Gqunukhwebe Chiefdom. Hintsa rejected Ngqika and Ndlambe, but when asked if he could accept Chungwa, he bluntly declared that the latter "was properly one of his own people ... but added that he thought the others would not allow him to pass them unmolested."[140] Hintsa's fears were justified for Tshaka had been killed while seeking sanctuary in Gcalekaland. The presence of the Xhosa in the Zuurveld was a source of constant discomfiture for the Government. It is possible that the authorities conceived the idea of removing Chungwa to Gcalekaland, to be far from the Khoi who were his natural allies apart from his family.

From Gcalekaland Collins travelled to Ngqika's land. Ngqika told Collins's party that "the fear of him was only a pretext, and that the Xhosa would never leave the Colony unless forced to do so." [141] Ndlambe, in his turn, expressed concern over the removal of the Colonists from his neighbourhood, possibly thinking that their action could lead to his expulsion. All along the way the chiefs were presented with gifts, possibly to soften them up. Behind the thickets along the right bank of the Sundays River the party found Chungwa's place.[142] The Chief's uncle, Kokati, reported that Chungwa had visited his oldest wives who resided next to Ndlambe. It seems as if Chungwa had kraals near the sea, and gardens in the vicinity of the Boknes and Kooba rivulets, but that, for the sake of his cattle, he personally

---

140. Moodie: The Record, V, Collins's Journal, 23.1.1809, p. 42.
141. Ibid., p. 47.
142. Ibid., p. 53.

resided near the Sundays River. Chungwa also stayed occasionally at Coega partly, Collins thought, to steal from the Colonists. He had had to pay a huge lobola to Ndlambe on behalf of his son, Kobe, and he had also lost many cattle by disease. Chungwa's people were very anxious to hear their chief's message, a fact which made Collins believe that Chungwa had, suspecting expulsion, gone into hiding. On his return, Collins drew up his report and recommendations which, in essence, consisted of effectively driving the Xhosa across the Fish River. While Collins's recommendations were being considered Chungwa, with most of his people and cattle, crossed west of the Sundays River, in 1810, only to meet with strong opposition from Cuyler.[143] Chungwa, who was possibly only following his transhumance pattern sent an ox, but Cuyler rejected it.[144] Later Chungwa explained that the ox was in fact payment for the grass, an indication that he intended to remain there, even on terms. Governor Caledon, a civilian, resigned at this time and was replaced as Governor by a professional soldier, Sir John Cradock. The new Governor immediately sent Colonel J. Graham to put Collins's recommendations into practice, by expelling Ndlambe's Rharhabe and the Gqunukhwebe back across the Fish River.[145] Chungwa was now on the southern edge of the densely vegetated Addo Bush, which generally provided the Xhosa with easy refuge. When ordered to retreat across the Fish River the Chief promised to give his answer the next day. Meanwhile Ndlambe's men started gathering at Chungwa's kraal, thereby suggesting preparations for joint action to defend their claim to the Zuurveld.[146] Then the sad day

---

143. Maclennan: Degree of Terror, p. 68.
144. Ibid.
145. T.R.H. Davenport: South Africa a Modern History, (Johannesburg, 1987) p. 128.
146. Maclennan: Degree of Terror, pp. 99-101.

came when the Colonial forces, armed to the best of their ability, converged on Chungwa's kraal. According to Ngani, on that 12th day of November 1812 confusion reigned and out of it the Great Chief Chungwa was shot dead together with his bodyguards.[147] In Peires's words, "Pathetically Ndlambe and Chungwa tried to maintain the old heroism in the face of this cold-blooded professionalism."[148] Samuel Tyhali formerly of Alexandria remarks that there will never be anything to justify the deed of those who killed Chungwa in the midst of the thick MTEBHELE forest, for they fired at a paralysed dying man.[149] The only justification they have left posterity is that they had, by that grim act, closed the whole chapter of the controversial land deal between Khwane's Tshaka and Ruiter's children. Graham's party must have imagined that, with Chungwa dead, the potential witness to the unwritten transactions affecting the conflicting land claims of Boer and Xhosa was gone forever.

Today Chungwa lies buried in a grave now fenced not far from the old site of his cattle (igquba). The village is generally known as 'eChungwa' (Congo's Kraal) and is dotted with farms and a few general dealers' shops. My informant proudly told me that at the time of his death, Chungwa owned large herds of cattle.[150]

---

147. A.Z. Ngani: UBom Buka-Kama (Lovedale, 1952), p. 18.
148. Peires: Phalo, p. 142.
149. S. Tyhali: Interviewed by D.S. Yekela, Gqumahashe Location (Alice), 24.6.1987.
150. Ibid.

The day on which Chungwa died was one of historical importance in Gqunukhwebe history as is furnished by the Gqunukhwebe oath "Ndifung' uChungw' efel' eMnyameni: I swear by Chungwa who is lying dead at Alexandria," [151] the implication being that what is said prior to the swearing is both an indisputable truth and an incontrovertible fact. What a legacy Chungwa's death has left the Gqunukhwebe! In traditional Xhosa society one swears by someone one respects and there is no possibility of associating lies with the revered one. Friction between Black and White over land had, finally united Ndlambe and Chungwa against a rival claimant. After Chungwa's death Chungwa's Mount, at the foot of which Alexandria is situated, was also cleaned of the Xhosa. The latter were subsequently driven across the Fish river,[152] with the exception of Chungwa's remains which were left behind as a testimony to the great chief's one time ownership of that land. Davenport confirms that Colonel Graham executed the Government's orders with brutal zest, [153] and the victims of his exercise obviously included Chungwa's sons, PHATHO, KOBE and KAMA, who were in fact being pushed out of their native land. The British soldiers little suspected that, from Chungwa's House, they would later have an everlasting ally. Chungwa's death closed a chapter, but it ushered in yet another phase for the great grandsons of Khwane. Evidence of this phase was shown when Kobe, Chungwa's eldest son, immediately assumed the regency [154] in place of the rightful but under-age heir, Phatho.[155]

---

151. Ngani: Kama, p. 18.
152. Ibid., p. 18.
153. Davenport: Modern History, p. 128.
154. Maclennan: Degree of Terror, p. 114.
155. Ngani: Kama, p. 18.

The expulsion of the Xhosa from the Zuurveld had been a difficult and slow task.[156] For this reason steps were taken to prevent a repetition of the previous intrusions.[157] This latter task was accomplished by fortifying the Fish frontier by a series of strong points between new villages named Grahamstown and Cradock.[158] These military measures made the Fish River in its entirety an effective Colonial boundary for the first time in the history of the Cape Eastern Frontier. Contrary to expectation, however, the Xhosa continued to cross the boundary line, and the commandos also abused official permission to seek stolen cattle across the border. Somerset wilfully carried this domestic crisis further by opting to deal with Ngqika in all matters affecting the Xhosa. Ngqika was thus accorded a superior status, and it is against this background that we must place the so-called Kat River Conference, the famous meeting of 2nd April 1817 between the Governor and notable Xhosa chiefs, near the present town of Fort Beaufort.[159] Ngqika was, of all the Xhosa chiefs in attendance, the principal consultant in the frontier peace experiment. In the Governor's opinion Ngqika emerged from this conference the supreme chief of the Rharhabe. Butler maintains that Governor Somerset's dealings with Ngqika identified the latter with the enemies of the Xhosa, while increasing the hostility of his uncle, Ndlambe.[160] The outcome of this was that an atmosphere of uneasiness prevailed among the Xhosa chiefs on the one hand and between the latter and the Colonial authorities on the other hand.

---

156. J.L. Dracopoli: Sir Andries Stockenstrom 1792-1864 (Cape Town, 1964), p. 26.
157. Ibid.
158. Davenport: Modern History, p. 128.
159. U. Long: Daily Dispatch (East London), 13.10.1947.
160. G. Butler (ed): The 1820 Settlers (Cape Town, 1974), p. 39.

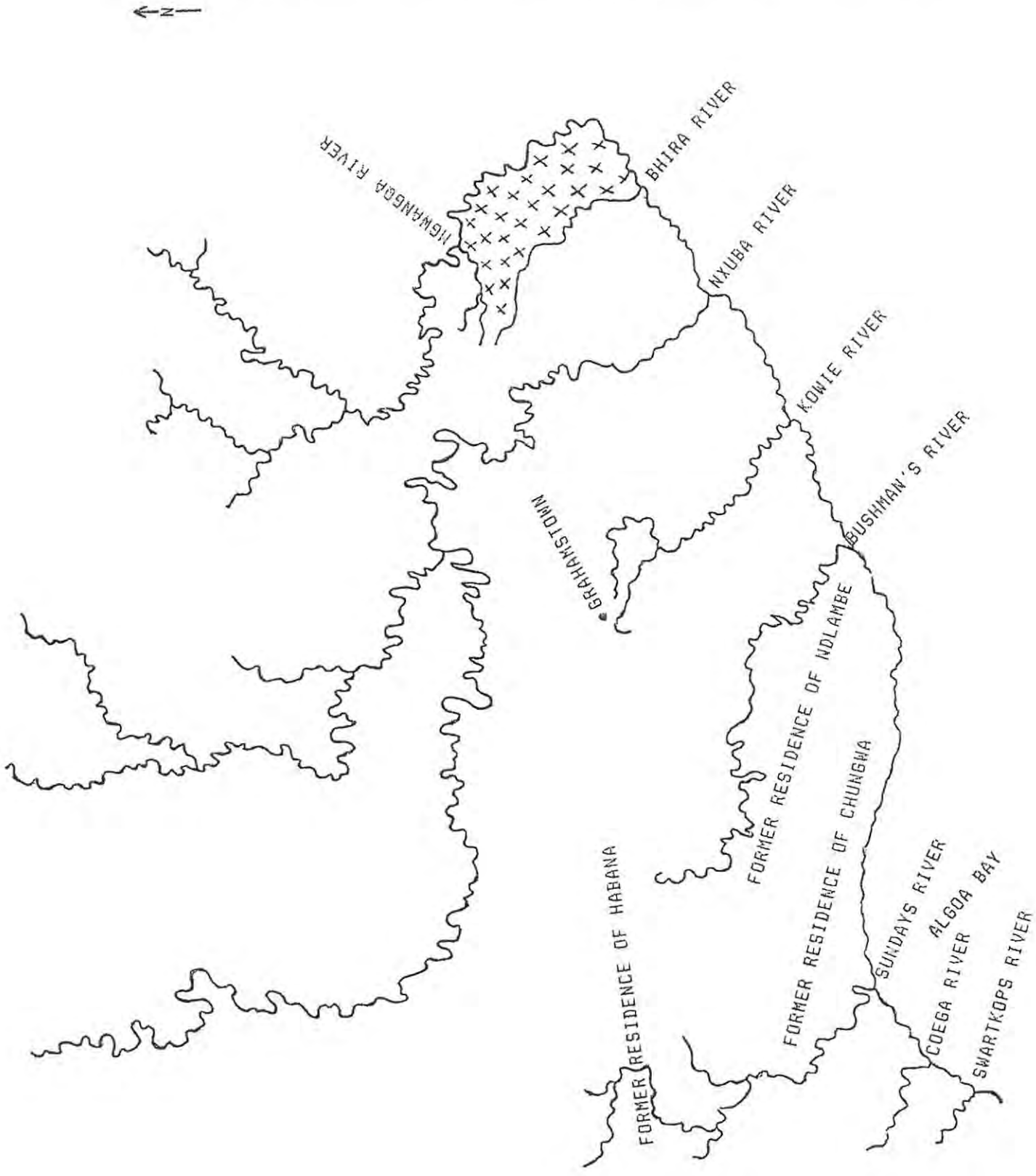
This led to a wave of raids and counter-raids, culminating in Brereton's commando of December 1818. Colonel Brereton captured 23,000 Xhosa cattle thereby launching the Fifth Frontier War. [161]

Over this period communication between the Cape governorship and the Colonial Office continually dwelt on the question of settling emigrants at the Cape, with a view to buttressing the vulnerable frontier and making it defend itself against intrusion.[162] This called for the application of Collins's recommendations. Their essential features were both non-intercourse between Black and White and dense settlement on the Zuurveld. Coincidentally, the scourge of the times in Great Britain was unemployment, resulting from the victory of the Allied Powers at Waterloo. The Governor of the Cape writing to the British Colonial Secretary referred to "many of those Emigrants from England who were said to be most anxious to find employment and food in new Countries ..." [163] Poverty, unemployment and redundant population were the problems stressed in Parliament.[164] On 19.7.-1819 Lord Bathurst wrote to Somerset and remarked thus "As the first Settlers from this country will probably arrive at the Cape early in the next year ..." [165] thereby reporting the eventual launching of the British emigration scheme through the Colonial Office. Significantly at the very time that the emigration motion was being successfully passed in the

---

161. Peires: Phalo, p. 143.
162. L. Bryer & R. Hunt: The 1820 Settlers, (Cape Town, 1969), p. 14.
163. G.M. Theal (ed): C. Somerset - Bathurst, 18.12.1817, Records of the Cape Colony, 11 (London, 1902), p.425.
164. Bryer & Hunt: 1820 Settlers, p. 15.
165. Theal: Bathurst - Somerset, 19.7.1819, R.C.C. 12, p. 258.

LAND TAKEN FROM THE GQUNUKHWEBE IN 1819 : FROM THE COAST TO THE MGWANGQA RIVER



British Parliament Ndlambe's army, divided as it was into three columns, and commanded by "three chiefs ... known to be principally hostile to the Colony, viz. Ndlambe, Congo (Kobe) and Lynx (Nxele),"[166] was attacking Grahamstown and thus prosecuting the Fifth Frontier War.

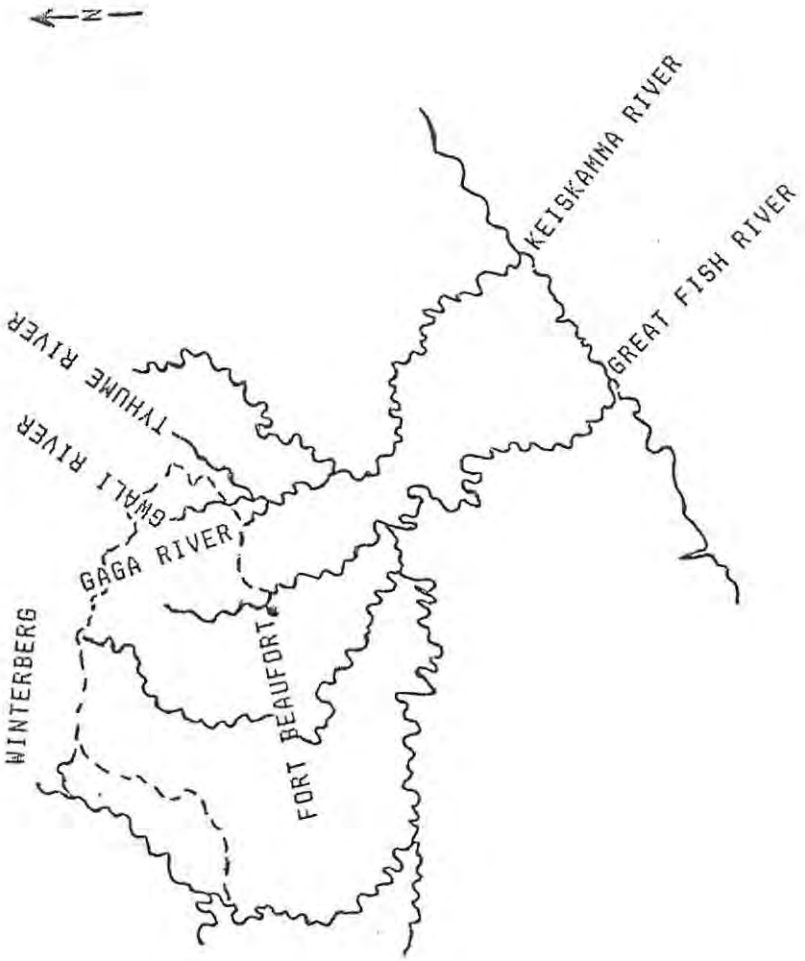
Kobe's fighting on the side of the anti-Colonial coalition certainly seemed as if it were an announcement to the Xhosa nation that Chungwa's sons had abandoned their father's policy of "splendid isolation". Moreover the Gqunukhwebe had obviously not given up hope of regaining the land associated with their childhood memories. They had not forgotten the Zuurveld expulsion of 1812 which had so unnaturally hurled them out of their familiar surroundings. Unfortunately, however, the Xhosa were defeated and Somerset made the war an excuse for re-arranging and reshaping the frontier policy, so as "to control those depredations which have proved so ruinous to the inhabitants of the frontier districts."[167] "All the lands between the Fish and the Keiskamma Rivers (the ceded territory) were to be added to the colony, even the birthplace of his ally, Ngqika". Among the chiefs to be removed were "the Chief Congo (Kobe) and his adherents and people from that forest country ... on the left bank of the Fish River,"[168] because they had been "particularly obnoxious and hostile to the colonists."[169] The Governor deliberately exaggerated Xhosa hostility to justify his aim of cleaning the adjacent bushy areas of all the Xhosa. The latter had

---

166. Theal: Somerset - Bathurst, 22.5.1819, R.C.C., 12, p. 194.
167. Theal: Somerset - Bathurst, 15.10.1819, R.C.C., 12, p. 338.
168. Ibid.
169. Ibid.

THE LAND THAT WAS TAKEN FROM GQUNUKHWEBE BY GOVENOR SOMERSET IN 1819

(CEDED TERRITORY 1819-1829)



mobilised under cover of the forests until it was too late for the Government to take preventive measures. Somerset thus convinced himself that the future security of the frontier would be best guaranteed by pushing the Gqunukhwebe out of their territory, which adjoined the boundary line.[170] To put this idea into effect a conference was held at Mgwangqa between Governor Somerset's retinue and the members of the anti-Colonial league but for Ndlambe who was on the run.

The subsequent stipulation that

> "strong Military Posts shall be established between the Keiskamma and the Fish Rivers, to prevent occupation of the Ceded Territory by any petty Chieftain"[171]

was an acknowledgement on the part of authorities that the Xhosa, would not find it easy to keep away from land which had been theirs from time immemorial. Of all the Xhosa chiefdoms, the Gqunukhwebe were most likely to intrude because the Colony and its adjacent lands were a familiar environment to them.

The Governor's party obviously emerged from the Mgwangqa conference with a diplomatic victory. To certainly crown his efforts especially with regard to the manning and maintenance of the frontier vacuum just created, was the news, on his arrival in Cape Town, that the arrival of the British emigrants under the auspices of the Colonial Office was imminent. The Governor had at an earlier date resolved to settle the emigrants from England on the Zuurveld

---

170. Theal: Intelligence from the Camp on the Mgwangqa (Gwangwa), 15.10.-1819, R.C.C. 12, p. 343.
171. Ibid., p. 344.

> "So as to draw forth from that source a sufficient force for the protection of the border ... without the aid of regular troops."[172]

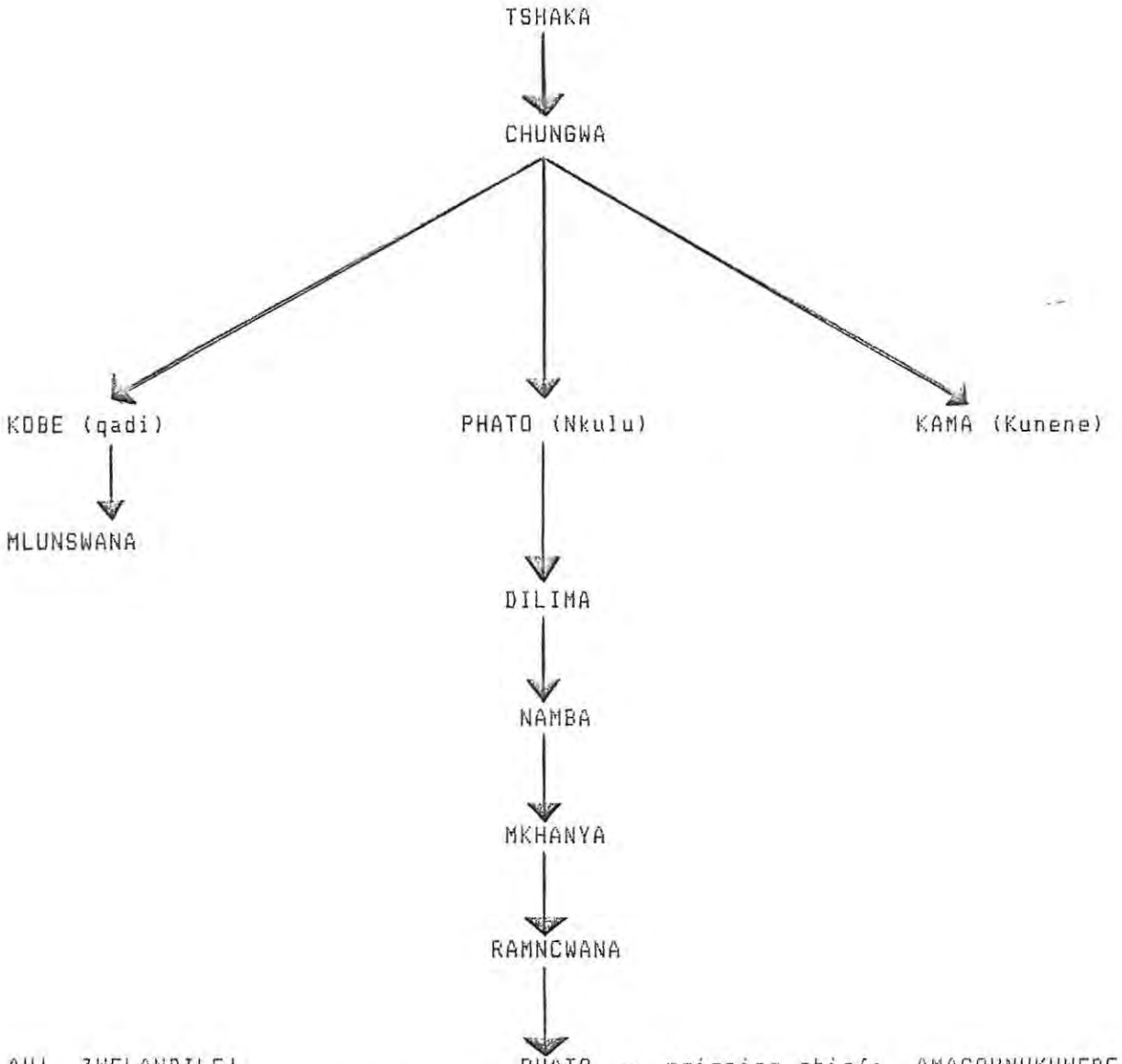
The stage was set for the immediate arrival of thousands of Britons.[173] These were men and women who, ironically, little suspected the hardships that awaited them in the vulnerable frontier area but instead were looking forward to a new, positive start to life.

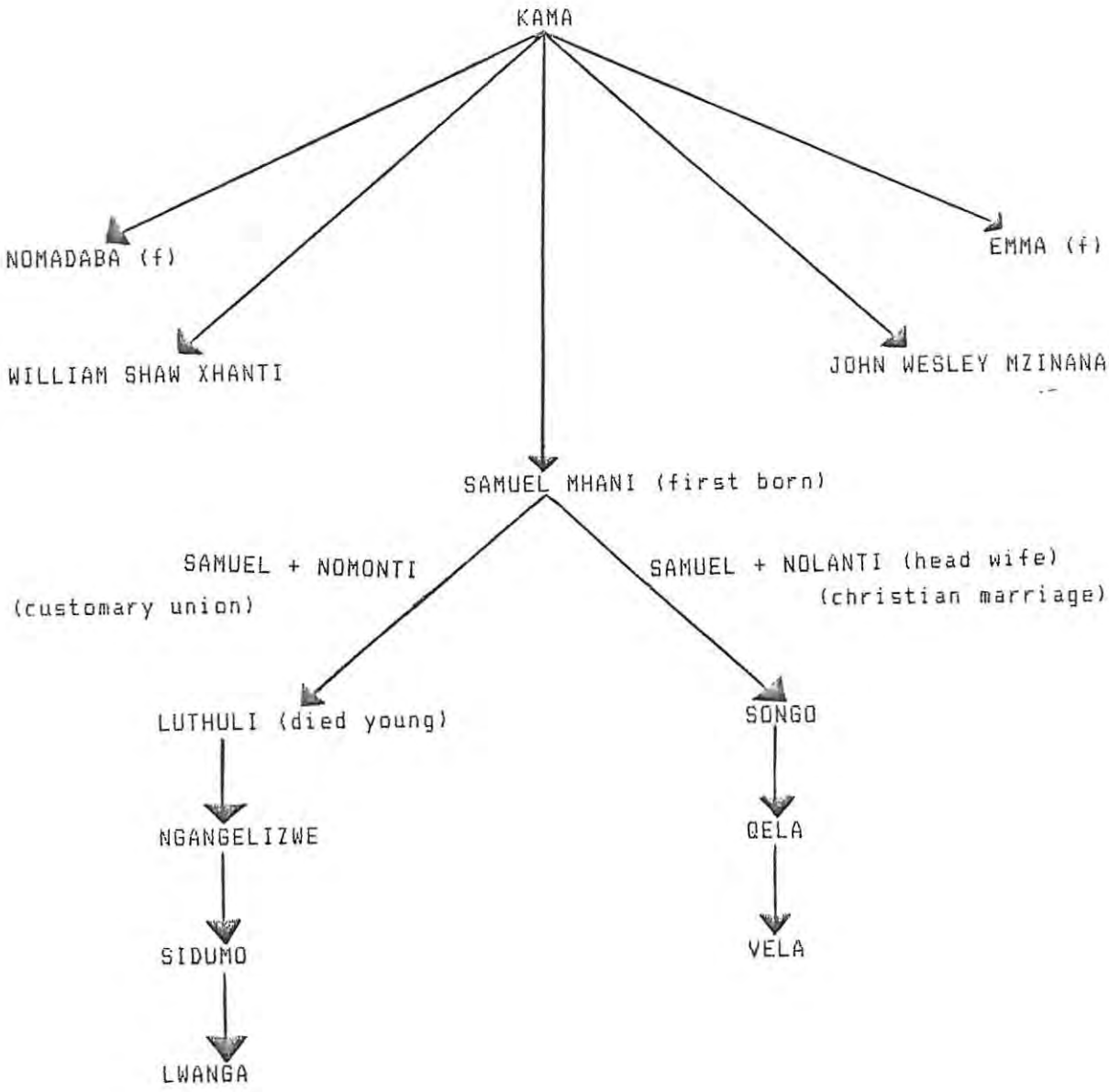
The British emigrants had long before embarkation for the Cape formed parties of up to a hundred settlers each. One such party was the Methodist party headed by Hezekiah Sephton. Because it was large it qualified for a minister of its own religious affiliation. This party, sailing in the Aurora,[174] disembarked at Simonstown,[175] South African soil on 2.5.1820. Its minister, William Shaw, was to play a significant role in the future history of the Gqunukhwebe.

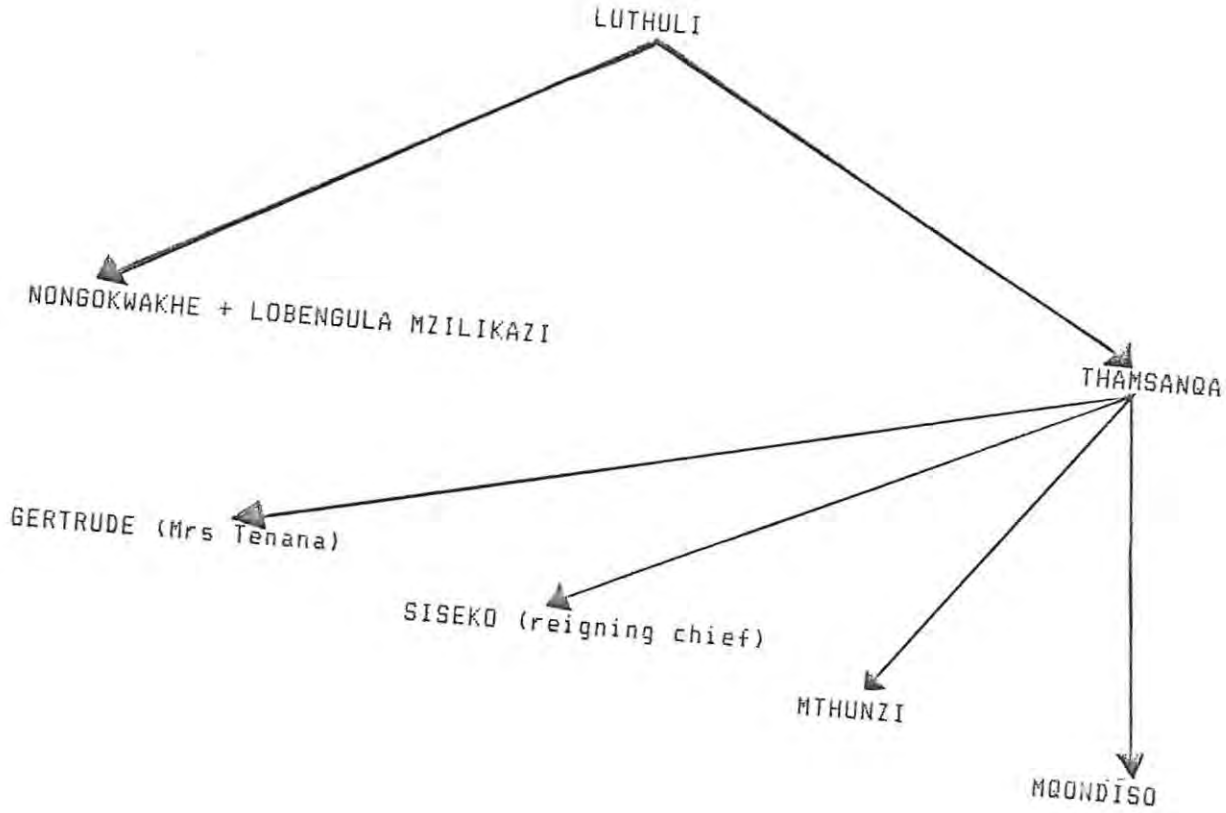
---

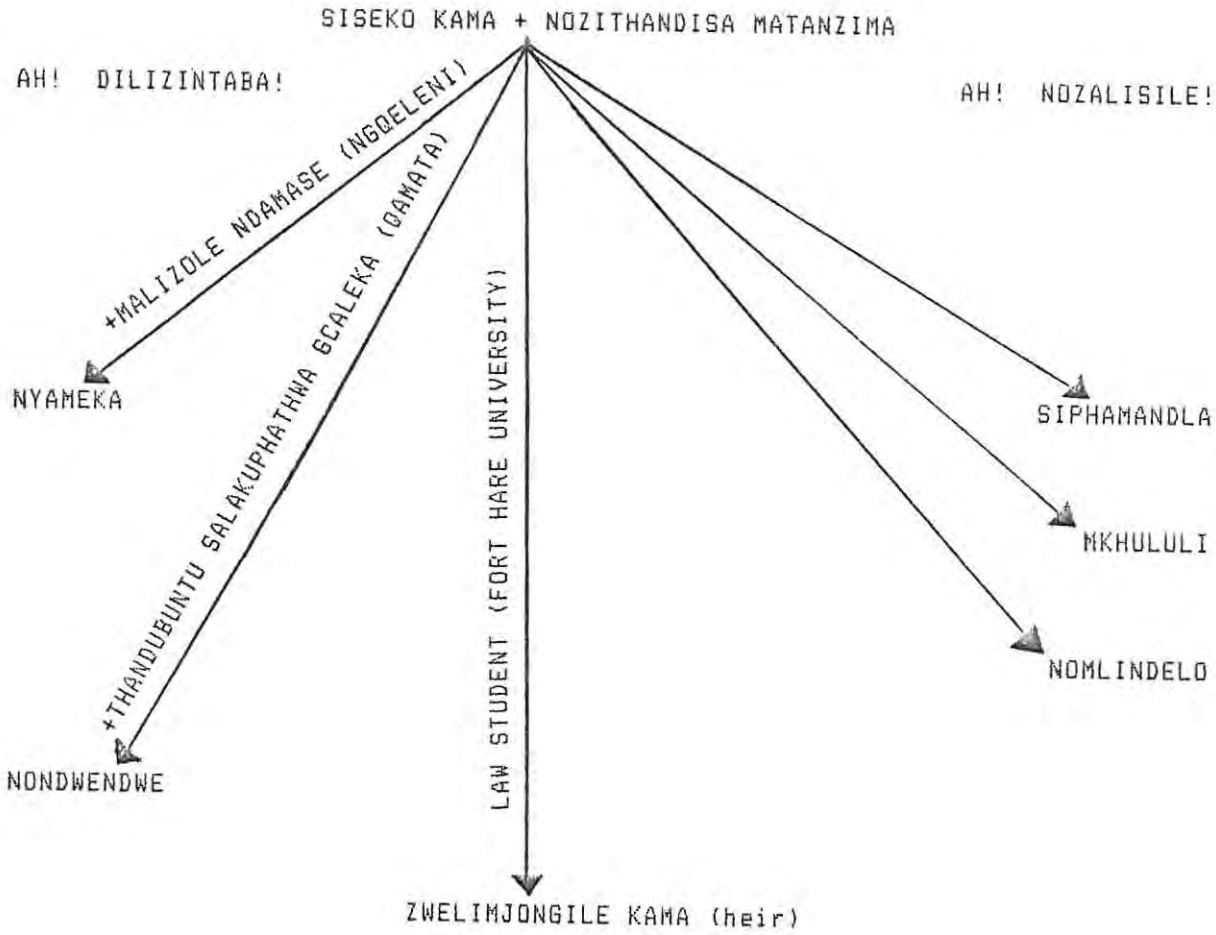
172. Theal: Somerset - Bathurst, 23.1.1817, R.C.C. 11, p. 253.
173. Bryer & Hunt: 1820 Settlers, p. 14.
174. W.D. Hammond-Tooke: The Journal of William Shaw, (Cape Town, 1972) p. 4.
175. P.H. Lyness: The Life and Influence of William Shaw, 1820-56 (Rhodes University), p. 85.

