

A HISTORY OF THE XHOSA OF  
THE NORTHERN CAPE 1795 - 1879

BY

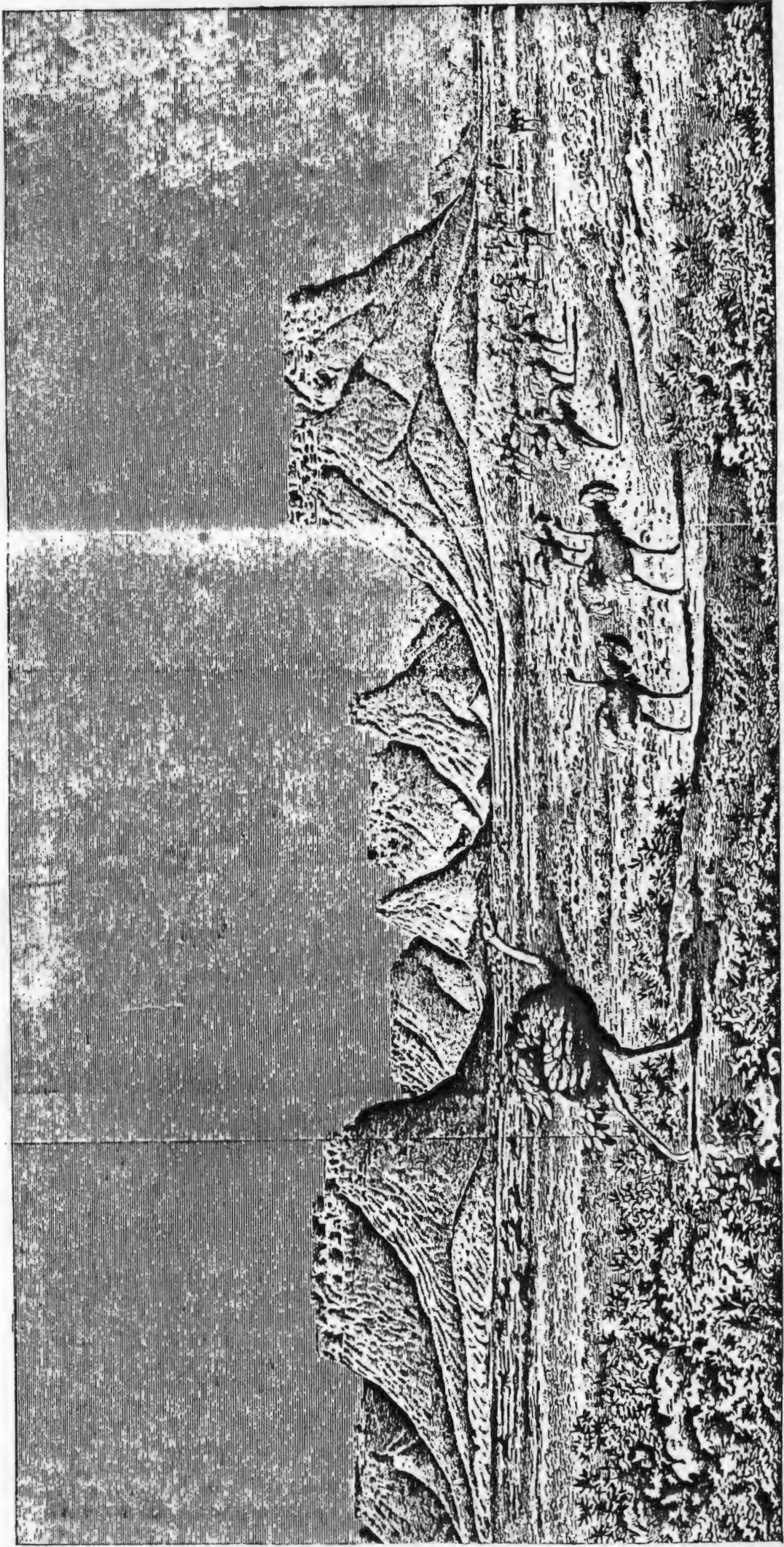
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Submitted to satisfy the  
requirements for the degree  
of Master of Arts in the  
Department of History at  
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*A View in the Kurree Mountains with Ostriches and Quaggas.*

Source: H. Lichtenstein, *Travels in Southern Africa*, Vol. II, frontispiece

(See page 24.)

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- Acc - Accessions
- BFW - Beaufort West
- BPP - British Parliamentary Papers
- CCP - Cape Colony Publications
- GH - Government House
- GR - Graaff-Reinet
- HA - House of Assembly
- JAH - Journal of African History
- LBD - Land Board
- NBM - Northern Border Magistrate
- NGK - Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk
- OFS - Orange Free State
- SAL - South African Library
- SB - Standard Bank
- SESA - Standard Encyclopaedia of Southern Africa
- SG - Surveyor-General
- SK - Sending Kerk
- STB - Stellenbosch
- WOC - Worcester

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## INTRODUCTION

'My Mama het ons vertel van onse grootouma Kappie, 'n ryk ou vrou wat met haar bokke geboer het in die rantjies anderkant Carnarvon. Haar naam was Plaatjies en sy het die hoë stamneus gehad wat onse oompie Pengi van haar geërwe het.

Sy het vir Mama goed vertel van die ou dae en van die groot man, Donker Malgas, wat gedood is op die eiland in Grootrivier.'

(Elsa Joubert, Die Swerfjare van Poppie Nongena, p.3)

Poppie Nongena's family had moved to Upington by the time she was born, but her great-grandmother, born in about 1860, came from Carnarvon and her great-aunt Hannie had married a Xhosa sheep shearer who had been born in Beaufort West. The family had spent many years moving and working along the banks of the Orange River, at Putsonderwater, Draghoender, Koegas and Prieska, before reaching Upington. All these places had been haunts of the Xhosa hero, Donker Malgas, who made a last stand for Xhosa independence in 1879, having left Schietfontein, north of Victoria West, for the banks of the Orange River in the middle of the nineteenth century.

The early travellers, from Somerville and Truter in 1801-1802, Lichtenstein in 1805-1806, Burchell in 1811 and Thompson in 1824, all mention meeting groups of Xhosa on the northern borders of the Cape. In 1824, Thompson actually pinpointed a 'caffer location' in the vicinity of modern Victoria West. This study is an attempt to discover who the northern Xhosa were, where they had come from and why they

had moved so far from their original homes, to settle along the northern frontier of the colony. It also sets out to recount and critically assess the processes whereby most of these independent stockfarmers and traders were dispossessed and reduced to labourers by 1879.

So much has been written about the Xhosa on the Cape's eastern frontier, where the presence of water and grazing encouraged early contact between them and the colonists. Conversely, little is known about the Xhosa who moved away from the eastern districts and into the northern Cape at the end of the eighteenth century.

J.S. Marais in The Cape Coloured People mentions the formation and development of the community at Schietfontein after 1829 (and, erroneously, the formation of the Pramberg settlement as late as 1839). In 'The Griqua, the Sotho-Tswana and the Missionaries', Martin Legassick conceived the idea that the northern borders of the colony were a 'frontier zone' which was '...temporary, unstable, fluid and dynamic...', a place where acculturation took place and conflict was endemic. He emphasised the necessity for all the frontiersmen of the north to have access to guns and powder, and that leadership was finally grasped by those who had access to other resources, most importantly, to land.

Peter Kallaway has written two papers, 'The Xhosa of the Karreebergen', and 'Danster and the Xhosa of the Gariep', which suffer from not including material from the Cape Archives. Nevertheless, they contain useful material and have been, thus far, the only writing which deals specifically with the northern Xhosa. In The House of Phalo, J.B. Peires gives some insight into the origins of the northern Xhosa, and

some explanation as to why they moved into the colony.

The Rhenish Mission Society in South Africa by E. Strassberger, contains a brief history of the mission to the Xhosa and Bastards at Schietfontein, and in War Along The Orange, T. Strauss tells of the final defeat of the Xhosa in 1879.

There are many reasons for this paucity of material. The Xhosa numbers were comparatively small, and the northern frontier was very different from that in the east. The haunt of San hunter-gatherers for centuries, the northern Cape was so barren and rainfall so minimal that it was only by the beginning of the nineteenth century that pastoralist groups - Boer, Bastard, Khoi and Xhosa - really began to penetrate there. This movement, though slow, led to the development of a complex frontier situation in which the intruding pastoralists co-operated to destroy San predators, and when that threat had been removed, the frontier remained an anarchical area, with little effort made by the central government to impose any form of control. This lack of the disinterested authority became evident in the 1820s and 1830s as pastoralist numbers increased. When competition occurred, local officials in the form of field cornets, if they felt strong enough to do so, generally acted in the interests of the Boers, the group to which they belonged. This inevitably led to group antagonisms, and raids and reprisals were common.

After 1830, there were three fairly clearly defined Xhosa groups. The most northerly consisted of numbers of small settlements along the southern banks of the Orange River, centred on the spring at Prieska. Because these fluid

communities were largely unaffected by changes in the colony, I have not attempted to reconstruct their history in the middle years of the nineteenth century. After 1860, however, considerable numbers of Xhosa, Bastard and white pastoralists encroached on their preserves, and frontier conflict became fierce. The second group was established by the local white authorities in 1830, as a buffer against the San, at Schietfontein, situated in the eastern foothills of the Kareebergen. Their history is well documented, particularly after the arrival of missionary Alheit in 1847. The third settlement, on Pramberg, was furthest south. Established as early as 1809, it was the most stable group with a traditional way of life and a stronger identity than the other two. Being nearest to colonial settlement, it became the first scene of conflict between the Xhosa and the encroaching Boers in the late 1830s.

Serious friction, however, only developed after 1840. Britain's declining wool clip coincided in 1840 with an increased demand for woollen goods which could be made in great quantities by the new machinery of the time. Thus Britain turned to the colonies for wool supplies, and as a result there was a surge of immigrant wool farmers to the Cape. Simultaneously, depression and a decline in wine exports turned the minds of Cape merchants and wealthy landowners to the possible wealth in wool.

The previously 'worthless' land of the northern Cape proved (if the farms were big enough) excellently suited to the grazing of wool sheep. Thus an influx of wool farmers

caused pressure on the Xhosa, Bastard, Khoi and poor white pastoralists' grazing lands. The new men, in concert with the wealthy local landowners, gained control of local government which, at the time, meant they also controlled the disposal of land - a power they used entirely to their own advantage. Besides the dispossession suffered by all the poorer pastoralists through the machinations of the wealthy wool farmers and their agents, the Xhosa ability to hold land independently was increasingly curtailed after 1847 when the Schietfontein community fell under the care of C. Alheit of the Rhenish Mission Society. The presence of a missionary encouraged both the poor and the rich white farmers to think of all three Xhosa groups as a unit. They began to demand a clearly defined mission settlement into which all the northern Xhosa would be placed. By limiting Xhosa movement within the confines of a mission, more land would be available for white expansion and the community would also become a source from which labour could be drawn.

The effect of these pressures on the Xhosa was enormous, largely because the barren nature of the terrain was such that pastoralism was impossible unless large tracts of land were available for grazing, and settled agriculture was not feasible because of the lack of permanent water. This meant that when the northern Xhosa were squeezed off the land, and migration north of the Orange River became impossible, their only alternative to starvation was to become labourers on white men's farms.

C H A P T E R 1THE NORTHERN CAPE AND ITS INHABITANTSThe Land

'This part of Africa, without a miracle, must, for want of water, remain a wilderness to the end of time; it cannot be inhabited, though its general appearance is charming.'

Missionary John Campbell's<sup>1</sup> description of the northern Cape in 1813 was apt, and the hostile environment into which groups of Xhosa moved in the nineteenth century had an enormous effect on all who sought a livelihood from it, for drought was endemic and Campbell's 'miracle', the windmill, did not appear until 1900.<sup>2</sup>

Geographically, most of the area under consideration lay beyond the northern borders of the Colony until 1848. It extended northwards from modern Beaufort West to the Orange River, was bounded in the west by the Zak and Hartebeest Rivers, and in the east by what J.S. Marais in The Cape Coloured People, called the 'line of equilibrium' which was an attempt to demarcate a natural boundary between the Xhosa in the east and the colonists, Bastards and Khoisan in the west. (See maps No. 1 and No. 2, pp. 3,4).<sup>3</sup>

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1. It was Campbell, on this visit to the Bastard settlements north of the Orange River on behalf of the L.M.S., who persuaded the people to call themselves Griquas rather than Bastards. See: J.S. Marais, The Cape Coloured People, p.36.
  2. J. Campbell, Travels in South Africa, pp.193-194; F.J. Steynberg, 'Carnarvon', p.60.
  3. Map No. 1 from J.S. Marais, The Cape Coloured People, facing p.14.

This flat central plateau of the Cape, 1200-1600 metres above sea level, is geologically part of the Karoo System. It is sun-baked and barren. The hot westerly winds have blown away the fine desert sand and exposed the dwyka tillite on the earth's surface. This is a rock series which was named 'dwyka' by the geologist, E. Dunn, in 1873, because it was found in the vicinity of the Dwyka River. The boulders which make up the layer are not conglomerate and are likely to have been originally '...soft till or glacial boulder clay'. (See Diagram p. 5 ). This till has in turn been eroded into desert pavements of clay, cracked and broken by the heat of the sun.<sup>4</sup>

Numerous outcrops of Karoo dolorites break the otherwise monotonously flat surface, and created for Henry Lichtenstein in 1805, the melancholic impression of flat-topped waves in a stormy sea.<sup>5</sup> The dolorite, called yster-klip because of its weight, rusty appearance and metallic ring, has been broken up by the great temperature changes which occur, and boulders, 'coated with the usual black desert varnish', lie scattered over the earth's surface.<sup>6</sup>

The mean annual rainfall for the whole area is between 12-25 centimetres per annum and falls in summer, between November and April. When rain does occur, the low gradients of the rivers, together with the dolorite outcrops which

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4. J.H. Wellington, Southern Africa, A Geographical Study, I, Map II, pp.322, 74; A.L. du Toit, The Geology of South Africa, pp.264-269.
  5. In 1805, Henry Lichtenstein, surgeon to the Hottentot Corps, formed part of a government commission to investigate L.M.S. mission settlements north of the Orange River. See: G. Theal, History, V, p.184; H. Lichtenstein, Travels in Southern Africa, II, pp.259-261.
  6. A.L. du Toit, Geology, pp.360, 368; J.H. Wellington, Southern Africa, I, pp.26, 322-323.