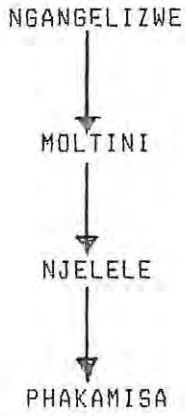
THE KAMA FAMILY TREE




KAMA
NOMADABA (f)
WILLIAM SHAW XHANTI
EMMA (f)
JOHN WESLEY MZINANA
SAMUEL MHANI (first born)
SAMUEL + NOMONTI
(customary union)
SAMUEL + NOLANTI (head wife)
(christian marriage)
LUTHULI (died young)
NGANGELIZWE
SIDUMO
LWANGA
SONGO
QELA
VELA


LUTHULI
NONGOKWAKHE + LOBENGULA MZILIKAZI
THAMSANQA
GERTRUDE (Mrs Tenana)
SISEKO (reigning chief)
MTHUNZI
MQONDISO


SISEKO KAMA + NOZITHANDISA MATANZIMA
AH! DILIZINTABA!
AH! NOZALISILE!
+MALIZOLE NDAMASE (NGOELENI)
+THANDUBUNTU SALAKUPHATHWA GCALEKA (GAMATA)
LAW STUDENT (FORT HARE UNIVERSITY)
NYAMEKA
NONDWENDWE
SIPHAMANDLA
MKHULULI
NOMLINDELO
ZWELIMJONGILE KAMA (heir)



CHIEFSHIPS IN KAMA'S HOUSE

WILLIAM KAMA CHUNGWA (1798 - 1875)

AH! MBANQOBUSO: (born about 1798 - 99 and ruled until 1875, the year of his death).

WILLIAM SHAW XHANTI KAMA (1875 - 1899): (left evangelical work to be chief in his father's place, Mhani having died in 1868).

NGANGELIZWE KAMA (1900 - 1939): (regent for Luthuli's son, Thamsanqa, the former having died young).

THAMSANQA KAMA (1939 - 1952): (allowed his

AH! VULUMHLABA! regent uncle to rule for as long as he lived).

SISEKO KAMA (October 1953 - ? reigning chief)

AH! DILIZINTABA! (AMAGQUNUKHWEBE TRIBAL AUTHORITY): QHIBIRA (MIDDLEDRIFT).

CHAPTER 2

THE MISSIONARY IMPACT ON THE GQUNUKHWEBE STRAINS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TWO BROTHER CHIEFS.

Hezekiah Sephton's party had, because of its size, applied to the Wesleyan Mission House for a Methodist minister to accompany them to the Cape. Mr W. Shaw, conceived by the secretariat of the Committee of the Wesleyan Missions to be "a person of approved character,"[1] and also an appropriate choice for the role of chaplaincy, offered his services.[2] In subsequent correspondence Rev J. Taylor confirmed the Government's approval of the appointment of William Shaw as a minister attached to the Sephton party.[3] Ironically Shaw's evangelical work was to revolutionize the course of the Gqunukhwebe history rather than that of the British Settlers for whose spiritual benefit he had principally come to the Cape. It is therefore necessary to digress briefly to examine the background of this extra-ordinarily important man.

Shaw was born in Glasgow on 8.12.1798, the eleventh child of a sergeant in the North York Militia. His first environment was the Mess House in the Royal Barracks, his father being in charge there at the time. Mr and Mrs Shaw were members of the Established Church and they brought up their large family in the fear of God.[4] On his father's retirement William was placed in the care of his older brother who was a sergeant in the same regiment. Obviously therefore William was destined for a non-commissioned rank in the regular army. As time passed on, young William came under the strong Methodist influence of Josh Sykes and William Pearson, within the regiment. As a result he joined the local Methodist society at Colchester Barracks in Essex in 1812.

---

1. Theal: Secretariat of the Wesleyan Missionary Committee - Bathurst, R.C.C., 12, p. 372.
2. Ibid.
3. Theal: J. Taylor-J. Butterworth, R.C.C., 14, p. 192.
4. W. Shaw: Memoir of the Rev. William Shaw (London, 1874), p. 1.

Shaw was not yet fourteen years of age when he experienced conversion, thereby putting an end to the scheme of a commission in the army. The conversion alienated his brother, for the officers were all strongly opposed to Methodism. On 10.7.1815 he took his discharge from the army at Drogheda and went to live with his family at Wisbeck. He was already thinking of fulltime ministry as a vocation. On the strength of the recommendatory letters he had brought along from Ireland he was immediately put on the Local Preachers' Plan.[5] Whilst engaged in lay preaching the Rev. W. Bacon asked Shaw, a professional teacher, to commence a day school, a project that would also help him earn a living. The Long Sutton School succeeded beyond all expectations but Shaw, not content with his achievements, became more and more convinced that his vocation was that of a missionary. Thus Shaw had opted for a missionary career before leaving England. His getting married on the 30.12.1817 however, nearly complicated the plan of submitting his name as a candidate for foreign work.[6] On the 25.11.1819 Shaw was ordained as a Methodist minister, declaring publicly that he presented himself for ordination because he believed he "was moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon me the office, duties and responsibilities of a Christian Missionary".[7]

While Shaw spent time school-mastering and preaching, down at the Cape the governorship of Lord Charles Somerset was being bedevilled by a complete breakdown of frontier policy. The outbreak of the Fifth Frontier War had proved to be a decisive event in the reshaping of the frontier policy,

---

5. Hammond-Tooke: The Journal, p. 3.
6. Ibid.
7. Lyness: William Shaw, p. 82.

and its short term effect was the creation of a no man's land between the Fish and the Keiskamma Rivers. Against the background of the newly created unmanned frontier vacuum and the small frightened Zuurveld white community, Sephton's party, under the chaplaincy of Shaw, came to anchor in Algoa Bay on the 15th October 1820.[8]

The Sephton party eventually founded the Salem settlement in Albany, and from this base Shaw was able to conduct his missionary activities, starting in Grahamstown.[9] From the moment of his appointment to Southern Africa Shaw committed himself to the fulfillment of what he believed divine Providence had designed:

> "After I had accomplished some preparatory work among the settlers ... I should proceed beyond the colonial boundaries and establish a Wesleyan Mission among the Xhosa".[10]

Shaw was obviously voluntarily offering himself for God's service. The Missionary Society responded positively to Shaw's initiative, and ordered him to

> "report ... any openings to the heathen which might present themselves in the neighbourhood, in order that a missionary might be appointed, under his direction, to carry out the light and influence of Christianity in that quarter."[11]

---

8. Hammond-Tooke: The Journal, p. 32.
9. Lyness: William Shaw, p. 80.
10. W. Shaw: The Story of my Mission Among the British Settlers In South Eastern Africa (London, 1872), p. 59.
11. MS 15,429 (Reel 1): Printed Missionary Reports 1821-66, 2, 1823.

This encouraged Shaw in his resolution to obey the divine call. Thus, while ministering to settlers and the Khoi, he, in keeping with his self-made obligations as well as the Committee's instruction, constantly fixed his eye on Xhosaland. He had only been at Salem for a few months when he wrote to the Missionary Committee: "this station will be the key to Kaffirland, a country abounding with heathen inhabitants".[12] Shaw's identifying with the Colonial opinion is clearly revealed in the above excerpt, because he had not yet been to Xhosaland to see for himself how heathenish the so-called 'Kaffirs' were. He further went on to say:

> "The present is not the time for penetrating that country: but I hope the present turbulent spirit of that people will soon begin to subside, and then I would wish to see a Wesleyan Missionary ready to take advantage of the opportunity to enter and ... publish peace and salvation".[13]

Ministering to the 1820 Settlers was, for Shaw, from the very beginning a stepping-stone to his envisaged mission to the non-Christians in Xhosaland. He realised, however, that a peaceful atmosphere would be both desirable and conducive to the proclamation of the message of peace. The anti-Colonial chiefs had not only been overwhelmed, but contrary to their expectation the provisions of Somerset's peace had been harsher that the status quo, and thus a justification for an everlasting grievance. William Shaw was certainly aware of this state of affairs when he referred to the 'turbulent spirit' of the Xhosa people. His simultaneous expression of

---

12. Shaw: Memoir, p. 94.
13. Ibid.

hope for calm gives one the impression that the proclamation of heavenly message was well timed to persuade the Chiefs to accept what they could not change because they had not been able to resist. Shaw was obviously envisaging a grand Methodist crusade taming the warlike spirit in Xhosaland

> "... two or three prudent Missionaries would render them (ama-Xhosa) even more friendly. If there were two of us here, we might occasionally make a tour of observation, and gain the most valuable information as to the proper time and manner of forming a missionary establishment among them". [14]

Shaw's ambition would eventually lead to a chain of mission stations all the way from Grahamstown to Port Natal.

The Cape Government had, shortly after the arrival of the 1820 Settlers, prohibited all intercourse between them and the Xhosa.[15] Non-intercourse was deemed to be essential for the peace and safety of the border. Shaw nevertheless petitioned the Governor for permission to establish a mission in Kaffraria. He had his eyes on the coastal chiefdom of the Gqunukhwebe, between the Keiskamma and Buffalo Rivers. No missionary had as yet visited that area. The way to the Gqunukhwebe kingdom passed through the territory of the Government's acknowledged ally, Ngqika. It was therefore surmised that he would not take well to the idea of the honour associated with Gospel teachers being given to the other chiefs. The Government's initial

---

14. MS 15,429 (Reel 1): Printed Missionary Reports 1821-66, 2, 1823.
15. Shaw: S.M.M., p. 60.

reluctance [16] was shown by the length of time it took to respond to Shaw's request. To obviate all problems Shaw visited Ngqika to obtain permission to pass through his country to Phatho's Gqunukhwebe. After the customary delaying tactics characteristic of the Xhosa chiefs, Ngqika allowed the missionary party to proceed to Phatho, and to commence a mission if the Chief of the land was agreeable.[17] The go-ahead from Ngqika possibly paved the way for a similar gesture from the Government, for after Shaw had made Ngqika's consent known the authorities eventually sanctioned his preliminary tour.[18] The first obstacles had thus proved surmountable and one imagines that Shaw felt this to be further confirmation of his missionary venture.

In July 1823 Shaw and Mr W. Shepstone, an assistant missionary, with Dyani Tshatshu as interpreter journeyed to Phatho's Great Place to seek permission to establish a mission station in his land.[19] The Government Missionary, the Rev. W. Thomson, joined the party, so as to be able to give an independent account of the proceedings with the Gqunukhwebe chiefs. On arrival at their destination the visitors were asked to unsaddle their horses, an invitation to honour their 'indaba' by settling down for a while.[20] Phatho had just assumed his chiefly powers as the proper heir of Chungwa, and Shaw specifically desired his sanction before he could select a site for the station.[21] It thus went without saying that the Missionary,

---

16. Shaw: S.M.M., p. 69.
17. Ibid., p. 80.
18. Ibid., p. 81.
19. Hammond-Tooke: The Journal, p. 9.
20. Shaw: S.M.M., p. 85.
21. MS 15, 429 (Reel 1): Printed Missionary Reports, 1821-66, 28.8.1823.

on his part, regarded Phatho, much to the gratification of the latter, as Chief in his own right and land with no interference from either Ngqika or anyone else. After the traditional Xhosa examination of the strangers the three brother chiefs Phatho, Kama and Kobe received the missionary party "with evident pleasure and goodwill".[22] Obviously the very idea of being visited by the Gospel teachers was a little exciting since it ended the difference in rank between these chiefs and Ngqika. Shaw duly explained the purpose of his visit to Chief Phatho's Council, and after answering a few questions, he was given a go-ahead to establish a mission station for the benefit of the Gqunukhwebe. His ability to expedite matters was needed more now than ever before. The site for the station was immediately selected in the neighbourhood of Phatho's kraal. The availability of wood, water and extensive land for both agricultural and farming purposes usually determined the choice of the sites of the missionary stations, and this case was no exception. Then Shaw was to return to the Colony and later to come again and take up his abode among the Gqunukhwebe. Phatho remarked "we shall strain our eyes in looking out for your arrival".[23] The idea of sharing in the honour associated with the presence of Gospel teachers was obviously exciting Phatho, and he could not control his yearning for this wonderful experience. In this way the Wesleyans were presented with an opportunity to conquer the field for the propagation of Methodism.

Having returned to Albany, Shaw made preparations for the final departure to Xhosaland. His party included his family, that of the assistant and mason, Mr W. Shepstone, the interpreter and the wagon drivers with

---

22. Shaw: S.M.M., p. 89.
23. Ibid., p. 90.

their families.[24] The racially-mixed composition of the party tended to symbolise the integration that was to be characteristic of a future missionary community in Phatho's kingdom.

When the party was almost ready to start a terrific storm occurred, which added to the many words of discouragement which had been uttered against proceeding to take up residence in the midst of a 'cruel race'. The Gqunukhwebe's role in the latest war had earned them the label of being "the most audacious of the whole Xhosa nation, they having actually stormed and nearly captured Grahamstown ..."[25] This desperate effort must be viewed against the background of a strong desire to repossess their original home. On the question of the warnings of danger Ann Shaw addressed her missionary husband:

> "You have long sought and prayed for this opening; Divine Providence has now evidently set the door open before us; ... you stand pledged to the Chiefs".[26]

Then it became apparent that there was as yet no excuse good enough to effect the cancellation of the project. The very helpless and hopeless condition of the unChristian Xhosa with much publicised heathenishness signified a beckoning call for the evangelical light, to an earnest missionary. The above excerpt also reveals Ann Shaw as both the driving and positive force in Shaw's missionary life. On the other hand his doubting and uncertainty at the very last moment signified the gravity and/or intensity of the warnings which could not but bring to the surface the inherent weakness of human nature.[27]

---

24. Shaw: S.M.M., p. 92.
25. Ibid., p. 94.
26. Ibid.
27. Ibid., p. 92.

On 19th November 1823, Shaw's party arrived at the Government Missionary Station at Tyhume. While there Shaw saw it fit to confirm if chief Phatho would still honour the agreements made earlier on and welcome the missionaries. The entry of a commando in Phatho's land to recover stolen cattle had suddenly become a cause for concern. Contrary to Shaw's fears Phatho immediately dispatched an escort to guide the party through to his land. The chief's quick and positive response, though bringing relief to the evangelical party, had possibly been motivated by guilt and desperate need for a mediator.[28] William Shaw's account of how they had to open a road from Tyhume to Phatho's land, making use of Xhosa hatchets, cannot but symbolise the intensity of effort they would have to exert to gain access into the so-called heathen hearts, armed only with the Holy Book and wisdom of expression. On 5 December 1823 the Wesleyan pioneers triumphantly entered the land of the Gqunukhwebe "in the midst of a tumultous welcome".[29] The party's arrival at the destination marked both the realization of a dream conceived in England and a signal for the beginning of the fulfillment of Shaw's divine pledge. On the next day the three brother Chiefs deliberated with their councillors on the purpose and procedure of the missionaries. After the discussion with the Chiefs, Shaw was left in no doubt about the former's interpretation of his taking up residence in their midst and about his triple role: he was to adopt paternal interest in their welfare; to mediate on their behalf and to shield them, "a bush of defence from wind and rain".[30] These expressions give us a hint of the Chiefs' motives for readily accepting the missionaries in their land. The motives were all characteristically secular: "political prestige, the

---

28. MS 15, 429 (Reel 1): Printed Missionary Reports 1821-66, 3, 20.12.1823.
29. Ibid.
30. Shaw: Memoir, p. 107.

provision of a regular channel of communication with the Colony and the fear of the consequences of a possible refusal".[31] Phatho's flattering welcome may also be considered in the light of the commando entry in his country. The secular motives which were of primary importance to the Chiefs were in no way a feature of the missionary scheme. The latter's primary purpose was to preach and teach the Gospel and thereby Europeanise and civilize the unChristian Xhosaland, but this very purpose was treated by those to whom it was meant to benefit as a part-time peace time venture.

The commencement of building operations under the guidance of Shepstone[32] was visible evidence that a new settlement was taking shape on the banks of the Thwecu River. It soon became clear that a mission community was being born and that it would in no time grow into a village. Shaw on his part soon demonstrated that he had not lost sight of his objective in that land by conducting "daily domestic worship in the open air, often with scores of the natives, especially women and children, looking on with undisguised surprise and amusement".[33] Ironically, amused though they were, the reality of the fact is that they were astonished by the new routine in their land. For most men the sound of the presence of the strangers had not been sharp enough to challenge their curiosity. The open-air service was obviously the only alternative in the absence of accommodation, but it afforded the curious in the non-Christian community a convenient point of observation. Several families came and requested permission to reside on

---

31. Peires: Phalo, p. 76.
32. Shaw: S.M.M., p. 102.
33. Ibid.

the station. At this point in time, very early in 1824, Shaw resolved to name the first Methodist Mission in Xhosaland, WESLEYVILLE.[34]

It is interesting to note that Shaw's major commitment in the land was not different from that of the missionaries elsewhere in Africa. All were inspired by the same ideal of conquering the dark continent of Africa for Christ. Within this context Shaw also aimed at uprooting heathen beliefs and customs, and this part of his task necessarily implied the destruction of the status quo in Xhosa traditionalism. It was, however, one thing to wreck the authority of tradition, to trample upon the time-honoured privileges of custom; it was another thing to introduce a new style of life and a new culture which would embody the progressive aspirations of Christianity and Europeanization and at the same time substitute an advanced civilization in the place of an 'inferior', different one. To fulfill this latter task Shaw aimed at replacing the unChristian practices with Christian ideals and principles. This part of the programme implied a constructive mission. In the destructive aspect the agents were likely to get support from other local Europeans but certainly not from Blacks initially.

Shaw continually asked for reinforcement of the missionaries so as to be able to extend the mission to the still ignorant and non-Christian.[35] Subsequent reports confirmed his itinerating activities among the Xhosa, mostly on weekdays.[36] This itineration, which was characteristic of Shaw's method of evangelising, was nothing less than physical contact whereby the missionary identified with the ordinary people and, by becoming one of

---

34. Shaw: Memoir, p. 123.
35. MS 15, 429 (Reel 1): Printed Missionary Reports 1821-66, 2, 1823.
36. Shaw: S.M.M., p. 126.

them, he showed that he had realised that to be able to rise with them he first had to share their way of life. Furthermore by sleeping in their huts Shaw showed that he recognised no difference between himself and the Xhosa, but that the inferiority of the latter's civilization in relation to the superiority of the former had, of necessity created a gap. All his efforts at Christianizing, while 'Europeanizing' and therefore 'civilizing' were directed at closing this said gap.

Early in 1825 Shaw founded a school for the children residing near the station. Within fourteen months of his stay at Wesleyville he could boast of "sixty kaffir Children present at the Sunday School".[37] The nudity of the children was rather disgusting to Shaw who possibly thought that it was accountable for by poverty. The fact is that body covering for children in traditional society is not a priority. Nudity is regarded as proof that the subject is still a young child (possibly because of lack of embarrassment on the part of the subject) rather than a form of indecency. A point of interest is the fact that to overcome nakedness Shaw had to resort to his civilizing skill and thus bring together Europeanizing and civilizing as aspects of the grand Christianizing process. His ordering of clothing, hatchets and iron cooking pots on a later date demonstrated his efforts in achieving these two aspects of the Christianizing scheme.[38]

Shortly after Shaw had arrived in Phatho's country, he addressed the Chiefs and their councillors of all ranks on the conditions of his residing in their midst. One of these conditions was the cessation of stealing,

---

37. Shaw: S.M.M., p. 122.
38. Hammond-Tooke: The Journal, p. 82.

otherwise he would remove himself from their land and thereby diminish all chances of the peace they professedly desired with the English.[39] By the latter statement Shaw was assigning to himself a role other than that of a Gospel teacher. The Chiefs who already saw in him a channel of communication with the British Government thanked Shaw and undertook to help fight stock theft among their people.[40] It is possible that they were already thinking of asking Shaw to negotiate on their behalf for the return of their land. Proof that the Chiefs kept their promise was furnished in Shaw's letter of 18.12.1823 to Rev. S. Kay wherein he commended the Chiefs for their "willingness to collect and send back to the colony the stolen cattle".[41] This state of affairs would surely prolong the period of peace while affording Shaw both the incentive and the time to pursue his missionary work.

Within barely six weeks of his stay in Xhosaland Shaw received a letter from Major Somerset, expressing a desire to hold a friendly conference with the Gqunukhwebe Chiefs and their followers. By communicating this instruction through Shaw, Somerset was obviously utilizing him as a Government agent, a role which Shaw did not willingly accept. The irony of this was that the Chiefs, who already reposed more confidence in Shaw than in Somerset made it clear that they would only confer with Somerset in Shaw's presence. Shaw reports thus:

> "I at length reluctantly consented, and informed Major Somerset of the circumstances; reminding him, at the same time, that the personal safety of myself and all our missionary party would be

---

39. Shaw: Memoir, p. 113.
40. Hammond-Tooke: The Journal, p. 82.
41. MS 15, 429 (Reel 1): Shaw - S. Kay, 18.12.1823.

> jeopardized, if any untoward event, leading to a collision occurred at the meeting".[42]

Shaw was in this way persuading the Major to preserve peace at the conference so as to protect the missionaries' image while at the same time securing Shaw's personal safety.

On the appointed day the relevant parties converged on the conference spot with their followers and warriors. Shaw too had his own little crew.[43] The presence of the military element symbolised the mutual distrust of both parties. There was much private consultation among the Chiefs as to the principal points to be raised in the discussions. The main points were that the Chiefs wanted to be recognised by the Government as independent chiefs, and further desired that all communication should be sent to them through Shaw rather than Ngqika. One wonders whether Shaw could have had a feeling of complacency at this indirect conferring of Ngqika's status upon him. The Chiefs' attitude could have given the Missionary hope that everything associated with him, Gospel teaching included, would ultimately prevail upon the people, who were lately reposing so much trust in him, a newcomer, that they would entrust him with their politico-diplomatic life. These Chiefs had obviously come to realize that the Missionary was a better link with the Government than Ngqika whose unjustifiable assumption of superiority posed a threat to their autonomy. Further, they stood to benefit from Shaw who was in no way a rival to their chiefly greatness. Whatever Shaw felt, his anxiety to ward off the outbreak of hostilities pushed him into acting as a real messenger of peace between two parties

---

42. Shaw: S.M.M., p. 111.
43. Ibid.

ready to engage in an interview despite their mutual distrust. As the conference hour drew nearer he suddenly assumed the role of being the chief consultant of both camps, and amazingly his word was an assurance to both parties.[44]

As an outcome of the conference the several points that had been urged by the Gqunukhwebe Chiefs were conceded and further, the chiefdom was permitted to re-occupy the land between the Keiskamma and the Fish Rivers. The Chiefs, on their part, undertook to give up deserters and to restore stolen cattle. As a guarantee of the fulfillment of the promises Kobe Chungwa agreed to be held as a hostage provided Shaw would remain with him.[45] Thus the whole narrative of the conference reveals how Shaw was able to play the roles of an escort, peace-messenger and mediator, consultant, adviser and hostage without prejudicing any of the parties involved. Paradoxically, the shuttle diplomacy had nothing to do with Shaw's religious teaching.

The first test of the effectiveness of Shaw's diplomatic mission with the Gqunukhwebe came with the events of 1834-35. In those years, the majority of the Xhosa went to war partly out of irritation at Colonial commandos, and partly out of a desire to recover their lost lands between the Fish and the Keiskamma. Thanks to the intervention of William Shaw, the Gqunukhwebe had recovered their lands and were free of the nuisance of commandos. Though urged by the other Xhosa chiefs to go to war, they declined to do so as they had everything to lose and nothing to gain.[46] Earlier Governor

---

44. Shaw: S.M.M., p. 118.
45. Ibid., p. 117.
46. Peires: Phalo, p. 94.

Durban had commended them for their good conduct, and he was not to be disappointed. In February of 1835 Durban wrote thus about the brother chiefs:

> "In the first days of the present month, the Caffre Chiefs Phatho, Kobe and Kama (Brothers occupying the country between Beka and lower Keiskamma who had already given strong proofs of their adherence to the Colony, and especially by protecting the missionary institution at Wesleyville (... beyond the Keiskamma) with many traders who had fled thither for refuge placed in my hands the second brother Kobe, as a hostage for their future fidelity and he has remained since at my head-Quarters".[47]

This then was the impression which the Gqunukhwebe Chiefs made on the Colonial Government and one wonders if there could have been any better proof of good intentions. Their credit in the Governor's eyes was exactly the measurement of their treachery in the eyes of their fellow chiefs. Durban's dispatch to Glenelg in 1837 wherein he commented on the

> "Attack upon our old and faithful Allies, the tribe of Chungwa ... to expel them ... from the portion they hold by grant from the British Government ... taking vengeance on the Chungwas for their fidelity to us during the war ..."[48]

must be seen in the light of their withholding themselves from the grand Xhosa coalition. In his letter to the Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, the Earl of Aberdeen, in 1835, William Shaw pleaded for the Gqunukhwebe to be given their ancient territory within the neutral ground

> "on condition that they place themselves under the protection of the British Government, and become responsible to the Colony for all stolen cattle actually traced into their district".[49]

---

47. GH 23/11: General Dispatches, Durban - Spring Rice, 27.2.1835.
48. GH 23/17: General Dispatches, Durban - Glenelg, 9.10.1837.
49. BPP 1826-36, XX: Shaw - Aberdeen, 7.4.1835, p. 662.

Shaw's plea implied an extension of British authority as it smacked of imperialistic tendencies. He further argued that the three chiefs had conducted themselves so well because of the influence of the Gospel teaching and therefore a reward was expected to follow after that demonstration of good will. Thus the Gqunukhwebe Chiefs' behaviour, especially in recent events, as well as Shaw's interceding on their behalf[50] provided a context for the treaty agreements which established them on the land

> "extending from the Great Fish River on the West, to the Buffalo on the east, and bounded on the south by the sea, and on the north by a line running from the Caffre Drift ford of the Fish River to the ford of the Beka, ..."[51]

While relations between the Gqunukhwebe Chiefs and the Colony were daily being consolidated, the Wesleyville community too was manifesting a changed outlook. Building operations had since been crowned with the completion of two houses of four rooms each.[52] In his letter of 28th March 1826 Shaw remarked on the "encouraging attendance at public worship and the progress of public works with the aid of some natives."[53] Shaw and Shepstone had set the example by the physical management and building of the dwellings that were to mark the nucleus of the Wesleyville Community. The Xhosa who were helping in the building operations were certainly undergoing a change of daily habits. While spending time purposefully they were also being

---

50. BPP 1826-36, XX: Shaw - Aberdeen, 7.4.1835, p. 663.
51. BPP 1826-36, XX: Durban - Glenelg, Encl. 8 in No. 9, p. 784.
52. MS 15, 429 (Reel 1): Printed Missionary Reports 1821-66, April, 1824.
53. CO 291: Shaw - R. Thompson, 28.3.1826.

introduced to a system of working for something in return. The sign of a reward was soon witnessed when the Wesleyville Xhosa replaced the traditional huts with rectangular structures which definitely showed a resemblance to Western style.[54]

Alongside cultural and social transformation Wesleyville was still to be the laboratory for agricultural revolution with the introduction of the plough.[55] Proof that a female in traditional society was, besides her feminine obligations, also a beast of burden is readable in the following utterance by one of the chiefs:

> "This thing that the white people have brought into the country is as good as ten wives".[56]

Ironically, if the chief's expression had been accurate, polygamy would not be a feature of Xhosa societies and communities today. It is, however, significant that the first Xhosa to witness the plough in operation in Southern Africa were those of Wesleyville, and improvement in the traditional methods of planting possibly meant better produce. Further, rows made by the plough were neater, giving a better appearance to the fields and thus to the village. The conspicuous features of this community at this time were a missionary village which included a school, a chapel and a number of cottages built by the Xhosa.[57]

---

54. CO 291: Shaw - R. Thompson, 28.3.1826.
55. Shaw: S.M.M., p. 163.
56. Ibid., p. 164.
57. Ibid., p. 136.

An early feature of the Thwecu (Wesleyville) community was partnership in trade, with the Xhosa giving milk, meat and labour for beads, iron and handkerchiefs from the missionaries.[58] It is interesting to note that the presence of the spiritual agency in Xhosaland had given rise to circumstances which fostered the secular atmosphere. The missionaries needed food supplies for the labour force which included women, children and men, some of whom assisted in the building operations.[59] Xhosa men and women were taught to sell their labour for five strings of beads per day.[60] With beads the Xhosa could purchase cows, heifers and even adorn themselves.[61] Noteworthy is the fact that these transactions were no sign of spiritual progress from the missionary point of view, but because the whole process encouraged people to work in the hope of being rewarded with something they valued, it did reach one of the missionaries' targets, idleness. When Shaw realised that there was more attraction to the secular aspect of the mission he devised a plan whereby the spiritual aspect could benefit from the circumstances:

> "Watching favourable opportunities, I used to assemble a group of them, and desire them to sit on the grass while I told them the good news which I had brought them".[62]

In spite of the developments at Wesleyville Shaw expressed the feeling that it had not as yet come up to his expectations:

---

58. Shaw: S.M.M., p. 103.
59. Ibid., p. 106.
60. MS 15, 429 (Reel 1): Printed Missionary Reports 1821-66, April, 1824.
61. Shaw: S.M.M., p. 106.
62. Ibid., p. 107.

> "There is however one thing wanting as a stimulus to civilization and improved habits, viz. a store to be opened on the station where the inhabitants and surrounding natives might purchase useful articles of clothing and manufacture." [63]

Civilization needed to be stimulated so that it would in turn improve the habits of the Xhosa. Two of the Gqunukhwebe Chiefs had, as early as 1824, visited the Colony, and they had not only witnessed civilized life but had, in their gifts of clothing, actually enjoyed its benefits. Shaw therefore realised that the time had come when all these items should be made available at Wesleyville. The acquisition of European civilization was an essential stage in the process of conversion of the illiterate non-Christian, and inherent in the idea of a store was the motive to westernize and thus civilize. The ultimate result would be the economic progress, by itself destined to make William Shaw so popular! His reference to the buying of clothing implied that his spiritual obligations had a secular aspect which he could not ignore if he wanted to achieve his ultimate objective, set out on his original plan.

In subsequent correspondence Shaw remarked that the store had begun to function, though to his surprise the Xhosa preferred ornamental articles to "useful articles - clothing, hatchets, iron cooking pots".[64] The preference for ornaments would surely not augur well for Shaw's westernizing and civilizing plan, though it was an aspect of economic progress. On the other hand restriction of stock to the so-called useful articles reduced the number of customers.[65]

---

63. CO 291: Shaw - R. Thompson, 28.3.1826.
64. Hammond-Tooke: The Journal, p. 82.
65. Ibid.

The economic progress of Wesleyville was crowned in 1828 by the introduction of 'money economy':

> "a considerable quantity of useful goods were sold to the natives, a knowledge of the value of money was spreading and many of the inhabitants of Wesleyville obtained profitable employment in connection with the store". [66]

The introduction of money economy was, and still is, important for the promotion and progress of the mission, for it is with money only that church offerings and other similar taxes are paid. At the time of which we are writing, however, generally all that marked a revolution in the economy of the Thwecu village made Shaw a popular innovator.

A final point on Shaw's mission relates to the identity of his converts. His first baptism was that of the dying Khoi Chief Ruiter Hobo. Hobo was, at the time of his formal acceptance of Christianity, resident at Wesleyville Mission Station.[67] Donovan Williams, in trying to explain why the Gqunukhwebe converted earlier than the other Xhosa groups, highlights the former's association with the Khoi.[68] His contention, however would appear to lack foundation. Conversion, if genuine, occurs between man and his God rather than as a result of biological factors. The Khoi converted to Christianity earlier than the Xhosa because their social structure was more broken up and because they had been exposed to missionary teaching since the first half of the eighteenth century.

---

66. Hammond-Tooke: The Journal, p. 125.
67. Shaw: S.M.M., p. 134.
68. D. Williams: The Missionaries On The Eastern Frontier Of The Cape Colony, 1799-1853, (Witwatersrand, 1959), pp. 249-56.

The Gqunukhwebe heeded Shaw's message for practical rather than ethnic reasons. In fact, Gqunukhwebe history reveals more than once that Christianity may be proclaimed for convenience's sake and as a result of the services (political, social, economic) rendered by the Christian agent in this case William Shaw. Hobo's conversion, therefore, should be seen rather as an isolated example of Shaw's ability as a missionary, though it was not, in itself, an event likely to initiate subsequent conversions, even among the members of his own family.

The youngest of the Gqunukhwebe brother chiefs who had deliberated on the entry of the missionaries in Phatho's land in 1823 was Kama.[69] In chiefly rank Kama came second to Phatho. He was born at Alexandria circa 1798-99,[70] and was still young at the time of the death of Chungwa. By 1823, however, Kama had matured and had taken Ngqika's daughter, Nongwane, to be his wife. Nongwane had, as a young girl, been briefly exposed to Vanderkemp's Christian influences.[71] With the departure of Vanderkemp from Ngqika's land Nongwane's infant Christian knowledge was either extinguished or become passive. Presumably, when Shaw arrived in Phatho's country Nongwane was no different to other people and childhood experiences belonged to another world. Ngani argues that it was possibly Shaw's regular Gospel teaching which rekindled in Nongwane the flame which had touched her as a child. She developed a habit of withdrawing to the veld every day at sunset. It was soon discovered that, once withdrawn, she talked to herself.[72] An oral

---

69. Shaw: S.M.M., p. 95.
70. Graham's Town Journal: 12.11.1875.
71. A.Z. Ngani: Ibali LamaGqunukhwebe (Lovedale, 1937), p. 14.
72. Ibid.

informant confirmed that one day Kama followed his wife without the latter being aware of it. Hidden at a short distance Kama could hear his wife talking, and as he drew nearer he discovered that Nongwane was praying. The Chief hurried home without disturbing his wife. Qhomfo claims that Kama was very touched by his discovery that day; no small wonder he persuaded his wife to refrain from exposing herself to snakes by praying in the forest.[73]

The next step in Kama's progress to Christianity was when, very much against the wishes of his people, he joined Shaw's party on its first visit to Grahamstown. Kama was received in Grahamstown very amicably, possibly because of his being in Shaw's company and also because of the peaceful relations between the Gqunukhwebe Chiefs and the Colony. In addition to a good reception, Kama was presented with articles of clothing and Major Somerset sent Kobe, his onetime hostage, a horse as a present. These presents symbolised friendship between the white Colony and the house of Chungwa, and furthermore, the gesture was intended to nurture that friendship. Moreover the presents were unquestionably benefits from the European civilization.

In Grahamstown Kama had an opportunity to attend divine worship, and thus to witness the administration of the Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Eucharist [74] to people who came from Christian backgrounds and who had been Christians for years and who therefore knew how to conduct themselves. This was bound to be an amazing revelation to anyone who had never before been exposed to formal Christian rituals. These divine scenes overwhelmed

---

73. S.S. Qhomfo: Interviewed by D.S. Yekela, Qhibira Great Place (Middledrift), 5.8.86.
74. Shaw: S.M.M., p. 129.

Kama, and though he did not understand English, "at one of these services ... he had been seized with an apparently irresistible emotion, and shed floods of tears".[75] Shedding of tears, especially during the sermon, is still a strong feature of Methodism among Blacks. While a stranger may feel the practice is disturbing to the minister, especially as it involves pacing to kneel in front of the altar, it does appear that this is a source of inspiration and it assures the preacher that his message has been received and understood.

On returning to Wesleyville Kama narrated all, also describing "the seriousness and solemnity which he had observed in ... religious assemblies ..." [76] Certainly the presents were an object of irresistible envy to the stay-at-homes. Of greater significance was the effect of Kama's experiences on Shaw. That he took Kobe with him on a subsequent visit can be surmised to have been encouraged by Kama's experience and by the belief that personal experience of God's word in action was a fast and effective agency for conversion. Shaw remarked after this that "equally gratifying results were produced," [77] but in reality the two Chiefs responded differently to what they witnessed in Grahamstwon: While Kama would not contain his tears, and possibly made a decision to reshape his life in accordance with God's ruling, Kobe expressed regret that the Great Word had come so late in his life: "I now see a great day, great things, and a great people; and I wish we had seen them sooner. [78] The inference to be gained from these remarks is that, by then, Kobe felt himself to be too deeply committed to his old way of life to shake it off. Kobe obviously had a less exciting and intensive experience than Kama, who could not have

---

75. Shaw: S.M.M., p. 129.
76. Ibid.
77. Ibid.
78. Ibid.

formed any preconceived ideas, his visit to the Colony having been the first by a Xhosa chief. Kobe's rather cold reaction serves to emphasize the intensity of Kama's experience.

Although all three brothers professed an interest in the mission, it was clear to Shaw that Kama's interest was exceptional.

> "The three brothers Pato, Kobe and Kama, are very seldom absent from Divine Worship. The last-named is particularly inquisitive, very docile, and tells me he often prays to the Great God, that he may be guided into the truth".[79]

These signs were even more noticeable in Kama after he had been to the Colony. Noteworthy is the fact that his reaction to Nongwane's clandestine praying had been sympathetic, rather than aggressive or negative and indifferent. It is thus difficult not to highlight the significance of Nongwane's inclination to Christianity as an effective instrument in Kama's later conversion. Nongwane's Christian influence was an unimposed daily physical contact whose probable gradual impact was catalysed by Kama's visit to Grahamstown.

On the promise of positive change in Kama, Shaw remarked "should he be truly converted to God, he will no doubt be a useful auxiliary to us".[80] Kama would attract his brother Chiefs and behind them the whole Gqunukhwebe nation. It is possible that Shaw already saw in Kama a future evangelist.

---

79. MS 15, 429 (Reel 1): Printed Missionary Reports 1821-66, April 1824.
80. Ibid.

It thus appeared that Kama's house had undergone conversion to Christianity. It is possible that some of the non-Christian Xhosa who observed the changeover considered that the Kamas had taken the first step in identifying with the Europeans of the land. Further, Kama's conversion could be interpreted as a possible withdrawal of strength from the non-Christian element. The fact that the converted Kama was also a traditional chief implied further fragmentation within the Gqunukhwebe, as some members of the chiefdom would obviously choose to follow the Chief who was abandoning traditional African religion for European Christianity. The two religions seemed incompatible, hence acceptance of the one implied that the other was thrown away or sacrificed. Traditional religion was a victim of the destructive aspect of the evangelical process, while the triumph of Christianity was the principal constructive aspect. The Xhosa needed to be converted before they could assist in the destruction of the old order. "What then would become of the children in Kama's home, where the parents were going astray"? the traditionalists obviously asked of each other.

The conversion of Kama and his wife was certainly a source of great pleasure for Shaw, demonstrating as it did the fruits of his labours. A further promise of 'fruit' was Phatho's and Kama's younger brother Yingana, who showed strong Christian inclinations, much to the missionaries' joy. Chief Phatho, who had, hitherto been professing Christianity with physical proximity and a distant heart, resented his younger brother's interest in

Christianity. As a result he removed Yingana to a distant cattle pasture. Ironically this became a justification for the extension of Shaw's field of activity. From now on he extended his mission to include the cattle places,[81] and Yingana clung on, very much against the wishes of his relatives.

Phatho's removal of Yingana must be viewed against the background of the probable strengthening of the foreign culture at the expense of that of amaXhosa. Peires cites the reaction of one old man who warned his neighbours that "because of the missionaries the Xhosa would be ruined because their children would neglect the cattle".[82] The herding of cattle was the boys' traditional duty, and ownership of cattle was the very life of a man in a society completely submerged in tradition, but the above factors do not exclude the question of resistance to foreign domination. The fact that we do not hear of Yingana's subsequent baptism gives us an idea of the strength of opposition to his acceptance of Christianity.

On the surface the evangelical work at Wesleyville was progressing well. The brother Chiefs patronized both divine worship on Sundays[83] and the public examinations that were often held for the school children. On these latter occasions the Chiefs, as with one voice, were wont to pass encouraging remarks to the children.[84] But Shaw is reported to have been greatly

---

81. Hammond-Tooke: The Journal, p. 89.
82. Peires: Phalo, p. 75
83. MS 14, 429 (Reel 1): Printed Missionary Reports 1821-66, 40, 8.7.1825.
84. Hammond-Tooke: The Journal, p. 126.

disturbed by the instability of Phatho's Christian commitment and convictions. This state of affairs was often discernible from the daily happenings in the very neighbourhood of the Mission Station.[85] In one instance Shaw had to intercede on behalf of a widow who was being dragged away from the mission village. This practice derived from what Shaw called the "customary understanding that the commoners' widows were public property".[86] One finds it difficult however, to believe that the unwritten law of the traditional society was so devoid of principle as to make no provision for the security of persons of commoners' widows. It is possible that Shaw experienced a linguistic handicap here; where he should have said the widows of commoners were presumed reverted to spinsterhood, a harsher unrealistic phrase conquered his lips. On the other hand, widows of respectable figures were often victims of the 'kungena' custom. This might be interpreted as a custom to avoid the above mentioned reversion. Instances of dragging women could also have been caused by negligence on the part of the guardians of the law. Nevertheless in the case in question Shaw conferred with the Chief of the country on the undesirability of the practice. Chief Phatho, who apparently did not want to commit himself, reiterated that "it was not reputed a crime to force away such women".[87] This incident demonstrates the variety of problems that required Shaw's attention. The dragging away of the women was actually an invasion of the mission community itself as well as a challenge to the chief of such a community. When the sovereignty of this new 'state within a state' was undermined its residents would be alarmed, especially as the station had assumed the function of an asylum. Phatho's shallow commitment to

---

85. MS 15, 429 (Reel 1): Printed Missionary Reports 1821-66, 40, 8.7.1825.
86. Ibid.
87. Ibid.

Christianity is revealed by his suggesting that widows should be barred from the station[88] because the long venerated custom should be practised without hindrance. Activities at the station were in no way to collide with the dictates of custom, otherwise the Mission Station would be viewed as a rival community. Eventually Shaw prevailed upon Phatho to exempt the residents of the missionary establishment from heathen customs. In this manner Shaw yielded to what he obviously conceived to be powers of darkness, and thereby acknowleged the existence of a characteristically non-Christian community beside his. The brother Chiefs agreed to exempt the widows at the station from the pagan customs presumably only out of deference to Shaw, who had been of such political use to them. Many a time the Xhosa who professed their acceptance of Christianity did not immediately see the need to abandon their old practices altogether. Phatho's attitude in the case of widows in the land placed him in this category. He was grateful for Shaw's political help, but was, at the same time, greatly disturbed by the disruptive influence of Christianity. Missionary activities were in no way to hinder the good old practices prescribed by custom. Instead Christianity was to exist alongside traditionalism.

Phatho expended all his energies to preserve the traditionalism and, behind it, the unity of the chiefdom. On one particular Sunday in October of 1825 there was dancing and feasting in Kobe's kraal, in full view of the Mission premises.[89] This was contrary to the earlier instructions of the Chiefs to the people that they should revere the Sabbath. Obviously the Chiefs resented the fact that the missionary had structured the activities of this

---

88. MS 15, 429 (Reel 1): Printed Missionary Reports 1821-66, 40, 8.7.1825.
89. Ibid.

particular day to make it unique among other days. A discovery that on this day the prestige of the missionary was enhanced above that of the chief was also disquieting. This implied that the Gospel teacher was a rival chief, and his following increased at the expense of that of the owners of the country, Phatho and his co-operative brother Kobe. In Phatho's view the missionary aimed at extending his authority over the Chief, his councillors, subjects and the children of the land. On the day of the Sabbath only the missionary's voice was to be heard in Phatho's country. If this state of affairs was to be allowed to go on Xhosa traditionalism, which enshrined the very essence of Xhosa political, economic, cultural, social and religious systems, would be paralysed and would eventually collapse. To counteract this imminent possibility as well as to suffocate the disruptive potential of Christianity, it seems that Phatho, the senior Gqunukhwebe Chief deliberately decided to hold traditional functions on the Sabbath. On being reproached the Chiefs again pretended to revere the Sabbath, even obliging their subjects to do likewise. The credulous Shaw once more reported that he was highly gratified by the Chiefs's attendance at divine worship. The Chiefs were either embarrassed by confrontation, possibly not knowing the outcome of open resistance and defiance or did not want to chase away the missionary and thereby lose the benefits associated with his presence in the land. As a result of Shaw's intermediary position they had just been allowed by the Governor to graze their cattle between the Keiskamma and the Bhira Rivers.[90]

---

90. B. Seton: (Wesleyan Missions) quoted in Lyness: William Shaw, p. 117.

Significantly Kama had not been involved at all in his brother's assault on missionary teachings and principles. Instead by opening his heart to Shaw he brought forth from that source the following remark:

> "He is indeed a superior person in mind and behaviour as well as in views of religion ... He admits that nothing prevents his formally embracing Christianity, but his fear of man, he waits to see whether some more powerful Chief, will not show him the example ..."[91]

The above excerpt reveals clearly that Kama was very much aware of his eldest brother's shallow commitment to Christianity. By 1828 it had become clear that Phatho accepted Christianity for its outward benefits and possibly to keep a check on Kama's deeper commitment. The latter, on the other hand was acknowledging that he needed a stronger senior man to take the lead in swaying the whole Gqunukhwebe nation towards Christianity. Kama, knowing that Phatho was an influential figure, believed that his influence could be used for the good if he embraced the Christian faith. Another obstacle to Kama's Christian leaning was the attitude of his subjects. Shaw remarked "his people at present dread the thought of his becoming a Christian, as they imagine it would be a change injurious to them ...",[92] for he would oblige them to follow suit. Thus they would not be able to get as many wives as they liked, they would not get 'lobola' for their daughters, they would not be able to feast and dance as they pleased and more than this their chiefdom would be divided and disrupted.

---

91. Hammond-Tooke: The Journal, p. 86.
92. Ibid.

An event of the year 1828 which pushed Kama to take a clear stand was his presentation with a second wife and his subsequent rejection of polygamy, much to the missionaries' gratification. In keeping with the custom and, possibly, to dissuade Kama from his Christian inclination, a princess from the imiDushane chiefdom was brought to Kama as a second wife. All the people knew that the only course open to Kama was to honour the old-aged custom by accepting the princess, for otherwise rejection would be taken as insult and injury and even as a cause of war.[93] Kama, too, was well aware of the expectations of the people of the land and of the implications for him should he send back the princess. He was also aware of the implications of polygamy to the faith he was embracing. Above these points, Kama also knew what he wanted and that the time had come for a one man decision. He therefore addressed his brothers and councillors of the kingdom

> "Ma igoduke intombi kaMdushane, uKam' ugqobokile;
> musan' ukundijika kwindlela endiyihambayo.
>
> Send Mdushane's daughter back home, Kama is converted;
> do not dissuade me from the path that I have chosen".[94]

Mr J. Tunyiswa of Annshaw confirms that Kama refused to take a second wife on the basis of the incompatibility of polygamy with Christian principles.[95] His word was final and it left his brothers in no doubt about his resolution. Kobe is quoted to have said:

> "uKama usigwebile, asinakuthetha. Uyishiyile imithetho nemimiselo yamanyange.
>
> Kama has given the judgement, we can say no more. He has abandoned the laws and precedents of the elders".[96]

---

93. H. Ward: Five Years In Kaffirland, I, (London, 1848), p. 305.
94. Ngani: Kama, p. 26.
95. Tunyiswa: Interviewed by Yekela, 20.4.1986.
96. Ngani: Kama, p. 26.

Then the brothers agreed to send cattle as an apologetic gesture to Mdushane's place,[97] and this was possibly a lesson to others who might decide to follow or imitate Kama's example. In this symbolic clash between traditional practices and Christianity, the latter religion had emerged triumphant. The outcome of the case was of great importance for the Christian Church. Certainly now that Kama had been pushed to speak his mind he was freer to pursue the course that was dictated by his conscience. An unforeseen outcome of the case was that many people now decided to follow the converted Kama, some even deserting Phatho for his brother. This could not but widen the gap between the two brothers, much as it brought to light the fact that there were people under Phatho who would have embraced Christianity earlier, but that they wanted to take the example from their leader who was now being forestalled by Kama. Ngani confirms that Phatho started complaining that his people were running to Kama. The quarrel between the two brothers extended to their followers and it became an open secret. The Church stood to gain in the conflict between the brothers, for while Phatho would justifiably blame the Christian Church for causing the rift in Chungwa's house, the former body could not but delight in the increase of Kama's following for it implied a consolidated Church alliance. Phatho however had not made up his mind to be one of the followers of Kama, and his calling of the 'wise woman' to look into the cause for the reduction of the number of his cattle and the sickness of his recently circumcised son[98] must be understood in the light of his determination to frustrate the missionaries' objective by any influence he could wield.

---

97. Ngani: Kama, p. 26.
98. Hammond-Tooke: The Journal, p. 86.

Until 1828 Chief Kama, on his own initiative, backed the progress of the mission without publicly and formally proclaiming himself a Christian by accepting the baptismal rite. Then on Sunday the 11.10.1829 Kama Chungwa was baptised with water in the name of the Holy Trinity.[99] Kama was at this time about thirty years of age, having informally embraced Christianity at the age of twenty-five. From the baptismal rite the Chief emerged christened William Kama Chungwa. His public opting for the missionaries' religion created a clear line of division between him and Phatho and a source of inspiration to other people. Rev. S. Young mentioned in a letter to George Marsden that Chief Kama's mother Noyanyiswa, had submitted her name to the Methodist trial list. History was again made at Wesleyville when on Christmas Day 1831, Noyanyiswa, one of Chungwa's wives, was baptised together with her daughter-in-law, Nongwane Kama.[100] Proof that Kama was a Chief turned evangelist was furnished by his being among the Christian exhorters on this day.

After the War of Hintsa (1835) Rev W. Shepstone was commissioned to establish a new mission station, BHIRA, to cater for the spiritual needs of the Gqunukhwebe kingdom and some Mfengu. Contrary to the missionaries' expectations however, Phatho displayed an unexpected lack of enthusiasm for the Christian cause,[101] and this despite the favourable post-war treaty agreements with the Gqunukhwebe.[102]

---

99. MS 15, 429 (Reel 1): Printed Missionary Reports 1821-66, 11.10.1829.
100. MS 15, 429 (Reel 1): S. Young - G. Marsden, 6.4.1832.
101. R.E. Gordon: Shepstone The Role Of The Family In The History Of South Africa (Cape Town, 1968), p. 53.
102. BPP 1826-36, XX: Durban - Glenelg, Encl. 8, in No. 9, 7.11.1835, p. 784.

Moments of co-operation between Kama and his brothers tended rather to reveal the deeper divergent motives behind the Chiefs' acceptance of the Gospel teachers of European origin than to display unity of spirit. At one time they rendered help to the crew of the wrecked ship, Elizabeth, a gesture which led the authorities to reward the Chiefs with equal amounts of money.[103] The Chiefs' initiative in this regard was very praise-worthy, but not to the exclusion of their having become used, especially by that time, to the idea of trading-in good services or conduct for benefits or gifts from their civilized superiors. Otherwise nothing would shield Phatho's retrogression. For example he now had a rainmaker established in the midst of his people. The raindoctor is reported to have acquired some influence over the chiefdom, and his activities were definitely aimed at propping up traditional religion against the destructive Christian teachings. It is however possible that Phatho had no faith in the rainmaker's pretensions but, for political reasons decided to give him a feigned patronage. The rainmaker was a very effective weapon with which to thwart the missionary endeavours. The Christian Kama soon became uneasy, and in due course moved nearer to the Fish River,[104] thus abandoning the Bhira mission for a place that had no provision for spiritual needs at all. In his new district Kama played the role of a Xhosa evangelist by conducting worship especially on the Sabbath.[105] Eventually, he applied for a missionary and Shaw, who had returned to Grahamstown, confessed that he

---

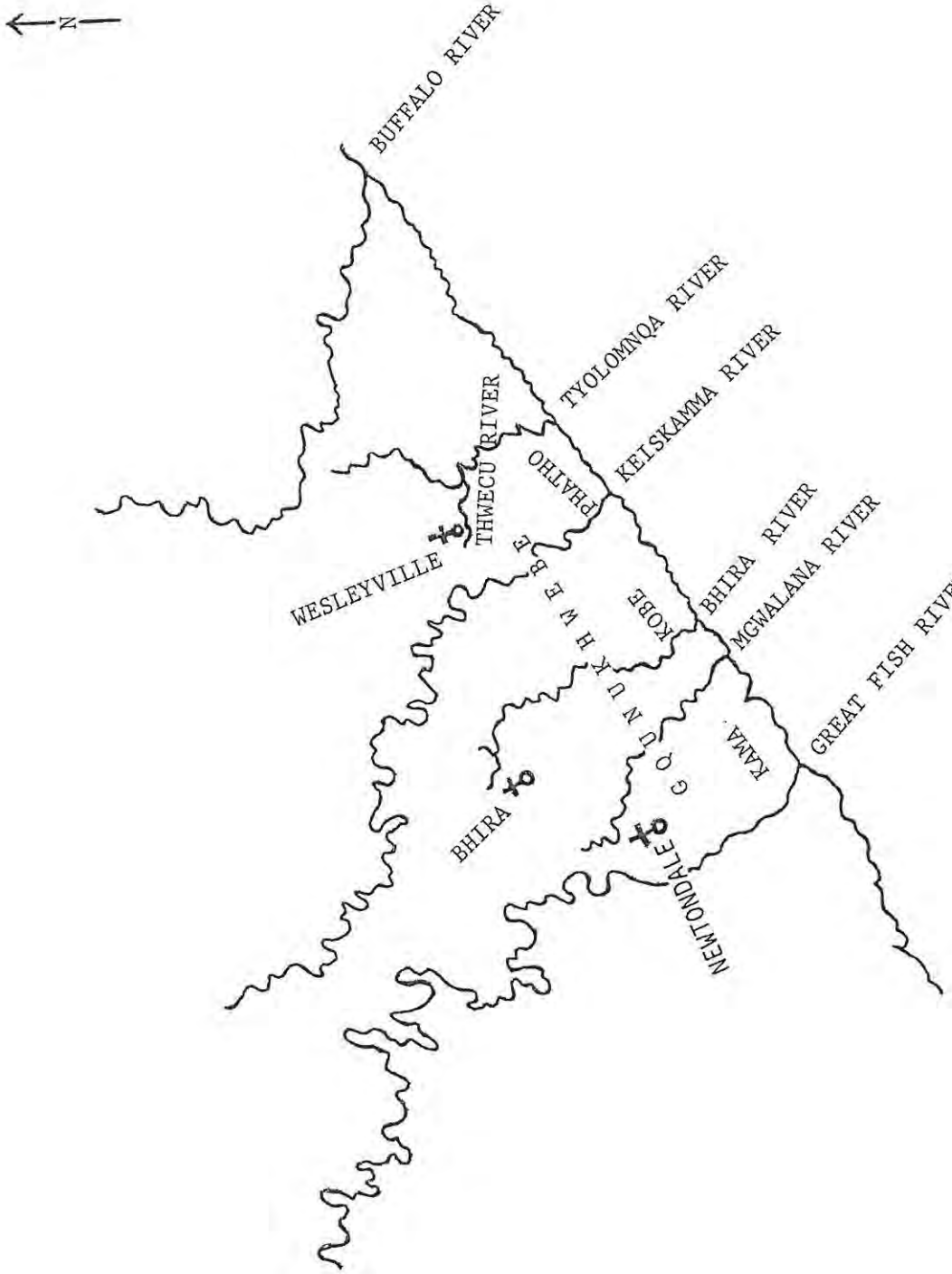
103. LG 406: Letters Received, T. Shepstone - H. Hudson, 15.1.1840.
104. Ngani: ama Gqunukhwebe, p. 20.
105. Ibid.

"found Kama's appeal an irresistible one."[106] The application bore fruit in the establishment of the NEWTONDALE (MTHATHI) mission in 1838 within a short distance from the Fish River.[107] Newtondale was Chief Kama's mission indeed, and still more, it was a result of the persecution of evangelical work by Chief Phatho and his associates.

---

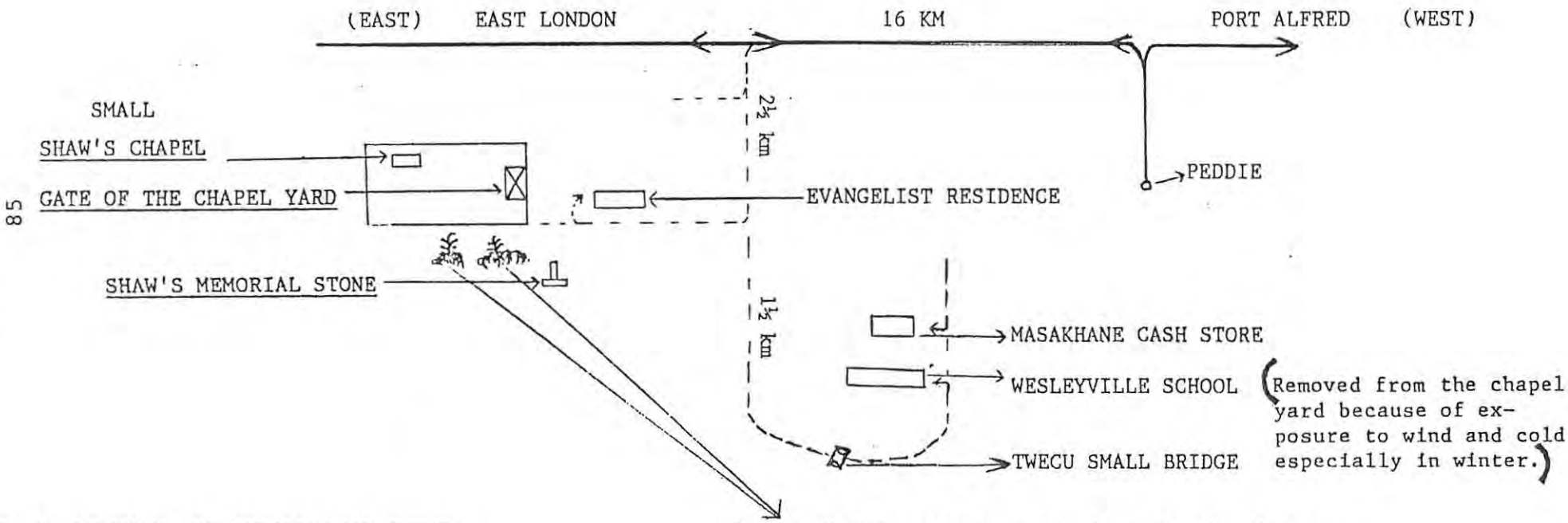
106. MS 15, 429 (Reel 1): Shaw - Secretaries of the Wesleyan Missionary Society., 25.7.1837.
107. Ibid.

FRONTIER ARRANGEMENTS AFTER 1835



SSINARY STATIONS ASSOCIATED WITH KAMA

WESLEYVILLE TODAY



THE INSCRIPTION ON THE MEMORIAL STONE:

"Kwesi siza uMfundisi W.M. Shaw wemisa indlu yokuqala yenkonzo yeBandla lamaWesile kweli lase Mpumalanga yeKoloni ngo 1823.
On this site the Rev. W.M. Shaw erected the first Methodist Church in the South Eastern Cape in 1823.

CHAPTER THREE

KAMA ESTABLISHES HIS OWN CHIEFTAINSHIP

Chief Kama's rejection of polygamy on the basis of its incompatibility with the Christian doctrines brought to the surface the emnity of his brothers. Ward, expressing Kama's awareness of his brothers' hostile attitude, remarks thus: "So uncertain is Kama of the good faith of his brothers, Pato and Cobus Congo (Kobe), that he is about to remove".[1] Rev R. Walker writing from Newtondale in 1842 hinted that he had heard from Kama's messenger that "Pato's people are fully determined to make an end of him (Kama)".[2] Walker at the same time confirmed that Kama had resolved that, if he were to die, he would die at the station.[3] The family feud had begun to affect the entire chiefdom, and the polarised Gqunukhwebe parties were being reinforced by other chieftainships for a variety of reasons. For example two young men from the Jonga chiefdom fled to Kama for protection after their father had been murdered for 'purchasing the small pox'. Kama's protection of the fugitives drew the remainder of the Jonga chiefdom closer to Phatho and Kobe. The intention was to attack Kama and thus force him to give up the runaways. The Diplomatic Agent T. Shepstone, writing to Hudson, mentioned that the enemy was "collecting in all directions and from their conversation overhead by Kama's spies, he anticipated an attack on Kama in the morning - at 3 o'clock a.m."[4] Shepstone's timely intervention however, prevented the shedding of blood. It is against this background that we must understand the Diplomatic Agent's reference to "an inquiry into the matter of dispute existing among Congo tribes and which has already taken up three days ..."[5] It was possibly after these incidents that Kama's principal men suddenly became restless at Newtondale, eventually persuading their chief to find land elsewhere:

---

1. Ward: Five Years, p. 148.
2. LG 407: R. Walker - T. Shepstone, 8.4.1842.
3. Ibid.
4. LG 407: T. Shepstone - H. Hudson, 11.4.1842.
5. LG 407: T. Shepstone - H. Hudson, 19.4.1842.

> "Inkosi le iyinkosi nje yinkosi ngomhlaba;
> Kungekho mhlaba aph' akukho khaya;
> Kungekho khaya k' akukho nokonwaba".
>
> A chief is a chief because he owns land;
> If he does not have land his subjects are homeless;
> No home no happiness for all".[6]

Ward's remark that "he (Kama) intends putting himself under the protection of Moshesh, the Basoto Chief"[7] gives the impression that there was some understanding or even communication between the Sotho Chief and Kama. T. Shepstone is also reported to have informed the Lieutenant Governor that:

> "the Chief Kama is in consequence of his dissatisfaction at the treatment he has received from his elder brother determined to move with his tribe ... to the Orange where he has had a tract of country granted him by Chief Moshesh".[8]

The association between Kama and the Shepstone family was most probably instrumental in the former's emigration to the baSotholand. William Shepstone, the missionary, obviously heard about Kama's unpleasant experience from his son, Theophilus, who was then the Diplomatic Agent at Fort Peddie. Being at Witte Bergen nearer Moshoeshoe at that time, the missionary may have even negotiated with the Sotho King on behalf of the Christian Chief. In the Missionary Notices W. Shepstone confirms that Kama's intended destination, when he left Newtondale, was Witte Bergen[9] (Herschel), a fact which correlates well with Gordon's view that Shepstone's aim had been to "induce Kama to bring his people there to form a strong

---

6. A.Z. Ngani: Intlaba-Mkhosi, (Lovedale, 1965) p. 54.
7. Ward: Five Years, p. 148.
8. LG 407: Letters Received, T. Shepstone - H. Hudson, 2.5.1843.
9. The Wesleyan Missionary Notices, Third Series, II, No. CXLI (141) Quarterly Papers Relative To The Wesleyan Missions, And The State Of Heathen Countries, September, 1855. (n.p.)

Christian nucleus about which he could build his new activities".[10] Shaw, too, in a letter to Southey, located Rev W. Shepstone:

> "In a district between the Orange River and the Kraai River. No chief whatever has any valid claim to it. When Shepstone went there, it was without inhabitants. The natives now living there are Tambookies and Fingoes, all of whom have collected around the Mission ..." [11]

Thus, should Shepstone's schemes with regard to Kama materialize, the latter would be made use of as a Christianizing agency. The area in question "had been set aside in 1835 for the exclusive use of about 20,000 Fingoes, Tembus and Basutos".[12] The influence of Theophilus Shepstone and secular authorities generally, should not be excluded from Kama's decision to leave the neighbourhood of his brothers, and the following comment could be a clue:

> "his gentleness, consistence, patience, and hazardous position between his richer brothers, Pato and Congo (Kobe), make him, indeed, an object of our care and protection." [13]

Further proof that the authorities had either been informed or consulted is furnished by Ward's confirmation of Kama's decision to leave:

> "Kama gives us very little trouble, ... and resolves on quietly establishing a position for himself on the other side of the Orange River, ..." [14]

---

10. Gordon: Shepstone, p, 60.
11. GH 22/3: Miscellaneous Papers, W. Shaw - R. Southey, 14.3.1848.
12. Gordon: Shepstone, p. 56.
13. Ward: Five Years, p. 161.
14. Ibid.

Kama was indeed making preparations for removal, also deciding on the route to be taken by his party.[15] A large number of his people refused to accompany him,[16] and some of his councillors were later to oblige him to fetch them.[17] Those left behind were, however, subsequently entrusted by Kama to Theophilus Shepstone, the Diplomatic Agent

> "as they will have no other authority to look up to for direction in the absence of their chief and he fears without such protection they will be eaten up as soon as he leaves".[18]

The party that was destined for the unknown land consisted of men who were prepared to endure all possible hardships on the way. The descendents of such men as Hina, Sityi, Tele, Mama, Hashe, Sinxo[19] and others are to this day members of the QHIBIRA (Gqunukhwebe) Regional Authority, living proof of Kama's once strong following. In his diary entry of 26th May 1843 Ward comments thus

> "Chief Kama - I believe the only Christian Kaffir is passing through Peddie, with his family, baggage, followers, and fifteen hundred head of cattle ... He is bound for Bechuana country, on the other side of the Orange River; but, until spring commences, he will make a halt near Beaufort, and act under the protection of our nominal and drunken ally, Macomo, ... chief of the Gaika tribe"[20]

---

15. LG 407: Letters Received, T. Shepstone - H. Hudson, 16.5.1843.
16. W.M.N.: No. CXL1, Quarterly Papers, September, 1855.
17. Gordon: Shepstone, p. 60.
18. LG 407: Letters Received, T. Shepstone - H. Hudson, 16.5.1843.
19. Ngani: amaGqunukhwebe, p. 21.
20. Ward: Five Years, p. 167.