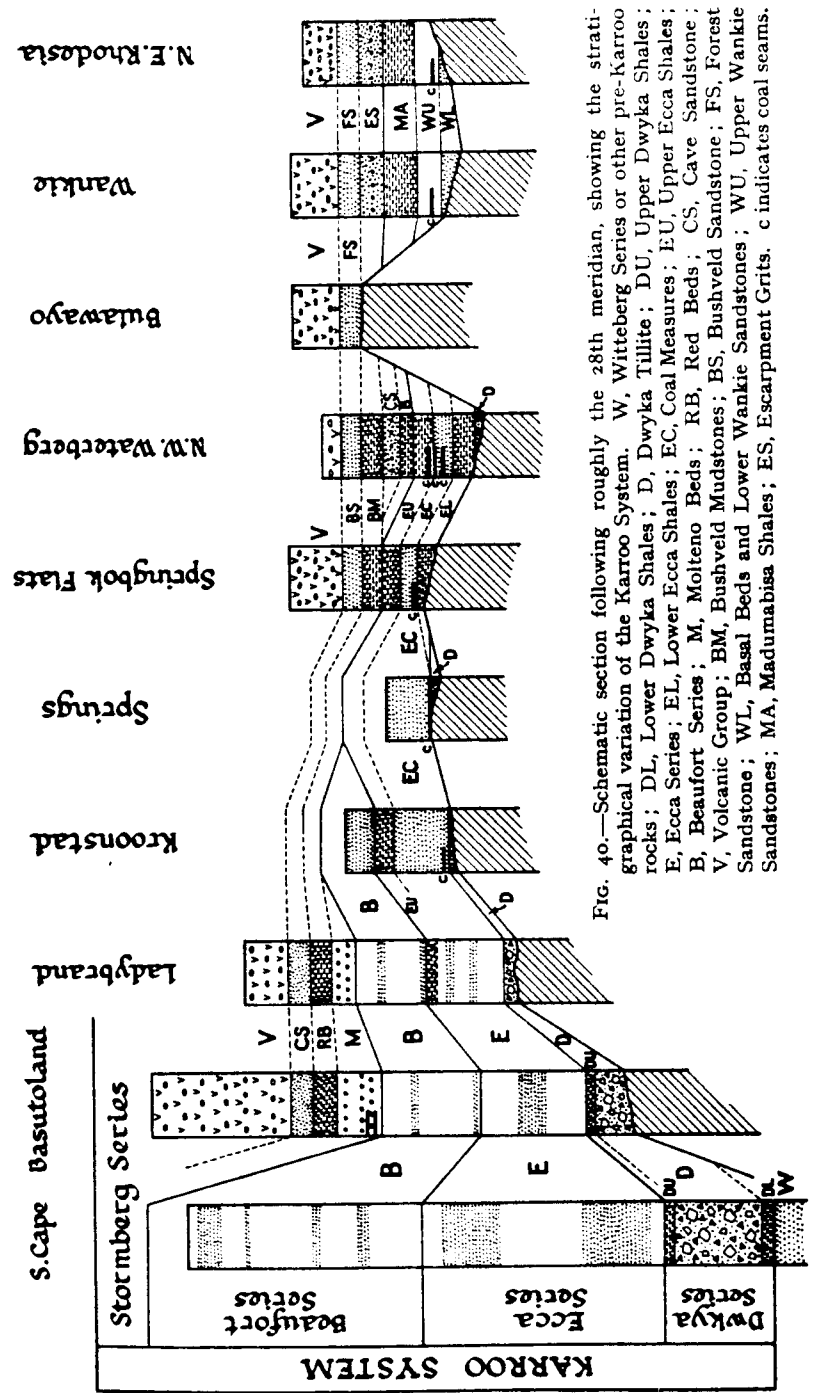


FIG. 40.—Schematic section following roughly the 28th meridian, showing the stratigraphical variation of the Karroo System. W, Witteberg Series or other pre-Karroo rocks; DL, Lower Dwyka Shales; D, Dwyka Tillite; DU, Upper Dwyka Shales; E, Ecça Series; EL, Lower Ecça Shales; EC, Coal Measures; EU, Upper Ecça Shales; B, Beaufort Series; M, Molteno Beds; RB, Red Beds; CS, Cave Sandstone; V, Volcanic Group; BM, Bushveld Mudstones; BS, Bushveld Sandstone; FS, Forest Sandstone; WL, Basal Beds and Lower Wankie Sandstones; WU, Upper Wankie Sandstones; MA, Madumabisa Shales; ES, Escarpment Grits. c indicates coal seams.

form barriers across the watercourses, cause the rivers, such as the Zak, to flood into shallow pans ('vloers'), which are sometimes 32 kilometres wide. Although there are a few fertile strips of land in the valleys of the Zak River, the general brackishness of the soil makes cultivation very difficult, even with irrigation.<sup>7</sup>

The more southerly part of the area, stretching from the Roggeveld and Nieuweveld mountains, through the Kareebergen and modern Carnarvon to the outskirts of Victoria West, was blessed with several fairly strong fountains, and included the chain of mountains called the Kareebergen, named after the Khoi word 'Karee', meaning dry or arid. This became a popular trekveld for Boers from the winter rainfall areas, and P.J. van der Merwe, writing in the 1940s, designated the whole area as the Kareeberge.<sup>8</sup>

Besides the Zak River itself, from whose frequently dry bed brack water could be drawn, there was the fountain at Schietfontein in the eastern foothills of the Kareebergen (see map p. 14) which still conforms with the traveller William Burchell's description of it in 1811. It rises in a thicket of reeds (used for building and thatching) at the head of a shallow ravine down which it runs for about 280 metres before being lost in the earth.<sup>9</sup> Harmsfontein, six or seven kilometres away, was a weaker but more accessible spring which explains why the village of Carnarvon developed

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7. G20-'81, Historical account of the Northern Border, pp. 83-84; J.H. Wellington, Southern Africa, I, pp.246, 74-76, 323-324, 476.

8. P.J. van der Merwe, Trek, pp.196-198; W.J. Burchell, Travels in the Interior of Southern Africa, I, p.206.

9. P.J. van der Merwe, Trek, p.195; W.J. Burchell, Travels, p.208; personal observation, April 1981.

around it. Today, although the fountain at Harmsfontein has dried up, the 100 or so windmills clustered about it indicate plenty of underground water.<sup>10</sup> Meidefontein and Rhonosterpoort had water, and so did Moordenaarsgat, where the spring, though strong, was almost inaccessible, being situated at the foot of a precipitous kloof. And three perennial fountains provided water to the slopes of the Pramberg, 80 kilometres east.<sup>11</sup>

Further north the springs were too weak and erratic to be relied upon and often the only available water, before the Orange River was reached, was that found in brackish pans after the infrequent rains.<sup>12</sup>

As a result of the destructive overgrazing and overkraaling of pastoralists' stock, the desert has encroached onto the northern Cape karoo, making the word, 'karee', more descriptive now than it was in the nineteenth century.<sup>13</sup> The vegetation consists today, as it did then, almost entirely of karoo shrubs. The smaller ones on the flat plains are perennial woody bushes, 8 to 30 centimetres high, growing about a metre apart. The leaves are very small and the root systems large, and thus adapted they can survive up to 10 months of drought. Because of their high mineral and protein content even under drought conditions, they provide invaluable

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10. G7 - '59, Report of an Inquiry as to the Claims of certain Natives residing at the Missionary Institutions of Amandelboom and Schietfontein in the Division of Beaufort to the Lands on which they are located, J.B. Auret, Government Surveyor, 1859, pp.14-15, (henceforward referred to as G7 - '59, Auret's Report); personal observation, April 1981.
11. G7 - '59, Auret's Report, p.13.
12. J.H. Wellington, Southern Africa, p.487; G20 - '81, Northern Border, p.83; CO 692, Report of Inspecting Officers, 1857.
13. J. Acocks, 'Veld Types of South Africa', Memoir No. 28, Botanical Survey of South Africa, pp.10-11, 14, 99.

grazing for sheep. Two common and valued bushes are the various types of pentzia, and the ganna which, though it supplies superb fuel in an otherwise barren land, is strictly guarded when found, being reserved for grazing only.<sup>14</sup>

The symmetrical 'driedoring' which grows a metre high, is common, and 'Bushman' grass grows in some parts of the plains, being replaced in the barren north by the more silvery desert grasses. A taller bush sometimes found on rocky outcrops and in kloofs is the Kareeboom, greatly appreciated as the only shade tree often for hundreds of kilometres.<sup>15</sup> Mimosa bushes too, grow in the dry river beds, particularly in that of the Hartebeest River in the west. After summer thunderstorms, many annuals, both flowers and grasses, spring up for a short, beautiful season. In all the area, only the well-wooded and fertile banks of the Orange River can support life with ease.<sup>16</sup>

Before the intrusion of pastoralists, a fairly large and varied animal population roamed the plains of the plateau. In 1805 when Lichtenstein's party set up camp at Schietfontein, they came across a herd of hartebeest, some of which they shot. On the following day, whilst hunting in the surrounding Karee mountains, they saw a flock of about 30 ostriches and a herd of at least 100 quagga as well as a rhinoceros; and on the plains just beyond Schietfontein, Lichtenstein recorded the presence of eland and stone antelope. Six years later Burchell,

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14. J.H. Wellington, Southern Africa, I, Map IV, pp.280-283; J. Hutchinson, A Botanist in Southern Africa, p.541; information from local farmers, June 1984.

15. J. Acocks, 'Veld Types', pp.99, 92, 96; J.H. Wellington, op.cit., p.280; personal observation and local information, April 1981, June 1984.

16. T. Strauss, War Along the Orange, pp.21-22; J.H. Wellington, op.cit., I, p.180.

at the same place, saw lions, quagga, springbok and hares.<sup>17</sup>

Although game remained plentiful along the Orange River until 1869 (see sketch map No. 3), the game in the Karee-berge had mostly been shot or pushed north by 1824. As the game retreated, the area became prey to swarms of locusts, the pest of drought-stricken areas. Occasionally too, the veld was ravaged by great treks of springbok who were pushed south by drought much further north.<sup>18</sup>

### The San

From the time of written history, San have been recorded as living throughout southern Africa.<sup>19</sup> It seems likely that the San of the north western Cape were solely hunter-gatherers and clearly distinguishable from the Khoi pastoralists whose migration into the south western Cape bypassed this inhospitable region. There is linguistic evidence that hunters in the Roggeveld mountains did not speak any Khoi dialect, and that all attempts by Trekboers to encourage these San to become herders were signally unsuccessful.<sup>20</sup>

The San were nomadic hunter-gatherers. They had to have enough space to be able to expand their seasonal migratory pattern in time of drought and also to preserve the land from over-exploitation. The Kareeberge area with its

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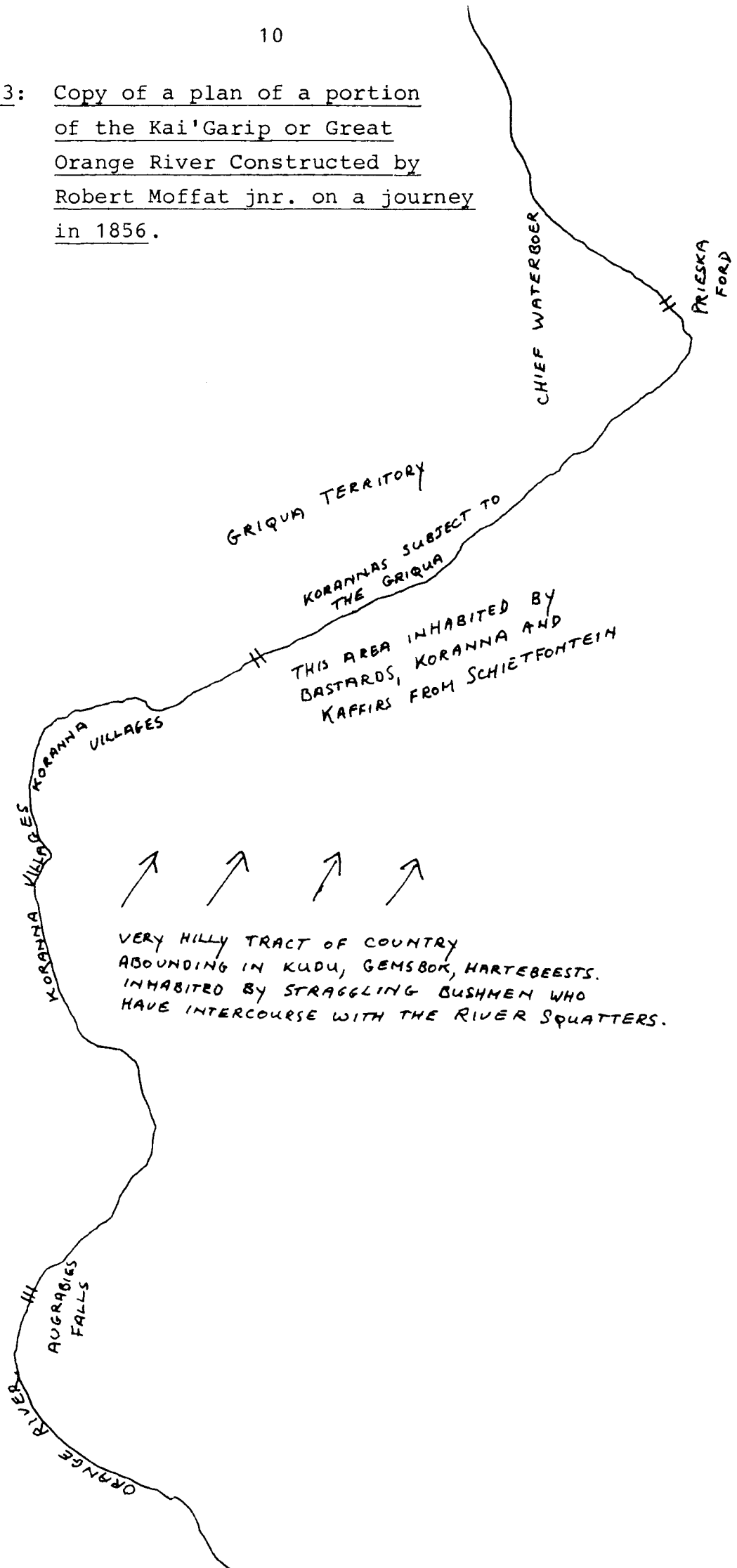
17. H. Lichenstein, Travels, II, pp.259-264; W.J. Burchell, Travels, pp.203-204.

18. Sketch map by R. Moffat Jr., Cape Archives, Maps No. M1/2598, 1856; 1/NBM 5, M. Jackson to Secretary, 6 April 1869; P.J. van der Merwe, Noordwaartse Beweging Voor die Groot Trek, pp.196-200.

19. I. Schapera, The Khoisan Peoples of Southern Africa, p.29.

20. R. Elphick, Kraal and Castle, pp.16, 20-21, 29; G. Theal, Records, XXXIV, p.437; G. Thompson, Travels and Adventures in South Africa, II, p.5.

Map No. 3: Copy of a plan of a portion  
of the Kai'Garip or Great  
Orange River Constructed by  
Robert Moffat jnr. on a journey  
in 1856.



fountains, pasturage and sheltering hills was an ideal environment for them. Though they probably followed game into the Karoo during the dry winter months, for much of the year they could adopt a more sedentary mode of existence.<sup>21</sup>

How many San were living in the Kareeberge before the pastoralists arrived is unknown, for their inaccessibility, nomadism and division into small bands made enumeration difficult. If the traveller and anthropologist, G.T. Fritsch's estimate of 10 000 San living in the Cape at the end of the eighteenth century is reasonably accurate, then there were probably several thousand spread out on these north western plains. The murderous commandos which began in 1770 must have decimated them, for between 1785 and 1795 about 2 500 were killed.<sup>22</sup>

The early travellers saw many traces of San but rarely encountered any. Dr Somerville and P. Truter, leaders of a government-sponsored expedition to procure cattle north of the Orange River in 1801, saw '...a few half-starved Bushmen' between the northern borders of the Colony and the Orange River. Lichtenstein in 1805 had a visit from some San in the Roggeveld, but while his party was in the Kareeberge area they met none, though they found much evidence of fires, bones and dung. In 1811 Burchell had several friendly encounters with San, including a party who visited the travellers at Schietfontein.<sup>23</sup>

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21. I. Schapera, *The Khoisan*, p.91; D.A. Findlay, 'The San of the Thirstland', pp.8-9.

22. I. Schapera, *op.cit.*, pp.39-40; SESA, V, p.52; G.W. Stow, *The Native Races of South Africa*, pp.162-163.

23. G. Theal, *History of South Africa*, V, pp.98, 100; H. Lichtenstein, *Travels*, I, p.141; II, pp.258-259; W.J. Burchell, *Travels*, pp.205, 209.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century these San may have included in their groups Khoi and others who, dispossessed of stock and land, had joined San bands and taken to a San pattern of existence in order to survive.<sup>24</sup> Because so little is known about them, the word 'San' is used here to identify groups who lived by gathering, hunting and raiding, and who did not depend on pastoralism and agriculture.