Further evidence that Kama was on the move is to be found in T. Shepstone's letter to Hougham Hudson, the Agent - General, wherein he referred to the removal of Chief Kama and his chiefdom to Maqoma's country as likely "to create confusion on the border consequent on the passage of such a number of people and cattle along it".[21]

Ngani confirms that Kama did spend some time with his in-laws at MTHONTSI (Maqoma's Great Place) in the vicinity of Fort Beaufort in 1843.[22] His intention was to stay in Maqoma's country long enough to anticipate the passage of winter, after which he would proceed to the country he was intending to adopt.[23] Indeed, when the time came, the Gqunukhwebe party proceeded from Mthontsi until they came to stop at Tyumbu (Kraai River). While there, Kama despatched his great son Mhani with a small party to confirm the land deal with Moshoeshoe. Tradition has it that Mhani's party, having landed in the wrong hands, could have been killed, just when they thought their negotiations were beginning to bear fruit, were it not for a timeous warning of a Sotho plot to destroy them. The vulnerable party recrossed the Orange River in unprecedented haste, and their arrival at Tyumbu was a source of inexpressible relief to the multitudes they had left behind.[24]

While sojourning at the Kraai river Kama was entreated by the sea-coast remnants of his people to fetch them.[25] At roughly the same time he is supposed to have been making preparations to join Rev William Shepstone "who was prepared to receive him at Witte Bergen, to which place he had

---

21. LG 407: Letters Received, T. Shepstone - H. Hudson, 16.5.1843.
22. Ngani: amaGqunukhwebe, p. 21.
23. LG 407: Letters Received, T. Shepstone - H. Hudson, 2.5.1843.
24. Ngani: Kama, p. 32.
25. Gordon: Shepstone, p. 56.

already sent forward much of his stock".[26] Ann Shepstone, in her journal, records that on the 1st January 1846 Samuel (Mhani) Kama arrived at Witte Bergen with a few men and cattle.[27] For some reason, however, Kama was delayed from taking up residence in the neighbourhood of his old missionary friend, W. Shepstone.[28] Significantly it was Rev H. Dugmore of Mbaxa (Haslope Hills) Mission who baptised Kama's child in 1845. It is possible that Kama, living at this time about twenty miles from Haslope Hills Mission,[29] was moving down towards the coast to fetch his chiefdom's remnants, now that he was assured of a place of permanent settlement. But before he could make a move, rumours of war in his neighbourhood intensified, and prevented him from moving.[30]

The Xhosa Chiefs had, much earlier than the period in question, displayed a bellicose restlessness. Phatho's tactics, designed as they had been to make life unbearable for Kama, had eventually pushed the latter to 'the unknown land'. Even after this Phatho still showed his disaffection with everything smacking of the white man's influence. He was implicated in the murder of the Rev Scholtz, a Berlin Missionary, at a time when reports of Xhosa hostility were intensifying.[31] An exception was Chief Toyise who, apparently disgusted by the attitude of his compatriots, threatened to break with them and join Kama. Coupled with these factors a dreadful drought was ravaging the countryside, "threatening the natives with loss of

---

26. W.M.N.: No. CXL1, Quarterly Papers, September, 1855.
27. MS 7596: Ann Shepstone's Journal, Part I, p. 6.
28. W.M.N.: No. CXL1, Quarterly Papers, September, 1855.
29. Gordon: Shepstone, p. 60.
30. W.M.N.: No. CXL1, Quarterly Papers, September, 1855.
31. BPP 1837-47, XX1: T. Smith - H. Fynn, No. 14c, 3.2.1846, p. 462.

corn,"[32] and also challenging potential for pillaging. At the same time Kama reported to T. Smith that the Xhosa intended to invade the Colony and cut off communications from Port Elizabeth: "Kama expressed himself under great alarm and anxiety"[33] possibly because he was as vulnerable as the Colonists. Into this atmosphere already so inflamed, came the news of the theft of an axe and the subsequent murder of a civil escort and his Khoi prisoner.[34] This occurred at a time when the Treaty System (1836-46) was breaking down, and it led to the War Of The Axe (1846-7).[35] Lieutenant-Governor Hare, writing to Governor Maitland, mentioned that temperatures were running high in both the Colonial and the Xhosa camps. Significantly, for the first time in the history of the Frontier Wars, Chungwa's House reinforced both the Colonial side and the anti-Colonial confederacy in the persons of Kama and Phatho[36] respectively. Phatho's resistance to the British troops "was most obstinate, and he was the last Chief to sue for peace".[37] His role in the war seemed to disqualify him altogether as a future British subject:

> "One thing must be apparent to everyone who has the honour of our country at heart-Pato should never be admitted to terms by our Government; ... To enrol him as a British subject would be a disgrace to the name of one".[38]

The eventual submission of this "most treacherous, troublesome and determined enemy"[39] brought an end to the work of Colonel Henry Somerset. As a

---

32. MS 7596: Ann Shepstone's Journal,I, 12.2.1846, p. 5.
33. BPP 1837-47, XXI: Colonel Somerset - Lt Governor (Hare) No. 14e 6.2.1846, p. 463.
34. BPP 1837-47, XXI: T. Smith - H. Hudson, No. 2a 16.3.1846, p. 498.
35. Davenport: Modern History, p. 132.
36. BPP 1837-47, XXI: J. Hare - P. Maitland, (No. 33) Encl. in No. 9, 28.3.1846, pp. 520-522.
37. Maclean: Kafir Laws & Customs, p. 132.
38. H. Ward: The Cape and the Kaffirs (London, 1851), p. 157.
39. Ibid., p. 153.

result of his active involvement in the War Of The Axe, Phatho lost many of the privileges of a chief. His last minute pacific attitude did not save him from being punished. When cattle were demanded by Colonel Henry Somerset he promised to deliver five thousand head. Likewise, when guns and assegais were asked for, they were readily delivered.[40] Phatho was indeed an abject, broken man at the time of his surrender to Somerset. He was henceforth to pay allegiance to the Queen's representative, in this case Sir Harry Smith, who was to be the supreme authority in British Kaffraria. Smith reiterated that

> "From me, as the representative of the Queen of England, you hold your land." [41]

This stipulation obviously undermined Phatho's authority and autonomy. Further, it went hand in hand with the abolition of chieftainship "in their (Xhosa chiefs') sense of the term." [42] A crowning aspect of the post-war arrangements was the conferring of English names on lands which were appropriated from Phatho and his comrades-in-arms.[43] This was further evidence that the British tentative ownership had superseded the hereditary ownership of the so-called British Kaffraria. Phatho's location was henceforth known as Bedfordshire. He himself was placed under the close supervision of Colonel John Maclean, the Ndlambe Commissioner at Fort Murray.[44] As for Kama's role in the Seventh Frontier War, Smith had earlier claimed in a letter to Hare

---

40. Ward: Five Years, pp. 322-323.
41. Ibid., p. 323.
42. Ibid., p. 334.
43. Ibid., p. 337.
44. A.E. du Toit: The Cape Frontier: A Study of Native Policy with Special Reference to the Years 1847-1866 (Archives Year Book For South African History (Pretoria, 1954), p. 30.

> "that the Chief Kama came to me today (26.3.46) to state that he had 100 men about an hours ride from Tarka; that they were, like himself, true to the Government, and wished that they might be provided with arms and powder".[45]

Kama, who possibly had heard that his brother had openly and wholeheartedly assumed the offensive, knew that his past sins against Xhosa law would also make him a likely target. Therefore he decided to expend all his resources for the benefit of the party that would assure his security. His fortunes were guaranteed as long as the British strength emerged supreme in the frontier struggles, and it is certain he well remembered the gains of the Gqunukhwebe resulting from their conduct in Hintsa's War. All Kama's people remained loyal to the British even those still living under Phatho. Colonel Hare, writing to P. Maitland, confirmed this fact thus:

> "100 of his (Kama's) people, under a petty chief named Nubie, ... mixed amongst Pato's tribe, and asked if they left Pato, and came to Fort Peddie for protection, they would receive it".[46]

This further proved, beyond all doubt, Kama's dissociation with the warring chiefs. His rather short-sighted anxiety to associate with the British Government at any cost is confirmed by William Shepstone's statement:

> "When the war broke out, he was in this neighbourhood; and as this point was on the very border of the war-party, he refused to leave, lest it should be construed into an act of disaffection towards the English Government, although he was on the eve of moving forward to me, who was prepared to receive him at the Witte Bergen".[47]

---

45. BPP 1837-47, XXI: J. Hare - P. Maitland, (No. 33) Encl. in No. 9, 28.3.1846, pp. 520-521.
46. Ibid.
47. W.M.N.: No. CXLI, Quarterly Papers, September, 1855.

Chief Kama, then, was in occupation of the lands between Shilo and Tarka when the war commenced, having never reached beyond the Orange River.[48]

During the War Of The Axe Kama's Gqunukhwebe fought in a mixed unit with the Mfengu under the command of Captain W. Hogg, mainly in the Windvogelberg (Cathcart) district.[49] The alliance which had earlier been implied by the appointment of Rev W. Shepstone to minister to both the Gqunukhwebe and the Mfengu was now assuming visible form. Captain Hogg, at a later stage, referred to his proceeding "with a party of Kama's Caffres and Kat River Burghers to drive the enemy out of the high ranges of the Keiskamma basin",[50] though William Shaw claimed that Kama had "appealed to him against being employed against his Brethren."[51] Fighting against the Xhosa in the Amathole fastnesses would have been an unnatural exercise indeed, for Kama would have been required to fight against Phatho, Kobe and their associates. On the other hand driving Maphasa's Thembu from the Whittlesea area signified disloging an enemy from one's country and thus fighting for one's rights.

Ward also confirms that Kama "was willing ... to defend the white man's property and rights, ... but he begged the Government would not insist on his attacking his own people in their haunts".[52]

---

48. BPP 1847-51, XXII: H. Pottinger - Earl Grey, No. 17, 14.4.1847, p. 65.
49. BPP 1837-47, XXI: H. Cloete - J. Hare, No. 8, 25.8.1846, p. 585.
50. B. le Cordeur and C. Saunders: The War Of The Axe (Johannesburg, 1981), p. 183.
51. GH 23/17: General Dispatches, H. Pottinger - Earl Grey, 28.1.1847 - 6.12.1847.
52. Ward: The Cape, p. 194.

Kama had indeed rendered invaluable help to the British troops during this war "cattle have been rescued by them, positions defended, and safe escort to travellers afforded".[53] It was thus "in consideration of his services that a Location was granted to him near Shilo on lands from which the Tambookies (Maphasa's Tembus) had been expelled".[54] William Shaw, too, writing to R. Southey in 1848 expressed satisfaction with "His Excellency's intention to cause lands to be surveyed for Kama on the Zwart Kei near Shilo".[55] One doubts however, if Kama, a stranger, would have been comfortable in a land whose owners had been ousted. The exercise would perhaps have been in the policy-makers' interests but was likely to be the source of, or an excuse for, another war at a later date. Chief Kama was also intended to be an instrument for maintaining the peace. Shaw's subsequent statement,

> "His Excellency's decision on this point will give us and Kama great contentment, and if properly managed by the local authorities, Kama's people may be as useful as a body of police in that neighbourhood, without formally contributing or paying them as such," [56]

was suggestive of church interest, and thus interference, in secular matters, perhaps for the promotion of the Mission. Kama had, on previous occasions, shown that wherever he landed he would uphold both the government and evangelical cause.

---

53. Ward: The Cape, p. 194.
54. BK 71: Gaika Commissioner, 1855-58, C. Brownlee - J. Maclean, January 1855.
55. GH 22/3: High Commissioner, Miscellaneous Papers, W. Shaw - R. Southey, 14.3.1848.
56. Ibid.

The land on which Chief Kama settled eventually, THALA, abutted on the lands of Maphasa's Thembus.[57] He did not have an easy task as there was no missionary in the region,[58] as Haslope Hills had been abandoned.[59] The only visible and perhaps positive feature of life was that the Gqunukhwebe appeared to be happily settling down. The hardships they had endured on their circuitous route from Mthathi (Newtondale) were soothed with a sense of relaxation long unknown to these people, and in this state they worried less about Christian religion and afterlife, concentrating instead on the joys and pleasures of the moment.[60] Quite suddenly, though, Kama's followers, very much against their Chief's will, took to attending traditional functions and dances. The good old days, characteristic of life at Thwecu before the advent of Shaw and Shepstone, were manifestly missed.[61] It had been a blunder to allow the unChristian Tembus to reside so close to Kama's followers. If this relapse were to continue there would be no justification for the latter's having left Phatho's neighbourhood in Newtondale.

The Gqunukhwebe's spiritual weakness was proof that their Christian experience was still far from being mature. They openly professed their envy for the Thembus because the latter had the privilege of dancing with their chiefs. The councillors, too, raised a hue and cry as they tried to persuade their chief to revert to traditional life.[62] The influence of other unChristian forces from both far and near, cannot be excluded in this

---

57. W.M.N.: No. CXLI, Quarterly Papers, September, 1855.
58. Ngani: Kama, p. 32.
59. Gordon: Shepstone, p. 61.
60. Ngani: Intlaba-Mkhosi, p. 56.
61. Ibid.
62. Ibid.

call for the renaissance of traditionalism. The intensity of the councillors' persuasiveness is brought out clearly by Ngani in the following excerpt:

> "Amceng' uKam' amaphakath' emcengel' emdudweni;
> Awu! Yaphants' ukuw' int' enkulu, umfusa woNoyanyiswa;
> Sikhulu isihend' enkosini xa size ngamaphakathi.
>
> And so the councillors persuaded their chief to revert to traditionalism;
> Alas! the great leader, Noyanyiswa's admirable son nearly succumbed;
> The chief is prone to be tempted when persuaded by his councillors".[63]

Holden also argues that during the late 1840's "the Christian principle and genuine piety of Kama were severely tested".[64] Thanks to the deeply-rooted teachings of Shaw and Shepstone, from being close to a lapse Kama emerged as a more strongly committed Christian soldier,[65] a shepherd indeed for the "then backward and extremely unChristian Thala community".[66] In due course (as if the Almighty was finally satisfied by Kama's faithfulness) William Shaw, now the superintendent of the Wesleyan Missions, decided to post a missionary to the region on a temporary basis. It is likely that the above move was a response to Kama's characteristic pleas for a missionary or, perhaps, Shaw himself was bothered by the possibility of the Chief's retrogression. William Shepstone, Kama's first missionary was thus commissioned to take over Haslope Hills Mission which had been without a missionary for some time.[67] The mission was established on a pair of hills

---

63. Ngani: Intlaba-Mkhosi, p. 56.
64. W.C. Holden: British Rule In South Africa, (London, 1879), p. 16.
65. Ngani: Intlaba-Mkhosi, p. 56.
66. C.W. Sigabi: Interviewed by D.S. Yekela at Kamastone (Whittlesea), 6.4.83.
67. Gordon: Shepstone, p. 62.

so identical and close to each other as to be commonly referred to as 'Mary and Martha' by local residents. A retired school teacher at Thala recounted how the Rev W. Shepstone would, in the olden days, descend from MBAXA (Haslope Hills) Mission to minister to Kama's chiefdom,[68] whose numbers were daily increasing as a result of the Gqunukhwebe's being traditionally attuned to integration with members of other chiefdoms if they professed loyalty and obedience to the Chief. Kama's evangelical duties in between Shepstone's visits cannot be under-estimated.

One imagines that Shepstone welcomed the opportunity to minister to Kama once more. Within a short time, possibly circa 1849, the two men set about planning the details of a new mission which was to be established at Thala.[69] They thus united both effort, forces and names in establishing the new Shepstone-Kama Mission Station,[70] justifiably called Kamastone, and Haslope Hills then ceased to be a mission station.[71]

Today Kamastone Mission Station carries few of the features of its original design. Mr R. Sigabi claims that the mission house has been designed and redesigned to suit the tastes of the various priests. Some of the trees once characteristic of the mission premises, have been felled in the reshaping process.[72]

---

68. Sigabi: Interviewed by Yekela, 28.3.87.
69. Gordon: Shepstone, p. 62.
70. W.J. de Kock (Ed): Dictionary Of South African Biography, Vol. 1, (Pretoria, 1986), p. 715.
71. J. Whiteside: History Of The Wesleyan Methodist Church Of South Africa (London, 1906), p. 216.
72. R. Sigabi: Interviewed by D.S. Yekela at Fort Hare, 27.3.87.

On a visit to this historical establishment I was shown a plaque with the following inscription:

> "Dedicated by the President of The Methodist Conference Rev S. Le Grove Smith to mark the centenary of The Kamastone Church 20.5.1951".

and from this information I was able to date the original chapel at a century before to 20.5.1851. The small mission village is beautiful, and in the center, almost a kilometer from the Mission Station, is an historical graveyard. The graveyard is dominated by the tombstones of the Shepstones, with one towering above the others.

Kamastone still bears the traces of Kama in the names like Ntaba ka-Kama (Mt Kama) at Wukuwa. Further evidence that Kama was once an important figure in the history of this region is furnished by the Ciskei Government's naming its military base after Kama. Kama Military Base is on the right-hand side of the Whittlesea-Kamastone road.

The fact that Kama had again brought a Christian teacher to reinforce the anti-traditional element in the land was obviously not taken well by his retrogressive followers and the Thembus. The latter were so close to Kama's land that the two groups' homesteads were situated beside each other in the same valleys, and W. Shepstone claims that Kama "was constantly receiving haughty and menacing messages from the Chiefs whose hearts were set on war ..."[73] The Christian Chief's relationship with his neighbours was not improved by the constant flow of new arrivals from other chiefs, a

---

73. W.M.N.: No. CXL1, Quarterly Papers, September, 1855.

clear indication of his and Shepstone's popularity. Sometimes immigration into Kamastone put blame on the officers assigned to issue passes as immigration often took place under the pretence of a visit.[74]

Outside the boundaries of Kama's domain, the Xhosa Chiefs became the victims of the innovations which resulted from the termination of the War Of The Axe. The turning of the Keiskamma-Kei Xhosa territory into British Kaffraria caused great injury to the Xhosa chiefs' autonomy and pride. This meant that after 1847 the Xhosa were, for the first time, under the direct rule and regulations of the British Government, as administered by the High Commissioner.[75] The Xhosa chiefs obviously resented this diminishing of their status and authority, but, possibly, reluctant to risk another military confrontation, lest it should call forth more stringent measures, opted for pretended slumber.

However, war broke out again within three years. Mother nature, as if in league with the authors of Xhosa misfortunes, still withheld her rain month after month in the early fifties, and thus brought disaster to both humans and beasts alike.[76] In the midst of discontent and debilitating destitution, a youth named Mlanjeni began to practise rainmaking and witch-finding. Colonel G. Mackinnon, the Chief Commissioner of British Kaffraria, ordered that Mlanjeni should be arrested. This unprovoked attack on Mlanjeni gave his prophecies an anti-Colonial slant.[77] Chief Sandile, who was seeking

---

74. BK 85, 1856-65: Kayser - R. Robertson, 5.9.1851.
75. Ward: The Cape, p. 223.
76. Du Toit: The Cape Frontier (A.Y.B.), p. 55.
77. BPP 1851-52, XXIII: Mackinnon - Gaika Commissioner (C. Brownlee), No. 1, 5.10.1850, pp. 45-46.

recompense for the injustices inflicted in 1847, supported Mlanjeni's call to war, as can be seen from his stirring message to Phatho:

> "Arise, clans of the Kaffir nation! the white man has wearied us; let us fight for our country: they are depriving us of our rights which we inherit from our forefathers: we are deprived of our chieftainship, and the white man is the chief to whom we are obliged to submit: Sandile will die fighting for the rights of his forefathers".[78]

Sandile, knowing that Phatho was smarting under the so-called injustices he had suffered after the Seventh Frontier War, thought, with some confidence, that this great Gqunukhwebe leader would obviously welcome an opportunity to undo the policy that had led to his destruction. Contrary to Sandile's expectation Phatho remembered well how he had been abandoned by his comrades-in-arms in the last war, and thereby made to appear as if he was a singularly determined Colonial enemy. He was thus not prepared to join Sandile, and to this end he also sent him a message:

> "I was instigated to join you in the last war, but it shall be the last; it shall never more be said that Pato has joined in a war against the colony".[79]

At the same time Phatho assured the Colonial officials of his loyalty and readiness to avail himself for the Colonial cause with his great son Dilima together with about 1,400 fighting men.[80] Earlier he had offered "to protect the missionaries in their respective locations in the event of a

---

78. BPP 1851-1852, XXIII: G. Cyrus - the Civil Commissioner Of Albany, Sub-Encl 2 to Encl 1 in No. 9, 15.8.1850, p. 58.
79. Ibid.
80. BPP 1851-52, XXIII: H. Smith - Earl Grey, No. 14, 12.12.1850, p. 74.

hostile movement being made in the Gaika District".[81] In the midst of Phatho's offers of help, the Xhosa confederacy attacked the Colony on the Christmas Day of 1850.[82] This came as a thunderclap to Kama and the Shepstones who, in their nook were celebrating Christmas little suspecting that not far off "fellow creatures ... were ... falling by the hand of the ruthless savage".[83] By 3.2.1851 Kama's force was fully mobilized, and on taking to the battlefield it repulsed both the Thembu and rebel Khoi at Whittlesea.[84] Tradition has it that, before joining this war, Kama demanded a reward whereupon he was promised land if he would help the Government to victory.[85] In Tylden's words:

> "In this skirmish I had occasion to notice the great skill and gallantry displayed by the Chief and Samuel Kama, at the head of his own people ... Captain Tylden desires to record his approbation of the services of the intrepid ... men of Kama's tribe". [86]

This scene proved that rubbing shoulders with the Hoggs and the Tyldens against the Xhosa in 1846-47 had been an opportunity that afforded invaluable military experience to Kama and his men. Tylden informed Somerset how Kama's forces had helped the British troops tackle the enemy on all fronts.[87] Kama had thus fought a hard battle on behalf of the British troops and his

---

81. BPP 1851-52, XXIII: Mackinnon - Harry Smith (High Commissioner), Encl. 3 in No. 14, 8.12.1850, p. 76.
82. MS 7596: Anne Shepstone's Journal, I, 5.1.1851.
83. Ibid.
84. BPP 1851-52, XXIII: R. Tylden - Major-General Somerset, Encl. 3 in No. 6, 3.2.1851, p. 181.
85. G. Vitsha: Interviewed by J.B. Peires, Debe Marele (Middledrift), 1975.
86. BPP 1851-52, XXIII: R. Tylden - Major-General Somerset, Encl. 3, No. 6, 3.2.1851, p. 181.
87. Ibid.

men, in all instances of their action, emerged victorious.[88] It is not surprising that most oral informants on his life begin his life story with the words "uKama wayelijoni, ubukhosi nomhlaba, ezonto zombini wazifumana ngobujoni - Kama was a soldier, he acquired both chieftainship and land through soldiership".[89]

Phatho, too, had time to translate his earlier offers of help into action, and he did so to the best of his ability, as H. Smith subsequently confirmed:

> "I continue to receive great assistance from Pato, his brother Cobus Congo, and his son, Delima ... especially from Pato whose tribe affords protection to convoys from East London, as well as from Fort Peddie".[90]

Therefore, Chungwa's sons had come out in full support of the English in the Mlanjeni War, and in two separate interviews with the Governor the two brothers expressed their belief in the banishing of the Ngqika Xhosa beyond the Kei as the best measure for securing peace.[91]

The British Officials in London thought somewhat differently however, for, to them the first step in the peace plan was the recall of Governor Sir Harry Smith.[92] The eastern frontier had become both a battlefield and a testing ground not only for the skirmishes and battles between contestants, but also for the governmental policies of the various Cape Governors. In

---

88. Holden: British Rule, p. 17.
89. Tunyiswa: Interviewed by Yekela, 5.3.1985.
90. BPP 1851-52, XXIII: H. Smith - Earl Grey, No. 3, 8.3.1851, p. 200.
91. BPP 1852-58, XXV: H. Smith - Earl Grey, No. 6, 16.2.1852, p. 52.
92. Du Toit: The Cape Frontier (A.Y.B.), p. 47.

this regard the mantle of governorship fell on Sir George Cathcart who immediately set about the task of concluding the war so as to be able to bring about a settlement bearing his imprint. This was achieved in March 1853. Cathcart, who was anxious for a quick peace, realised that it would prolong the war if he insisted on a complete expulsion of the hostile chiefs from British Kaffraria.

It was Cathcart's avowed intention to drive the hostile Xhosa from their mountainous strongholds, and in this regard Sandile and his associates were turned out of the mountainous foothills of the Amathole range. The place of the ousted chiefs was taken by chiefs of proven loyalty to the Government.[93] One such loyal figure was Chief Kama who was established at Middledrift on land formerly occupied by imiDange chiefs, Bhotomani and Tola,[94] who had fought under Sandile's command during the Eighth Frontier War.[95]

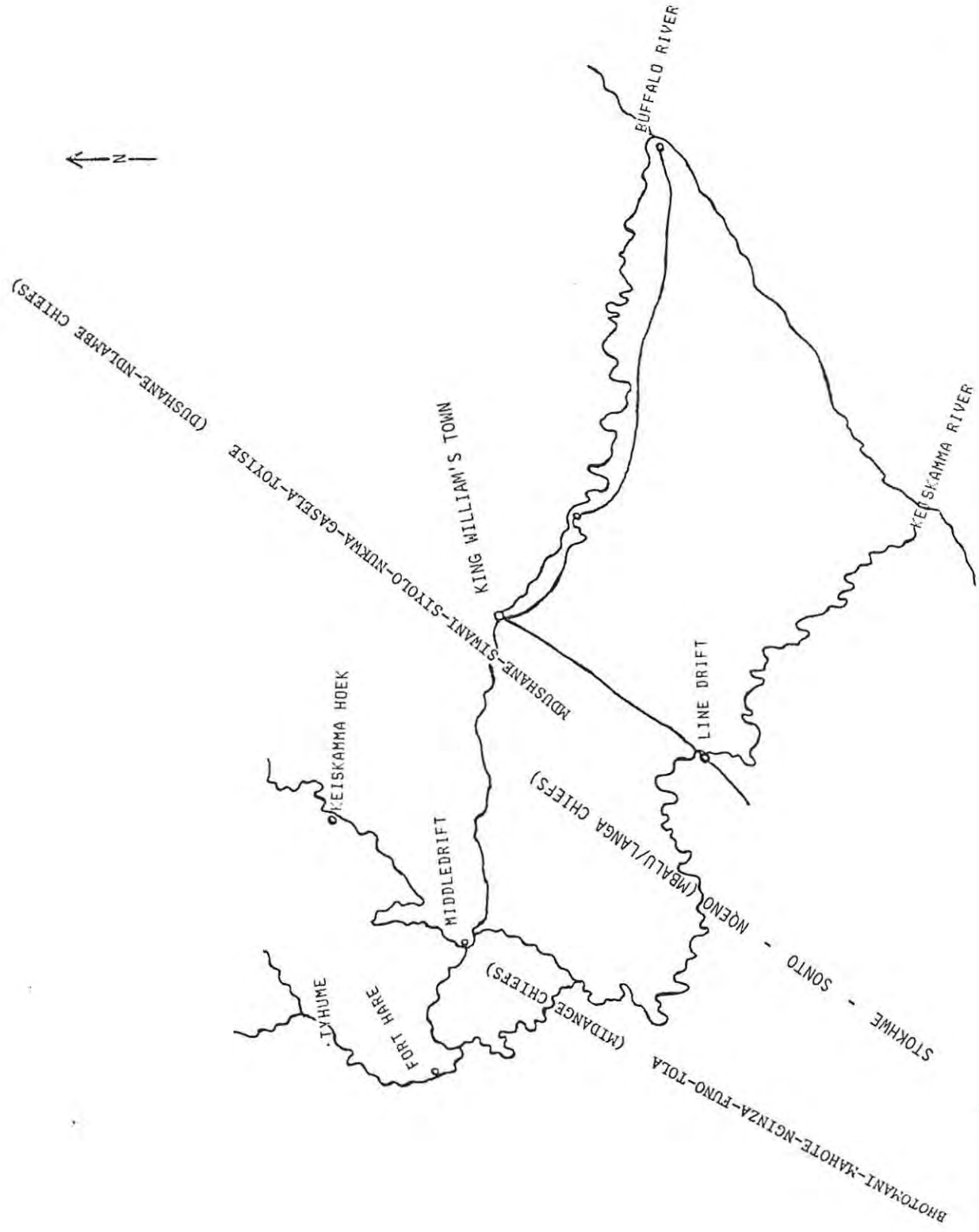
Cathcart had in April 1852, while in King William's Town written to Earl Grey, remarking about

> "a tract of country, hitherto the contiguous locations of the Chiefs Seyolo (Ndlambe) and Stockwe (Mbalu), who have been most inverterate in their participation in this war against Her Majesty's authority. Those locations may be described as together forming a triangle, having its apex near to this place

---

93. G. Cathcart - Earl Grey, 20.4.1852, quoted in G. Cathcart: Correspondence of Lt-General The Hon. Sir George Cathcart, K.C.B. (London, 1857), p. 47.
94. J.S. Bergh & J.C. Visagie: The Eastern Cape Frontier Zone 1660-1980 (Stellenbosch, 1980), p. 53.
95. Maclean: Kafir Laws & Customs, p. 137.

THE LOCATION OF THE IMIDANGE, LANGA AND NDLAMBE CHIEFDOMS IN 1853



> (KingWilliamstown) and its base on the Keiskamma between Line Drift and near Fort Hare ... it is necessary, as soon as I may have secured more important and immediate objects, to occupy this country, in the first instance by military posts, and then will arise the question as to what chief and people I may subsequently find it expedient and practicable to place there in permanent occupation ..." [96]

Cathcart went on to hint that while planning the post war settlement he had Chief Kama in mind

> "who is the only Black whom I can find is confidently believed to have become a true convert to Christianity. This chief, with his tribe, have been most faithful throughout these trying times; and should he desire a change of location ... within the colonial boundary, that change might be attended with beneficial results. This however depends entirely upon his own free will". [97]

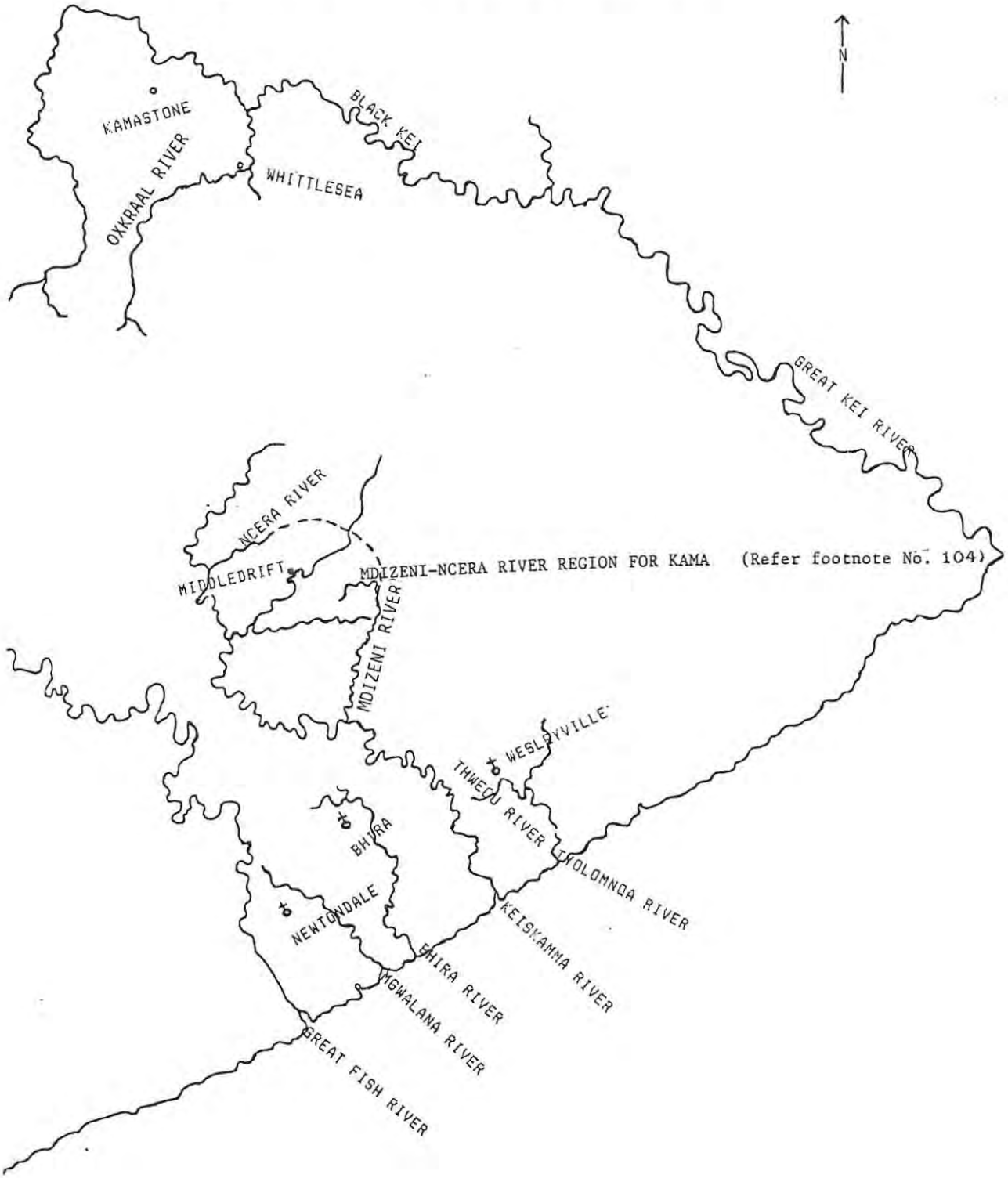
The missionaries, too, felt that Kama had, by his good conduct, done the British good. It is not surprising that Her Majesty's Government commended with admiration the Christian Chief's resoluteness and firm stand in the Mlanjeni War "the late war has told its tale and borne ample testimony to the Chief's fidelity". [98]

Chief Kama's feelings on the question of remaining at or removing from Kamastone are contained in Major John Bisset's letter to the Governor wherein the Chief anxiously expressed his desire "to remove from this part of the country, and to inhabit part of the lands, forfeited by the Gaika Kaffirs". [99]

---

96. Cathcart's Correspondence: Cathcart - Grey, 20.4.1852, p. 47.
97. Ibid.
98. W.M.N.: No. CXL1, Quarterly Papers, September, 1855.
99. BK 415: J. Bisset - G. Cathcart, 9.1.1853.

KAMA'S LONG PILGRIMAGE FROM THWECU TO MIDDLEDRIFT



Rival traditions unanimously stress the Chief's desire to leave Kamastone during these years to escape from its severe winter seasons, its trials and also to be able to unite with his other councillors whom he had left behind when he began his pilgrimage.[100] The latter idea is reinforced by Vitsha who claims that when Kama was established in Middledrift he fetched the former's father, Vitsha the senior, from Thwecu on the grounds that he had been Chungwa's councillor.[101]

Cathcart's despatch to Grey shows he was a pioneer in proposing to involve a Xhosa chief in his frontier policy experiment of creating a buffer zone. His determination to see this experiment through is emphasized in the letter from the Chief Commissioner for British Kaffraria whom George Cathcart had asked for comment on the possible removal of Kama to British Kaffraria. Maclean unequivocally stated that:

> "the occupation of Keiskamma Line of boundary by Kama's people is highly desirable for the motives and interests of the British Government".[102]

The Chief Commissioner, who had information that Kama was very "desirous of obtaining the country formerly occupied by amaNgqika opposite Fort Willshire,"[103] summed up his remarks by persuading the Governor to "accede to Kama's request and to give him the whole line of Keiskamma and Tyhume boundary from the Umdizeni to the Ncera river".[104]

---

100. Tunyiswa: Interviewed by Yekela, 17.9.1985.
101. Vitsha: Interviewed by Peires, 1975.
102. LG 658: Papers Received 1852-53, J. Maclean - G. Cathcart, 14.1.1853.
103. Ibid.
104. Ibid.

The Colonial officials unwisely proposed to achieve results by the simple application of the 'divide et impera' policy. Rewarding Kama with a controversial piece of land would scarcely promote peaceful relations among the Black communities of this area, when such relations were the essential foundation of a peaceful eastern frontier policy.

Cathcart finally confirmed that Kama had, as a result of the valuable services he had rendered in the last war, "been granted a location on a portion of the forfeited Gaika country".[105] Thus Kama's Gqunukhwebe left Kamastone behind, taking away the very nucleus of Shepstone's Methodist Christian community in the region. Mr C. Sigabi recounts how the Gqunukhwebe trudged over the Katberg, henceforth called by the Xhosa 'Intaba kaNtongwana,' from its being so misty as to make the traveller feel as though he had matter in the eyes.[106]

Kama had, before starting from Kamastone, sent messengers to inform his brothers-in-law, Sandile and Maqoma, that their land had been given to him. Maqoma welcomed the move, further requesting his brother-in-law to protect their war-refugees who might find themselves in his land.[107]

Kama's stay-at-home followers, excited by his return, met him halfway at Gqumahashe Location (Alice).[108] Their hearts had not as yet been able to find a substitute for their 'priest-Chief', and to Kama's delight they had not been 'eaten up'.

---

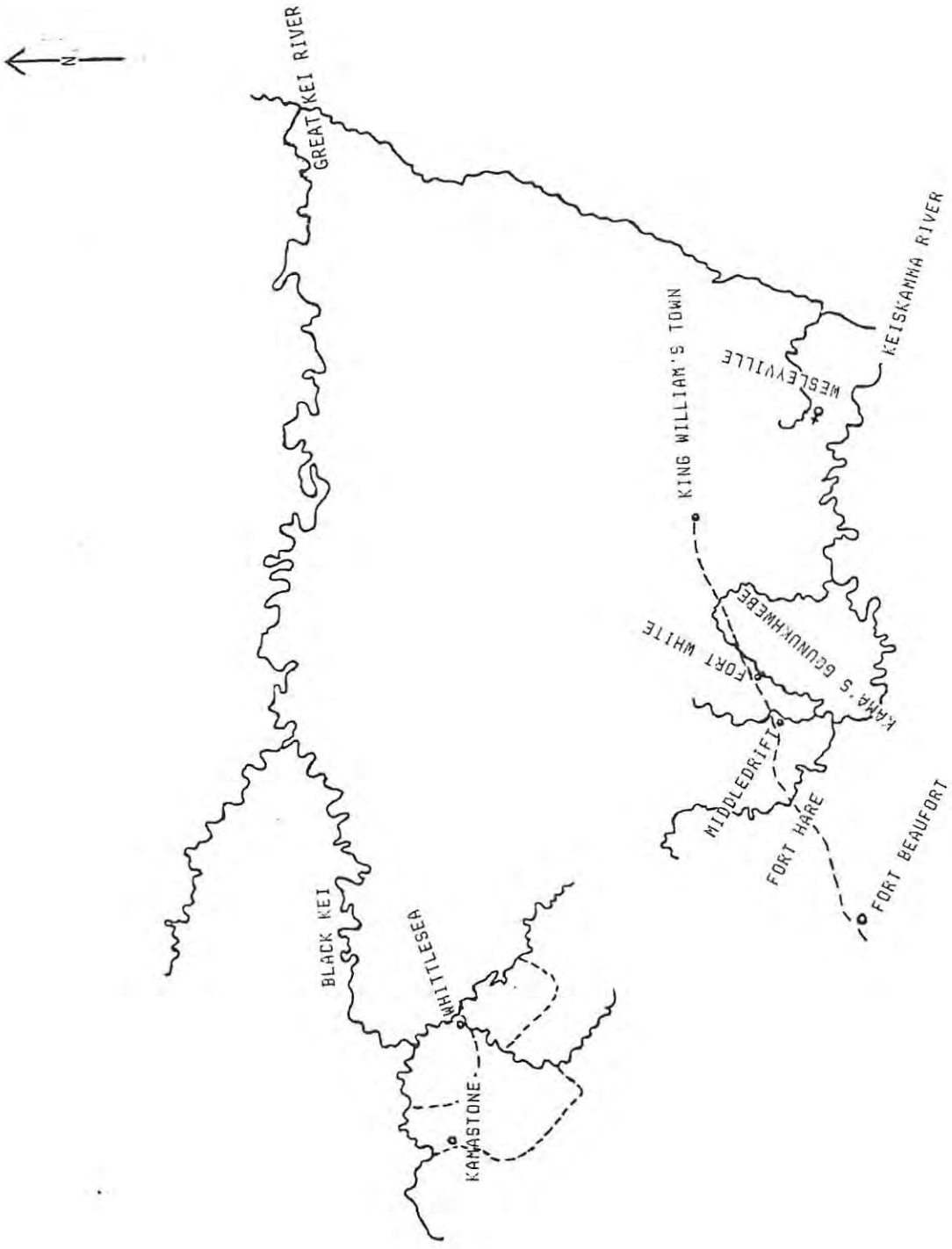
105. BK 71, Gaika Commissioner, 1855-58: C. Brownlee - J. Maclean, January, 1855.
106. Sigabi: Interviewed by Yekela, 6.4.83.
107. Ngani: Kama, pp. 33-34.
108. Ngani: Intlaba-Mkhosi, p. 56.

An entry of 8.5.1853 in Chief Commissioner Maclean's diary alluded to Kama's arrival on the banks of the Xesi River, "having moved down with his followers to take possession of the Keiskamma line of country".[109] Maclean immediately held an interview with Kama so as to ascertain the boundaries of the country allotted to him and his followers.[110] After this he sent a report to the Governor "relative to Kama's arrival and his occupying the Keiskamma line as far up as the Ncera river".[111] Thus began the second phase of Kama's life story in the area where the first had also begun.

---

109. PR 3625: Colonel J. Maclean's Diary at Fort Murray, 1850-58.
110. Ibid.
111. Ibid.

KAMA SETTLES AT MIDDLEDRIFT



CHAPTER FOUR

KAMA AND THE CATTLE-KILLING

Most of Kamastone's Christian community removed with Kama to form the nucleus of Kama's new station, ANNSHAW, on the banks of the Keiskamma River "where they are now well cared for, and their numbers are pleasingly increasing, under the attentive and judicious management of Mr Sargeant."[1] Kama had brought along about 2000 people, and only 50 of these were Christian converts.[2] The Annshaw Mission Station had substations where services were effectively conducted every Sunday by Local Preachers:[3]

> "These Native Preachers are .... themselves the fruit of Missionary labour among Kama's Tribe. William Kama's second son (William Shaw Xhanti), is one of them".[4]

Annshaw Mission's distinctive status, among other missions was due to the fact that the leader of the chiefdom, who formed the nucleus of the mission, together with his family, was directly involved in the activities of local preaching:

> "Among the fully accredited Church Members there are four of Kama's own family viz. the Chief Kama himself - His wife Susanna, His son William Shaw Kama, and William's wife, Sarah".[5]

Some problems had, however, to be overcome before the proposed Day School for children could be established.

---

1. W.M.N.: No CXL1, Quarterly Papers, September, 1855.
2. Ngani: Kama, p. 40.
3. W.M.N.: No CXL1, Quarterly Papers, September, 1855.
4. Cape Archives, British Kaffrarian Papers (BK) 90, 1848-56: W. Sargeant - The Wesleyan Missionary Committee, (n.d.).
5. Ibid.

At the time of the removal of Kama from Kamastone the Xhosa chiefdoms were, under Cathcart's arrangements, governed by their own chiefs according to their existing laws and usages in matters of internal discipline.[6] In Davenport's words "Cathcart also came to appreciate the importance of establishing a viable relationship with the chiefs in general, ... and therefore learned to reject Smith's brand of paternalism".[7] His policy of maintaining British Kaffraria intact as a great native reserve was, essentially, segregation of White and Black.[8] "Magistrates ceased to have any administrative or judicial authority and became 'Political Agents'."[9] This policy, reversing as it did Sir Harry Smith's unpopular innovation, could not but be strictly adhered to, for it restored to the chiefs what had been traditionally theirs.[10] Before the end of 1854, however, Cathcart was relieved of his governorship of the Cape, to take up high military command in the Crimea.[11] The Governorship was filled by the appointment of Sir George Grey. This appointment signalled the introduction of yet another new policy.

Sir George Grey, who was first and foremost, a strong believer in the maintenance and extension of the British Empire,[12] had recently completed a

---

6. E.H. Brookes: History Of The Native Policy In South Africa from 1830 To The Present Day (Cape Town, 1924), p. 90.
7. Davenport: Modern History, p. 134.
8. Rose, Newton, Benians (eds): C.H.B.E. (C.D. De Kiewiet: The Period of Transition in South African Policy, 1854-1870), p. 394.
9. Brookes: Native Policy, p. 90.
10. Ibid.
11. Rose, Newton, Benians (eds): C.H.B.E. (De Kiewiet: Transition) p. 394.
12. G.C. Henderson: Sir George Grey Pioneer Of Empire In Southern Lands (London, 1907), p. 129.

term of successful Governorship in New Zealand, a country, which he had found to be in a very turbulent condition in 1845.[13] As in Southern Africa of that day, the point of contention in New Zealand on Grey's appointment was extreme ill-feeling between the aboriginal inhabitants and the White settlers.[14] Grey identified the power of the Maori chiefs as the main threat to peace in New Zealand. His main aim, therefore, was to paralyse the political and economic structures on which the chiefs' power depended. By diverting the martial energies of the Maoris into constructive work such as roadmaking, technical skills, schools and missions, he was able to maintain peace and Colonial control for the period of his governorship.[15] Grey was helped by the fact that the Maoris were exhausted by war when he arrived, and his arrangements collapsed soon after he departed.[16] But as far as the British Colonial Office was concerned, he had proved himself to be a man capable of tackling the complex South African situation.

A major aspect of Grey's active measures was the integration of Black and White, defined by Wilson as 'civilization by mingling'.[17] His main objection to Cathcart's postwar settlement was, that, by secluding the Xhosa chiefs, it left them too much autonomy,[18] and thus defeated the goal: assimilation and integration. Grey earnestly desired to make the Xhosa

---

13. J. Milne: Sir George Grey The Romance Of A Pro-Consul (London, 1899), p. vii.
14. L. Rees: The Life And Times Of Sir George Grey (London, n.d.), p. 99.
15. Du Toit: The Cape Frontier (A.Y.B.), p. 86.
16. Personal Communication from Dr J. Peires, November, 1987.
17. Wilson and Thompson (eds): The Oxford History (Wilson: Co-operation and Conflict), p. 260.
18. Rose, Newton, Benians (eds): C.H.B.E. (De Kiewiet: Transition), p. 394.

chiefs subject to, or dependent upon, the Crown, believing strongly that educational results would be secured by the intimate association of the two races in the exercise of responsible power.[19] He made his first active move by obliging the British Government to vote a sum of 40,000 pounds per annum, to finance his 'Grand' scheme. Grey predicted confidently, that in subsequent years there would be a progressive reduction in the amount required.[20] The British Government was, though averse to spending, willing to give financial backing to any scheme that promised, even vaguely, to put an end to the financial liability created by the recurrent Frontier Wars.[21] Grey's scheme was in essence that of 'peaceful subjugation of the Blacks'. His road building programme, for example, is a good example of his ability to enlist the services of the Xhosa people in the Colonial penetration of their own country.

The development of educational-industrial institutions such as Healdtown were intended to occupy the children and provide training for the adults. The medical agency would definitely, though slowly, paralyse the traditional doctors' business, and thus reinforce the Christian doctrine and the missionary effort. By these means Sir George Grey hoped to

> "gain an influence over all the tribes ...., by employing them upon public works, which will tend to open up their country; by establishing institutions for the education of their children, and the relief of their sick, ..." [22]

---

19. Henderson: Sir George Grey, p. 132.
20. BPP 1852-53, XXV: Governor Grey - Grey, No. 20, Encl. in No. 14, 22.12.1854, p. 374.
21. Rose, Newton, Benians (eds): C.H.B.E. (De Kiewiet: Transition), p. 395.
22. BPP 1852-58, XXV: Governor Grey - Grey, No. 20, 22.12.1854, p. 376.

Looking forward to a pecuniary reward at the end of each day's toil was intended to be new focus of loyalty for the ordinary Xhosa.[23] Further, this exercise was likely to bind the traditionalists to a money economy which would probably revolutionize relationships within the traditional hierarchy. The councillors would learn to depend for their financial rewards on the Colonial authorities instead of their chief. Grey's scheme had room only for those who demonstrated individual enterprise and effort resulting in personal gains and benefits. This would then result in the chief losing his prestigious position as the centre from which the life of the nation emanated.

The ultimate aim was to win over the makers of traditional society to the cause of civilization, Christianity and thus peace, "and thus to change by degrees our at present unconquered and apparently irreclaimable foes into friends who may have common interests with ourselves."[24] To complement the civilizing mission, Grey fell back on the immigration policy he had applied in his model New Zealand, and thus proposed to settle immigrant pensioners in British Kaffraria. These mobile carriers of civilization, would, on their arrival engage in farming, making use of the Xhosa labour.[25] In the process of physical contact the latter would imbibe improved tastes as well as acquire 'better' attitudes to life, improved habits and a taste for industriousness. The presence of the pensioners would not only reinforce the defence of the region but would also breed

---

23. BPP 1852-58, XXV: Governor Grey - Grey, Encl. 1 in No. 27, 17.3.1855, p. 397.
24. BPP 1852-58, XXV: Governor Grey - Grey, No. 20, 22.12.1854, p. 376.
25. BPP 1852-58, XXV: Governor Grey - Grey, Encl. 1 in No. 27, 7.3.1855, p. 392.

> "stimulus ... to trade, and the increased demand for agricultural produce, for stock, and for native labour, which would be created by this immigration, would also tend materially to occupy the minds ... of ... Kaffirs, who are essentially money-loving races(sic), and would thus divert them from war".[26]

The Blacks would provide both labour and market for the farm products. Sir George Grey's imagination quickly transformed ideas into the practical benefits that might accrue by obligingly invoking the responsibilities of the civilized race towards "a race of troublesome marauders".[27]

The Blacks in Sir George Grey's view were not to be neglected, but rather to be inclined towards integrating with the Colonists. This latter aim was to be achieved by making them feel useful and thus indispensable as a labour force:

> "we should try to make them a part of ourselves, with a common faith and common interests, useful servants, consumers of our goods, contributors to our revenue".[28]

The last phrase of the above excerpt foretold both the usurpation of the duties and the undermining of the functions of the traditional revenue collectors in Xhosaland, for the replenishment of the Colonial coffers. Grey's proposals were, in outward appearance, more liberal than Cathcart's policy. Later events were, however, to prove that Grey's policy was more disruptive than that of Cathcart, though at the beginning some chiefs supported Grey's programme, obviously impressed with his seemingly benevolent intentions.

---

26. BPP 1852-58, XXV: Governor Grey - Grey, No. 26, 7.3.1855, p. 392.
27. BPP 1852-58, XXV: Governor Grey - Grey, Encl. 1 in No. 27, 17.3.1855, p. 394.
28. Ibid., p. 395.

Having tabled the method of accomplishing his formula, Grey moved on to acquaint himself with the chiefs in British Kaffraria. The important chiefs of the region were Siwani, Mhala, Sandile, Phatho and Kama, and all exercised authority independently. Of even more interest to the Governor was the discovery that the chief's revenue, regardless of how it had been acquired was of great importance to a traditional leader, whose prestige further depended on the number of his councillors. The 'eating up custom' to increase the chief's revenue, was the order of the day, hence the Governor's condemnation of the sytem:

> "such a mode of administering what is termed justice can but train up a poor and restless race of robbers, who, if they are in the vicinity of a community wealthy in flocks and herds ... will look in and steal, and carry off the stolen property to their own country, where the Chiefs are little likely to assist in giving up thieves, who have only stolen that, the greater portion of which will probably ultimately in due process of their own law become part of the private revenue of the Chief". [29]

If Grey's views are to be considered at face value, a system which abetted corruption, avarice and robbery was not ideal for any party at any point in time. A policy such as the above would surely discourage honest acquisition of property for fear of the 'eating up custom'. Justifiably, the Governor came to the conclusion that while the traditional administration of justice was good and profitable to the traditional leaders, it was highly detrimental to the interests of the British Government, and perhaps, also parasitic on the meagre resources of innocent subjects.

---

29. BPP 1852-58, XXV: Governor Grey - W. Molesworth, No. 9, 18.12.1855, p. 430.

He thus proceeded to prescribe a cure, not however to remedy the administration of justice among the Xhosa chiefdoms, but rather to bring it under Britain and make it an exclusive right of the Crown over what the Governor conceived to be British subjects in a British territory. In the Governor's mind the time had come for the introduction of "institutions of a civil character suited to their (Xhosa) present condition".[30] One obstacle that was likely to hinder the introduction of European judicature would be overcome by firstly assuring the chiefs that they would not lose, and that there was indeed a chance of greater gain should they accept and adopt the British system of administration.[31]

Sir George Grey's plan was simply to usurp the authority and position of the chief by the Crown, and for the Crown. The European magistrates were selected by Grey with great care, from officers serving with their regiments in the country, "men who had given proof of their energy and fitness

---

30. Brookes: Native Policy, p. 92.
31. Ibid.

to be placed in responsible positions".[32] W.B. Chalmers, an interpreter at the time, described Grey's magistrates as: "military officers, gentlemen by birth and education, men who commanded respect among the natives".[33] In the same letter, Chalmers confirmed that "the object of Sir George Grey's system was to break down the great power of the Chiefs by the instrumentality of their councillors, under the guidance and management of the European Special Magistrate".[34] These magistrates were, in addition to their judicial duties, expected to interest themselves in the welfare of the inhabitants of their districts, thereby encouraging industry, agriculture and promoting civilization:[35]

> "any Kaffir Chief of importance will be daily brought into contact with a talented and honourable European gentleman, who will hourly interest himself in the advance and improvement of the entire tribe, and must in process of time gain an influence over the Native races which will produce very beneficial effects".[36]

The most important change implemented by Grey was that the Chiefs would give up their power to impose judicial fines in return for a regular monthly salary from the Government. Grey believed that the Chiefs' dependence on the Government would develop in them "the strongest interest in its maintenance and success".[37] The assault on the position, status and prestige of the chief in the traditional hierarchy was thus to be

---

32. Du Toit: The Cape Frontier (A.Y.B.), p. 95.
33. Grey Collection MSB 223, No. 38: Chalmers - Fitzgerald, 3.11.1886.
34. Ibid.
35. Du Toit: The Cape Frontier (A.Y.B.), p. 95.
36. BPP 1852-58, XXV: Governor Grey-W. Molesworth, No. 9, 18.12.1855, pp. 431-32.
37. Brookes: Native Policy, p. 93.

accomplished in three stages: the payment of the chief in money; the placing of a white magistrate over the chief and the creation of a wedge between the chief and his councillors or headmen.

The Ngqika Commissioner, Charles Brownlee, commenting on the possible introduction of the magistrate system among the Ngqika, added "... I think the system would be acceptable to Kama ..."[38] This was an acknowledgement that this Chief had attained a disposition towards European civilization which was above that of his fellow Xhosa. Indeed, the earliest experiment of the new system was carried out in the district of the Christian Chief, Kama.

Captain F. Reeve was appointed in January 1856 as the first Special Magistrate. W.B. Chalmers assisted Reeve as clerk and interpreter.[39] Reeve had been a member and a captain of the 73rd Regiment which had fought for the British throughout the Mlanjeni War of 1850-53. He had the reputation of being one of the toughest soldiers under Colonel Eyre's command. William Eyre, as the commanding officer of the 73rd Regiment had taught the British soldier the method of fighting in the bush. Reeve was at the time of his appointment Colonel Eyre's personal aide-de-camp.[40]

---

38. BPP 1852-58, XXV: C. Brownlee - J. Maclean, Sub-Encl. 2 in Encl. No. 3, 8.8.1855, p. 438.
39. Rees: Sir George Grey, p. 229.
40. Personal Communication from Peires, 15.10.1985.

As Special Magistrate Reeve only had to bear in mind the specific aims of his being posted there. By 7.3.1856 the first report compiled by the first Special Magistrate in British Kaffraria was available for the attention of the Chief Commissioner, Colonel Maclean. Much depended on the tone of the content of this report for future planning:

> "It is with greatest satisfaction that I have to acquaint you, that the system of His Excellency, with regard to this district, seems to give general satisfaction both to the Chief and his people".[41]

In Reeve's personal judgement Kama and his people were pleased, contented and delighted. Perhaps this was the signal that Sir George Grey required prior to extending the system to other districts while monitoring its progress in Kama's district. The following excerpt shows Reeve a trustworthy, loyal servant of the Crown, as well as a man endowed with patience and an understanding of human nature:

> "In all cases which have been brought before Kama I have been present, and have done my utmost to keep in view His Excellency's wish, as to my position as adviser and assessor with the Chief in Council".[42]

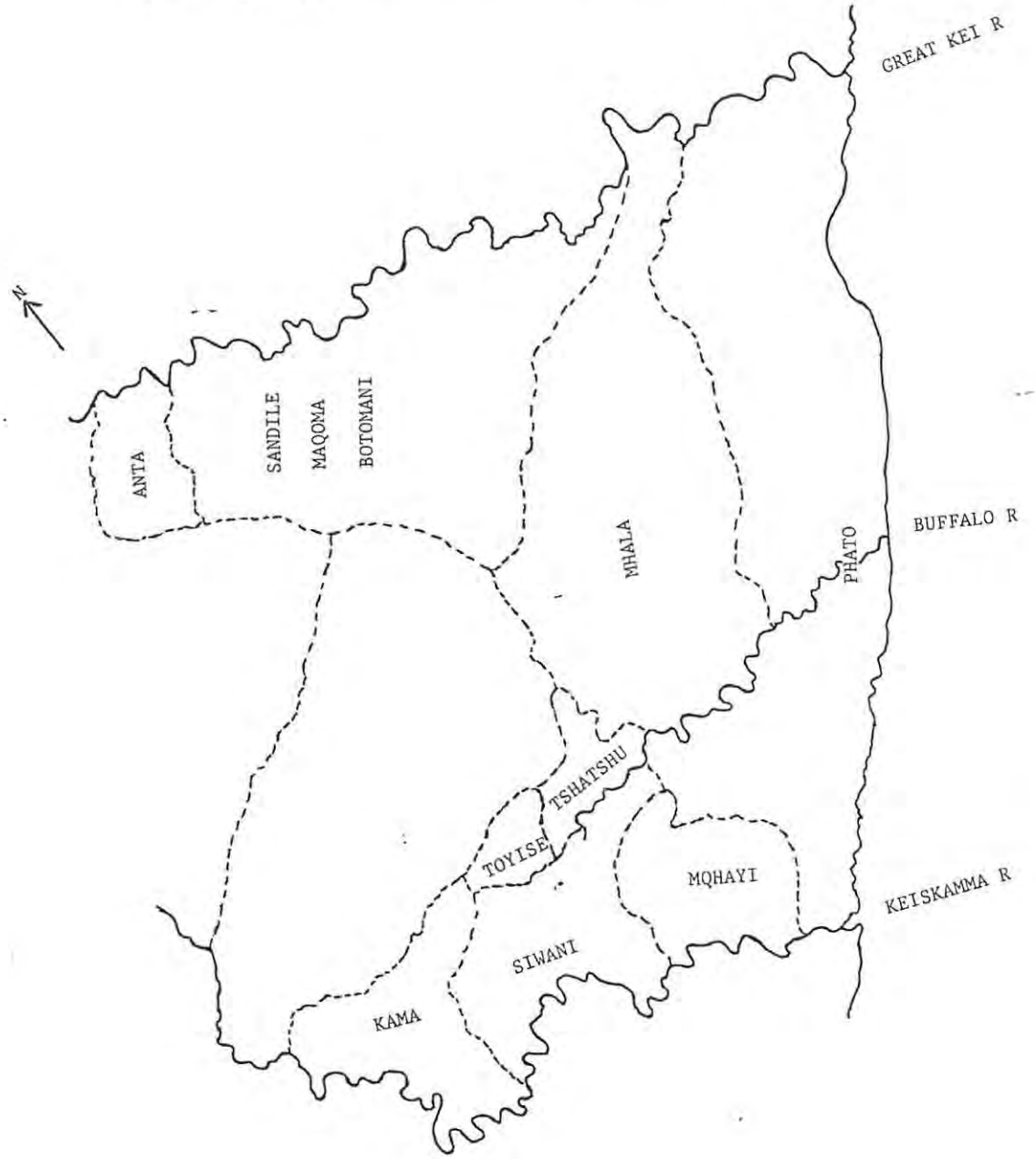
Reeve believed in educating Kama towards acceptance of the 'Crown's new policy', rather than imposing himself on the Chief as was Grey's actual ultimate aim. He did this by demonstrating the value, and thus the

---

41. BPP 1852-58, XXV: F. Reeve - J. Maclean, Encl. in No. 7, 7.3.1856, p. 486.
42. Ibid.

LOCATIONS OF CHIEFS IN BRITISH KAFFRARIA IN 1856

(reproduced from THE CAPE FRONTIER : A Study of Native Policy with Special Reference to the years 1847-1866): A.E. Du Toit.



indispensability, of a white advisor at the Chief's court for the greater benefit of the Chief. One observes that a magistrate of Reeve's calibre was at all times anxious to take up a position deferential to that of Chief Kama. Reeve was, in all respects, a peaceful subjugator rather than a forceful supervisor. He was Grey's first and thus best choice of all the Special Magistrates that were to be appointed in the various districts of Xhosaland. His term of office coincided with the introductory phase of the magistrate system, and one feels that Sir George Grey's policy could not have found a better servant than the kind, co-operative and understanding Frederick Reeve:

> "I have carefully explained to Kama, that I have to act as his friend, and not as the Chief of his tribe, and I am convinced that he sees that now in its proper light, and feels sure that this feeling will soon obtain throughout the tribe".[43]

Reeve's mention of the 'general satisfaction' of both the Chief and the people was an indication of the possible success of Sir George Grey's idea of securing educational results through intimate association of the two races in the exercise of responsible administering of justice. The fact that Reeve saw the need to explain everything to Kama, as if to allay the Chief's suspicion, exhibited great sensitivity.[44] Further, it was necessary that Reeve should continually convince Kama that he had not come to usurp, but to share judicial authority with him, and to let him derive sustenance

---

43. BPP 1852-58, XXV: Reeve - Maclean, Encl. in No. 7, 7.3.1856, p. 486.
44. Henderson: Sir George Grey, pp. 118-119.

from a fixed salary, while paradoxically the Crown 'usurped' the fines and the Chief's authority. The Chief's trust was the essential weapon for the gradual securing of the Chief's subordination to the British Government. But, either way, this implied an increase in Colonial authority. From this date Kama's people inevitably weighed his judgements against those of his co-magistrate, Reeve, a measure certain to upset the balance of power in the traditional society. Proof that there was co-operation between Kama and his Special Magistrate is furnished by the fact that on one occasion the two men agreed on the levy of a money fine:

> ".... but I conceive that His Excellency would desire to have money fines to be gradually introduced, as it seems to have many advantages on the old system".[45]

Levying of money fines in place of cattle fines signalled economic self-sufficiency and a self-supporting future for British Kaffraria. This possibly augured well for the fulfillment of Grey's promise that the financial burden on the British Government would, with the passage of time, be progressively lessened. The money fine referred to above was presumably the first to be levied in the whole of British Kaffraria. Kama's followers were thus the first chiefdom in Southern Africa to be educated into the monetary economy thereby weaning them gradually from their traditional obsession with cattle.

---

45. BPP 1852-58, XXV: Reeve - Maclean, Encl. in No. 7, 7.3.1856, p. 486.

The distribution of the population in Kama's district is worthy of note. The Keiskamma River divides Kama's country into the Northern or Upper division and Southern or Lower Middledrift. The Northern division was as from 1854, inhabited by Kama's personal followers, those who had come down with him from Kamastone. Here, Kama wielded unlimited authority which was reciprocated with undisputed loyalty. The Lower division was, though very extensive, sparsely populated. Nevertheless, the suitability of this region to corn growing suggested that it might soon become more densely populated. This Southern division gave Kama's kingdom a cosmopolitan outlook for there were found here followers of Toyise, Siwani, Stokhwe and Phatho. All these had joined Kama's chiefdom after 1854, presumably in order to get access to the land. The principal personalities here were Mati and Lama, respectively the son and the brother of Phatho. Kama's chiefship here was more nominal than real, and his authority was not so entrenched in this region. Mhani, Kama's son, was hardly known in the South.[46] The fact that Kama's district was not his native territory, but an award from the Colonial Government, created problems for him especially in cases where the original occupiers had managed to creep back.

There were eight districts in Kama's territorial division:

DISTRICT	HEADMAN	HOMESTEADS
1	Hashe	31
2	Maye	45
3	Xabana	27
4	Hina	30
5	Qekema	24
6	Lama	Unknown
7	Mati	2
8	Cwadi	Unknown[47]

---

46. Cape Archives, British Kaffraria Papers (BK) 86: F. Reeve - J. Maclean, 27.11.1856.
47. BK 86, 1856-58: Reeve - Maclean, 10.1.1857.

As Special Magistrate, Reeve deemed it expedient to undertake district tours of inspection at regular intervals. During one such tour he visited the sub-chiefs Mati and Lama, about whom Kama had remarked in an earlier despatch:

> "I am also anxious to bring to the notice of His Excellency, Mati (Phatho's son) residing in my location, and Lama, my half brother, also residing in my location, that they may likewise receive a subsidy from the Government, as although they are under me, they have immediate control of their people".[48]

Kama thus unknowingly endorsed the new status and role of the headman in Grey's administrative structure. Mati and Lama had probably been attracted by the spaciousness of Kama's territory. The above supposition does not, however, exclude the fact that the Gqunukhwebe, as a result of the circumstances pertaining to their foundation as a chiefdom, were traditionally attuned to integration with members of other national groups, whose only obligation was to profess loyalty and obedience to the Chief. Kama himself had greatly benefitted from this kind of integration since his long pilgrimage.

For a while it seemed as though the magistrate system was functioning well. The ravages of lung-sickness (imofu), which struck Kama's Chiefdom in the first half of 1854, seemed designed to make the new system, which paid salaries even in times of distress and destitution, more and more attractive to chiefs in districts where it had not yet been extended. Even when rumours of a possible invasion of the Colony, by the

---

48. BPP 1852-58, XXV: J. Ayliff - G.M. Shepstone, Sub Encl. 8 in Encl. 7, 26.10.1855, p. 449.

Xhosa chiefdoms, dominated the early part of Reeve's term of office, Grey reiterated his feelings of disbelief at such a possibility. Further the Governor was satisfied to note that the Blacks, whose herds of cattle were daily being diminished by the lungsickness, were happily obtaining sustenance by participating in public works while "the sick were availing themselves in large numbers, of the medical assistance".[49]

Significantly, while Sir George Grey's projects could relieve destitution, they could not arrest the spread of the cattle-sickness. Grey, with his usual foresight, quickly assessed the probable long term effects of the cattle plague. Writing to H. Labouchere, he expressed anxiety about the likely consequences, should the disease spread beyond British Kaffraria to Kaffraria proper, to the east of the Kei River. These fears were sadly confirmed when desperation and confrontation with sudden adversity, drove the Xhosa to resort to the ministrations of the traditional doctors.[50] The latter however, failed to prevent the spread of the cattle scourge. It is against this background that we must understand the sudden springing up of prophetism.[51]

Charles Brownlee, writing to the Chief Commissioner, Maclean in May 1856, referred to prophetess Bulu of Kama's chiefdom, whose confident predictions about the imminent relapse of the Christian converts and the destruction of white men were "causing the greatest sensation".[52] This sounded like

---

49. BPP 1852-58, XXV: Governor Grey-Labouchere, No. 23, 14.7.1856, p. 516.
50. BPP 1852-58, XXV: Governor Grey - H. Labouchere, No. 2, 16.8.1856, p. 594.
51. E.A. Dowsley: An Investigation Into The Circumstances Relating To The Cattle-Killing Delusion In Kaffraria 1856-57 (Unisa, 1932), p. 14.
52. Cape Archives, British Kaffraria Papers (BK) 70: C. Brownlee - J. Maclean, 11.5.1856.

stirring the populace against the whole fabric of Sir George Grey's innovations, while at the same time diverting attention from the failures of the doctors to rescue the national treasure, the cattle. Next to Bulu's wife was prophetess Petsheni from Stokhwe's district. Petsheni had begun her career in Kama's district, only to be expelled later, because of the undesirability of her services in the country of a Christian Chief. For Petsheni's predictions to be fulfilled, the Xhosa had to refrain from cultivating, and instead, they were to kill all their cattle. She even directed them "to purchase axes to make kraals, in which at the appointed time they would find cattle".[53] This sounded, to interested observers, more like driving the Xhosa headlong into dire distress, by making them exhaust the only means of sustenance they had earned from the public works. Further, anticipating future revelations would obviously make the people neglect their present predicament. It was significant that the prophetesses' field of activity was Kama's district, the land wherein the first European magistrate was at that very moment officiating. The doctors agreed that the Russians, having conquered the British forces in the Crimean War (1854-1856), would soon come to the rescue of the Xhosa nation.[54] Paradoxically this was an acknowledgement of the Xhosa's incapacity to improve or remedy their lot without external help. It is also interesting to note that the Xhosa believed the Russians to be a black race and thus the natural allies of the Xhosa as well as the enemies of the British.