White Trekboers, Bastard and Xhosa pastoralists, increasingly used the Kareeberge fountains and pasturage in the early years of the nineteenth century. The wild animals disappeared and the competition between the indigenous San and intruding pastoralists became one of the elements of conflict in the complex frontier situation of the Kareeberge.

#### Intrusion of Pastoralists

When Britain took control of the Cape Colony in the nineteenth century she failed to realise that control of the alienation of land was the only way for her power to become effective. This lack of insight, coupled with the constant need to curb expenditure, meant that instead of increasing her authority over the northern Cape by extending the border, she was prepared to allow uncontrolled, haphazard settlement, which encouraged the development of a grey frontier area where violence was endemic.

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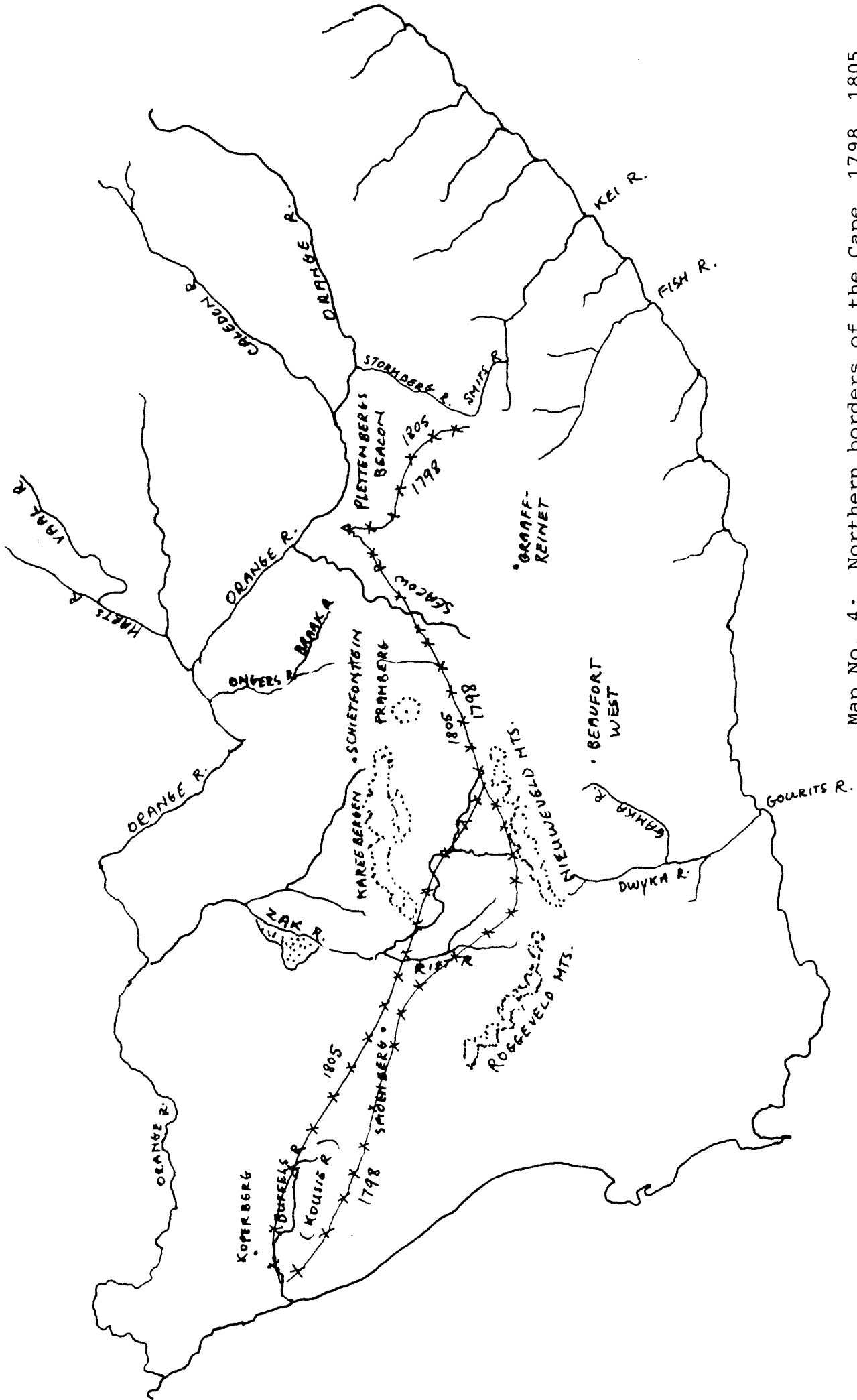
24. S. Marks, 'Khoisan Resistance to the Dutch in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries', Journal of African History, XIII, 1972, p.58.

Admittedly, Lord Macartney, the first British Governor of the Cape, did attempt to halt Trekboer movement and protect the San from their incursions when he defined the northern border of the Colony in 1798. This boundary stretched from the Buffels River on the west coast, dropped south east to the Middle Roggeveld and then climbed north east to von Plettenberg's beacon.<sup>25</sup> It was extended slightly in 1805 so that the line passed through the junction of the Zak and Riet Rivers (see Map No.4, p.14) but otherwise the boundary remained unchanged until, only when under great pressure, the colonial government reluctantly extended it in 1824.<sup>26</sup> (See Map No.7, p.37 ). Even then power to control the area and to dispose of the land therein was largely left in the hands of local authorities.

The arrival of Xhosa traders and pastoralists into the arid areas north of the colonial boundary at the turn of the century coincided with the influx of Bastard, Khoi and Trekboer graziers.

Economic development in the Cape during the latter half of the eighteenth century encouraged expansive stock-farming and by the early years of the nineteenth century Trekboers had settled, either on loan farms or as squatters, as far north as the Roggeveld, Hantam and Nieuweveld. From here they developed a pattern of seasonal migration

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25. British Parliamentary Papers (henceforward referred to as BPP), No. 50 of 1835, p.53; M. Legassick, 'The Griqua, the Sotho-Tswana and the Missionaries', p.102; G. Theal, *History*, V, pp.39-40.
26. LBD 79, Report by Surveyor-General, 16 May 1863; BPP, No. 50 of 1835, Evidence of G. Thompson, pp.138-139; G. Theal, *ibid.*, V, pp.392-394.



Map No. 4: Northern borders of the Cape, 1798, 1805.

into the summer rainfall areas north of the Zak River, the trekveld of the Kareeberge.<sup>27</sup>

This periodic migration was the forerunner of more permanent trans-frontier settlement as land became scarcer, and, after 1813, Cradock's perpetual quitrent system inhibited squatting within the Colony.<sup>28</sup> Though generally nomadic, the Trekboers, often unaware they had moved beyond the ill-defined border, or in expectation of the eventual extension of the boundaries, sometimes laid claim to a piece of land with water. These 'request places', recognised by the field-cornet whose border ward happened to be closest to the land, were the source of frequent conflict.<sup>29</sup>

Both Khoi and Bastards had been pushed beyond the Colony by white expansion. According to Henry Lichenstein,

'...white children of the colonists did not hesitate to make use of the right of the strongest, and to drive their half-yellow relations out of the places where they had fixed their abodes. These Bastard Hottentots were then obliged to seek an asylum in more remote parts, till at length, driven from the Sack River, as they had been before from the Bokkeveld, nothing remained for them but to retreat to the Orange River.'<sup>30</sup>

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27. H. Giliomee and R. Elphick, 'The Structure of European Domination at the Cape 1652-1820', pp.378-379, and L. Guelke, 'The White Settlers 1652-1780', p.59, both in The Shaping of South African Society, eds. R. Elphick and H. Giliomee.
28. P.J. van der Merwe, Noordwaartse Beweging, pp.117-122; W.M. Freund, 'The Cape under the Transitional Governments 1795-1814', in The Shaping of South African Society, p.219.
29. P.J. van der Merwe, op.cit., pp.123-129. In The Right to the Land, p.V, T.R.H. Davenport and K.S. Hunt describe request tenure as the occupation of land when authority for so doing had been given illegally by a local official. It was a form of squatting common in the 1820s because of delays in the granting of applications for Perpetual Quit-rent tenure. Also see G. Thompson, Travels, II, p.105.
30. H. Lichenstein, Travels, II, p.304.

Numerous other factors, such as threats to restrict their freedom of movement, the establishment of the Hottentot Corps, the Khoi rebellion of 1799, and Caledon's Pass Law of 1809, followed by Cradock's Apprenticeship proclamation in 1812, played a part in their dispersal.<sup>31</sup>

These push factors explain only some of the reasons why pastoralist groups left the Colony for its outskirts. As game retreated north, so hunting lured them away, as did the opportunities to trade and raid.<sup>32</sup>

### Conflict

The movement of the pastoralists upset the hunting-gathering pattern of the San. The intrusion of stock onto the natural vegetation drove away much of the game, and the hunters' guns depleted it still further.<sup>33</sup>

Some of the San retreated further north, some became clients. Many moved into the refuge provided by the Kareeberg, and from their 'skuilhoek' in those mountains they foraged and hunted. Experience had taught them that hunting the pastoralists' stock led to severe reprisals, but when drought caused the failure of their own resources, raiding became necessary for survival.<sup>34</sup>

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31. M. Legassick, 'The Griqua, Sotho-Tswana and Missionaries', pp.119-120; G.W. Stow, Native Races, p.343; History, V, p.499.
32. M. Legassick, op.cit., pp.118, 129; M.F. Katzen, 'White Settlers and the Origin of a New Society', in The Oxford History of South Africa, eds. M. Wilson and L. Thompson, p.208.
33. P.J. van der Merwe, Noordwaartse Beweging, pp.192-200; CO 2716, R. Fryer to Civil Commissioner, 22 August 1829.
34. G. Thompson, Travels, II, p.4; P.J. van der Merwe, op.cit., pp.85-89; J. Philip, Researches in South Africa, pp.17, 39; CO 2716, R. Fryer to Civil Commissioner, 22 August 1829.

P.J. van der Merwe suggested that the movement of colonial Trekboers to the north was slowed down by the threat of San attack. This is questionable. When pressure on the land became acute, the Trekboers moved, regardless of the San, and the pastoralist population showed a steady growth.<sup>35</sup>

The development of '...the quasi-political, highly flexible and mobile commando...(which) was organised to aid white expansion against indigenous peoples', together with the technological superiority of the pastoralists ensured their ultimate victory over the San.<sup>36</sup> The fact that the local government was in the hands of field-cornets who were themselves Trekboers, in favour of harsh measures against the San, meant that '...the key role in the administration came to be played by men who were more often the agents of the colonists rather than of the colonial government.'<sup>37</sup> Despite these advantages, the difficulties of chasing the raiders through the drought-stricken territory denied a decisive victory to the pastoralists for some time to come.

As the Xhosa moved into the northern Cape they were drawn into the conflict with the San, but were often seen by the boers as competitors for spoils and for labour.

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35. P.J. van der Merwe, Noordwaartse Beweging, pp.19, 106-112.

36. C.C. Saunders, 'Political Processes in the South African Frontier Zones', in The Frontier in History, eds. M. Lamar and L. Thompson, p.170; CO 2716, R. Fryer to Civil Commissioner, 22 August 1829.

37. CO 2716, op.cit.; H. Giliomee, 'The Eastern Frontier 1770-1812', in The Shaping of South African Society, p.298.

## C H A P T E R 2

### EARLY XHOSA SETTLEMENT

#### Xhosa on the Orange River

By the end of the eighteenth century the Orange River, with its islands and wooded shores, had become a refuge for all manner of people: San, Korana and Bastards; traders, deserters and criminals. To these was added, in 1795, the first recorded group of Xhosa. In that year Ngqika overthrew and captured his uncle Ndlambe. One of Ndlambe's brothers, Nzwane,<sup>1</sup> probably an experienced ivory trader, escaped from Ngqika with a few followers, moved away from Xhosa territory, and attempted to settle along the banks of the Orange River.<sup>2</sup>

Unable to subsist initially, most of them moved south and entered service in the Colony. Nzwane worked for Floris Visser, a veldwachtmeester in the Roggeveld with whom he had frequent, angry clashes. Nevertheless he learned to speak Dutch, and took the name Danster.<sup>3</sup> More importantly, guns were available, and as each Xhosa man acquired the arms and ammunition necessary for independent life, he slipped away, back to the Orange River.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Nzwane was also known as Nozi or Zonie. See: J.B. Peires, 'A History of the Xhosa', Appendix IV, p.250; D. Moodie, The Record, V, p.16.
  2. J.B. Peires, House of Phalo, p.51; D. Moodie, op.cit., p.50; J.S. Marais, Maynier and the First Boer Republic, p.4; H. Lichenstein, Travels, II, p.283.
  3. Cory Accessions, M.S. 1211, p.11.
  4. 1/STB, 10/165, G. Maritz to Landdrost, 16 October 1797, F. Visser to Landdrost, 17 November 1797; H. Lichtenstein, op.cit.; J.B. Peires, op.cit., pp.117-118.

By 1800, Danster had assembled a considerable force whose aim was to capture control of the attractive northern ivory and cattle trade. This was impossible without forming an alliance with Afrikaner, the formidable Korana gangster who had gained absolute control of the middle reaches of the river.<sup>5</sup>

Afrikaner, true to his reputation, soon betrayed the alliance by kidnapping Danster's wife and children, as well as stealing his cattle and murdering his followers. Danster plotted his revenge, and one night while Afrikaner's gang was sleeping off the effects of dancing and brandy, he slipped into their camp in an attempt to rescue his family. He was discovered before he could kill Afrikaner though, and '...was even obliged to leave the children'.<sup>6</sup> This episode earned Danster the nickname, Umgaqi, 'creep mouse', which was to remain with him all his life.<sup>7</sup>

The immediate repercussions of the feud with Afrikaner were serious, and Danster's greatly diminished band, with no cattle to trade, or arms with which to raid, was forced to move further up the river.

Here they met and united with two leaders of the Dange clan, Gola and Olela, who had just arrived with a small group of a hundred followers and who were in an equally vulnerable position.<sup>8</sup> Towards the end of the eighteenth century, the Imidange, refusing to become subordinate to the Xhosa chief Rharhabe, had been pushed

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5. G.M. Theal, Records, II, pp.437-438, IV, p.400.

6. Cory Accessions, MS 1211, p.11, MS 1258, p.2, MS 1242, p.23.

7. ibid., MS 1211, p.13, MS 1242, pp.17, 23; Cape Monthly Magazine, II, 1880, p.282.

8. H. Lichtenstein, Travels, II, p.284.

west of the Fish River, where they had come into contact and clashed with the Boers of Agter Bruyntjeshoogte in 1779. After this war the Dange clan had fallen into disarray under the poor leadership of Olela.<sup>9</sup> While continuing to build up the Rharhabe clan at the expense of other chiefdoms, Ndlambe, Rharhabe's son, crushed the weakened Imidange in 1783, and as a result many small groups were driven deep into the Cape Colony. After the further disruption of the third frontier war in 1799, Olela, his brother, Gola, and scattered remnants of the clan had moved north to the Orange River.<sup>10</sup>

Co-operation between Danster, brother of Ndlambe, and Gola and Olela was uneasy, brought about through necessity alone. Nevertheless it made for a cohesion which impressed Somerville and Truter's party who met the group in 1801. So great was Afrikaner's notoriety, that Danster's stories of the gangster encouraged Somerville and Truter to give practical evidence of their abhorrence of his violent deeds. In 1802, strengthened by gifts of arms and ammunition, Danster was able to muster a combined Xhosa, Namaqua, Bastard and Korana force against Afrikaner. This time Afrikaner was defeated, and, his power broken, he fled to Namaqualand.<sup>11</sup>

The prizes from this raid, enough guns and powder at last, encouraged the Xhosa to extend their raiding and trading activities further north, where they attacked the

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9. J.B. Peires, House of Phalo, p.50. Olela and Bangela were the same person. See: J.B. Peires, 'A History of the Xhosa', pp.94-95.  
 10. J.B. Peires, 'A History of the Xhosa', Appendix IV, p.249; G. Theal, Records, VII, pp.51-52.  
 11. G. Theal, ibid., IV, pp.405-408; T. Strauss, War Along the Orange, p.10.

Tlhaping in 1805. The Griqua, who held the monopoly of trade with the Tlhaping, strongly objected to this bid for power, and with missionary assistance, not only forced the Xhosa to return the stolen cattle, but also made it clear they would not tolerate such competition.<sup>12</sup>

It became apparent that if they were to gain control of the lucrative northern trade, the Xhosa would have to form a stronger, more stable community. Although nominal leadership was in the hands of Olela and Gola, who had originally moved to the Orange River in order to avoid subservience to others, real authority, particularly after the defeat of Afrikaner, was held by 'corporal' Danster.<sup>13</sup> He was not strong enough, however, to weld the tribally disparate, naturally fissiparous group into one unit. Physically the land south of the Orange River was too arid to sustain large, stable settlement, while the river banks themselves were the scene of constant unrest and war. The major drawback though, lay in the essential contradiction: trade meant constant movement which encouraged the formation of small, fluid groups.

#### Settlement further south

Thus the barren wastes which lay between the southern banks of the Orange River and the northern borders of the Colony, the traditional home of San hunters, began to be

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12. W.J. Burchell, Travels, II, pp.382-383; P. Kallaway, 'Danster and the Xhosa of the Gariep', African Studies Journal, 1982, p.155.

13. H. Lichtenstein, Travels, II, pp.283, 285.

travelled, explored and settled by groups of these Xhosa newcomers. By 1806 two commoners, Hendrick and Jacob (Ogande) had settled with a number of adherents at a source of the Gamka River. They had cattle and moved in and out of the Colony to barter, while other independent trading units had settled on the northern banks of the Zak River by 1808.<sup>14</sup>

By then Gola, unwilling to remain subordinate to Danster, had moved to the Zwarteberg, and Danster's numbers had dwindled alarmingly. In 1808 he organised a recruiting campaign. Olela was sent to persuade Gola to return, and also to entice Xhosa in colonial service to leave it for the freedom and trading wealth he offered. Danster himself wooed Hendrick on the Gamka.<sup>15</sup>

Though partially successful, these attempts underlined the difficulties involved in attempting frontier unity. Although Hendrick's fellow leader, Jacob, remained behind, Hendrick's party, probably under pressure, followed Danster back to the Orange River only to be virtually wiped out by a San attack on arrival. Hendrick and 30 men were killed. Understandably Olela's attempts at recruitment within the Colony were looked at askance by the colonial authorities who arrested him for causing unrest among their servants. Though he managed to escape, he was able to provide Danster with only 40 new followers.<sup>16</sup>

Gola returned to the Orange in 1809, but in order '...to bring away his wife and children', not stay. With

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14. H. Lichstenstein, *op.cit.*, pp.219-220; D. Moodie, *The Record*, V, p.16, Appendix p.60.

15. D. Moodie, *ibid.*

16. *ibid.* The San were a constant threat to the Orange River Xhosa. See: W.J. Burchell, *Travels*, I, p.302.

his family and a few dependants from the Zwarteberg he established himself on Pramberg, 80 kilometres south east of Schietfontein.<sup>17</sup> (See Map No. 5 , p. 27 ) Although they became, to some extent, a settled pastoral unit, the Pramberg Xhosa certainly continued to participate in large-scale raiding operations beyond the Orange River, and engaged in frequent, bitterly competitive clashes with Danster.

Olela was not the only one harassed by the local authorities. All of the independent Xhosa traders who moved in and out of the Colony bringing ivory and cattle to exchange for arms and ammunition, were regarded as trouble-makers and were unwelcome within the Cape borders. The only Xhosa who were considered acceptable within the Colony were those who were prepared to sell their labour and become servants.<sup>18</sup>

Danster and a party were caught within the colonial boundaries early in 1811, accused of cattle theft, and transported aboard the 'Young Phoenix' to Algoa Bay. From there they were to be returned, under heavy guard to Ngqika. The government hoped, by widely circulating this action, to deter Xhosa crossing both the Fish River and the northern borders into the Colony. The plan failed. Danster and most of his fellow prisoners escaped en route, and Ngqika refused to take responsibility for the others as his own

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17. D. Moodie, The Record, V, p.50; G. Thompson, Travels, II, p.7, and map showing 'caffer location', pp.90-91.

18. H. Lichstenstein, Travels, II, pp.220-221.

position was far too weak.<sup>19</sup>

During 1811 tension increased on the Fish River, causing a ripple of Xhosa movement. In February a considerable number of Xhosa were given permission to move through the Colony in order to settle on the Orange River (probably because of Governor Caledon's conciliatory policy at the time). Angry Nieuweveld boers complained of cattle theft, and demanded a commando against them. Harassed by the fighting on the eastern frontier, the authorities wanted to avoid clashes, and the travellers were allowed to go in peace, though watched carefully and encouraged to move swiftly.<sup>20</sup>

Many did not go as far as the Orange River and one group under the leadership of a man called Pieterse<sup>21</sup> joined Jacob's settlement on the banks of the Zak River just beyond the northern border of the Colony. Another large emigrant group, including over 500 men and probably containing the triumphant Danster, marched defiantly through the Graaff-Reinet district, past Schietfontein, to strengthen the Orange River settlement.<sup>22</sup>

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19. CO 2575, J. Cuyler to Secretary, 24 January 1811, 3 February 1811; J. Cuyler to W. Nel, 19 January 1811; W. Nel to J. Cuyler, 7 February 1811; A. Stockenström to Secretary, 25 February 1811. Burchell believed they were transported after Danster had petitioned the Governor's aid against other Xhosa leaders. See: W.J. Burchell, Travels, I, p.134. Apparently Danster and Hermanus Pieterse did approach the Governor earlier, c.1805, to complain about Ndlambe. See: Cory Accessions, MS 1242, p.17.
20. G. Theal, History, V, p.250; J.B. Peires, House of Phalo, p.60; CO 2575, H. van der Graaff to Governor, 1 February 1811.
21. CO 2575, H. van der Graaff to Governor, 1 February 1811. Pieterse (Pietersen) is called Claas in this letter. However there are both earlier and later references to Hermanus Pieterse who became a leader on the Zak River. There is also evidence that he and Danster were together on occasions. See: fn.19 above; Cory Accessions, MS 1242, p.17, MS 1244, p.2; CO 2609, Landdrost to Secretary, 11 August 1817; GR 8/9, Secretary to Landdrost, 29 March 1820.
22. W.J. Burchell, Travels, I, pp.49, 160, 202.

In November 1812 Danster, believing he now had enough support, risked another assault on the Griqua trade ascendancy. A Korana kraal was attacked, but the consequences were disastrous. The Klaarwater Griqua, using arms provided by their missionaries, retaliated. Only a handful of Xhosa men and their families survived.<sup>23</sup> Danster was forced to leave the Orange and move southward, though a few of his supporters remained near Prieska Drift where they formed a nucleus for later settlement. Danster's tiny band now allied with Hermanus Pieterse and Jacob, and the Zak River, only just beyond the colonial boundary, became their base for future operations.<sup>24</sup>

The Xhosa settlement on the Zak River had always been a good jumping off point for trade with the Colony, and had become a refuge for colonial deserters. Now it became a hive of activity, and Danster escorted Coenraad Buys<sup>25</sup> to the Orange River in 1814, from where they threatened the LMS station at Toverberg (Colesberg), and several Griqua villages. The Griqua fear of attack since 1813 was reasonable in the light of this behaviour, and the subsequent support by the Zak River Xhosa for the Hartenaars in the 1814-1815 rebellion against established Griqua authority.<sup>26</sup>

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23. CO 2587, W. Anderson and L. Jansze to Landdrost, 23 January 1813.

24. J. Campbell, Travels, p.347; CO 2609, J. Nel to Landdrost, 9 June 1817, Landdrost to Secretary, 22 August 1817.

25. Coenraad Buys was outlawed in 1798 for living with the Xhosa and refusing to return to the Colony. Because of his close relationship with Ngqika's mother, Buys was believed by both colonists and Xhosa to have great influence over Ngqika. See: G. Theal, History, V, pp.52-53.

26. GR 8/8, Secretary to Landdrost, 6 August 1818, 22 October 1818; Cory Accessions, MS 1211, p.11; P. Kallaway, 'Danster and the Xhosa of the Gariep', p.158; J. Campbell, Travels, p.347.

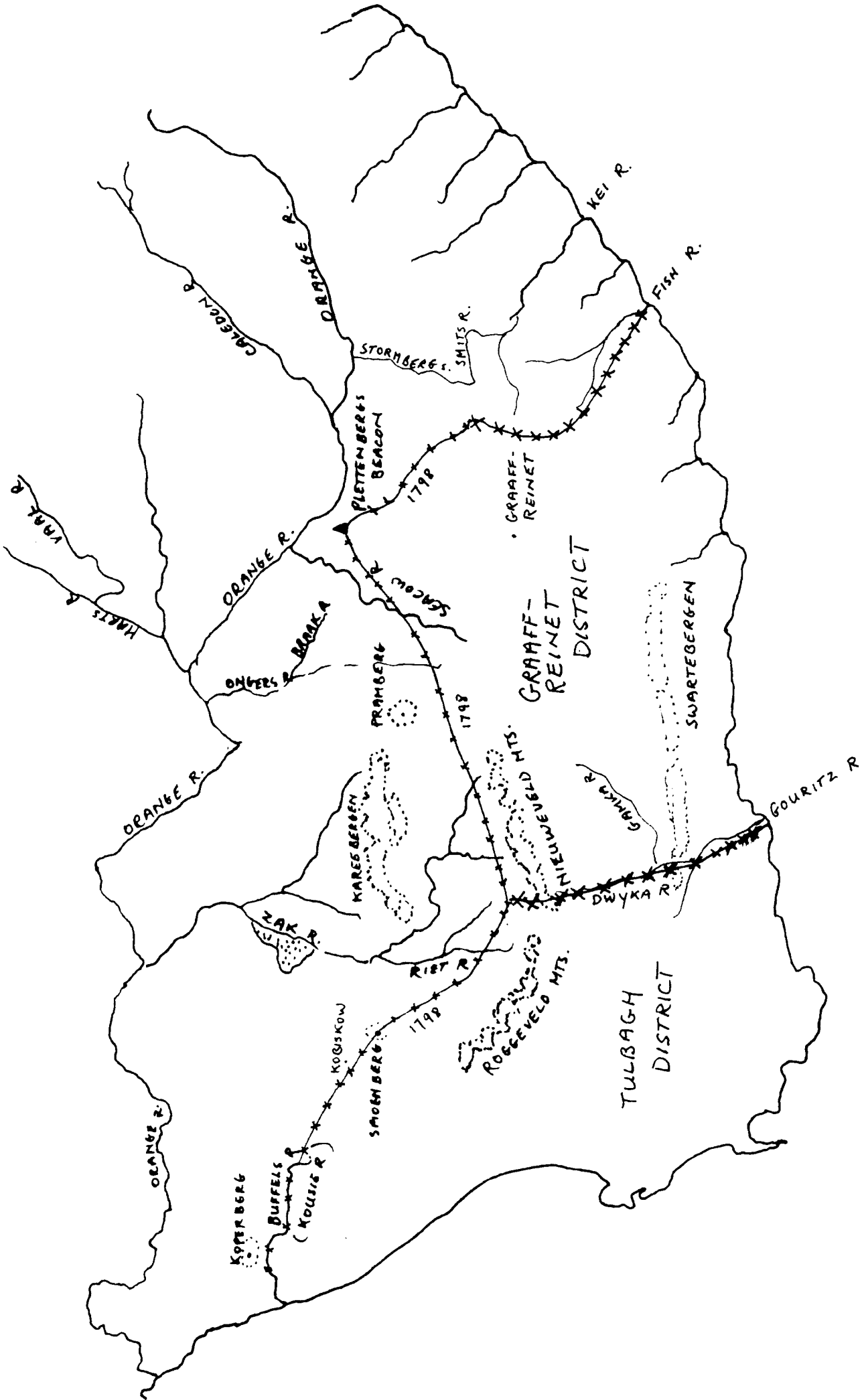
Danster formed alliances with white farmers too, in many instances acting as a guide to trade in the north. Field-Cornet Jan van der Westhuisen of Tulbagh was implicated in a deal whereby in exchange for trading introductions beyond the Orange, he gave Danster ammunition. Similar deals were made, mostly with those Boers who, banished after the Slachtersnek rebellion, had settled in the Nieuweveld, and in this way Danster built up a good supply of illicit arms.<sup>27</sup>

By 1817 the Nieuweveld straddled the districts of Tulbagh and Graaff-Reinet. (See Map No. 5, p. 27 ). The Zak River Xhosa were settled on the Tulbagh borders whereas the settlement under Gola on Pramberg was situated just beyond the district of Graaff-Reinet. The two landdrosts, J. Fischer in Tulbagh and Sir Andries Stockenström in Graaff-Reinet, had sharply differing attitudes towards these communities, which though beyond the boundary, became their responsibility in the maintenance of law and order. Fischer condoned the illegal gun-running, whereas Stockenström was clearly concerned that justice and peace should prevail on the frontier.<sup>28</sup>

#### Intervention by Stockenström

Relations between Gola and Danster were never cordial.<sup>29</sup>

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27. CO 2614, Landdrost to Secretary, 15 April 1818; CO 2612, Landdrost to Secretary, 29 July 1818.  
 28. CO 2609, Landdrost to Secretary, 22 August 1817; GR 8/8, Secretary to Landdrost, 8 April 1818; CO 2614, Landdrost to Secretary, 15 April 1818; CO 2606, Landdrost to Secretary, 4 December 1817; CO 2612, Landdrost to Secretary, 29 July 1818.  
 29. GR 8/8, Secretary to Landdrost, 20 December 1817; Cory Accessions, MS 1211, p.12.



Map No. 5: The Nieuweveld, 1817.

They were possibly further irritated by trading competition and by cattle lifting, as all the traders used the route through the Kareeberge, via the water of Schietfontein.<sup>30</sup> While Gola remained on Pramberg, Danster was unable to control the cis-Orange trade. The drought in 1817 and 1818 brought the simmering antagonism to a head, at the same time as it provoked an increase in San raids on all the pastoralists of the area who retaliated violently.<sup>31</sup> Danster saw in the ensuing turmoil an opportunity to rid himself of Gola.

He used his allies to good effect. In June 1817 Field-Cornet Jan van der Westhuisen complained to Landdrost Fischer that Gola and his men had not only attacked and stolen everything from Danster's people, (unlikely when superiority of weapons clearly lay in Danster's hands), but were conspiring to attack the colonists as well. He fuelled Boer fears further by announcing that Gola had stolen his cattle too. Aware that they had Fischer's tacit approval, these depredations were sufficient excuse for Danster and van der Westhuisen to rally their men: they attacked Gola in December, inflicting severe loss of life and gathering considerable booty in the form of cattle.<sup>32</sup>

Gola was weakened but not destroyed, and both Xhosa groups continued to attack the raiding San. Although it was believed in Graaff-Reinet that it was Danster who was

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30. P. Kallaway, 'The Xhosa of the Karreebergen', p.2.