The events of April 1856 were to prove that the wild prophecies dominating the latter part of 1855 were only precursors of a major prophecy, which was to destroy the whole of Xhosaland. Nongqawuse, the niece of Mhlakaza, who

---

53. BK 70, 1854-56: C. Brownlee - J. Maclean, 11.5.1856.
54. Ibid.

lived in King Sarhili's country across the Kei, began to preach,[55] ordering the people to kill their cattle and destroy their corn so that the dead would arise.[56] As we have seen, such prophecies were common during the time of lungsickness. Nongqawuse's prophecies were, however more potent because they were believed by King Sarhili himself, who personally ordered all the chiefs and people under his authority to obey the orders of Nongqawuse.[57]

The orders were essentially that:

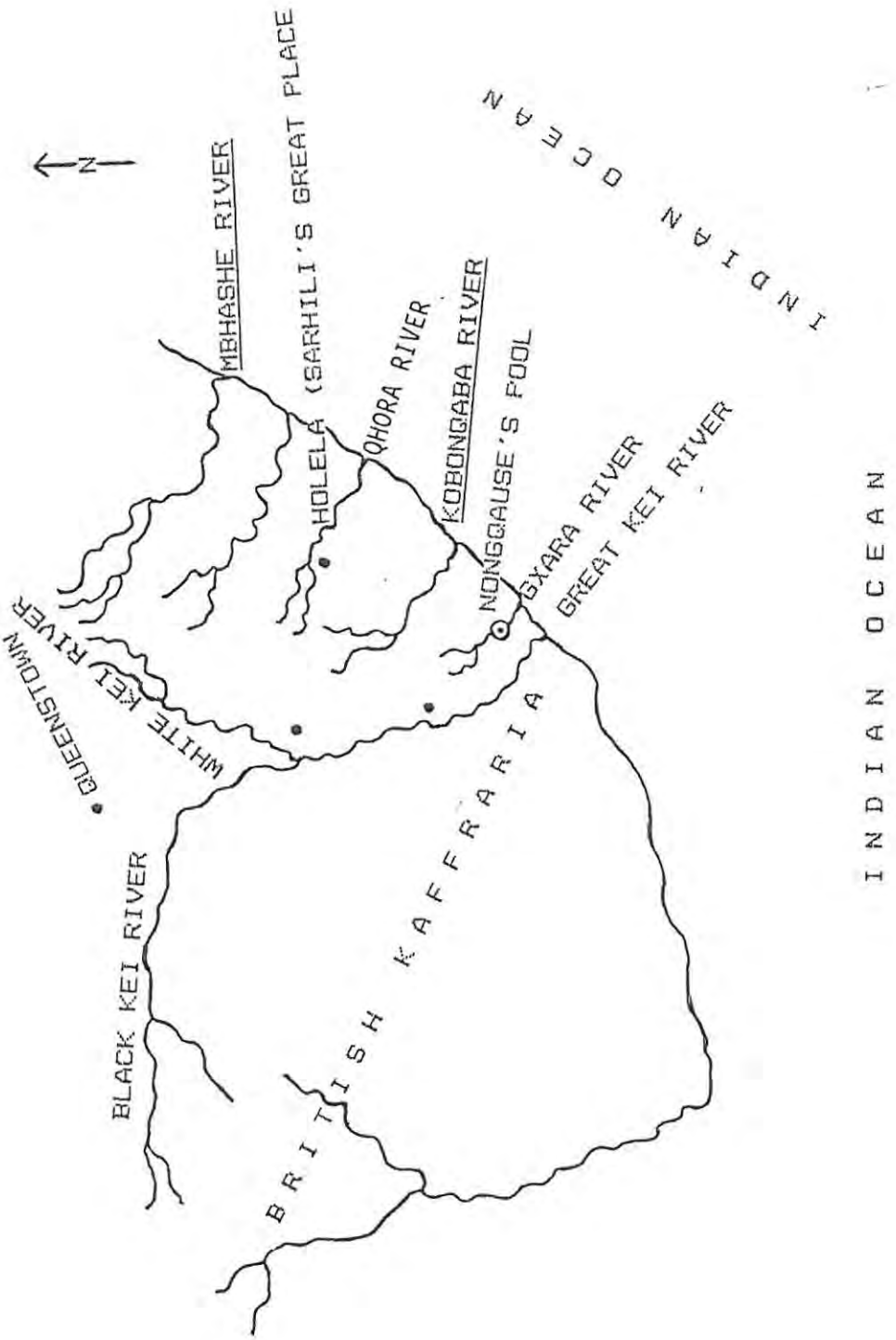
> "Noxela ukuba umzi uza kuvuka wonke ekufeni, niti nenkomo ezi zikoyo mazixelwe zonke kuba zifuywe ngezandla ezincolileyo kuba abantu bapete ubuti.
>
> Ize niti makungalinywa, makumbiwe izisele ezikulu ezitsha, kwakiwe nezindlu ezikwantsha; kubiywe inqili ezinkulu zentlanti, kusikwe intsuba, kulukwe nengcango zobuka zibe zininzi. Abantu mababulahle ngokwabo ubuti, bangade bambululwe ngamagqira. Nothi zitsho inkosi u-Napakade into ka- Sifubasibanzi".
>
> Tell the people that the whole nation will rise from the dead, and that all existing cattle should be slaughtered because they have been reared with unclean hands of people who have been indulging in witchcraft practices.
>
> (Further) tell them that there should be no cultivation. Instead huge corn pits must be dug and new huts built. Lay out solid and expansive cattle-kraals, cut out new milk-sacs, and weave many doors using the 'buka' plants. The people should voluntarily discard witchcraft and not wait until they are smelled out by the diviners. So say the chiefs, Napakade, the son of Sifuba-sibanzi."[58]

The prophecies of Nongqawuse first reached Kama's country in July 1856. According to G. Vitsha of Middledrift, the word arrived from nowhere saying

---

55. Milne: Pro-Consul, p. 143.
56. Rubusana: Zemk' inKomo (Gqoba: Isizatu sokuxelwa kwenkomo ngo Nongqause), p. 218.
57. Wilson & Thompson (eds): Oxford History (Wilson: Co-operation), p. 258.
58. Rubusana: Zemk' inKomo (Gqoba: Isizatu), p. 218.

THE POSITION OF MHLAKAZA-NONGQAWUSE THEATRE-GXAXA POOL



"xhelan' inkomo - kill the cattle!, then the dead will arise from their graves bringing along abundance of everything".[59] In response to the rumour, Kama immediately sent word to all under his jurisdiction, advising them to ignore the prophecies of Mhlakaza. He was absolutely convinced that the dead would never rise. To Kama's surprise, some of his people eargerly listened to the prophecies, and thereafter acted accordingly. Reeve remarked on the intensity of the war rumour, on the persistent killing of cattle and on the resultant alarm felt by the neighbouring Europeans.[60] The talk of "ilizwe lifile- the country is in a state of war," was rife in Kama's district during early August.[61] The Chief confirmed to the Special Magistrate that "the people look for great things to happen at about the middle of this month".[62] At the same time he proffered counsel to Siwani, persuading him to disobey the prophecies of the heathen prophet. Kama was obviously trying to win an ally for the British Government, while at the same time he meant to propagate the cause of the Christian Gospel by stressing the incompatibility of the Christian religion with the prophecies of Mhlakaza. After this the Chief proceeded to call a meeting of his people at his Great Place.

---

59. Vitsha: Interviewed by Peires, 1975.
60. BPP 1852-58, XXV: Governor Grey - H. Labouchere, Sub-Encl 3 in Encl 1 in No. 2, 1.8.1856, p. 598.
61. BK 86, 1856-58: H. Calderwood - R. Southey, 5.8.1856.
62. BPP 1852-58, XXV: Governor Grey - H. Labouchere, Sub-Encl. 4 in No. 2, 2.8.1856, p. 599.

So much had been happening in Kama's land, against his will and without his knowledge. So that on this day Kama addressed a vastly augmented following compared to the number he had brought from Kamastone. More were still welcome as long as they would "conform to our views of loyalty. I wish therefore, to know if such is the case, and for that reason, give me the news".[63]

Certainly, Kama's opening address referred directly to Mati and Lama, among others. If they were as influential as Reeve had reported them to be on his first meeting with them,[64] why did they not exercise that influence to persuade their people against the Cattle-Killing? It is perhaps necessary at this stage to note that Mati and Lama, both chief personalities in the Southern division of Kama's country, had chosen to obey the Mhlakazian prophecies enthusiastically. Thus, they demonstrated their influence, but for the wrong cause. After the Chief had called for the 'news' silence ensued, suggesting commitment to superstition, possibly with no intention to offend Kama. There was obviously nothing to say in defence. The country was, indeed, in a state of war for the Gqunukhwebe had responded to their Chief's call with spears in their hands.

The first reply came from Gweleta, who might have felt some guilt, because he asked Kama to elaborate on the news he wanted, when Kama had already explained that he wanted more information on Mhlakaza's mission. To this

---

63. BPP 1852-58, XXV: Governor Grey - H. Labouchere, Memoranda (meeting at Kama's Great Place), 4.8.1856, p. 526.
64. BPP 1852-58, XXV: Governor Grey - H. Labouchere, Encl. in No. 7, 7.3.1856, p. 487.

Kama quickly replied expressing disappointment at the conduct of the old councillors Gweleta and Qogo, to whose care Chungwa had entrusted him. Xola was not even there, preferring to hide his face from Kama while continuing to kill. Gweleta's sitting outside the circle showed that he disassociated himself completely from Kama, much to the latter's chagrin. Kama, further, referred to prophetess Bulu, "a woman who spreads the same words of Mhlakaza, and (Gweleta) has been washed by her".[65] This remark was significant for it revealed that Mhlakaza's influence and prophecies had antecedents which gave them momentum. Noteworthy, is the fact that being washed by a doctor or prophet obviously marks a stage in the initiation of a priest-diviner. It also symbolises complete submission to superstition, that is, to being purified by magic medicines. Thus, for the converts of the prophets, killing could possibly have been regarded as complementary to the purification process. Mati, Lama, and Cwadi had failed to persuade their people against slaughtering because they themselves could not resist killing. Therefore, Kama justifiably heaped the blame on them while at the same time lashing out at Qogo: "Why are you, Qogo, slaughtering your cattle? Have you also seen Chungwa, and has he told you to despise his son"?[66]

Kama's opposition to the killing derived from his deep Christian convictions which nullified superstition. Nonetheless, to despise and disobey one's chief was, and still is, condemned by Xhosa traditional values. Different excuses were heard at this meeting, some claiming to have killed for women's dresses, when all those who had killed had definitely come

---

65. BK 86, 1856-58: Memoranda, 4.8.1856.
66. Ibid.

under the spell of Mhlakaza. Kama, certainly had reliable evidence as to who had killed and who had not. Continuing with his address, he declared:

> "my present country has been given to me by the English Government, the Governor is my Chief, the Queen is my great Chief. Whoever lives in this country must also look up to the same Governor and the same Queen as myself".[67]

No other statement could have better revealed Kama's total commitment to the Government of the day. His subjects were to accept guidance from above rather than mislead each other. Guidance from the Christian Chief was the only way because he better understood their interests, the interests of peaceful neighbourliness, and had a better idea of the future needs of their mortal bodies than the heathen prophet.

Of all the Chiefs in British Kaffraria Kama was the only one who owed his chieftainship to the Crown and to His God, a fact which he proudly acknowledged. The land wherein he ruled had been presented to him by the Crown, thanks to his steady conduct in the eyes of the British Government. He could thus not reconcile the disobedience he experienced from his subjects with the respect he rendered the Governor and by inference the Queen. Finally he absolved the cattle-killers from allegiance to himself, and further directed them to follow their newly-found leader - prophet. Those who wanted to change for the better were still welcome but "my orders will not be broken",[68] a statement which was an assertion of the Chief's authority.

---

67. BK 86, 1856-58: Memoranda, 4.8.1856.
68. Ibid.

Kama's reaction to being scorned and disobeyed is fairly justifiable when considered in the light of the very foundations of the Xhosa traditional political system, which stressed that order in traditional society could be maintained by conformity:

> "Kuz' intsaph 'ive oonina;
> Oonina bev' amadoda,
> Amadoda ev' iinkosi,
> Iinkosi ziv' u@amata.
>
> And the children should obey their mothers;
> Their mothers should obey the men,
> The men should obey the Chiefs,
> The Chiefs should obey God". [69]

It was thus strange and rather ironical that the very people who defied him claimed that they were killing so as to hasten the revival of the old order of things, of which the above law was an inherent part.

Much to Kama's and perhaps Reeve's disappointment, killing still continued after the eventful meeting of 4.8.1856 at the Chief's Place. Reeve's subsequent correspondence, reveals that the authorities were on the verge of despair. Hence the decision to provide a ready market for the mealies that was being disposed of so as to bring it forth when the anticipated famine finally came. [70] The fluctuating nature of the killings, seems to suggest that there might have been mischief-makers within Kama's territory, who constantly withstood the good being practised. This negative attitude possibly arose because half-hearted obedience to the

---

69. S.E. Mqhayi: Ityala LamaWele, (Lovedale, 1953), p. 63.
70. BK 86, 1856-58: Reeve - Maclean, 23.8.1856.

prophecies would not only anger the ancestors, and lead them to withhold the abundance they were to bring forth, but might also incite them to shower the whole Xhosa nation with misfortunes.

Not all of Kama's followers obeyed the prophet, as the following extract from Reeve's journal confirms by its reference to

> "A great many Blacks of Kama's tribe passing this place from the Reserve with quantities of seed-corn and mealies which they had received from the Fingoes".[71]

The mention of seed-corn suggests that many of the people were inclined to sow, although they were held back by doubt and, perhaps, by the intimidation of Mhlakaza's supporters. As a result a party comprising Reeve, his interpreter, and Kama undertook a tour of inspection in October of 1856. The purpose of the tour was to induce people to cultivate, to forestall starvation and thus to prevent being tempted into mischief on the Colonists' property. While there was cultivation in some sub-districts, quite a number of those who were not cultivating received Kama coldly. In this way they demonstrated a lack of enthusiasm for their Chief, who, by preaching against the Cattle-Killing, was delaying the fruition of Mhlakaza's prophecies. Qekema, a reliable non-killing headman, had been strategically removed to the vicinity of Fort White where he was to collaborate against the killers by inducing his neighbours to work. Kama's reproaches of Mati on the day of the meeting (4.8.1856) were proven true, as the touring party discovered that he was not cultivating. From Reeve's observations the women

---

71. BK 86, 1856-58: Extract from Reeve's Journal, 25.9.1856.

were all too ready to heed Mhlakaza's teachings[72] in an age of prophetesses. Women were more concerned with material values, and thus the coming abundance and the promise of revitalised men were obviously exciting to them. Further, in a polygamous society many women were a floating element and tended to be lonely even when married. They were never attended to in a special way even from an economical point of view, and thus the prophecies, if obeyed, gave hope of an improved life situation. On the other hand men had every reason to be hesitant at first about killing their stock, which was already being diminished by lungsickness, for an uncertain future. The tour of inspection was, nevertheless, not without some reward as Reeve reported later: "Since my visit I hear a considerable quantity of people have commenced growing, and I have seen many spots where cultivation has begun".[73]

Evidence that famine had set in was furnished by the increasing number of applicants for work in the Colony in January 1857.[74] However, some people still continued to kill, possibly in anticipation of greater reward to come. Mhlakaza's influence, however, was probably the more convincing because he presented himself as the link with the inhabitants of the underworld. Thus the whole Xhosa world, confirmed adherents of ancestor worship, became deluded. The national ancestors had been offended, and a sacrifice on a national basis was required to restore their favours.

---

72. BK 86, 1856-58: Reeve - Maclean, 15.10.1856.
73. Ibid.
74. BK 86, 1856-58: Reeve - Maclean, 18.1.1857.

Advising the course of action to be taken was the national doctor's responsibility, a position which Mhlakaza had confidently secured for himself.[75] To the non-Christian Xhosa the ancestral world was a living one indeed, and ancestor worship was an inherent part of the Xhosa tradition, so that whoever upheld it would be sure to win the support, while anyone who thought anything to the contrary would be assured of a weak following. Such a loser was Chief Kama. Few people obeyed his instructions not to kill, and the reasons were various: the people associated non-killing and the cultivation of fields with Christianity, a religion which was too new and unfamiliar to have taken a firm hold in most Xhosa minds, while Mhlakaza's appeal was explicit and easy to understand, in that he told people about the ancestors whom they had accepted from childhood, as their guardian spirits. Killing in the sacrificial manner was also not something new, as it was part of the existing Xhosa religious system. What was new in Mhlakaza's teaching was the prediction that the dead would rise. This was popular with the heathen, as it nullified the finality of death, besides which it was quite in agreement with the Christian idea of the Resurrection. Above all, Mhlakaza had the complete confidence of his chief Sarhili, who was also regarded as the king of all the Xhosa, including the Gqunukhwebe. Thus at this point Chief Kama, who owed his chieftainship to the Christian religion and the British Government, lost his influence with the Xhosa masses. He failed to win a following which competed favourably with those traditionalist chiefs who owed their rank and dignity to venerable custom, traditional religious attitudes, and the counsels of principal men of the chiefdom. However, Kama persevered in his good

---

75. E. Moorcroft: Theories Of Millenarianism (Oxford University, 1967), p. 125.

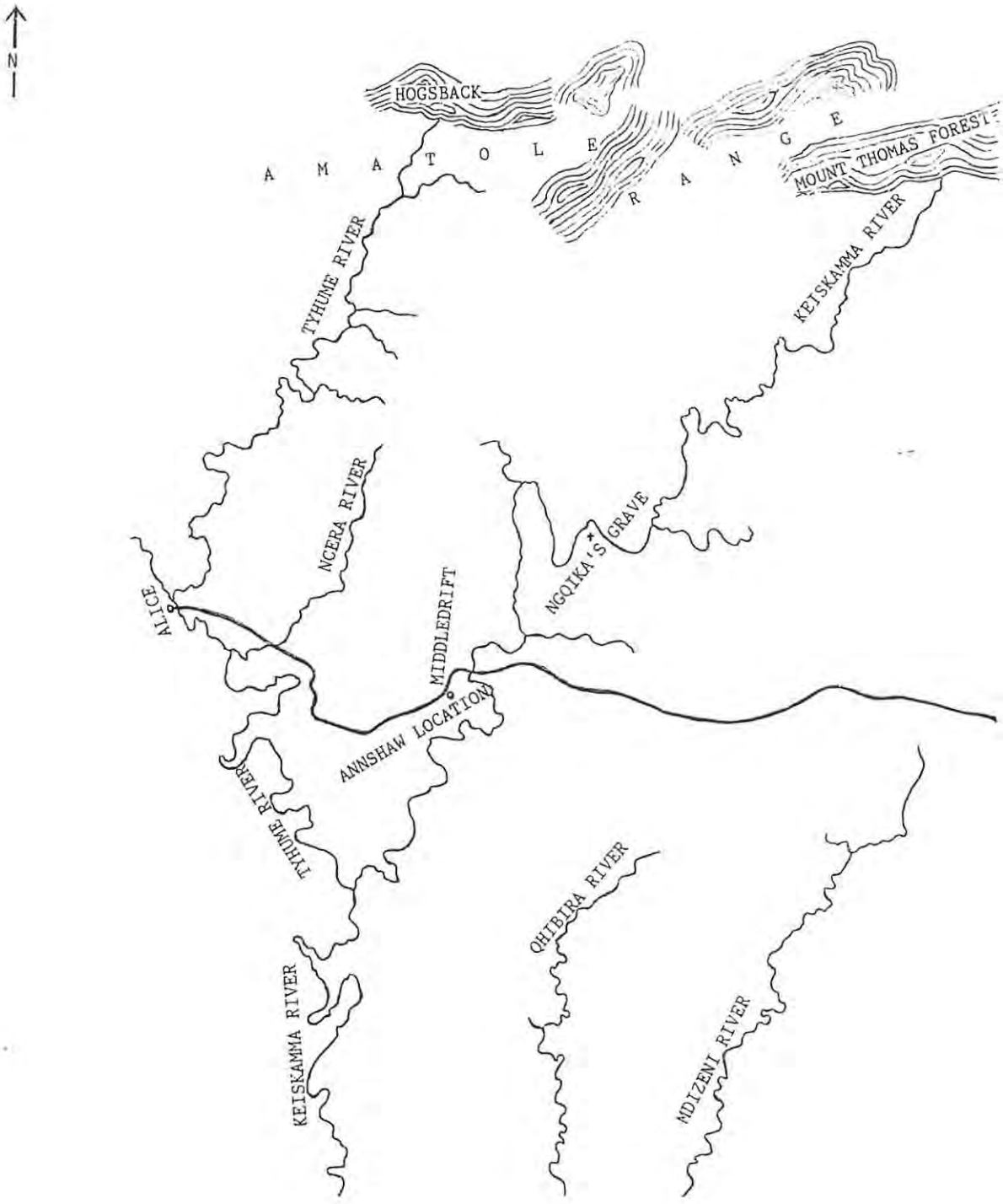
mission. In November 1856 Reeve reported how the cattle killers sought to attribute the Xhosa defeat in frontier wars, the perishing of their stock and the unfavourable climatic conditions to the fact of the Xhosa's succumbing to the rule of the foreign nations.[76] Moorcroft also puts forward the view that the Xhosa were convinced that all their afflictions tended to coincide with the period of the domination of the nations from the sea.[77]

The headmen's office, a feature of Grey's administration, was extended during the period of the Cattle-Killing. The headmen were to check on who killed and who did not, as well as inducing people to cultivate. But often the headmen ended up being the only ones who planted. The actions of the various headmen collate well with the division of Chief Kama's territory into the cattle-killing and non-cultivating South and the non-killing cultivating North. The recalcitrant Mati and Lama dominated the non-cultivating region, despite the fact that they were junior to Kama. With the intensification of the Cattle-Killing, Kama found it more difficult to wield authority over his disobedient subjects, and there was a danger that this undesirable state of affairs might spread to the northern region. But the strong stand of Kama and Reeve prevented the further spread of the Cattle-Killing.

---

76. BK 86, 1856-58: Reeve - Maclean, 27.11.1856.
77. Moorcroft: Millenarianism, p. 125.

THE UPPER (NORTHERN) AND LOWER (SOUTHERN) SECTIONS OF KAMA'S COUNTRY AS DIVIDED BY THE KEISKAMMA RIVER



It was the custom that, whenever something disquieting occurred, the Chief would call his people together. This Kama did on 26.12.1856. The purpose of the meeting was to pronounce publicly punishment on Mati, Lama and their followers.[78] The two sub-chiefs had, by their actions and attitude, not only abetted disobedience and misguided people, but also undermined the authority and the prestige of the Chief. Mati and Lama were ordered to return to Phatho, their legitimate chief, who was not against the slaughtering of cattle. Further, they were to forfeit their headmen's allowance, which they owed to Kama's recommendation.[79] The restive atmosphere of the land had also affected Kama's son, Mhani, who was both emotionally and spiritually torn between the two factions. This, despite his earlier promises that he would "remain with his father and take sides with him against his opposers".[80] Mhani's attitude inclined towards Mhlakaza's prophecies, and the influence of Lama and Mati cannot be excluded on someone as weak-willed as Mhani. Reeve, writing to Maclean, remarked that although Mhani had cultivated it was very minimal. Mhani had even tried to protect and save Mati and Lama from his father's punishment.[81]

---

78. BK 86, 1856-58: Reeve - Maclean, 26.12.1856.
79. Ibid.
80. BK 86, 1856-58: Reeve - Maclean, 3.12.1856.
81. BK 86, 1856-58: Reeve - Maclean, 30.12.1856.

The divisive elements in Kama's kingdom really put Mhani's 'integrity' to the test, and it appeared that, although he could well distinguish good from bad, he could not act upon his decision. While Kama was possibly content with few obedient law-abiding subjects, Mhani did not want the neighbouring chiefs to be strengthened at the expense of his father's chiefdom. Rather than fragment the chiefdom, Mhani possibly thought to himself that it was better to take the common course by following the prophet. His desire to remain neutral, and thereby keep his father's chiefdom intact, is reiterated in the report of an interview between Kama's heir and Reeve: "Samuel (Mhani) Kama acknowledged his neutral stand which he had taken for the sake of keeping his father's tribe together".[82] Mhani's view differed, however, from Kama's principal aim as reflected in this letter from Reeve"

> "Kama's wish I believe is only to keep his country from that reproach which is likely to result in case of disturbance, he also knows that he has no authority amongst the disaffected to prevent crime and cause its punishment, and that he has thought desirable that they should leave his country".[83]

Kama desired, at all costs, to keep his chiefdom beyond the reproach of the government of the Queen. It was hoped that the removal of the undesirable elements, would enable Chief Kama to reassert his authority over his whole chiefdom. Contrary to Kama's expectations, the expulsion of the prophet's converts resulted in an even more destabilizing commotion. Expulsion had repercussions as far afield as Sarhili's dominion, the country of the origin of the Cattle-Killing delusion. Reeve, writing to Maclean in January 1857, referred to Sarhili's message to Kama, which was to the effect that:

---

82. BK 86, 1856-58: Reeve - Maclean, 7.2.1857.
83. BK 86, 1856-58: Reeve - Maclean, 3.1.1857.

> "he (Kama) was killing his tribe by giving orders that his people were to sow and were not to kill their cattle ... Kama would let his people alone as the country belonged neither to him nor to the English but to the Ngqikas".[84]

The reference to landownership brings out more clearly that the question was not purely one of compliance or non-compliance with the prophet's instructions, but that it also involved the land issue the combatants being the Xhosa kingdom and English with their allies. Anything that pertained to Xhosa traditional society was to be heeded with all dignity in the land of AmaXhosa. Significantly, this message, instead of making Kama indecisive, served to solidify his resistance to temptation. Despite the restive atmosphere, the expulsion of the 'amathamba' (cattle-killers) afforded the 'amagogotya' (non-cattle killers) "a better chance of keeping their cattle and of reaping their crops which they have kept and planted in obedience to his (Kama's) orders".[85] These events were to come to culmination on 'the day of revelation'. As this important day drew nearer, much excitement reigned in Kama's land. Suddenly, the wives of the 'amathamba' deserted their husbands. Possibly, they had sensed it was all in vain, and thus they were running away from the evil of a possible civil war. In a letter written in January of 1857, mention is made of a disappointed Sarhili, ordering that "the killing should cease".[86] About this time, some people were already planning to go to Reeve to seek employment, evidence that they had begun to reap the fruits of their folly. Some wandering families endeavoured to push themselves into Kama's territory, to be driven back on the advice of the Special Magistrate. Others made no effort to alleviate

---

84. BK 86, 1856 - 58: Reeve - Maclean, 3.1.1857.
85. BK 86, 1856-58: Reeve - Maclean, 3.12.1856.
86. BK 86, 1856-58: Reeve - Maclean, 18.1.1857.

their destitution, and thus gave substance to rumours of survival by thieving. Mati threatened "to turn upon Kama and upon the farmers on his immediate location and take all the cattle they possess".[87] Others disposed of their assegais, so as to be able to buy food. That there was still something to be coveted in the Middledrift district, crowned the Christian Chief's stand in the Cattle-Killing delusion, with a measure of success.

The last letter written and signed by Frederick Reeve in Middledrift, is dated 11th November 1857. After this date Reeve was recalled to join his regiment,[88] which was commissioned to fight the Bengal Sepoys in the bloody Indian Mutiny of 1857-58.[89] He was eventually killed in Sri Lanka in 1869.[90] Reeve left behind a Middledrift that was vastly different from the one he had found. Ironically, the rumours of war which had dominated the first part of his term of office, would have been more than justified at the time of his departure, by reasons of destitution and want.

Kama's resoluteness of character, survived the trials of this troubled period in the history of the Xhosa people. His deep Christian convictions stood the test of time, and the British Government had, in Kama, an invaluable ally. His loyalty, his Christianity and peace-loving qualities

---

87. BK 86, 1856-58: Reeve - Maclean, 25.2.1857.
88. Personal Communication from Peires, 15.10.1985.
89. O.C. Watson (ed): Longmans English Larousse (Great Britain, 1967), p. 576.
90. Personal communication from Peires, 15.10.1985.

contributed greatly to his co-operation with Reeve, thus making Sir George Grey's experiment a success in Middledrift. Significantly, Reeve's first report gave an indication that the experiment was worth trying in other districts.

Reeve left behind a fully established magistracy, which had been further extended by the consolidation of the headman system. They were all to co-operate for the good of peace and humanity and in the preservation of order. In this regard, the main disturber of peace, during Reeve's term of office, had been the prophetic influence of Mhlakaza, and perhaps from the point of view of the Xhosa chiefdoms, the economic and political antecedents of the same influence. It is interesting to note how the prophet's influence preoccupied the Xhosa peoples' way of thinking for almost two years, directing them towards the achievement of common good through means dictated by tradition.

Apart from Kama and a few others, most of the Xhosa chiefs supported the Cattle-Killing movement. They wished to oust Colonial magistrates and Colonial law, and to restore the rights of the traditional leaders in the land of their forefathers. Though some chiefs had initially given Sir George Grey credit, when it became apparent that his object was the complete subordination of the Xhosa Chiefs, the more suspicious got afraid, lest the ultimate effect of the whole scheme should be their destruction.[91]

---

91. Henderson: Sir George Grey, p. 138.

The question of jealousy on the part of the traditional doctors (the supporters of chiefly privileges and upholders of the maintenance of national equilibrium) cannot be excluded in this episode, bearing in mind that the traditional medicine was being threatened by the services of Drs Fitzgerald and Bindon. Confessions that were made to Kama, towards the final climax of the movement, revealed that superstition, inherent in Xhosa religion, was the real villain of the Xhosa tragedy. All that Kama could have done at this time was to mobilize the repentant into an effective peace force.

The Mhlakazian episode definitely accelerated the integration of Kama's people into the Colonial economy. Greater numbers had, much earlier, taken up employment in the Colony on contracts. Reeve in his report of 20 April 1857, revealed that 324 men, 254 women, 221 boys and 252 girls, thus totalling 1051, had been employed in the Colony by the 29th March.[92] The elevation of the status of women is worthy of attention. The stay-at-home group engaged in cottage industries, and some embarked upon ploughing their fields. The taking up of employment in the Colony contributed to the rise of farm communities, which in turn assisted integration. Those who came back after the expiration of contracts, took to the building of cottages after the styles they had seen in the Colony. Their Chief had earlier taken the lead in this regard. Integration could not but ameliorate the condition of the Xhosa chiefdoms in some respects, for example in the Colony they were better exposed to scientific medicine. It is ironical

---

92. BK 86, 1856-58: Reeve to Maclean, 20.4.1857.

to note that this brainchild of Grey, which cost its inventor so much intellectual exercise, was, accomplished at one stroke by the Mhlakazian episode:

> "The cattle had been slaughtered and the corn-pits were empty, but his (Grey's) labour bureaus were filled to the brim. The magistrates - Grey's 'honourable European gentlemen' worked overtime drafting thousands of starving men to the various applicants for cheap labour".[93]

All this, however, had come after the collapse of a real national suicide and at the cost of much human life. Perhaps the fact that there was less human loss in Kama's district (3,600 (29%) died during the Cattle-Killing period, out of 13,000) provided an indication of his role and contribution during this phenomenal episode. Holden commends Kama thus:

> "He who before was lowest (in the traditional hierarchy) took the first place, and figured away with 9,350 people (71%); whilst Pato and Stock had only 650. Kama lost 3,588; Pato and Stock 8,246. Sandilli, the great Amangqika chief, had 3,738 left, having lost 27,282 by this dire calamity (88% losses against 22%), and leaving the former despised little chief 5,612 ahead of him".[94]

---

93. N. Majeke: The Role Of The Missionaries In Conquest (nd) p. 74.
94. Holden: The Kaffir Races, p. 162.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE LAST YEARS OF CHIEF KAMA, 1857-75

The effects of the Cattle-Killing episode were generally felt within a year of its commencement. Some people, however, continued to kill, and dispose of all their food supplies, proving that even the failure of the prophecies was no deterrent. Others killed gradually, adopting a 'wait and see' attitude, thus making the whole affair look haphazard. Significantly, the overall result was not haphazard, but rather general, severe and lasting.

The regional role of Kama's district in the Cattle-Killing drama is worthy of note: Reeve, writing to Maclean, remarked on the robbery committed by the Mfengu on the Xhosa refugees from Döhne. These Xhosa families, driving their livestock, were proceeding to Kama's location,[1] a fact which implied that Chief Kama's land had become a sanctuary for the non-killers of cattle. Reeve further referred to a number of men, women and children, from Kama's domain, taking up service in the Colony, and there, becoming "a useful labour force on farms between Somerset and Sundays River."[2] Indeed, the Cattle-Killing delusion had, by indirectly fragmenting the family unit, come to the rescue of those in need of labour, and Kama's district was not the least among the resultant labour pools.