31. CO 2612, Landdrost to Secretary, 25 June 1818; A. Smith, The Diary of Andrew Smith, II, p.36.

32. CO 2609, J. Nel to Landdrost, 9 June 1817; Landdrost to Secretary, 19 June 1817; CO 2614, D.S. Forie (the spelling of his name varied) to J. van der Westhuisen, 11 December 1817.

inciting and enslaving the San, the Tulbagh Boers insisted that it was Gola and his men who kept crossing the Zak River and attacking. As a result, Stockenström, determined to put an end to the unrest, sent a commando against Gola and the Pramberg Xhosa in mid 1818.<sup>33</sup>

No-one was killed, but Gola and 42 men were captured and more than 2 000 sheep and goats taken. Stockenström distributed these among the local San and Boers, leaving just enough for the subsistence of the few remaining Xhosa pastoralists who were allowed to return to Pramberg. Gola and the other prisoners were taken to Graaff-Reinet, and from there returned to Bruyntjeshoogte. They were given arms on leaving the Colony because of the enmity they feared from other Xhosa groups. Many of these men soon filtered back into the Colony and Stockenström conceded he could not prevent their return.<sup>34</sup>

The outbreak of hostilities in 1818 had coincided with a period of drought. There were good rains in 1824, and the picture presented to George Thompson when he visited the area in that year was one of tranquillity. The numbers on Pramberg had increased to 40 families who were considered peaceable and thrifty, had 1 100 cattle and 21 000 sheep, and lived in apparent harmony with their neighbours.<sup>35</sup>

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33. CO 2609, Landdrost to Secretary, 19 June 1817; CO 2614, D.S. Forie to J. van der Westhuisen, 11 December 1817; CO 2612, Landdrost to Secretary, 29 July 1818.

34. CO 2612, Landdrost to Secretary, 29 July 1818, A. Stockenström to Landdrost Faure at Bruyntjeshoogte, 22 August 1818; GR 8/8, Secretary to Landdrost, 28 August 1818; BPP, No. 50 of 1835, p.119; CO 2625, Landdrost to Secretary, 15 March 1820.

35. For rainfall patterns, see chart on p.30 from P.J. van der Merwe, Noordwaartse Beweging, p.204; BPP, No. 50 of 1835, pp.137-139.

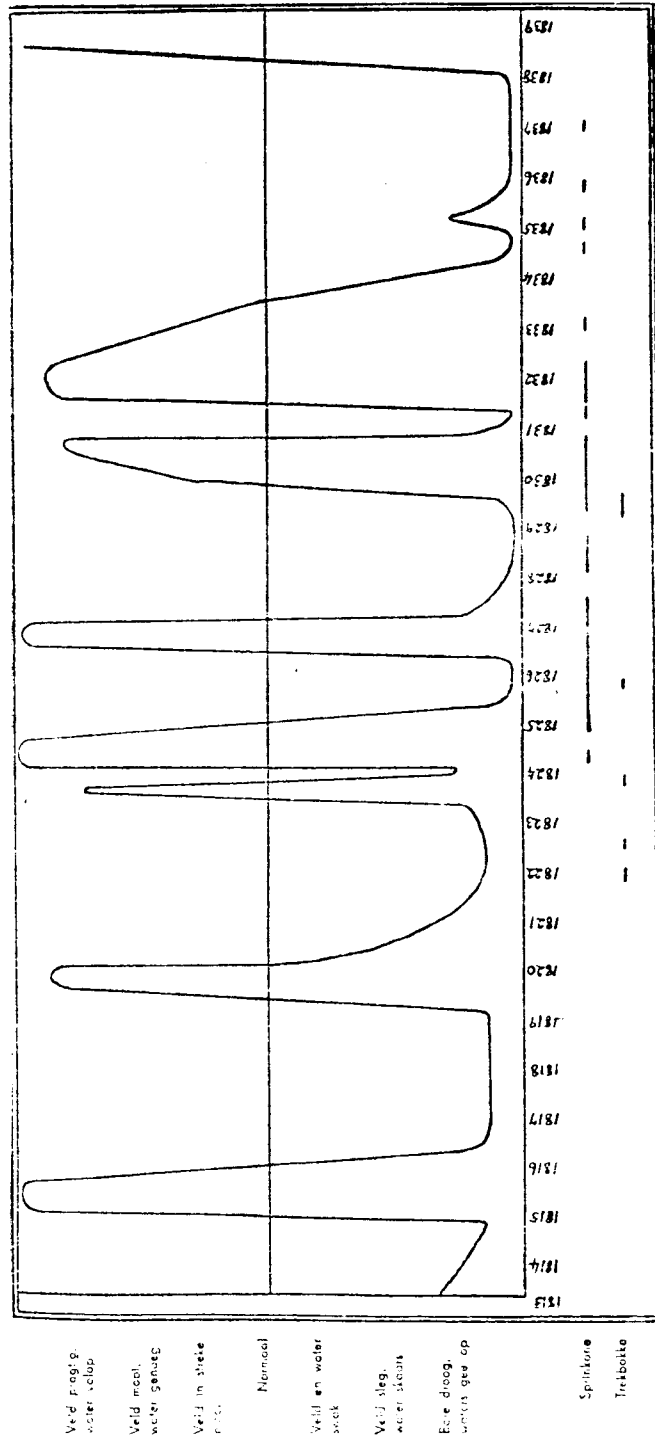


Fig. 2. Die Loop van Droogtes in die Veldkornetskappe op die Noordgrens (1813—1839).

Rainfall Chart taken from P.J. van der Merwe, Noordwaartse Beweging, p.204.

Meanwhile, Danster and his forces had managed to elude Stockenström's commando in 1818. There is some evidence that they were not seriously pursued, and that the commando was wary of Danster's armed might. Once the fighting was over he returned to the Zak River, leader of an increasingly mixed band.<sup>36</sup>

This fracas in 1818 gave the final impetus to the Governor's plans for the formation of a sub-district between Tulbagh and Graaff-Reinet. Fischer and Stockenström decided that its centre should be the farm, Hooyvlakte, at the base of the Nieuweveld mountains, and the new district, Beaufort, was proclaimed in 1818. (See Map No.6, p.32). Jan van der Westhuisen's ward fell within its confines, and as it was placed under the jurisdiction of Graaff-Reinet, Stockenström could, at last, tighten up border discipline.<sup>37</sup>

Danster, Jacob and Pieterse were still on the Zak River in 1819, beyond colonial control, restless, intriguing, shifting, and wary of white patrols.<sup>38</sup> They moved large numbers of Bastard refugees to the Orange River in 1820 (20 wagonloads went via the Kareebergen in February) and after each trip the Xhosa brought back cattle which they still traded within the Colony.<sup>39</sup>

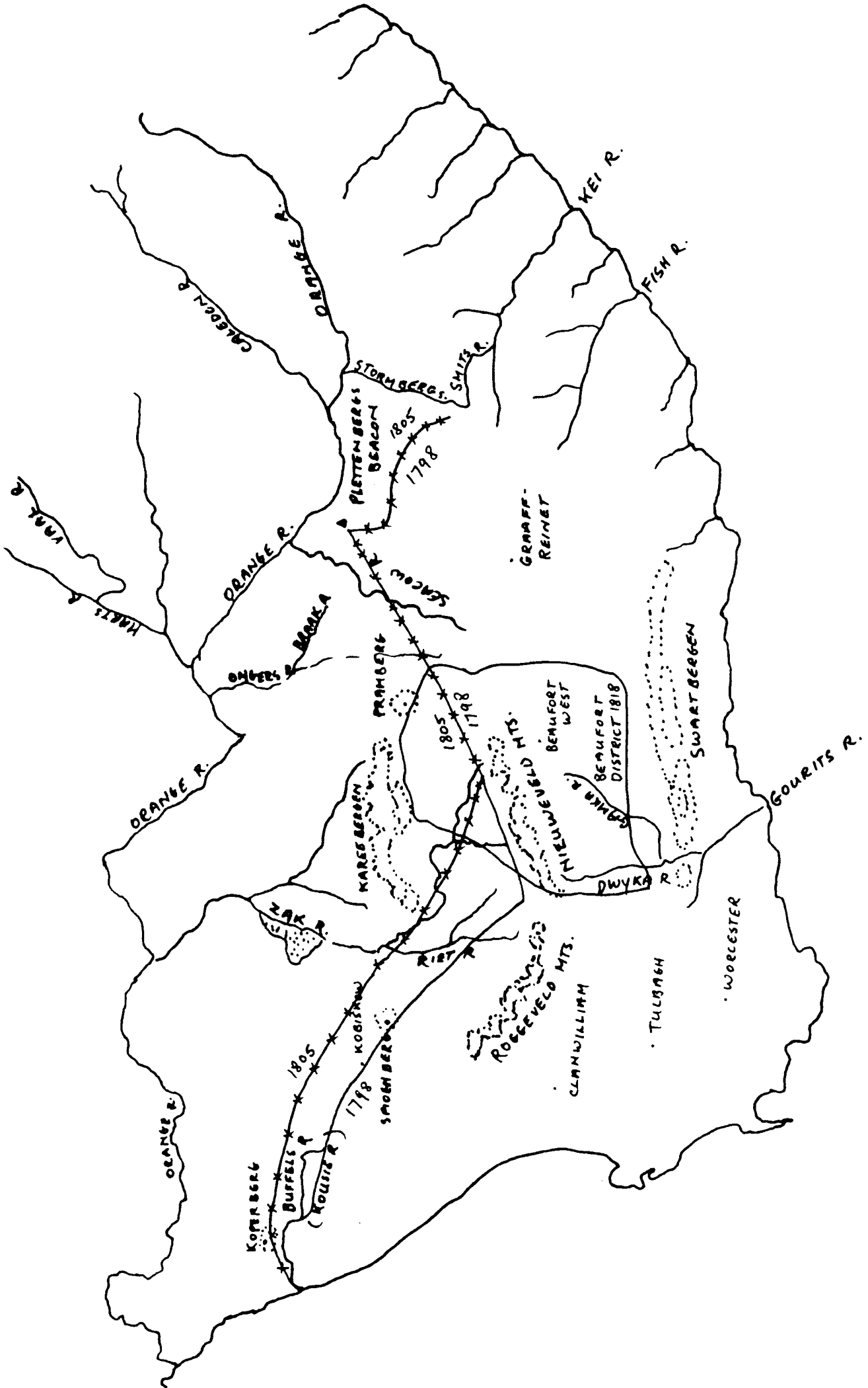
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36. CO 2612, Landdrost to Secretary, 29 July 1818; G. Theal, Records, XII, p.34, XXXI, p.27.

37. GR 8/8, Secretary to Landdrost, 28 August 1818; CO 2612, Landdrost to Governor, 10 October 1818; W.G.H. en S. Vivier, Hooyvlakte. Die Verhaal van Beaufort-Wes 1818-1968, pp.5-6.

38. CO 2620, Landdrost to Secretary, 21 April 1819; CO 2618, J. Baird to Secretary, 8 June 1819; G. Theal, Records, XXXI, p.27.

39. CO 2625, J. Baird to A. Stockenström, 25 February 1820; J. Burgers to J. Baird, 9 February 1820; GR 11/4, J. Burgers to J. Baird, n.d. March 1820.



Map No. 6: Formation of the district of Beaufort West, 1818.

Now, however, they were being sternly watched: Stockenström wanted an excuse to pounce. The Governor had warned him that because Danster and Pieterse lived beyond the boundary of the colony they were inviolable unless they attacked the colonists. Stockenström thus instructed the field-cornets of the Nieuweveld to keep a sharp lookout and to capture any Xhosa who entered the colony. This gave the field-cornets an opportunity to rob Xhosa traders of their goods, and many, who were caught and sent to Robben Island, had their stock and dependants distributed among their captors.<sup>40</sup>

Nevertheless, under Stockenström, the border field-cornets, who had been used to wielding absolute power, were occasionally forced to bow to the law. In 1821 Provisional Field-Cornet P.D. Jacobs, acting on instructions from Field-Cornet D.S. Fourie, captured a party of three Xhosa men. Pending their trial, the field-cornet distributed their women-folk, two San children and 808 cattle among the people of the Nieuweveld. When the trial finally took place in 1824, the men were acquitted and the Boers not only had to reimburse them but had to accept their return to Danster. Sometimes too, Xhosa prisoners, instead of being despatched to Robben Island, were given permission to remain, with their small flocks, within the Beaufort district, no doubt as a potential source of labour.<sup>41</sup>

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40. CO 2625, J. Burgers to J. Baird, 8 March 1820, 15 March 1820; GR 8/9, Secretary to Landdrost, 29 March 1820; CO 2641, Landdrost to Secretary, 6 June 1822; CO 2633, D.S. Fourie to J. Baird, 7 May 1821. The Governor's pencilled reply to a letter, CO 2633, from A. Stockenström, 9 May 1821, stated that according to regulations Xhosa prisoners were to be sent first to Cape Town and then to Robben Island.
41. CO 2633, D.S. Fourie to J. Baird, 7 May 1821; GR 8/13, Attorney-General to Secretary, 15 November 1824; CO 2641, Landdrost to Secretary, 6 June 1822. There were Xhosa pastoralists in the Beaufort district in 1829. See: chapter 3, p.38.

Despite these attempts to either destroy trading links or to co-opt Xhosa into the colony, Danster and the Zak River settlement continued to flourish, with considerable Boer support. Stockenström, galled by his inability to enforce law and order, realised that only by an extension of the boundary of the Colony itself, could he force the extension of colonial control over these brigands.<sup>42</sup>

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42. LBD 79, A. Stockenström to Secretary, 19 September 1820.

CHAPTER 3BEGINNINGS OF COLONIAL CONTROL DURING THE 1830s

Stockenström's commando against the Xhosa in 1818 did little to change the overall pattern of conflict. 1821 and 1822 were years of terrible drought which led to a particularly heavy influx of people onto the fountains and vegetation of the Kareeberge. Warfare with the San, and conflict between all the pastoralist groups became so bad that the central government was forced to listen to demands that it extend its control over the area.<sup>1</sup> As a result, the boundary of the Colony was extended to include the Zak River Xhosa in 1824. Thus the local authorities were able to disperse Danster's community and later establish a new Xhosa settlement at Schietfontein, which though beyond the border, would fall under colonial control.

Boundary Changes

For some time Stockenström had been pressing for the extension of the boundary to the Orange River. The formation of the Beaufort district in 1818 had informally added to the Colony a large tract of land north of the Zak River, and farmers had begun to lease land beyond the old border line.

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1. BPP, No.50 of 1835, pp.105, 77-78, 109; LBD 79, A. Stockenström to Secretary, 29 September 1820; GR 8/8, Secretary to Landdrost, 11 October 1820.

Stockenström's attempts both to define the colonial limits and prevent further movement beyond them were in vain.<sup>2</sup>

As a result, Acting Governor Donkin, though reluctant to increase the extent of British authority as far as the Orange, established a commission in 1821 to ascertain an accurate northern border. Stockenström and Lieutenant Bonamy of the Engineer's Department conducted the survey and their recommendations, though never officially proclaimed, were approved and put into practice in 1824. In the east the border was pushed up to the Orange River and in the north it was moved up to the Kareebergen adding 124 800 square kilometres to the Colony. (See Map No.7, p.37).<sup>3</sup>

As a bar to settlement the extended border was a failure and by the end of 1825 not only was the new territory completely settled, but farms were beginning to appear as far north as the Orange River.<sup>4</sup> As far as Stockenström was concerned however, the lawless Bastard and Xhosa settlements on the Zak River, particularly that of Danster and Pieterse, were at last within his control.