Proof that Middledrift was not, at this time, passing through an absolutely benighted era, was furnished by the progress of spiritual work alongside the ravages of the national tragedy. Services and ceremonies were being held in connection with the laying of the foundation-stone of the Annshaw Chapel.[3] Speakers on these occasions could not help

---

1. BK 86, 1856-58: Reeve - Maclean, 15.4.1857.
2. BK 86, 1856-58: Reeve - Maclean, 20.4.1857.
3. W.M.N.: 1857-59, 4.6.1857, p. 139.

> "contrasting the fruits of Christianity as exemplified in the happy and prosperous condition of the different mission stations amidst surrounding and appalling want, with the baneful consequences of the late superstitions, which seem to be breaking up AmaXhosa tribes, and threaten to depopulate the country."[4]

The above excerpt clearly reveals a striking contrast between the effects and influence of Christianity, and of superstition. That the former was unable to overwhelm the latter, gives an idea of the determined mood of the followers of the prophet. This furnished proof, beyond doubt, of the strength of the traditional beliefs and practices. Christianity had obviously not sunk deep enough into the minds and hearts of the traditional believers.

With regard to the context of destitution, the Committee was elected and subsequently a Relief Fund was formed, to rescue from death's 'tentacles', those among the Xhosa people who were in the last stages of exhaustion.[5] The role of the Church in the relief scheme was exemplified by the active interest and zeal of the Bishop of Grahamstown, Henry Cotterill. One is immediately struck by the contrast in the ultimate goals of the secular and spiritual parties. While the Government was intent upon giving sustenance to "such of these people as are able and willing to take employment in the colony,"[6] the Church's immediate aim was to relieve distress, and thereby save life, according to the needs and demands of each individual case. The

---

4. W.M.N.: 1857-59, 4.6.1857, p. 139.
5. G.T.J.: 3.8.1857.
6. Ibid., 8.8.1857.

Governor's determination to see his intentions materializing is reinforced by his prescribing that relief should be given in such a way "as not to hinder the natives from passing into the colony ....",[7] for, if too much were to be given, the receiving party might feel so contented as to disregard the need for taking up employment. The Governor was especially anxious that the destitute, constituting as they did, a destructive force, should take up employment in the Colony, so as to afford the Government an opportunity, to paralyse the whole fabric of traditionalism:

> "Instead of nothing but dangers resulting from the Kaffirs having during the excitement killed their cattle and made away with their food, we can draw very great permanent advantages from the circumstances, which may be a stepping stone for the future settlement of the country."[8]

It was regrettable that the true measure of the Governor's magnanimity to help the destitute was his foremost desire to protect "those of whose interest he is the guardian", namely the white settlers.[9] Ironically securing a labour force was in the best interests of his wards, but it in turn called for magnanimous dispensing of relief, especially in Middledrift. Here, Reeve had registered for employment in the Colony men, women, boys and girls, all totalling 1051 within March of 1857. There was thus need for better relief measures especially because this district was on the highroad from King William's Town to Alice, and thence to Fort Beaufort or Somerset East. The labour force was first expected to walk from King William's Town to Middledrift. Those who survived this part of

---

7. G.T.J.: 8.8.1857.
8. J.B. Peires: Sir George Grey Versus The Kaffir Relief Committee (Journal of South African Studies, Vol. 10) (April, 1984), p. 151.
9. G.T.J.: 25.8.1857.

the test of strength, still had to proceed to Alice, the centre for the distribution of supplies. And how they fell and died by the wayside![10] The Governor's apparent complacency with this undesirable situation derived not only from his moral deafness, but also from his absolute trust in the ability of his team of magistrates to execute his instructions 'for the good of all parties'.[11] Grey's deliberate wish to obtain advantage for the Colony from the prevalent starvation dominated his thinking, and his Chief Commissioner, Maclean, adopted his motto enthusiastically: "those who have money must purchase, those who have not must work."[12] J. Tunyiswa of Annshaw pointed out to me the graves (almost in front of the ruins of Chief Kama's house) wherein the 'amathamba' (cattle-killers) who had come from other districts to beg for food from Kama, were buried, because they were too starved to recover.[13] It is ironical that Chief Kama, who had done so much to counteract the Cattle-Killing 'fever', had his land turned into a theatre for the worst scenes of distress. The conditions were indeed very bad when F. Reeve was recalled from Middledrift in November, 1857. However, the fact that someone else succeeded Reeve gave continuity to the operation and effectiveness of the magistrate system, and thus it was slowly but surely entrenched as an essential feature in the restructuring of the traditional political system.

---

10. G.T.J.: 25.8.1857.
11. Ibid., 8.9.1857.
12. Peires: Kaffir Relief Committee, p. 152.
13. Tunyiswa: Interviewed by Yekela, 9.7.1985.

The next step in Grey's policy was to implement the village system, which was first proposed to the Xhosa in 1856, but delayed by the cattle-killings. One of its main instigators was the Methodist missionary W. Impey who urged the Governor thus:

> "All Kaffirland is now at your foot (sic) - now is your time- why not try our longtalked of project of concentrating the population into towns and villages and thus bringing the people within reach of the arm of good Government," [14]

This statement clearly justifies Majeke's identification of the missionaries with the European conquest of Africa.[15]

The authors of the village system called upon the

> "magistrates ... to fix the sites of such villages in the vicinity of a sufficient supply of grass and water to support the cattle of a village which should not be allowed to contain more than 200 huts," [16]

Chief Commissioner Maclean, writing to J.M. Miller, Reeve's replacement at Middledrift entreated him not to allow anyone to occupy a hut in the district except in the established villages, and further, to

> "impress upon the Chief and the paid men at each village that no native can be allowed to reside in it unless he is first brought to you by the Headman and is duly registered." [17]

---

14. GH 8/13 : Impey - Maclean, April 18, 1857, quoted in Du Toit: The Cape Frontier (A.Y.B.), pp. 105-6.
15. Majeke: The Missionaries, p. 37.
16. Du Toit: The Cape Frontier (A.Y.B.), p. 106.
17. Cape Archives, British Kaffraria Papers (BK) 87, 1859-61: Maclean-Miller, 9.2.1859.

The above excerpt brings out clearly the role of the liaising function of the headman, between the village system and the magistrate. The former, with the connivance of the latter, by-passed the chief in the discharge of his duties:

> "They were in short to be utilized as a powerful machinery in the hands of the Magistrates to win the people from the Chiefs to the Magistrates, and thereby in time bring them entirely under the management and control of the Government."[18]

The loyalties of the 'good old' subjects were to be diverted to a new authority. The introduction of a new official, the headman, into the traditional hierarchy suggests a measure of compulsory power sharing and thus decentralization of the chief's prerogative. Each village was to be under the supervision of a headman, whose duties as explained by W.B. Chalmers, the interpreter at Middledrift, were of a 'wide range' indeed. Headmen were:

> "to act as policemen in apprehending offenders and bringing justice ... to exercise a general supervision over the people ... and see that they did not take their cases to their chiefs ... to act generally as detectives, watch the movements and actions of the chiefs, and report to the magistrates ... to be utilized by the magistrates as advisors in all native matters; and the instructions of Sir George Grey were that we were to treat these men in such a manner as to win them from their Chiefs to the Government, and by their instrumentality win the people to us ..."[19]

'Nkwali', 'Dyosen', both Mfengu and 'Maye Neku', a Ngqika, were among the headmen that were raised up against Kama in the district of Middledrift.[20]

---

18. Grey Collection MSB 223, No.38: Chalmers - Fitzgerald, 3.11.1886.
19. Ibid.
20. Cape Archives, British Kaffraria Papers (BK) 88, 1862-66: R. Lamplough - the Lt Government of British Kaffraria, 3.12.1864.

The appendage to the village system was the hut tax, and Miller's immediate task was to devise an effective method of collecting this tax:[21] "Every hut was to be subject to an annual tax of 10s." [22] Sir George Grey personally realised a close connection between the village system and the taxation of the Xhosa. His initial aim had been to make "the natives bear the cost of the system of magistrates and stipends to chiefs, counsellors and headmen ..." [23]

The village system was a weapon to strike at unauthorized squatting, while at the same time it ensured that all people in the magisterial district were registered. [24] Further, it was anticipated that with the Xhosa located in villages, under close surveillance of the police,[25] there would be easy and frequent detection of thieves.[26] The pinnacle of these objectives was the goal of the breaking of chieftainship of British Kaffraria. The faithful chiefs, "who have opposed the cattle-killing mania, and remained faithful to the directions of the Government," [27] were, however to be compensated with gifts of private farms.

---

21. BK 87, 1859-61 : Miller - Maclean, 15.2.1859.
22. Du Toit: The Cape Frontier (A.Y.B.), p. 106.
23. Ibid.
24. BK 87, 1859-61: Maclean - Miller, 9.2.1859.
25. Du Toit: The Cape Frontier (A.Y.B.), p. 107.
26. BK 87, 1859-61: Miller - Maclean, 14.1.1859.
27. MS 15,429: Sargeant - Hoole, 3.3.1858.

Association of the 'cattle-killing mania' with the 'portions of land' in the above context shows the land grants to be one of the long term effects of the national tragedy. In the Governor's design the grantee's area of jurisdiction was to be fixed and localized, and this, in the opinion of the British Government, was a just reward for faithfulness.

Middledrift was already an established laboratory for Sir George Grey's experiments. The essence of the scheme, was in effect an exchange of chieftainship and sovereignty for a farm. Maclean, reporting on the interviews he had had with Kama, remarked thus "to Kama and each of his sons the Government have also given good and large farms as their own property."[28] Thus the objects involved in the exchange were, paradoxically enough, part of the Chief's already existing domain.

The allocation of farms to Kama and his sons brought to the surface many points of difference between the Chief and Miller, his Special Magistrate. When Governor Cathcart originally settled Kama on the banks of the Keiskamma River in 1854, he made promises of land to the Chief and each of his sons, "leaving to Colonel Maclean the adjustment of all detail."[29] By the time that this allocation finally took place, the land in question had become a component of the irreversible village system.[30] For that reason

---

28. BK 87, 1859-61: Maclean - Miller, 24.4.1859.
29. BK 87, 1859-61: Miller - Maclean, 16.4.59.
30. Ibid.

Magistrate Miller offered to give "Kama and his sons land where they will annoy no one and upset no present arrangement."[31] Miller's offer to settle Kama elsewhere must surely be viewed against the background of the efforts being made to entrench the village system. Chief Kama, however focussed on the land comprising the site of his house, and was thus not pleased with Miller's recommendations.[32] Any slight action to accommodate Kama's interests would have surely struck the execution of the Government's plan about villages at its roots.

The introduction of headmen in the administrative hierarchy was to complete the decentralization of authority. This stage unfortunately coincided with the term of office of Miller, a person so difficult and uncompromising, as to make Kama more alert than before. The ensuing relationship was thus one of the mutual distrust. In the midst of the prevalent tension Sir George Grey on 29.01.1861 gave title on individual tenure to Chief Kama and each of his three sons, for farms situated in the tract of country in which they were settled. In February, 1861 Kama, together with his evangelist-son, Xhanti, and three councillors, sought an interview with Grey who was at King Williams' Town at the time. The object of the interview was to obtain title to the land promised to the Chief by Sir George Cathcart. The result was that on the 7 February 1861 a document was executed under the hand of Sir George Grey and under the seal of his private secretary to the effect that[33]

---

31. BK 87, 1859-61: Miller - Maclean, 26.4.1859.
32. Ibid.
33. R.M.O. Records: Middledrift

> "The tract of country described and shown in the annexed sketch has been given over to the Chief Kama, his family and his tribe, for their occupation and use, under such Regulations, fiscal or otherwise, as may, from time to time, be fixed by the Government, and under the condition that, at all times, and under all circumstances, they are to protect the road from King William's Town to Fort Hare, to answer for its security from any Kaffir molestation, and to detect and apprehend all thieves passing through their country. The Government reserves to itself the right of resuming all land required for military posts, roads, or public works."[34]

The reservation of certain rights by the Government at this stage suggests de jure ownership, but that, as later events were to prove, these rights made de facto ownership impossible. The above measure was, however, a welcome placebo for Chief Kama.

H.H.A. Mdledle confirms that, consequently, from one piece of land, Chief Kama's original farm, in the neighbourhood of Qhibira Great Place, his son's farms were surveyed.[35] Under this arrangement Farm A was awarded to John Wesley Mzinana.[36] Mdledle supports this claim further by locating this farm in the RIXANA-MNQABA area.[37] Farm B went to William Shaw Xhanti,[38] and was surveyed in the PHEWULENI area.[39] After carving out Farm D for Samuel Mhani,[40] in the QHIBIRA area, Chief Kama was left with the mother portion, FARM C, also not far from Qhibira. All the farms were held under free-hold title deed, which was fairer for all children and grandchildren irrespective of sex and the marital status of the girls.[41]

---

34. Cape Archives, British Kaffraria Papers (BK) 5, 1861-63: Grey-Travers, 7.2.1861.
35. H.H.A. Mdledle: Interviewed by D.S. Yekela (Zwelitsha), 9.4.1986.
36. R.M.O. Records: Middledrift.
37. Mdledle: Interviewed by Yekela, 9.4.1986.
38. R.M.O. Records: Middledrift.
39. Mdledle: Interviewed by Yekela, 9.4.86.
40. R.M.O. Records: Middledrift.
41. Mdledle: Interviewed by Yekela, 9.4.86.

Miller experienced problems with the collection of the hut tax in Kama's district, and he blamed his failure on the cosmopolitan nature of Kama's locality:

> "The people in this location belong to every tribe in the country and I think those who will not obey the government and the Chief should be sent to their own old Chiefs ..."[42]

Lack of unity, which is one of the features of cosmopolitanism, could have been a contributory factor to the ineffectiveness of authority, but that very factor demanded that Miller exhibit more tact and forbearance than he, from the records, appears to have been capable of, for various reasons. Kama would not have taken well to the banishment of these people, for he personally welcomed newcomers provided they professed loyalty and obedience to the Chief and the Crown. Further, Miller's criticism of Reeve ("the policy of my predecessor was to allow all who wished to settle here")[43] makes him appear a stricter, harsher magistrate who was not prepared to depart from the demands of law even when the situation called for a measure of flexibility. Evidently the settlement of outsiders in Kama's district was henceforth to be strictly supervised.

---

42. BK 87, 1859-61: Miller - Maclean, 15.2.1859.
43. Ibid.

The brutality with which Miller enforced the village system and the hut tax, revealed his lack of patience and the mild approach, which had been the characteristic attributes of Reeve. His failure to exercise diplomacy in stripping Chief Kama of his authority caused irreparable damage to the Chief-Magistrate relationships in Middledrift. His determination to impose the village system and its appendage, the hut tax, made Miller resort to burning the homesteads of those believed to be tax-defaulters. His enthusiastic execution of the punishment led to the destruction of huts of people who had in fact paid the tax.[44] Miller's weapon was the headman and the victims were the Chief and his subjects. Significantly, between these two parties the Special Magistrate symbolised a remorseless and yet partially divisive force whose delight was in humiliating Chief Kama. In a letter to Maclean, Miller remarked about the people's aversion to the payment of taxes

> "but I do not despair of making them see their own benefit therein. I know well that the Government has gained more than the Kamas have lost of authority."[45]

Later on he reiterated this remark

> "for the authority that Kama lost the Government gained more; ... the Chief ... is a spoilt child ... He and his sons have been trying to persuade the people that they have more authority in questions connected with the land than they really have. The people are afraid to tell me ... but many have in confidence requested me to get them some tenure to their lands ..." [46]

---

44. BK 87, 1859-61: Kama - Maclean, 17.2.1860.
45. BK 87, 1859-61: Miller - Maclean, 2.6.1859.
46. BK 87, 1859-61: Miller - Maclean, 1.12.1859.

It was thus no small wonder that time and again Kama lodged complaints against his uncompromising magistrate, who sometimes dubbed the Chief a 'stupid'. Miller's lack of interest in anything associated with Kama was further shown by his unwillingness to back or to recommend the construction of the watercourse. Miller also complained that Kama was inclined to act without consulting him,[47] while Kama, having been made aware of his unofficial dethronement with the ascendancy of the 'headmen',[48] also submitted a relevant complaint. There were now two hostile camps in the district, the magistrate's and the Chief's party. In this light we must understand Maclean's comment, and also acknowledge his tact and diplomacy in protecting the person and integrity of Kama:

> "Kama is inclined to act independently of the magistrate, but I personally do not regard it in a serious light for Kama is old and weak and is easily led away by evil advisers."[49]

Another point of difference was caused by the people who, on returning from service in the Colony, desired to settle on Kama's land.[50] Miller, as a result of his previous experience of administering law to large numbers, only granted such concessions reluctantly, as they gravely complicated the already established administrative structure of the villages.

As more and more problems were being exposed, J.B. Miller died suddenly, making way for Alexander Bisset, another military officer, to impress his stamp as Special Magistrate.[51] One can only guess that Chief Kama,

---

47. BK 87, 1859-61: Miller - Maclean, 28.1.1860.
48. BK 87, 1859-61: Kama - Maclean, 17.2.1860.
49. BK 87, 1859-61: Maclean - Miller, 20.2.1860.
50. BK 87, 1859-61: Maclean - Secretary of Kaffrarian Affairs, 3.3.1860.
51. BK 5, 1861-63: Secretary (to the Governor)- the Lieutenant Governor of British Kaffraria, 14.8.1861.

together with most people in the district, including the hut tax defaulters, sighed with relief at the news of the change of magisterial regime. Middledrift had lately been the theatre for the very cold relationship between the Colonial authority and its traditional counterpart. Furthermore, white attitudes had conspicuously changed for the worse towards Kama and Blacks generally during these years. An experience concerning a visit made by Chief Kama to the Colony during the days of severe destitution provides us with a relevant example. Kama had been invited by some Koonap farmers to collect a present of goats, offered as a token of gratitude for the labour force he had always procured for them. As part of his programme in the Colony, Kama intended to visit a certain Mr Bowker, to repair his wagon and to buy a plough for himself and his son. While still at Bowker's residence he was rudely harassed and insulted by Commandant W. Currie, who insisted that Kama be escorted to the Colonial border.[52] Currie obviously believed that the Xhosa allies were no longer of any benefit to the British Government, now that the 'national suicide' had completely paralysed its victims physically, morally, politically, culturally, socially and economically. Kama, a renowned ally, who still valued past bonds and relationships, could not but be disappointed and offended at this clumsy treatment. Out of disgust at this high-handed display of unnecessary authoritarianism Kama possibly experienced total revulsion, and thus became less inclined to co-operate, after he had compromised so much. It is probable that his hitherto consistent support of the Government made it extremely difficult for him, at this stage, to reject outright a system of which he strongly disapproved.

---

52. BK 86, 1856-58: Reeve - Maclean, 5.6.1857.

Later incidents revealed that Kama had resolved within himself not to co-operate, and, unfortunately, this was the time when the Whites also felt strong enough to ignore the wishes of their fellow Christian.

Alexander Bisset had been Special Magistrate for about a year only, when he submitted complaints against Kama. The complaints must be viewed in the context of the High Commissioner's intention to break down the authority of the chiefs. Bisset was determined to execute the Government's plan by undermining Chief Kama through the headmen, as evidenced by the conflict between the Chief and headman Maye Neku. Kama complained about Neku because the latter had defied him: "Kama has no claim to the land ...., Maye said I was no longer a Chief and that he would take the case to the magistrate ...." [53] This conflict can be understood better in the light of the duties of the headman, as prescribed in Grey's 'grand design'. The time had come for the theory to be tested in the 'traditional laboratory'. Maye was obviously acting with Bisset's knowledge, for he "told Mr Bisset he would not take cases to Kama, Mr Bisset said it was right". [54]

Furthermore, in Bisset's opinion, Kama had erred by assuming the prerogative to settle dowry cases. The result of the complaint was an interview between Maclean and the Chief after which Kama came back empowered to settle dowry cases. [55] Bisset felt very offended by the diminution of his authority:

---

53. BK 88, 1862-66: R. Fielding - Mills, 13.11.1865.
54. Ibid.
55. BK 88, 1862-66: Bisset - Brownlow, 30.8.1862.

> "I have considered it my duty to bring this, so repeatedly before the notice of the Lieutenant Governor and to ask to be informed of the facts of the case in order that I might know how to regulate my conduct towards Kama as I cannot allow myself to think that Colonel Maclean would wish to place me in a false position or undermine my authority, which has hitherto been on the very best footing".[56]

Kama obviously felt justified in the restoration of his right to try dowry cases especially as his counterparts in other districts had never been debarred from this activity. Clearly, the withholding from the chiefs of the power to settle these cases marked yet another stage in Sir George Grey's 'grand design', and Bisset was to carry this stage through, without making Kama aware of the Government's plans. Middledrift was thus once more, the experimental district where the practicability and utility of the Government's changes were to be tested, a fact, which completely overlooked the probability that Kama might compare himself with his counterparts. However, the fact that the Chief resumed the settlement of the dowry cases after the interview, shows that Maclean must have realised the need for the postponement of the change until Kama's confidence in the local authorities had been revived. The fact that the people continually brought their cases to Kama for settlement[57] was an indication of their belief in the ability of a traditional leader, one who understood the derivation of their political system and legal precedents, in handling cases related to their culture and customs. The question of Kama's tacit refusal to compromise,

---

56. BK 88, 1862-66: Bisset - Brownlow, 4.10.1862.
57. Bk 88, 1862-66: Bisset - Brownlow, 30.8.1862.

to promote a detestable system, must also be taken into account in this regard. It was strange indeed that the Colonial agents were so unwilling to share their authority, while they expected the chiefs simply to hand over their prerogatives without even a protest.

Bisset even interfered in religious matters by blocking the expansion of the Methodists, Kama's chosen church. The conflict began when the Wesleyan missionary, W. Garner, appointed a native teacher, Mayepa, to pioneer spiritual work in Mfengu villages of Zimankulu, Nkwali, Mniki et cetera. Prior to this appointment these people were attended only on the Sabbath by a Wesleyan native teacher.[58] Obviously the appointment of Mayepa signified the extension of the field of the Methodists' activity and the gradual consolidation of Methodism in Kama's land. Mayepa's work was good enough to arouse the envy of the Presbyterian missionary, John Ross, who had probably intended to conquer these communities for his own denomination. The division between the two denominational orders was clearly demonstrated by the building of two huts, side by side, for the Methodist and Presbyterian services. As soon as the Methodist Chapel was finished, Bisset burnt it down without informing the Chief of the land,[59] showing, thereby, connivance with Ross. The division between the two religious orders inevitably influenced the native communities to take sides against each other. Furthermore, the all too common distortion of the Christian motive became clear in a case where the crusade was no longer waged against the heathens but against other Christians, with the heathen land being turned into the battle field. Bisset's lack of diplomacy and ill-conceived

---

58. BK 88, 1862-66: Lamplough - Brownlow, 3.12.1864.
59. Ibid.

intentions are best demonstrated against the background of the local Methodist priest's siding with the Chief. Not only was Kama a living product of the Methodists' labours but the befriending of the Chief would benefit the spread of the Gospel and the extension of evangelism. George Brownlow's letter showed clearly that he detected a lack of wisdom in Bisset's actions:

> "The Lieutenant Governor cannot approve the destruction of that hut and he trusts that you will not again be led away into a measure so derogatory to Kama as a Chief, and so exasperating to him as one who has an interest in the progress of the Wesleyan mission, and further that you will not allow Mr Ross or any other Teacher to put up a house or hut in Kama's location, without that Chief's sanction .... You will not do any good to the cause of religious liberty or advance religion itself, by bringing prominently before the Kaffirs and Fingoes of Kama's locations the differences and contentions of rival sects".[60]

Brownlow's contention was that Kama was an indispensable ally if the Wesleyan mission was to be supported. Further, to demonstrate to the Xhosa population groups of Middledrift the differences between the European churches was both tactless and harmful to the advance of the Christian cause. Suffice to say that Methodism has, up to this day, remained the dominant order of Annshaw. Even the red-blanketed heathen, on being asked about his or her denomination by census officials, will answer thus, "I belong to Kama's church, the church of the Great Place - Ndingena kwicawe kaKama, icawa yakomkhulu," that is to say the Methodist Church.

---

60. BK 88, 1862-66: Brownlow - Bisset, 13.12.1864.

It is a credit to Kama's true Christian devotion that his ill-treatment by the Colonial authorities did not weaken his religious enthusiasm. Rev. W. Impey who had embarked on a tour of visitation in 1861, had reported favourably on Annshaw. After the tour he recommended an additional missionary to back Kama's

> "disposition to further the object of the mission ... As an instance of the interest Kama takes in these matters .... A short time ago some of the Heathen Kraals refused to accept the labours of the Native Local Preachers, and in fact drove them away with violence, but on this being reported to the Chief, he voluntarily offered to accompany the Local Preacher on his next visit, when of course under such circumstances there was neither violence nor opposition".[61]

The recommendation for the appointment of an additional missionary furnished proof of the still unexplored fields, and in this light, we should understand the heathen reaction to the presence of a native preacher in their midst. The heathen element was still strong and determined, hence this very reaction was taken to be an invitation for more crusaders. Kama's voluntary offer to accompany the native preacher was indicative of his readiness to die for the Christian cause. Significantly the halting of violence with the appearance of Kama demonstrated the heathen's reverence for their traditional leader. Paradoxically, Kama would have preferred the non-Christian to accord more honour and respect to the Christian Gospel's agent than to himself. Further, his involvement in both the progress of the mission and the administrative affairs of his district, made him appear to be the symbol of the desirable unity of the two aspects of human life for the common good.

---

61. MS 15,429 : Impey - Osborn, 10.10.1861.

Furthermore, evidence of the influence of the missionary teachings, encouraging people to work hard for self-reward, was seen when Kama's people, on their own initiative contributed labour to lead out water for the irrigation of Annshaw agricultural lands. In this way they were obliging the Government in the fulfillment of a pledge made earlier to Kama "that the water should be got out at this station ... a project which when completed will be of immense advantage to the station ..."[62] Rev. R. Lamplough thus brought to the attention of the Government the fact that the Annshaw people had, by providing labour, cut down the expenditure envisaged in carrying out the project. The missionary's interest in this question shows us that agricultural pursuits were a common activity between the traditional and the missionary communities. Furthermore on many occasions, the missionaries could not escape being used as a link between the traditional communities and the Government.

Kama's patience was rewarded when Captain Robert Fielding replaced Alexander Bisset as Magistrate in June 1865. G.M. Fielding of Beacon Bay, a direct descendant of R. Fielding claims that his father, a bachelor before his appointment, was a peaceloving, devoted Christian.[63]

---

62. Cape Archives, British Kaffraria Papers (BK) 92, 1861-66: Lamplough-the Lieutenant Governor, 27.03.1863.
63. G.M. Fielding: interviewed by D.S. Yekela (telephonically Fort Hare Beacon Bay) 26.6.1986.

In his letter of 11.10.1865 to Captain Charles Mills, acting Secretary to the Government, Fielding reports on his being welcomed by Kama, his sons and other people. Robert, a fluent Xhosa speaker, was the first Special Magistrate of all those that had served with Kama thus far, to be formally welcomed by the house of the reigning Chief. In a subsequent letter Fielding commends Middledrift thus

> "... since my arrival here to take over the duties of this district the Chief Kama and his people have given me no trouble and seem perfectly contented".[64]

The above was a comment originating from the satisfaction of both the Chief and people, also characteristic of Reeve's time. The report itself displayed a striking contrast with the relationship between Kama and Fielding's predecessor, Bisset.

The settlement of the Kama-Neku dispute was to be one of Fielding's first tasks. Fielding acknowledged his lack of acquaintance with the characters involved, but remarked, "Neku may be a very good man, but should at all times respect the Chief of the country in which he is so as to prevent disagreements".[65] Even if Neku's attitude to Kama was in the interests of the success of the Government schemes it would still be to the Government's good to avoid reactions that might result from harsh introduction of changes, by encouraging perpetual respect to the traditional leaders in their rightful land. Such an attitude would also prevent alienation between Xhosa and Xhosa.

---

64. BK 88, 1862-66: Fielding - Mills, 4.11.1865.
65. BK 88, 1862-66: Fielding - Mills, 13.11.1865.

In one of his letters to Mills, Fielding commented on Chief Kama's readiness to help:

> "... up to the present time Kama has evinced much willingness to assist me in carrying out the duties of my office. I have explained to Kama, that in all cases which will come before me, should I require any information on Kaffir Law points I will apply to him for his opinion. This I have not yet done, nor do I hope I will have to, as I have an excellent guide in the "Book of Kaffir Laws, and Customs".[66]

More than anything, Fielding really wanted Kama to feel he was indispensable in the administration of his district. The positive attitude could erase feelings of inferiority, and, instead substitute them with mutual trust. That Fielding had created a good relationship with people in his district by the beginning of 1866 is evident in his letter,

> "the natives in this District have conducted themselves much to my satisfaction, notwithstanding the fearful state of the country, for want of rains, and consequent want of crops. Few thefts have been committed ..." [67]

this despite the fact that drought was so conducive to mischievous conduct. In the same letter reference was made to Kama's delicate health.[68]

---

66. BK 88, 1862-66: Fielding - Mills, 13.11.1865.
67. BK 88, 1862-66: Fielding - Mills, 6.01.1866.
68. Ibid.

The marriage of the Special Magistrate, to a local lady, Miss Atwell, of Battlesden Farm, along the Alice-Hogsback road[69] was an occasion for joy in Middledrift. "A number of gentlemen who had formed themselves into a committee"[70] arranged a picnic. That Fielding had a place in everybody's heart is evident in the following passage:

> "on the morning of the ultimo, the Chief Kama's large tent-wagon was sent round, by said committee, to call at the doors of all residents to collect and convey the ladies to the place of rendezvous ..."[71]

The importance of this joyful occasion in propagating the idea of a Christian marriage in a heathen land cannot be underestimated. The picnic spirit, proved to be an adequate replacement of the so-called traditional dancing, which was characteristic of such functions in a heathen society. Neither was Annshaw lagging behind in Christian progress during these years. She had become a fully-fledged Christian community. The first Wesleyan Sunday School Union Anniversary was celebrated on 2.11.1868 "and was a great success, proving a happy day to all who had the privilege of being present."[72] Mr Templer was credited for having taught the children several musical pieces for the occasion. In Middledrift, Black and White could live side by side and work together for their common good. The assemblage of the children in the chapel, and the marching thence to both the magisterial residence and the Great Place, threw light on the systematised arrangement and hierarchy of authority. The fact that the Chief and the magistrate felt secure and contented in their respective positions,

---

69. Fielding: Interviewed by Yekela, 26.6.1986.
70. G.T.J.: 1.11.1867.
71. Ibid.
72. G.T.J.: 20.11.1868

precluded any ill-feeling. The involvement of the priests such as Rev. J.R. Sawtell, the Special Magistrate, the Chief and the children (the latter crowning the social aspect of the function) reflected the co-ordination of the spiritual, political, cultural, and social aspects in the Middledrift of the second half of the 19th century. The children rendered musical items at both the magistrate's and Chief's place. How occupied they were, with something meaningful on their lives and expressive of their talents, while at the same time educative and entertaining to the community! Perhaps the importance of this occasion was still to be shown on a later date,

> "The civilizing influence must be very great on the surrounding heathen, who cannot help being struck with the appearance and manner of those who were lately their companions in heathenism and many of them are heard to say we see the truth, we no longer dispute it."[73]

A celebration similar to the above was held again on the 20th and 21st November of 1870,

> "The Annshaw Circuit is the centre of Christ's Church ... There are nine of these stations, at which religious societies have been formed. These are under the care of native preachers and evangelists."[74]

The participation of the Blacks in the evangelical work was destined to accelerate the spread of the Gospel. It would surely fall on receptive ears, now that it was imparted to the heathen by the once heathen evangelists, in the language best known and understood by the audience.

---

73. G.T.J.: 20.11.1868.
74. The Kaffir Express: Vol. 1-3, 21.11.1870.

The idea of detaching children from heathenish habits and practices characteristic of the land of their forefathers, and educating them in the Christian childhood, was of greatest significance. Services were scheduled for Sunday and Monday and thus "on the evening of Saturday, the children began to assemble from their different stations."[75] Judging from the great distances travelled by these children one cannot but conclude that the hearts of the young Gqunukwebe were full of great expectations. The fact that "their approach was intimated by the sound of singing on the way,"[76] was a measure not only of gaiety, but also of confirmed faith and love. The unity of the Christian Church in Chief Kama's land, the much yearned for ecumenism, was suggested by the fact that Rev. Tiyo Soga of the United Presbyterian Mission delivered a sermon at the Sunday morning service, while Rev. D.G. Davis preached in the evening.

A fact of great historical importance in the missionary records was that one of Kama's sons, William Shaw Xhanti, had joined 'Native Evangelism.'[77] Andrew, a convert of Phewuleni (Perksdale) is reported to have urgently called for Xhanti Kama on his death bed,

> "I wish he had been (here), that I might speak to him. It was with difficulty he got me out of my former state, and it is through his efforts and teaching that I have now the hope of going to heaven."[78]

---

75. The Kaffir Express: Vol. 1-3, 21.11.1870.
76. Ibid.
77. W.M.N.: 1869-70, 25.1.1870, p.27.
78. The Kaffir Express: Vol.1-3, 4.1.1871.

The above was more than just a good testimony for both son and father, the latter of whom was obviously enjoying his last years. Significantly this fruit from Kama's house illustrated the Gqunukhwebe's role in the spread of the Gospel.

Chief Kama was, however, not wholly contented during his last years. Even at that point in time, the progress of the mission did not for him mark the near-conquest of the heathen element in his land. Further, the retrogression of his eldest son and heir, Samuel Mhani, was an obvious source of misery. The fact that he had been brought up in a Christian home, and according to the principles of the said religion, mattered less to Mhani in later life.[79] He not only took to excessive drinking of brandy,[80] but also subscribed wholeheartedly to polygamic tendencies. He was firstly married by 'native custom' and afterwards according to Christian rites, to Nolanti. Later he married Nomonti, then Nomatede and Noboni, all by customary law.[81] This offers proof of Mhani's once-more wavering conduct, and could surely never have given Kama peace of mind. It was not surprising that W. Chalmers, once the interpreter at Middledrift, referred to "Sam ... a great scamp".[82]

In 1871, Rev Mr W.C. Holden took charge of the Annshaw Missionary Station. Kama was in his seventies at the time. He lived with his family in a cottage with a thatched roof and verandah, covered with climbing flowering

---

79. Ngani: amaGqunukhwebe, pp. 29-30.
80. BK 86, 1856-58: Reeve - Maclean, 7.5.1856.
81. R.M.O. Records: Middledrift.
82. Grey Collection MSB 223, No.38: Chalmers - Fitzgerald, 3.11.1886.

plants,[83] all evidence of European civilization. The Chief was no longer able to walk to the church, and for this reason he was conveyed in a spring cart. Holden and Whiteside, respectively describe the appearance of this Christian Chief thus, "as he walked trembling up the long aisle of the church, he had a specially venerable appearance." [84]

> "... as he slowly walked down the aisle to his seat, his tall figure still erect, and a benignant (sic) smile on his intelligent face, he presented a fine type of a native Christian gentleman."[85]

In due course Chief Kama became too feeble to be conveyed and thus the services were held in his own house,[86] the house of the eminent Christian of the land. R. Cumming, claimed by Tunyiswa to have been Kama's personal friend,[87] conducted the services and Sunday classes.[88] Despite Kama's failing health Christian activity still continued in Annshaw. The Anniversary services had become a feature of the land and must have served to distinguish this district from its counterparts. One such function was scheduled for the 16.11.1872. Attendance was expected to be double that of the previous functions:

> "... the gathering of children and adults on the occasion, should the weather prove fine, will probably be the finest ever witnessed in South Africa, in relation to native educational establishment,"[89]

---

83. Whiteside: Wesleyan Methodist Church, p. 317.
84. Holden: British Rule, p. 33.
85. Whiteside: Wesleyan Methodist Church, p. 317.
86. Ibid.
87. Tunyiswa: Interviewed by Yekela, 9.7.1986.
88. Whiteside: Wesleyan Methodist Church, p.317.
89. G.T.J.: 16.11.1872.

a fact which demonstrated the popularity of the Christian civilization among old and young in Middledrift above that in the neighbouring districts.

During January 1873 Wesleyan Methodism all over the world was mourning the death of the Society's first missionary in the Eastern District of the Cape Colony. Rev William Shaw had died on 4.1.1873, just before his 74th birthday,[90] and his death meant the loss of one of "the most serviceable and valuable missionaries ever sent forth by this Society."[91] Perhaps it was fitting that Shaw, who had cleared 'bush and shrub' to give the Gospel access into Kama's heart, should, at the end of his life's effort, have led the fruit of his labours to the destination of all Christian soldiers.

The close was gradually drawing near for Kama too. Samuel Mhoni, 'a great scamp' had tasted chieftainship under his father's guidance,[92] before his death in 1868.[93] Then the youngest of Kama's three sons, John Wesley Mzinana, succeeded to the chieftainship, but he also died leaving behind his second eldest brother, William Shaw Xhanti, the evangelist.[94] Already there was talk among the councillors with a view to approaching the church to release Xhanti,

---

90. G.T.J.: 13.1.1873.
91. W.M.N.: 1875-76, 13.2.1873, p. 27.
92. Grey Collection MSB 223, No. 39: Chalmers - Grey, 15.5.1887.
93. Ngani: Kama, p.50.
94. Grey Collection MSB 223, No. 39: Chalmers - Grey, 15.5.1887.

> "The necessities of the tribe requiring the residence of the future chief to be confined to the locality where the tribe is settled, obliged him to retire from itineracy ..."[95]

On being asked by councillor Mxengele on whether Xhanti was to be regent Chief Kama reiterated that "Yena akazi kubambela, uya kuba ndim- He will not officiate for anyone, instead he will rule in his own right (he will be myself)."[96] Kama's health was at this time deteriorating day by day. The heathen councillors began talking about heathen doctors, but the patient strongly rejected the idea.[97] Thus the heathen mind, though acknowledging the role of ancestors, who, in any case must go through death to be able to reach the world of shades, was not prepared to make an allowance for natural death, while Kama's rejection of heathen doctors, though he obviously had the will to live on, showed the Christian acceptance of death even as an unwelcome eventuality.

At a time when the self-confessed British ally, Kama, deserved a show of absolute integrity from the authorities, the Government made a round-about turn, thereby causing the Chief unjustifiable misery. As Kama became more and more infirm, his 'patron' anticipated the sickman's demise by parcelling out his land to a chosen European settlers.[98] Shortly before his death the Colonial Government entered into arrangements with certain persons for the sale of 4,000 acres of the common land of Kama's Chiefdom. A land surveyor was accordingly employed to draw the diagram of the land in question.[99]

---

95. W.M.N.: 1875-76, April, 1875.
96. Ngani: amaGqunukhwebe, p. 27.
97. Holden: British Rule, p. 34.
98. Ngani: amaGqunukhwebe, p.27.
99. Whiteside: Wesleyan Methodist Church, p.318

Noteworthy is the fact that the document executed in 1861 by Governor Grey was not legally valid. Thus "the land (had) remained Crown land, subject, however, to the right of occupation of the Chief (Kama) his family and Tribe".[100] Significantly, Kama was not consulted at all during the dirty proceedings, and as a result he became extremely disappointed and suspicious. The question "Can the Government give Kama land one day, and take it away another without asking about it?" [101] became common.

The wide scope of the duties of the missionary those days is clearly shown by the role which Holden played in the settlement of land question affecting Kama and his chiefdom. Initially, Holden tried to stop the confiscation of Kama's lands,[102] defined by Whiteside "one of those highhanded proceedings which occasionally Government officials transact in the supposed absence of a restraining title." [103] Whiteside also confirms that Holden consulted the relevant Government authorities, and after overcoming many an obstacle, clearly created by the Colonial Government's equivocation, Kama transferred chieftainship by legal deed to his son, whereupon Xhanti succeeded to chieftainship which he still held in 1887.[104] This was due to Holden's wide-ranging sense of responsibility.[105] On his accession Xhanti communicated with the Government, and, finally, the claim of the Gqunukhwebe chiefdom to the land was admitted, "but made contingent on good behaviour,"[106] as of old.

---

100. R.M.O. Records: Middledrift.
101. Holden: History of Methodism, p.327.
102. Ibid.
103. Whiteside: Wesleyan Methodist Church, p.318.
104. Ibid.
105. Holden: History of Methodism, p. 328.
106. Whiteside: Wesleyan Methodist Church, p. 318.

This change of mind on the part of the Colonial Government serves as an example of the general change of white attitudes to Blacks, a feature of the second half of the 19th century. There could also have been a feeling that what Kama had won by his integrity and good conduct, was not transferable to any party less than Kama's worth. No reasonable person, however, could condone this unwarranted imposition upon Kama, in his last days.

Shortly after Holden had accomplished his mission to the Gqunukhwebe, he took up appointment at Fort Beaufort.[107] He was replaced by Rev. B. Impey, but by this time Chief Kama was unconscious.[108] It was almost as if Impey had arrived to administer the extreme unction to the Christian Chief. On the 25th October 1875 Kama's soul peacefully departed, in the presence of Impey, Cumming, Xhanti, Tele and a few other people.

The funeral took place at Annshaw on Wednesday 27.10.1875 at 3 p.m. People from all parts of the country came to pay their last respects to the Christian Chief. The European community among others, the Special Magistrate, Robert Fielding were in attendance.[109] The funeral was in no small degree marked by ecumenism. Kama had stamped his mark on the hearts of people of all ages, and thus it was not surprising to see children attending his funeral service. After the service the corpse was removed from the chapel to his grave, the last home of Kama's mortal body.

---

107. Holden: History of Methodism, p. 328.
108. Holden: British Rule, p. 35.
109. G.T.J.: 12.11.1875.

The Christian Chief's funeral service was obviously different from that of any other native of that time. School children had a role to play (singing) while Joseph Tele, a native assistant and a trusted councillor of old, was among those scheduled to speak.

That the Gospel teachers were, even at that time, called upon to evangelize, was evidenced by the attendance of heathens in large numbers, "filling the aisle in every available space." [110] The main speaker and Kama's class leader, Robert Cumming, told the audience that William Kama Chungwa had actually been born at Elephant's Hoek (Alexandria) about the years 1798-99.[111]

It was thus fitting that Kama should be buried in Middledrift where he had made a lasting mark. As immediate confirmation of his everlasting spirit and influence, no sooner had he been buried, than it was "proposed to pull down the old chapel at Annshaw, and to build another on the site, to the memory of Kama," [112] to perpetuate the Kama Christian tradition.

With Kama dead

> "All the land (Four farms) held by the Kamas under title subsequently passed into the hands of Europeans. As a result the Government had to re-acquire by purchase from Europeans those properties which it formerly granted to the Kamas as a free gift ... the Amagqunukhwebe lost all they could lose ... They only retain the use and occupation of Kama's country because of the tenure under which they hold it ..." [113]

---

110. G.T.J.: 12.11.1875
111. Ibid.
112. W.M.N.: December 1876, p.279.
113. R.M.O. Records: Middledrift.

Farm A, had originally been granted to Kama's youngest son Mzinana, who died before his father. On 10 April 1914, the farm was legally transferred into the name of the long-dead Kama, and thence to eighteen other heirs. The farm was subsequently sub-divided into twenty-two parts of varying sizes, the bulk of which eventually passed into European ownership.

Farm B was on 18 November 1921, transferred from Xhanti's estate directly to the Union Government. Farm C which had originally been granted to Chief Kama was on 11 April 1902 surveyed and transferred to Ngangelizwe (Mhani's son), and at various times transferred from Ngangelizwe to various Europeans. Finally on 1 October 1938 a portion of Farm C was transferred to A.C.J. Pahl, and it is today presumably a trading site.

Farm D, part of Mhani's estate, was on 4 November 1914 transferred to George Songo (Mhani's son) Kama. Songo later sold it to a Mr Meier who in turn sold it to F.B. King. On 20 August 1937, the South African Native Trust acquired the property from Mr King.

In 1918 a large representative meeting of the Gqunukhwebe was held where it was decided that the Government should purchase portions of farms A, B, and C which should come into market, and the Chiefdom undertook to repay the

Government by means of proceeds from the chiefdom's levy. Eventually the portions in question were purchased for a sum of 11,234 pounds /4/-. The Chiefdom expressed through their attorneys, Hutton and Cook, that they were agreeable to the land being treated as a portion of a Crown Location.

The Kama Farms A, B, C and D are today scheduled Native Areas, vested in the Trust in terms of Act 18 of 1936, and AmaGqunukhwebe are predominant on these farms.[114]

---

114. R.M.O. Records: Middledrift.

CHIEF WILLIAM KAMA CHUNGWA

THE LATE CHIEF KAMA.

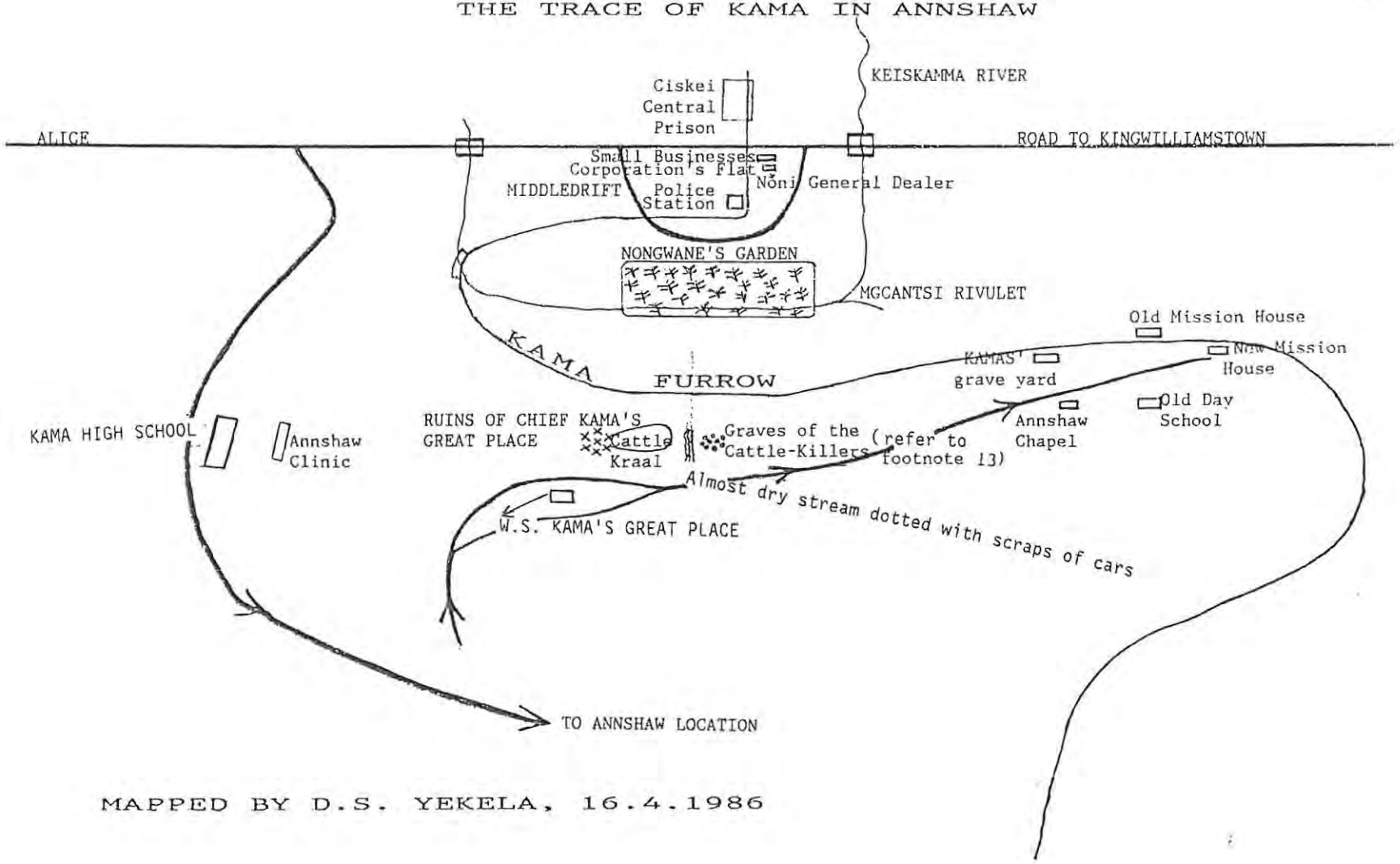
Wesleyan Missionary Notices, 1875-76.

WILLIAM SHAW XHANTI KAMA

WILLIAM SHAW KAMA.

Wesleyan Missionary Notices, 1875.

THE TRACE OF KAMA IN ANNSHAW



MAPPED BY D.S. YEKELA, 16.4.1986

CONCLUSION

Kama Chungwa (1798-1875) was a model Christian Chief of his time, having been the first African chief to become a professed Christian in Southern Africa. He was born in the then disputed Zuurveld region, at Alexandria, on the eve of the Third Frontier War. His father, Chungwa Tshaka, was a familiar figure in the land between the Zwartkops and Fish Rivers from about the middle of the 18th century. Later he became an active participant in the Colonial struggles of the 18th - 19th centuries. Thus to Chungwa's children the so-called Colonial land was not only native land but a very familiar environment.

Kama grew up in an atmosphere of conflict, Black-White confrontation and dispossession. His first unpleasant experience was in 1812 when his father was shot dead by the British troops in Ntebhele forest. In the same year the mourning remnants of Chungwa's family together with the other Xhosa survivors of the Fourth Frontier War were driven out of the Zuurveld across the Fish River. Kama, then about fourteen years old, and his brothers, Phatho and Kobe, were also victims of this unceremonious ejection from a place associated with childhood memories. The expulsions eventually drove the Gqunukhwebe people south-east coast to the banks of the Thwecu River. There the Wesleyan Gospel teachers, Shaw and Shepstone, discovered the soul of Kama in 1824. His life's story remains a testimony to the missionary efforts and achievements of these two figures.

Kama quickly cast off the unpleasantness of the past and opened his

heart to the Christian message as it was delivered by the Wesleyan missionary, William Shaw. Shaw soon realised that in Kama he had not only a patron of the missionary project, but also an ally and a friend. Kama's conduct induced Shaw to remark:

> "The three brothers Pato, Kobe and Kama, are seldom absent from Divine Worship. The last-named is particularly inquisitive, very docile, and tells me he often prays to the Great God, that he may be guided into the truth. We have great hope of this young man, and should he be truly converted to God, he will no doubt be a useful auxillary to us."[1]

The missionary was already distinguishing between the depth of Kama's Christian commitment and that of his senior brother, Phatho, whose pretended subservience to Shaw was for political gain. In 1824 Kama accompanied Shaw to Grahamstown, where he attended the Christian services and was also entertained by General Henry Somerset. He returned from Grahamstown with his Christian inclination reinforced, and Somerset's gesture had obviously made an impression on him as to the value of Black-White friendship.

Kama's opting for Shaw's religion was to cost him the love of his relations, chieftainship and chiefly dignity, traditional standing, citizenship and part of his following. His subsequent actions showed that he was prepared to pay a heavy price for the faith he was adopting. His rejection of both polygamy and other so-called heathenish practices, together with his consistent support of the missionary cause, led to his separation from his people. Eventually his experience forced him into exile at Kamastone. While his Christian attitudes tarnished his image in the eyes of the traditionalists, the British officials, who, like the missionaries,

---

1. MS 15,429 (Reel 1): Printed Missionary Reports 1821-66, April, 1824.

identified good Christian living with European civilization, peaceful habits and abstention from so-called heathenish practices, admired Kama all the more. It was as though he had merely exchanged loyalties, and he became attached to the Colonial cause. In the War Of The Axe he fought for the British Government, and was thus the first Xhosa Chief to fight on the Colonial side. He was ready to defend his rights, and to protect the white men's property but he explicitly refused to fight his own kinsmen in their hideouts. Kama could thus not be labelled a sell-out. His guiding principle was always to do the right thing for the sake of God and of those Gqunukhwebe people whom God had placed in his care. The firm stand he took during the Cattle-Killing delusion was in the end justified by the consequences.

The Government rewarded Kama for his military help in the battles of Whittlesea with the land on the banks of the Keiskamma River. His settlement at Middledrift in 1854 signalled both the end of a long pilgrimage and the beginning of a new era for the Xhosa people. During these years the Colonial Government sought to impose its rule on an unwilling people. The first experiment to this end was carried out by the appointment of Reeve as Special Magistrate in Kama's district. Thanks to Kama's co-operative spirit and Reeve's compromising attitude, the system worked well. The Christian Chief, however, was prepared to co-operate only to a certain extent as evidenced by his firm resistance to the oppressive magistracies of Miller and Bisset, the instruments of both the village and headman system. Eventually his steadfastness prevailed, and the Colonial authorities appointed a more sympathetic magistrate, Robert Fielding. Kama thus enjoyed his last years in characteristic Christian spirit, though the dispute over his family farms was a disturbing issue.

Chief Kama will always be remembered as a pioneer in both community and educational development in Middledrift. His general enlightenment policy stood to benefit his Gqunukhwebe Chiefdom. Even at his funeral service there was still something to be learnt, as he was the first Xhosa Chief in Southern Africa to have a Christian burial. Today a whitewashed tombstone on his grave at the Annshaw graveyard stands beckoning as if to say:

> 'here lies a noble character, a just leader and a faithful Christian of the first order.'

BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCES:

A. BRITISH PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS

1826-36 (50) XXXIX: HOTTENTOTS AND BUSHMAN; KAFFIRS; GRIQUAS.

1836 (279) XXXIX: THE KAFFIR WAR AND THE DEATH OF HINTSA.

1847 (786) XXXVIII: CORRESPONDENCE RELATIVE TO THE STATE OF THE KAFFIR TRIBES OF THE EASTERN FRONTIER.

1847-48 (912) XLIII: CORRESPONDENCE RELATIVE TO THE STATE OF THE KAFFIRS.

1847-48 (969) XLIII: KAFFIR TRIBES, FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE.

1851 (1334) XXXVIII: CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE CAPE GOVERNOR REGARDING THE KAFFIRS ON THE EASTERN FRONTIER.

1854-55 (1969) XLIII: FURTHER PAPERS RELATED TO THE STATE OF THE KAFFIR TRIBES.

1856 (2096) XLII: KAFFIR TRIBES: FURTHER PAPERS.

B. CAPE ARCHIVES

1. BRITISH KAFFRARIA (BK)

BK 86: MAGISTRATE WITH KAMA, 1856-58.

BK 87: MAGISTRATE WITH KAMA, 1859-61.

BK 88: MAGISTRATE WITH KAMA, 1862-66.

BK 5: HIGH COMMISSIONER, 1861-66.

BK 70: GAIKA (NGQIKA) COMMISSIONER, 1854-56, 1858, 1860-61.

BK 85: (no title), 1856-65.

BK 415: (no title), 1853.

BK 71: GAIKA COMMISSIONER, 1855-58.

BK 90: MISSIONS, 1848-56.

2. GOVERNMENT HOUSE (GH).

GH 22/3: HIGH COMMISSIONER, MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS, FEBRUARY-JUNE, 1848.

GH 23/17: GENERAL DISPATCHES, 1833-38, 28.1.1847 - 6.12.1848.

3. LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR (LG).

LG 406: LETTERS RECEIVED, DIPLOMATIC AGENT AT FORT PEDDIE.

LG 407: LETTERS RECEIVED, DIPLOMATIC AGENT AT FORT PEDDIE.

4. COLONIAL OFFICE (CO).

CO 291: AGENTS AND MISSIONARIES IN THE INTERIOR, 1826.

C. SOUTH AFRICAN LIBRARY

GREY COLLECTION.

MSB 223: No. 38, 3.11.1886 &
No. 39, 15.05.1887.

D. CORY LIBRARY

MS 15,429 (REELS 1 & 11): LETTERS TO THE SECRETARY OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WESLEYAN MISSIONARY SOCIETY, 1823-70 AND

PRINTED MISSIONARY REPORTS, 1821-66.

MS 7596: ANN SHEPSTONE'S JOURNAL, 1 & 11, 1836-57.

PR 3625: A DIARY KEPT BY THE CLERK TO COLONEL J. MACLEAN AT FORT MURRAY, 1850-58.

E. MAGISTRATE'S OFFICE, MIDDLEDRIFT

R.M.O.: MIDDLEDRIFT

F. NEWSPAPERS AND JOURNALS

WESLEYAN MISSIONARY NOTICES, THIRD SERIES, VOL 11, 1855 (NO. CXL1, PAPERS RELATIVE TO THE WESLEYAN MISSIONS, AND THE STATE OF HEATHEN COUNTRIES (QUARTERLY PUBLISHED), SEPTEMBER, 1855.

WESLEYAN MISSIONARY NOTICES FOR THE YEARS 1857-59, 1869-70, 1873, 1875 & 1876.

GRAHAM'S TOWN JOURNAL: 1856-75.

KAFFIR EXPRESS, VOL 3, 1870-3.

LONG, U.: DAILY DISPATCH. EAST LONDON, 13.10.1947.

G. ORAL SOURCES:

FIELDING, G.M.: INTERVIEWED BY D.S. YEKELA TELEPHONICALLY. FORT HARE-BEACON BAY, 1986.

MDLEDLE, H.H.A.: INTERVIEWED BY D.S. YEKELA. ZWELITSHA, 1986.

PAHL, H.W.: INTERVIEWED BY D.S. YEKELA. FORT HARE, 1986.

QHOMFO, S.S.: INTERVIWED BY D.S. YEKELA. QHIBIRA GREAT PLACE (MIDDLEDRIFT), 1985-87.

SIGABI, C.W.: INTERVIEWED BY D.S. YEKELA. KAMASTONE (WHITTLESEA), 1983-7.

SIGABI, R.: INTERVIEWED BY D.S. YEKELA. FORT HARE, 1987.

TUNYISWA, J.C.: INTERVIEWED BY D.S. YEKELA. ANNSHAW (MIDDLEDRIFT). 1985-86.

VITSHA, G.: INTERVIEWED BY DR J.B. PEIRES. DEBEMARELE (MIDDLEDRIFT) 1975.

H. PRINTED PRIMARY SOURCES

BENNIE, W.G.: IMIBENGO. LOVEDALE, 1971.

BURNS-NCAMASHE, S.M.: A SYNOPSIS OF THE HISTORY OF THE AMAGWALI TRIBE. FORT HARE, 1969.

CORRESPONDENCE OF LT-GENERAL THE HONORARY SIR GEORGE CATHCART, K.C.B. RELATIVE TO HIS MILITARY OPERATIONS IN KAFFRARIA UNTIL THE TERMINATION OF THE KAFFIR WAR, AND TO HIS MEASURES FOR THE FUTURE MAINTENANCE OF PEACE ON THAT FRONTIER, AND THE PROTECTION AND THE WELFARE OF THE PEOPLE IN SOUTH AFRICA. LONDON, 1856.

HAMMOND-TOOKE, W.D.: THE JOURNAL OF WILLIAM SHAW. CAPE TOWN, 1972.

HOLDEN, W.C.: BRITISH RULE IN SOUTH AFRICA. LONDON, 1879.

HOLDEN, W.C.: THE PAST AND FUTURE OF THE KAFFIR RACES. LONDON, 1866.

HOLDEN, W.C.: A BRIEF HISTORY OF METHODISM AND OF METHODIST MISSIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA. LONDON, 1877.

LE CORDEUR, B. AND SAUNDERS, C: THE WAR OF THE AXE. JOHANNESBURG, 1981.

MACLEAN, J. (ed) (REV. H.H. DUGMORE PAPERS): A COMPENDIUM OF KAFFIR LAWS AND CUSTOMS. GRAHAMSTOWN, 1906.

MOODIE, D.: THE RECORD OR SERIES OF OFFICIAL PAPERS RELATIVE TO THE CONDITION AND TREATMENT OF THE NATIVES OF SOUTH AFRICA. CAPE TOWN, 1838.

MQHAYI, S.E.K.: ITYALA LAMAWELE. LOVEDALE, 1953.

NGANI, A.Z.: UBOM BUKA-KAMA. LOVEDALE, 1952.

NGANI, A.Z.: IBALI LAMAGQUNUKHWEBE. LOVEDALE, 1937.

NGANI, A.Z.: INTLABA-MKHOSI. LOVEDALE, 1965.

NGANI, M.A.P.: UMKHONTO KATSHIWO. (n.d.)

RUBUSANA, W.B. (ED): ZEMK' INKOMO MAGWALANDINI (GQOBA, W.W.: UMKHONDO WAMAGQUNUKHWEBE

AND

ISIZATU SOKUXELWA KWE-NKOMO NGONONGQAUSE). LONDON, 1906.

SHAW, W.: THE 'STORY OF MY MISSION AMONG THE BRITISH SETTLERS IN SOUTH EASTERN AFRICA. LONDON, 1872.

SHAW, W.: MEMOIR OF REV. WILLIAM SHAW. LONDON, 1874.

SOGA, J.H.: THE SOUTH EASTERN BANTU. JOHANNESBURG, 1930.

SOGA, J.H.: THE AMAXHOSA LIFE AND CUSTOMS. LOVEDALE, 1931.

STOCKENSTROM, A.: THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF THE LATE SIR ANDRIES STOCK-ENSTROM. CAPE TOWN, 1887.

SUTHERLAND, J.: MEMOIR ON THE KAFFERS, HOTTENTOTS AND BOSJEMANS OF SOUTH AFRICA. CAPE TOWN, 1844.

THEAL, G.M.: RECORDS OF THE CAPE COLONY, VOLUMES 11, 12 & 14. LONDON, 1902.

WARD, H.: THE CAPE AND THE KAFFIRS. LONDON, 1851.

WARD, H.: FIVE YEARS IN KAFFIRLAND, 1. LONDON, 1848.

1. <u>SECONDARY SOURCES</u>

A. <u>PUBLISHED</u>

BRYER, L. AND HUNT, K.S.: THE 1820 SETTLERS. CAPE TOWN, 1969.

BROOKES, E.H.: THE HISTORY OF NATIVE POLICY IN SOUTH AFRICA FROM 1830 TO THE PRESENT DAY. CAPE TOWN, 1924.

BURTON, A.W.: SPARKS FROM THE BORDER ANVIL. KING WILLIAM'S TOWN, 1950.

BUTLER, G. (ed): THE 1820 SETTLERS. CAPE TOWN, 1974.

DAVENPORT, T.R.H.: SOUTH AFRICA A MODERN HISTORY. JOHANNESBURG, 1987.

DE KOCK, W.J. (EDITOR IN-CHIEF): DICTIONARY OF SOUTH AFRICAN BIOGRAPHY, VOL. 1.

DRACOPOLI, J.L.: SIR ANDRIES STOCKENSTROM 1792-1864. CAPE TOWN, 1969.

DU TOIT, A.E.: THE CAPE FRONTIER: A STUDY OF NATIVE POLICY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE YEARS 1847-1866. (ARCHIVE YEAR BOOK FOR SOUTH AFRICAN HISTORY). PRETORIA, 1954.

ELPHICK, R. AND GILIOMEE, H. (eds): THE SHAPING OF SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIETY 1652-1820 (GILIOMEE, H.: THE EASTERN FRONTIER, 1770-1812). CAPE TOWN, 1979.

GORDON, R.E.: SHEPSTONE THE ROLE OF THE FAMILY IN THE HISTORY OF SOUTH AFRICA, 1820-1900. CAPE TOWN, 1968.

HENDERSON, G.C.: SIR GEORGE GREY PIONEER IN SOUTHERN LANDS. LONDON, 1907.

LICHTENSTEIN, H.: TRAVELS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA 1, V.R.S. 10. CAPE TOWN. 1928.

MACLENNAN, B.: A PROPER DEGREE OF TERROR. JOHANNESBURG, 1986.

MAJEKE, N.: THE ROLE OF THE MISSIONARIES IN CONQUEST. (n.d.).

MARAIS, J.S.: MAYNIER AND THE FIRST BOER REPUBLIC. CAPE TOWN, 1801.

MILNE, J.: THE ROMANCE OF A PROCONSUL. LONDON, 1899.

MILTON, J.: THE EDGES OF WAR. CAPE TOWN. 1983.

MULLER, C.F.J. (ed): 500 YEARS A HISTORY OF SOUTH AFRICA (VAN ZYL, M.C.: TRANSITION, 1795-1806). CAPE TOWN, 1979.

PEIRES, J.B.: THE HOUSE OF PHALO. JOHANNESBURG, 1981.

PEIRES, J.B.: SIR GEORGE GREY VERSUS THE KAFFIR RELIEF COMMITTEE (JOURNAL OF SOUTH AFRICAN STUDIES, VOL. 10) APRIL, 1984.

REES, W.L.: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF SIR GEORGE GREY. LONDON, (n.d.).

ROSE, J.H., NEWTON, A.P., BENIANS, E.A. (eds): CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE, VOLUME 8 (HARLOW, V.T.: THE BRITISH OCCUPATIONS, 1795-1806

AND

DE KIEWIET, C.D.: THE PERIOD OF TRANSITION IN SOUTH AFRICAN POLICY, 1854-1870). CAMBRIDGE, 1936.

SAUNDERS, C. AND DERRICOURT, R.: BEYOND THE CAPE FRONTIER: STUDIES IN THE HISTORY OF THE TRANSKEI AND CISKEI. LONDON, 1974.

THEAL, G.M.: A COMPENDIUM OF SOUTH AFRICAN HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY. LOVEDALE, 1877.

THOMPSON, L. (ed): AFRICAN SOCIETIES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA (HARINCK, G.: INTERACTION BETWEEN XHOSA AND KHOI: EMPHASIS ON THE PERIOD 1620-1750). LONDON, 1969.

WALKER, E.A.: A HISTORY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA. CAPE TOWN, 1957.

WATSON, D.C. (ed): LONGMANS ENGLISH LAROUSSE. GREAT BRITAIN, 1868.

WHITESIDE, J.: HISTORY OF THE WESLEYAN METHODIST CHURCH OF SOUTH AFRICA. LONDON, 1906.

WILSON, M. AND THOMPSON, L. (eds): THE OXFORD HISTORY OF SOUTH AFRICA, 1 (WILSON, M.: CO-OPERATION AND CONFLICT: THE EASTERN CAPE FRONTIER). OXFORD, 1969.

B. THESES:

DOWSLEY, E.A.: AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE CIRCUMSTANCES RELATING TO THE CATTLE-KILLING DELUSION IN KAFFRARIA 1856-57 (M.A., RHODES UNIVERSITY, 1932).

LYNESS, P.H.: THE LIFE AND INFLUENCE OF WILLIAM SHAW, 1820-56. (M.A., RHODES UNIVERSITY, 1982).

MOORCROFT, E.: THEORIES OF MILLENARIANISM CONSIDERED WITH REFERENCE TO CERTAIN SOUTHERN AFRICAN MOVEMENTS. (M.A., OXFORD UNIVERSITY, 1967).

WILLIAMS, D.: THE MISSIONARIES ON THE EASTERN FRONTIER OF THE CAPE COLONY, 1799-1853. (Ph.D., UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, 1959).