#### Dispersal of the Xhosa

Danster was determined to remain a free agent and as pressure on his group now increased he fled to the Orange River, moving back into the Colony when he believed he was safe.<sup>5</sup>

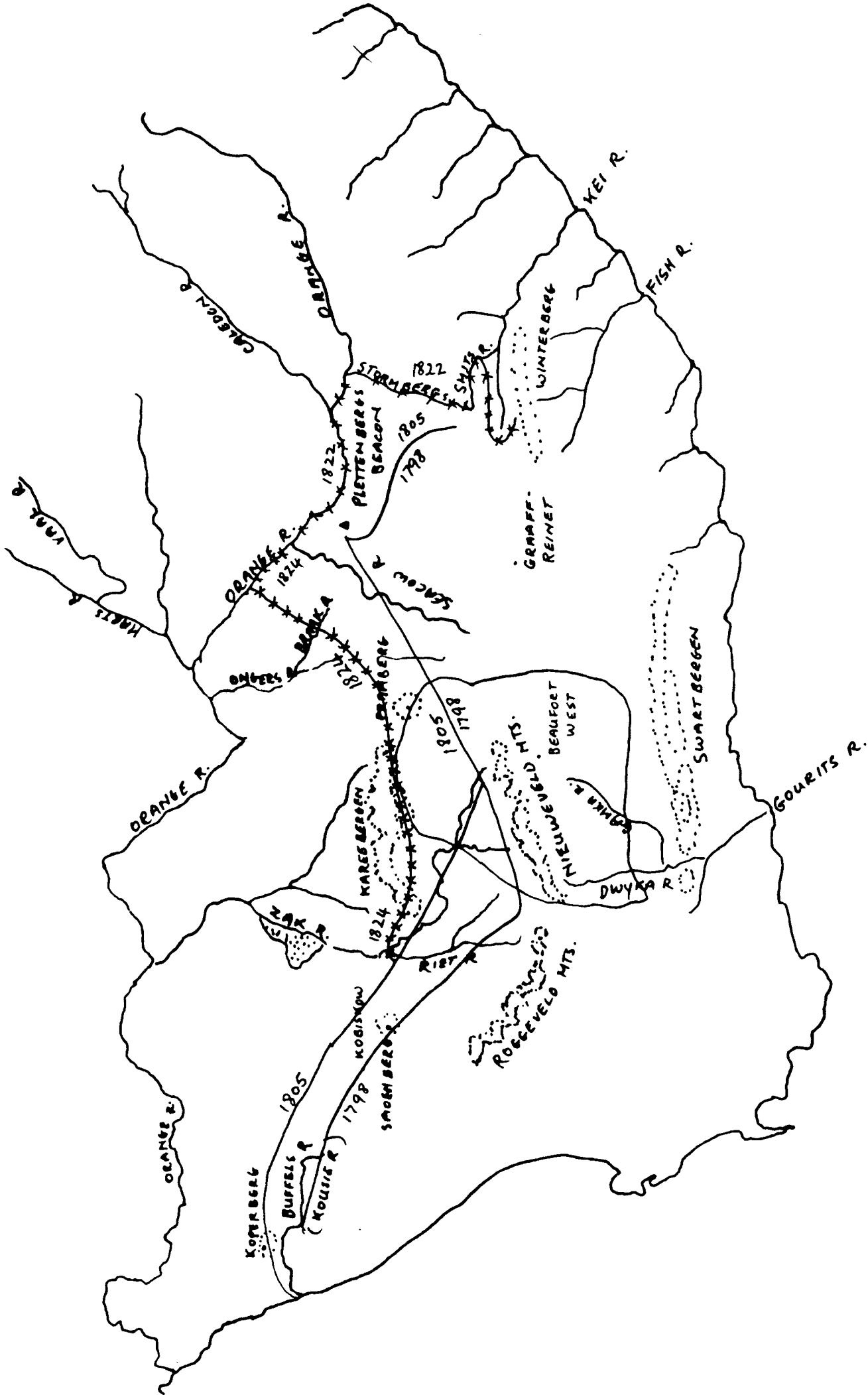
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2. G. Theal, History, V, p.392; P.J. van der Merwe, Noordwaartse Beweging, pp.123-125.

3. GR 8/8, Secretary to Civil Commissioner, 11 October 1820; G. Theal, op.cit., pp.393-394; BPP, No.50 of 1835, pp.120-121; LBD 79, A. Stockenström to Assistant Secretary, 18 August 1824, Report by Surveyor-General, 16 May 1863; GH 19/1, Commission of Enquiry re Land Matters 1821-1826.

4. BPP, No.50 of 1835, p.123.

5. Cory Accessions, MS 1242, p.24; The Diary of Andrew Smith, 1, p.107; Acc. 302, J.M. Orpen Papers, V.



Map No. 7: Extension of the northern border, 1824.

Though he was still eluding capture in 1828 there is a story, told by Nehemiah Moshesh, that he was finally caught and sent to Robben Island. He managed to escape in a boat, and though his companion was drowned, Danster returned to his old haunts in 1830 or 1831.<sup>6</sup> Extremely wary of recapture, he gathered his followers and trekked with them to Moshesh in Basutoland, where in exchange for arms he was allowed to settle at Danster's Nek, opposite Herschel, between Rouxville and Zastron, in 1834.<sup>7</sup> From there, though no longer part of this story, his plundering, raiding, trading and warlike activities continued unabated for many more years.<sup>8</sup>

Stockenström's actions against the Zak River Xhosa in 1824 succeeded in breaking the community. Pieterse, like Danster, removed to the Orange River, and about the time of Danster's capture he and his followers moved to Pramberg. He became captain of that settlement which now became the base for brisk trade with trans-Orange settlements.<sup>9</sup>

Stockenström permitted about 30 Xhosa families to remain on the northern bounds of the Beaufort district. Cultivators as well as pastoralists, they became respected members of the community until pressure on the land increased.<sup>10</sup>

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6. Cory Accessions, MS 1259, p.3; 'A Little Light from Basutoland', in The Cape Monthly Magazine, II, 1880, p.282.

7. Basutoland Records, I, p.541; Cory Accessions, MS 1242, p.17, MS 1211, p.12.

8. The Cape Times, 13 April 1921; Cory Accessions, MS 1242, pp.23-26; CO 2764, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 11 April 1836, 23 April 1836; Acc. 302, V, 16 September 1837, 18 October 1837.

9. 1/BFW 13/14, Names of Xhosa implicated in murder case, n.d. 1833; 1/BFW 9/51, C.J. de Klerk to Civil Commissioner, 20 November 1837; CO 2899, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 7 May 1854; Acting Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 11 May 1854.

10. 1/BFW 9/35, Civil Commissioner of Graaff-Reinet to Resident Magistrate of Beaufort, 4 March 1830.

By 1828 this pressure on pasturage was noticeable, and when J. van Ryneveld, the new Civil Commissioner of Graaff-Reinet, considered that these Xhosa, through long residence and good conduct, would be exempt from the provisions of Ordinance 49 which required all colonial Xhosa to go into service, the border authorities set about using their own power to remove them from desirable land.<sup>11</sup>

The Nieuweveld-Kareeberge area suffered extremely severe drought in 1829, with the result that San depredations increased as farmers sought grazing further and further afield. P.D. Jacobs, now Provisional Field-Commandant of the Nieuweveld, finally persuaded the Civil Commissioner of Graaff-Reinet that a commando against the raiders was necessary for security.<sup>12</sup>

Jacobs had great difficulty mustering enough men for the commando which had little success: the San were elusive, and lack of water forced the party to abandon the search and return home. P.D. Jacobs, considering both the desirability of pushing Xhosa off colonial land and the danger of recurrent San attacks, now formed a remarkably neat plan. As he and van Ryneveld rode through the northern foothills of the Kareebergen on their return from the abortive commando, he pointed out the fountain at Schietfontein and, perhaps with the Kat River settlement in mind,

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11. 1/BFW 9/35, *op.cit.*

12. CO 2715, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 1 November 1829; letters from D.S. Fourie and G.S. Marrits, (the spelling of his name varied), 16 October 1829; Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 5 November 1829, 13 November 1829.

'...suggested the Expediency of ~~collecting~~ the Caffers who reside in the colony and to give Said Place to them as a permanent Residency with a view that as the Kaffers being then placed between the Bushmen and the Colonists they might be a check upon the conduct of the former and ultimately put a stop to their depredations upon the colony.'<sup>13</sup>

Van Ryneveld could not agree with Jacobs as to the justice of the measure. He made it very clear that only the Governor could authorise such an arrangement; and he later told the Resident Magistrate of Beaufort, J.J. Meintjies, that because he disliked the scheme he had '...not as yet proposed the plan to His Excellency.'<sup>14</sup>

However, as soon as van Ryneveld returned to Graaff-Reinet at the end of 1829, P.D. Jacobs proceeded to implement his idea. By the time van Ryneveld heard of the move in March 1830, all the Xhosa who had been living on the borders of the Beaufort district had been resettled at Schietfontein, Harmsfontein and Rhenosterpoort, well beyond the colonial boundaries.<sup>15</sup>

A visit to Schietfontein in July allayed some of van Ryneveld's anxiety. He was assured that the Xhosa would never act independently against the San, and P.D. Jacobs managed to convince him that because the Xhosa owned such great herds of cattle there would very shortly have been no room in the colony for them anyway. In due course they would have been pushed

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13. The Kat River settlement, reserved for coloured people only, was established in 1829 as a military barrier between whites and Xhosa on the eastern frontier. See: T. Kirk, 'The Cape Economy and the expropriation of the Kat River Settlement, 1846-1853', in Economy and Society in pre-industrial South Africa, eds. S. Marks and A. Atmore; 1/BFW 9/35, Civil Commissioner of Graaff-Reinet to Resident Magistrate of Beaufort, 4 March 1830.

14. 1/BFW 9/35, ibid.

15. ibid.; CO 2711, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 17 July 1830; G7-'59, Auret's Report, Appendix C, p.23.

over the borders and would have become involved in bloody warfare with the San. By giving them a place of their own in this way, it might be possible, he suggested, to avoid too much bloodshed, and at the same time keep the Xhosa allied with the colonists against the San.<sup>16</sup>

Although van Ryneveld recognised the likelihood of future friction when he assessed the size of the land granted to the Xhosa compared with the amount of grazing they would require, he pushed his doubts to one side and informed the Governor that the whole border west of the Pramberg, stretching to the Kareeberg in the east, was now peaceful thanks to P.D. Jacobs's provisional settlement of the Xhosa at Schietfontein. With those assurances, Sir Lowry Cole was pleased to give his formal approval of the arrangement in August 1830.<sup>17</sup> The limits to the settlement were officially defined by P.D. Jacobs, who also appointed a captain, Claas Hendrick, who was to be subject to government control.<sup>18</sup>

Thus by 1830, northern Xhosa settlement centred on three areas: Prieska, still far beyond colonial control, and Pramberg and Schietfontein, both, though technically beyond the boundary, clearly considered within the ambit of local authority.

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16. CO 2722, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 17 July 1830.

17. *ibid.*; GR 8/20, Governor's permission for the Settlement at Schietfontein, August 1830.

18. Claas, a member of the Amaqwayi clan, as were Danster and Donker Malgas, was also known as Claas Boosman and when Jan Hendrick succeeded him as the government-appointed leader at Schietfontein, he took the name of Jan Kaffer in order to make it quite clear to the whites, according to his descendant Piet Hendrick, that he was not a 'Bossieman'. The name 'Kaffer' indicated moreover, an eternal enmity with the San whom he promised to destroy. See: CO 2729, P.D. Jacobs to Civil Commissioner, 20 December 1830; 1/BFW 9/51, D.S. Fourie to Civil Commissioner, 28 January 1835; G7-'59, Auret's Report, Annexure C 3, p.23; oral evidence of Piet Hendrick at Schietfontein, September 1983.

Pramberg and Schietfontein

Gola and his followers had made a wise choice when they moved to Pramberg in 1809. The slopes of the two conical peaks of the mountain (the name means Breast Mountain) provided excellent grazing, and although the Xhosa had to move their herds and flocks onto the plains during dry seasons, the three perennial fountains in the kloofs of the mountain had encouraged permanent settlement.<sup>19</sup>

The 400 people, whose numbers remained remarkably constant between 1824 and their removal from Pramberg in 1855, despite frequent arrivals and departures from both the east and the north, lived in several kraals situated near the sources of water.<sup>20</sup> The largest of these, Tschivika's Kraal, (from which the farm 'Kwekwa' took its name), was situated in Kafferskloof which straddled the mountain, and the Xhosa relied on horses for travelling the rough and stony terrain between kraals as well as for herding their stock.<sup>21</sup>

In Kafferskloof are the remains of numerous stone-walled cattle kraals and dwelling places, and a very early

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19. CO 2953, Acting Resident Magistrate of Victoria West to Civil Commissioner of Beaufort, 1 May 1858; G7-'59, Auret's Report, p.13.
  20. L. van Rohden, Geschichte der Rheinischen Missions-Gesellschaft, p.148; CO 2883, Copy of Colonial Office Memorial, 7 September 1850; population list, 1852; CO 2916 Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 27 September 1855; 1/BFW 9/51, C.J. de Klerk to Civil Commissioner, 6 March 1838; Cory Accessions, MS 1242, p.35; 1/BFW 2/25, Beaufort West Criminal Cases, examination of Kort Klaas and Goliath 1851; G7-'59, Auret's Report, Annexure A, p.20.
  21. Evidence from P. Olivier, farmer, whose family has lived at 'Kwekwa' since 1853; personal exploration of Kafferskloof in 1984. There are frequent references to Xhosa on horseback, e.g.: CO 2910, A.S. Karstens to Civil Commissioner, 5 July 1855.

well still provides water. The number of graves on the site and the many grinding stones and other implements indicate stable settlement over a period of time.<sup>22</sup>

The benign conditions on Pramberg allowed the Xhosa to retain their customs and traditions. Until Boer expansion into the area in the 1830's their contact with western mores was largely limited to gaining possession of arms and ammunition.<sup>23</sup> The Pramberg Xhosa did not speak Dutch, and as 'Kaal Kaffers', many only wore karosses.<sup>24</sup> Though they used guns, they continued to carry assegais, and also retained their pagan beliefs and traditions such as polygamy, practising war dances and removing the last joint of the little finger as a good luck charm.<sup>25</sup>

Xhosa from Kaffraria continually passed through the settlement, either looking for new pastures or on trading expeditions. The Pramberg fountains could not support any more people and pressure on the surrounding land was becoming acute so they did not stay. Nevertheless, ties remained and the Pramberg people's sympathies were engaged on behalf of their compatriots during wars on the eastern frontier.<sup>26</sup>

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22. Personal observation, June 1984.

23. As an example of illicit trading near Pramberg, see: 1/BFW 4/1, Criminal Record Books 1832-1849, case of A. de Villiers, 1841. The Xhosa possession of guns and horses also implies that they traded.

24. CO 2873, F.S. Kotze to S. Karstens, 14 June 1851; CO 2916, Deposition of Xhosa, Adam, 1855.

25. CO 2832, S.J. Esterhuyzen (the spelling of his name varied) to Civil Commissioner, 25 June 1846; L. van Rohden, Missions-Gesellschaft, p.138; CO 2883, Memorial of C. Alheit to Lieutenant-Governor, C.H. Darling, 19 October 1852; CO 2873, S. Karstens to Civil Commissioner, 17 June 1851; G7-'59, Auret's Report, p.19; CO 2886, Return of prisoners, 31 December 1851; J. Peires, House of Phalo, p.65.

26. 1/BFW 13/17, Clerk of the Peace to Civil Commissioner, 2 September 1847.

These close links continued, and it was Pramberg Xhosa as much as disaffected Schietfontein Xhosa, who, scattered along the Orange at the time, were attracted by millenarian movements, forerunners of the cattle killing of 1857, such as that of Umlangeni in the early 1850's.<sup>27</sup>

Very little cultivation was possible on Pramberg, but wherever they could, the Xhosa grew wheat.<sup>28</sup> Their main food was milk, supplemented by game, though when an ox was killed, its meat was cut into strips and dried as biltong.<sup>29</sup>

The Xhosa were not an exclusive community, and though they often clashed with the San they had San servants and frequently married San wives which saved the expense of lobola.<sup>30</sup>

White farmers began to move onto the plains surrounding Pramberg during the 1830's and contact, besides leading to friction, affected the lives of the Xhosa.<sup>31</sup> They were introduced to the brandy of the traders' wagons, learned to speak Dutch, and some took to wearing western clothes.<sup>32</sup>

Though they considered themselves, if anything, to be superior

27. P. Kallaway, 'The Xhosa of the Karreebergen', pp.30-33.

28. G7-'59, Auret's Report, p.16; CO 2916, Resident Magistrate to Secretary, 27 September 1855.

29. CO 2842, C. Alheit to Civil Commissioner, 10 January 1848; 1/BFW 9/57, C. Alheit to Civil Commissioner, 24 May 1848 (should read 1849); 1/BFW 2/25, Examination of Kort Klaas and Goliath, 1851.

30. 1/BFW 9/57, C. Alheit to Civil Commissioner, 6 October 1857; 1/BFW 13/17, Clerk of the Peace to Civil Commissioner, 2 September 1847.

31. There were numerous applications for request places on or beyond the northern borders. Pampoenpoort, near Pramberg was requested in 1831, see: LBD 78, Memorial by A.B. Esterhuisen, 15 November 1844; SG 1/1/1/3, Withdrawal of application by Mr Meiring, 21 June 1844. It was necessary to define the boundaries of Pramberg by 1838, see: G7-'59, Auret's Report, Annexure C3, p.23; CO 565, three depositions, 14 August 1847.

32. E. Strassberger, The Rhenish Mission Society in South Africa, pp.79-80; CO 2916, Deposition of Xhosa, Adam, 1855.

to the intruding Boers, in time of need they increasingly sold their labour to the nearby farmers.<sup>33</sup>

Fifty miles away, the situation at Schietfontein, named Phalane by the Xhosa settled there in 1830, was different.<sup>34</sup> The land was inhospitably barren so that from the start the Xhosa were nomadic and lived in small units scattered over a 30 mile radius.<sup>35</sup> Also, unlike the community at Pramberg, the people of Schietfontein accepted large numbers of newcomers. After the arrival of the Xhosa leader, Tores, from the east in 1837, the original 30 families had increased to 53 men and 213 women and children, and by 1847 there were at least 620 Xhosa in the settlement.<sup>36</sup>

The fountains at Harmsfontein and Schietfontein provided for a certain amount of cultivation, but seasonal migration was the rule. As a result the Schietfontein Xhosa tended to live in easily transportable mat huts, the attractive building stone of the area being used only to build cattle kraals.<sup>37</sup>

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33. CO 2832, S.J. Esterhuyzen to Civil Commissioner, 25 June 1846; 1/BFW 13/17, Clerk of the Peace to Civil Commissioner 2 September 1847.

34. The Argus, article by J. Potgieter, 16 March 1982.

35. There are many passing references to the nomadic nature of life at Schietfontein, see: 1/BFW 9/57, C. Alheit to Secretary, 8 February 1850; LBD 79, Land Claim No. 16, 1866; CO 3038, W. Dawson to Civil Commissioner, 10 October 1862; P. Kallaway, 'The Xhosa of the Karreebergen', p.21. For evidence of groups being widely scattered, see: CO 3114, Return of Kafirs, 1867; CO 2947, Resident Magistrate to Secretary, 16 August 1857.

36. 1/BFW 9/51, M.A. Oberholster to Civil Commissioner, 2 September 1837; C.J. de Klerk to Civil Commissioner, 6 March 1838; SG 1/1/1/3, Land Claims, 8 July 1845.

37. L. van Rohden, Missions-Gesellschaft, p.138; 1/BFW 9/62, H. van der Westhuizen (the spelling of his name varied) to Civil Commissioner, 4 September 1851; G31-'73, Geological Report by E.J. Dunn, 1872.

Kareekloof, beyond the plains of Rhenosterpoort, shows evidence of seasonal settlement. The kloof opens into a wide basin where the ruins of stone kraals support the local tradition (backed by much written evidence) that this was a frequently used camp. The small stream of water supplying the kloof is known as 'Jantje se water', and the well-worn path from Rhenosterpoort into the kloof is called 'Jan Kaffer se pad'. Along the banks of the stream are graves which resemble those in Kafferskloof on Pramberg.<sup>38</sup>

Like the Prambergers, the Schietfontein Xhosa had San dependants and intermarried with both the San and with the Bastard pastoralists who, in increasing numbers, moved into the vicinity.<sup>39</sup>

The different circumstances of these two settlements were clearly reflected in their differing attitudes to white expansion in the following years.

### White Advance

Although some of the biggest groups which left the colony during the Great Trek were from the Beaufort district (one of which was led by the erstwhile Field-Commandant P.D. Jacobs, resentful of official censure over his cruelty towards inoffensive San), the steady stream of Trekboers into the northern parts of the district and beyond, continued unabated.<sup>40</sup>

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38. Personal observation, June 1984. The loss of grazing at Rhenosterpoort was one of the factors which drove 300 Xhosa to the Orange River in 1848, see: CO 2883, Secretary to C. Alheit, 15 October 1850.

39. J. Backhouse, A Narrative of a Visit to The Mauritius and South Africa, p.495; oral evidence of Piet Hendricks, descendant of Jan and Daniel Kaffir.

40. W.G.H. en S. Vivier, Hooyvlakte. Die Verhaal van Beaufort-Wes 1818-1968, p. 31; CO 2778, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 23 June 1838; P.D. Jacobs to Civil Commissioner, 20 May 1838; CO 2825, C. Pritchard to Secretary, 9 May 1845.

Minor incidents of cattle reiving occurred in 1833 between the Xhosa and the newcomers, but it was the outbreak of a war on the eastern frontier in 1834 and the simultaneous conflict instigated by Danster north of the Orange River which resulted in the first real surge of hostility between the Boers and the Xhosa of Schietfontein and Pramberg.<sup>41</sup> This abated somewhat when, in 1837, a group of Pramberg mercenaries under Hermanus Pieterse marched up to the Caledon River and joined Danster's attack on the Basuto. They returned to Pramberg at the end of the year with spoils of at least 800 cattle and 6 000 sheep, some of which must have been siphoned off by local Boers and their field-cornet representatives as their price for condoning the raid.<sup>42</sup>

As the Boer numbers mounted, cries of 'theft' and 'trespass' increased. When squatting Boers complained of Xhosa trespass the Prambergers justifiably retorted that it was the Boers who were the transgressors.<sup>43</sup> Finding and keeping 'loose' cattle was considered justified by all pastoralists, but the Boers, who could write, or at least had the ear of the field-cornet, and through him access to the Civil Commissioner in Beaufort West, were able to gain redress. Their complaints had become so vociferous by 1838 that Civil Commissioner J.J. Meintjies visited both Xhosa

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41. G. Theal, History, VI, p.127; 1/BFW 9/1, Resident Magistrate to Secretary, 13 March 1835; CO 2764, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 11 April 1836, 23 April 1836; CO 2757, P.D. Jacobs to Civil Commissioner, 7 September 1835.

42. 1/BFW 9/51, C.J. de Klerk to Civil Commissioner, 6 March 1838; Acc. 302, V, 16 September 1837, 18 October 1837, 23 October 1837, 13 November 1837.

43. G7-'59, Auret's Report, Annexure C3, p.23; 1/BFW 9/51, Complaint by C.J. de Klerk, 27 September 1839; J.S. Marais, The Cape Coloured People, p.87.

settlements. He clearly defined the extent of Schietfontein as Schietfontein itself, Harmsfontein and Rhenosterpoort, and enjoined Jan Kaffer to see those limits were kept. Similarly the Xhosa right to the 22 000 morgen of Pramberg was recognised and given definition.<sup>44</sup>

Meintjies's belief that order would be relatively easy to maintain was based on the assumption that the 1830's rate of expansion would continue. The explosion of commercial wool farmers onto and beyond the northern borders in the 1840's was dramatic and unexpected. As a result of this burgeoning new industry, land ownership became a matter of crucial importance, and the colonial authorities were forced into playing a far more active role on the northern frontier.

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44. G7-'59, Auret's Report, Annexure C3, p.23.

C H A P T E R 4THE 1840 's: A CRUCIAL DECADE

During the 1840s three important developments occurred in the northern districts of the Colony. The first of these was the beginning of the wool boom and the consequent arrival of wealthy farmers and businessmen. Suddenly the barren land in the north became attractive. Almost simultaneously, in 1844, the British government decided to change the system of holding crown lands from one of leasehold to that of freehold; and thirdly, Sir Harry Smith extended the northern border to the Orange River in December 1847, thereby adding vast tracts of crown land to the Colony, much of it already occupied. All of these changes had a profound effect on the pastoralists of the north, and an ultimately disastrous effect on the Xhosa of Schietfontein, Pramberg and Prieska.

The Wool Boom

As early as 1805 an attempt had been made to encourage stockfarmers in the northern areas of the Colony to experiment with wool sheep. Their reluctance was understandable: they depended upon their flocks for food, and the Cape sheep were not only good eating but lambed twice

a year and had proved themselves well adapted to a country subject to drought.<sup>1</sup>

The arrival, in 1820, of British settlers who had connections with wider markets and who, in their ignorance of conditions, were more adventurous than their Dutch counterparts, gave the tiny wool industry a boost.<sup>2</sup>

Although most stockfarmers resisted change, in 1835 the Kinnears and Dirk de Wit (well-known local farmers) introduced merinos into the Beaufort district, where the number of wool sheep had increased from 3 000 in 1832 to 10 000 in 1834.<sup>3</sup> Fluctuations in the British market (for example, a fall in the wool price by 50 per cent in 1835) retarded rapid growth, and the replacement of Cape sheep by wool sheep was slow during the 1840s so that by 1846 only 15 per cent of the sheep in the Beaufort district were wool-bearing.<sup>4</sup> The lack of a road to a port was a drawback, so was drought: merinos had yet to prove their hardiness.<sup>5</sup>

A more important reason, perhaps, was that the established stockfarmers, white, Bastard and Xhosa, not only had no connections with overseas markets or their agents, but had well-established trading links beyond the Orange River where

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1. G. Theal, History, V, pp.162-168; H.B. Thom, Die Geskiedenis van die Skaapboerdery in Suid-Afrika, pp.312-315.

2. H.B. Thom, Skaapboerdery, pp.293, 305-308.

3. Cape Almanac, 1834, p.204R. Arthur and William Kinnear were both lawyers in Beaufort West. Dirk de Wit's farm Zeekoeigat was bought as the site for Victoria West in 1844. De Wit became a Justice of the Peace in the village.

4. ibid., 1838, p.47; P.A. Molteno, The Life and Times of Sir John Charles Molteno, pp.10-12; H.B. Thom, op.cit., p.326.

5. CO 2910, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, n.d. March 1855; H.B. Thom, op.cit., pp.314, 321.

they sold guns, ammunition, alcohol, horses and stock in return for cattle, stock and ivory.<sup>6</sup> Wool-bearing sheep had no place in this exchange.

However, the depression in the Cape, an increasing demand from Britain, and a drop in wine exports in 1839 and 1840 encouraged immigrants from Britain, Cape merchants and later, local landowners, to take an interest in wool as a saleable commodity.<sup>7</sup> In 1840, J.C. Molteno and other entrepreneurs came to Beaufort West in response to an advertisement by the Beaufort Grazing Company. As a result of the Great Trek, large pieces of land in the district, either loan farms or request places, had been abandoned, or the leases sold cheaply to the Beaufort Grazing Company, managed by Mr Thomas Tennant of the trading store of Watson Tennant and Company.<sup>8</sup> The land appeared ideal for the introduction of commercial wool farming and the businessmen leased huge farms. While they waited for the quitrent titles, they freely used not only the land they had applied for but the adjacent crown lands as well. Molteno occupied 100 000 acres at Nelspoort which he stocked with merino sheep, introducing two rams in 1841.<sup>9</sup>

Soon the influx of commercial farmers and speculators affected the entire district. Beaufort West was its legal and commercial centre. Power was held by J.J. Meintjies,

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6. References to this trade are numerous. Only some examples are given: CO 2706, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 18 September 1828; CO 2773, Resident Magistrate of Clanwilliam to Civil Commissioner, 28 July 1830; CO 2729, Missionary Kolbe to Acting Civil Commissioner, 7 October 1831; G. Theal, History, VI, p.38.
  7. P.A. Molteno, Life and Times, pp.10-12; T. Kirk, 'The Kat River Settlement', p.230; the Hon. D. Arnot and F.H.S. Orpen, The Land Question of Griqualand West, Appendix 40, p.242.
  8. P.A. Molteno, op.cit., p.13; CO 2772, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 28 September 1837; CO 2832, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 13 June 1846; W.G.H. en S. Vivier, Hooyvlakte, p.68.
  9. P.A. Molteno, op.cit., pp.15, 51.

Resident Magistrate since 1829 and Civil Commissioner since 1831; J.G. Devenish, who succeeded Meintjies as Civil Commissioner in 1857; W. Kinnear, Clerk of the Peace; Colin Fraser, the D.R.C. parson; Dr James Christie; Charles Pritchard, lawyer and auctioneer; Charles Pope, businessman and farm-owner; and storekeepers and merchants such as Henry Rose, James Cowan, John Harris and Thomas Watson. These men, whose business links were frequently strengthened by marriage connections, controlled every aspect of life in the district.<sup>10</sup> They also all owned farms outside the town and used extensive tracts of crown land for grazing.<sup>11</sup> Quick to recognise the potential importance of the wool industry they, like the newcomers, realised that in order to ensure profitable returns the wool farmers needed to have access to enough suitable grazing land so that drought and disease would have as little impact as possible. Together they placed pressure on poorer white, Xhosa and Bastard stock-farmers, which soon forced them to move further and further afield, and into fierce competition with each other.

#### Leasehold to freehold

Coincidental with the birth of the wool boom came the changeover from a system whereby crown lands were leased, to one of freehold tenure. Forms of landholding in the Beaufort

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10. CO 2839, Acting Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 31 July 1847.

11. *ibid.*, CO 2832, Auction Roll of Crown Lands let for 12 months.

district prior to 1844 were varied. At the end of VOC rule at the Cape, the most common form was loan tenure, under which a fixed rent was paid to the State, and ground was leased for three, six or 12 months at a time. While these loan farms could be taken up with ease, it was even easier for northern pastoralists, so remote from authority, to gain access to land without bothering to apply for it. Some wealthy farmers in the outlying districts did acquire loan farms but their purpose in doing so was to gain control of the few rare springs, which gave them effective control of large surrounding areas. Most stock farmers on the northern frontier however, were simply squatters on crown land.<sup>12</sup>

Britain's reluctant occupation of the Cape was demonstrated by her refusal to sell crown land, which would involve a greater commitment to the Colony than she was prepared to give. Governor Cradock however, believed Britain should keep the Cape, and devised a system of land alienation which he hoped would be attractive to its colonists. The scheme, perpetual quitrent, came into operation in 1813. Land, though still owned by the State, was to be surveyed and diagrammed, annual rents were to vary according to the quality of the land, and the holder of a farm was granted title deeds so that he could both sell and bequeath it.<sup>13</sup>

As an inducement to change to Cradock's system, no new lands were granted to holders of loan farms until they

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12. L.C. Duly, British Land Policy at the Cape, 1795-1844, pp.13-20.

13. ibid., pp.44-49; G. Theal, History, V, p.165.

had converted them to quitrent tenure.<sup>14</sup>

Because government machinery was inadequate to deal with the numerous requests to change to quitrent tenure, people waited, often for many years, before they received titles to their farms, and during this time they were unable to acquire more land. In practice, the stalemate was resolved by the development of an informal system called request tenure, whereby local authorities recognised a man's right to a piece of crown land, and request places were freely bought and sold.<sup>15</sup> The Beaufort district was unable to procure the services of a surveyor, so no quitrent titles were granted until after 1835, and as a result, request places were increasingly held by people who did not even have loan farms.<sup>16</sup> Frequently, these request places were situated on land well beyond the colonial boundary.<sup>17</sup>

Crown lands which were not occupied under any of these forms of tenure were, in some areas, reserved as commonage for seasonal grazing. In order to use the commonage, licences were required and were sold by the local field-cornet on behalf of the civil commissioner.<sup>18</sup> Any other unoccupied land was freely used by squatters - force being used by the strong to evict the weak.<sup>19</sup>

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14. L.C. Duly, British Land Policy, p.49.

15. ibid., pp.73, 77-78.

16. ibid., p.134; G. Thompson, Travels, part I, pp.54-55.

17. G.H. 19/1, Commission of Enquiry re Land Matters 1821-1826, Commissioners to Governor, 3 July 1826.

18. CO 2723, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 14 September 1830; 1/WOC 11/11, Secretary to Civil Commissioner, 23 December 1830; 1/BFW 9/13, Letters from Surveyor-General to Civil Commissioner, 28 June 1849. An example of this licensing was the grazing lands surrounding the Amandelboom mission station on the Zak river. See Chapter 8 below.

19. BPP, Cape Administration and Finances, Commissioners' Reports 1826-1827, No. 282, regarding the situation in the District of Worcester, September 1826; CO 2679, G. Williams to Landdrost, n.d February 1826.

The obvious inability of the administration to carry out Cradock's plan, and the consequent confusion, loss of rent, and unchecked expansion by colonial pastoralists led to the establishment of a Commission of Enquiry into land matters in 1821. The Commissioners recognised the necessity for central government control over land alienation, a Land Board was instituted and a Surveyor-General, Charles Michell, was appointed in 1828. By 1834, the system of surveying had improved and some order was emerging as Michell battled to reduce the backlog in the granting of quitrent titles. To hasten reform, loan farms could be converted to quitrent merely on request after 1838, and in 1839 the acquisition of additional land was recognised without the prerequisite of loan farm conversion to quitrent.<sup>20</sup>

All of these forms of land-holding really only affected the white inhabitants of the Colony. Prior to Ordinance 50 of 1828, doubts had existed about the competency of '...Hottentots and other Free Persons of Colour to purchase or possess land...'<sup>21</sup> The Commission of Enquiry clearly held the attitude that only whites had a right to land, and mooted the idea of re-settling all other groups in reserves.<sup>22</sup> Although after 1828 many individual grants of land were made to Khoi and Bastards, the concept of reserves remained attractive to white officials, particularly as most Khoi, Bastards and Xhosa had a tradition of communal land-holding.<sup>23</sup> In the northern districts these people had

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20. L.C. Duly, *op.cit.*, pp.100, 128-139.

21. W.H. Harding, *Ordinances*, Ordinance 50, Section 111, p.464.

22. GH 19/1, Commission of Enquiry re Land Matters 1821-1826, Commissioners to Governor, 20 July 1826.

23. GR 14/27, Land Transfers and Coloured Land-holding.

occupied land according to local whim and custom.<sup>24</sup> The Xhosa settlements at Pramberg, straddling the northern border prior to 1848, and Schietfontein, beyond it, had been established almost entirely in this manner, though the right of the Xhosa to the clearly defined lands of Schietfontein, Harmsfontein, Meidefontein, Boezaksfontein, Rhenosterpoort, Blaauwbosch, Minaskolk and Kareekloof had gained official legitimacy by 1839.<sup>25</sup>

By 1843 the British government was determined to standardise all forms of land alienation within the Empire. Uninterested in Michell's attempts to produce a viable system at the Cape, and deaf to his protests, Secretary of State, Lord Stanley, insisted on a new imperial code. In the regulations which were made public at the Cape in the Government Gazette of 7 September, 1843, all crown land was to be sold in freehold by public auction, and a reserve price of two shillings per acre was set. Prospective buyers were to apply in writing, giving as nearly as possible the position and boundaries of the land they wanted. After the application had been assessed and accepted by the Surveyor-General, the applicant would pay for the land to be surveyed. If, in the auction that then followed, the original claimant was outbid, his survey fee would be refunded; if on the other hand, the land was not sold at all, the original applicant would lose the surveying

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24. GH 18/2, His Majesty's Commissioners of Enquiry, n.d., 1827.

25. G7-'59, Auret's Report, pp.22-23.

fee.<sup>26</sup> If it was not practicable to survey land before the sale took place, it could be done afterwards. The crown lands applied for would then be advertised for two months in the Government Gazette before the sale took place. A sale having been effected, 10 per cent of the purchase price was to be paid immediately, and the balance within one month.<sup>27</sup>

#### Extension of the boundary

Sir Harry Smith's extension of the northern border to the Orange River in 1847 further complicated the land issue. (See Map No. 8 , p.58). The land added to the Colony by his action became known as the New Territory by both the central authorities and local inhabitants and was not nearly as uninhabited as Surveyor-General Michell had assured Smith it was. The fairly large Xhosa communities centred on Schietfontein, Pramberg and Prieska now fell under direct colonial control, as did the Bastards who lived on the Zak River and on the outskirts of Schietfontein. A considerable number of white farmers, too, were already living as squatters or on request places beyond the colonial borders. By his proclamation, Sir Harry Smith declared all of the New Territory to be crown land. However, the claims of those who already occupied it would not be entirely ignored. It was decided that the inhabitants of the New Territory could retain 6 000 acres (3 000 morgen) after it had been surveyed at their expense, while the rest of the land they held was to be sold by public auction.<sup>28</sup>

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26. L.C. Duly, op.cit., pp.160.169.

27. CCP 8/1/39, Government Gazette, 7 September 1843.

28. GH 1/193, Secretary of State to Colony, 30 June 1848; LBD 78, 14 September 1849.



It is important to remember that no part of the new Territory, except the banks of the Orange River, could support any settled community. Seasonal trekking was a basic fact of life. This made it possible, once the New Territory was part of the Colony, for people to apply for what appeared to be 'empty' land, and explains the bad blood engendered when titles for these 'empty' plots were granted to newcomers, who had taken advantage of this seasonal migration. Similarly, the nomadism of the northern pastoralists explains why there were often competing claims for the same bit of land which may have been used by numerous groups or individuals for periods of time over a number of years.

The 6 000 acres which pastoralists were permitted to retain was ludicrously little in that arid area, and the reserve price of two shillings an acre for extra land was therefore exorbitant. Civil Commissioner F. Rawstorne in Colesberg, emphasising the value of a settled community on the lawless frontier, recommended that at the very least a farm would have to be 20 000 acres (10 000 morgen) to be viable, and then only if additional land could be bought at fourpence halfpenny an acre.<sup>29</sup> He was ignored. The application of H.P. van der Westhuizen was typical of many. He had lived on 60 000 acres in the New Territory for nine years, opened up springs and built dams and a barn. He was prospective field-cornet for the area and had proved his loyalty to the government by fighting on the eastern frontier. He was refused permission to buy or lease the land he claimed: 6 000 acres was the limit. The remainder would have to be

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29. CO 2842, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 3 July 1849.

auctioned.<sup>30</sup>

The white pastoralists evolved several solutions to their problems. One was to request land, sometimes hundreds of thousands of acres, and then, during the long process before the land came up for sale, to sublet most of it at a high enough rate to enable them to pay for least a part.<sup>31</sup> Another ploy was to request and buy just a small piece of land with water on it. This made the surrounding land worthless to anyone else and the purchaser could use it freely.<sup>32</sup> Nevertheless these were the shifts of men in a tight corner. As their eyes turned further north and to the traditionally Xhosa and Bastard lands, they could feel the wool men breathing down their necks.

The position of the Xhosa and Bastards vis à vis rights to the land they occupied in the New Territory was vague, particularly because of the communal form in which they held it. The Zak River Bastards requested a modest amount for a mission village at Amandelboom; their missionaries asked for more on their behalf. Both claims were rejected in favour of white trekboers from Clanwilliam who insisted that the seasonal grazing provided by the commonage on the Zak River was necessary for their survival.<sup>33</sup>

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30. 1/BFW 9/4, Secretary to Civil Commissioner, 24 December 1851; LBD 78, Memorial from H.P. van der Westhuizen, 14 September 1849; 1/BFW 9/14, Surveyor-General to Civil Commissioner, 19 September 1850.

31. LBD, Memorials of C.J. and A.B. Esterhuizen, 15 November 1844, Report, 15 May 1845; 1/BFW 9/13, Assistant Surveyor-General to Civil Commissioner, 2 March 1848.

32. SG 1/1/1/3, Civil Commissioner, Beaufort, to Surveyor-General, 5 July 1849.

33. 1/BFW 9/4, Copy of Memorial from Bastards to Sir Harry Smith, n.d. 1848; CO 574, Memorial from J. Lutz and J. Beinecke, n.d. 1848; two Memorials to the Surveyor-General's office from Clanwilliam field-cornets, 10 July 1848; 1/BFW 9/4, Copy of reply to Bastard Memorial, n.d. 1848; Secretary to Civil Commissioner, Trekveld Regulations, 12 December 1848.

The Xhosa at Pramberg and Prieska would apparently have to compete for individual titles, and the Schietfontein Xhosa, who had occupied Meidefontein, Harmsfontein, Schietfontein, Blaauwbosch, Minaskolk, Rhenosterpoort and Kareekloof with both local and central government permission, became insecure. Even prior to the extension of the northern border, the local authorities had re-interpreted the extent of their lands: now, technically, these became the property of the crown, free to be applied for by anyone.

#### The effect of these changes

The emergent wool farmers, both local and newcomers, men of substance, were the first to be noticeably affected by the 1844 land law. It was not in their interests to have to buy Crown land, for only the advent of the windmill at the end of the century made settled pastoralism profitable. A leasing system was far more attractive: after a couple of years, when the veld had been exhausted by kraaling and over-grazing, or water had failed, they could simply give up their existing leases and then re-establish their flocks, on land with better prospects, at the next leasing auction.

In 1845 they complained that Crown lands which remained unsold were becoming wastelands inhabited by Khoi vagrants. Their representations were successful, and the central government conceded that if Crown land in the Beaufort division was not sold at a public auction, it could be leased for a year at a time. All that was required of the applicant was that he provide a description of the land to

the Civil Commissioner before it was leased by auction. Prices rose over the years, but in 1845 the prices realised per lot were about 15 shillings per annum.<sup>34</sup> The wool farmers gained a further concession in the following year when it became possible to lease unsold crown lands for up to seven years.<sup>35</sup>

The effect of the new land law on the nomadic white stock farmers on the northern frontier was profound. Their request places and the crown lands they had used for seasonal grazing were now liable to be sold. At first glance it might appear that at last they could gain security of tenure, but in fact it was not easy. The government, ignorant of conditions, was unsympathetic to requests for enormous tracts of land, and was apt to refuse them; moreover, two shillings an acre was extremely expensive for the very poor land they occupied, and credit was hard to come by.<sup>36</sup>

When the wealthy farmers of the district gained the right to lease unsold crown lands, these poorer men were forced into action, for if they did not buy the land they occupied, they could always be outbid for it at the leasing auction. Civil Commissioner Meintjies, who shared a lifetime of connections and friendship with them, made every effort, consistent with his basic desire to promote the wool industry, to assist their attempts to own land.

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34. 1/BFW 9/13, J.A. Thwaites to Civil Commissioner, 6 November 1869.

35. 1/BFW 9/3, Memorial from 42 Boers, n.d. 1844; CO 2832, Auction Roll of Crown Lands let for twelve months, 1846.

36. LBD 78, Surveyor Villet to Civil Commissioner, Beaufort, 20 January 1847; 4/BFW 1/1/1/1, Minute Book of Divisional Council, 7 October 1857.

His control of land tenure was extended in 1845 when he gained the right to organise surveys in the district, and as soon as Beaufort acquired a surveyor in 1846, Meintjies gave him permission to survey six pieces of land in the Karee-berge which he himself had defined as Xhosa land in 1839, and which were also well beyond the colonial border.<sup>37</sup> Once the border was moved in 1848 and more land was available, he sanctioned numerous surveys.

Nevertheless the attempts made by stockfarmers to secure property were thwarted by the wealthy farmers. Although auction after auction for the sale of crown lands took place, most of these lands, obviously applied for or they would not be up for sale, remained unsold, either because the reserve price was not reached, or through intimidation of the original applicant. Consequently they were leased to the highest bidder instead.<sup>38</sup> By 1849 no licensed auctioneer was prepared to sell land publicly, and the government, in an attempt to retrieve the situation and prevent any undue pressure on prospective buyers, empowered Meintjies to accept requests for crown land in private.<sup>39</sup>

Even this failed, for, though Meintjies was prepared to accept applications from poorer stockfarmers, the credit facilities which the latter needed were increasingly in the hands of the merchants and wool men who could thus control the access of the small men to land. Although the most common

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37. LBD 78, Report, 15 May 1845; 4/BFW 1/1/1/1, Minute Book of Divisional Council, 7 October 1857; G7-'59, Auret's Report, Appendices C, C2, C3.

38. SG 1/1/3/17, 23 February 1852; CO 2883, C. Alheit to Secretary, 8 March 1852; Secretary to Lieutenant-Governor, 15 April 1852.

39. V/BFW 9/4, Copy of Memorial from Bastards to Sir Harry Smith, n.d. 1848; Secretary to Civil Commissioner, 27 December 1849; CCP 8/1/45, Government Gazette, 15 June 1849.

form of credit in the district for many years remained private loans from wealthier farmers and storekeepers, the bank, after 1854, was increasingly asked to accept mortgage bonds and bills of discount as security against advances.<sup>40</sup>

Ten years after their arrival in the district, the commercial farmers and their agents had gained considerable power. The percentage of wool sheep had doubled, and, in 1851, J.C. Molteno was able to leave his farm in the hands of an overseer and move into Beaufort West. He became a member of the municipal council, gained control of the town's private gunpowder magazine, and established a trading store which he put into the hands of his brother-in-law, Percy Alport, in 1853.<sup>41</sup> Under the guidance of his friend, J.B. Ebden, he founded the Beaufort Bank in 1854, the directors of which included Charles Pritchard, J.G. Luttig, V. Rice, William Kinnear and J.G. Devenish, all prominent townsmen and farmers.<sup>42</sup> Thus Alport and Co., and Watson, Tennant and Co. (as the main trading stores, especially in wool, skins and hides), together with the bank, became the most important sources for credit, which, however, they often chose to withhold.<sup>43</sup>

By these means the encroaching commercial farmers effectively closed access to resources for the white trekboers, who moved into the considerably less well-watered karoo

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40. SB, Insp. 1/1/173, Inspection Reports for Victoria West 1865-1880, General Remarks, 9 January 1869, 4 July 1874; SB, Insp. 2/1/37, Manager's Profit/Loss Reports, Victoria West 1864-1879, List of Securities, June 1867.

41. CO 2886, Civil Commissioner to Acting Secretary, 11 August 1852; P.A. Molteno, Life and Times, pp.52-53.

42. P.A. Molteno, ibid.; W.G.H. en S. Vivier, Hooyvlakte, p.65.

43. W.G.H. en S. Vivier, ibid., pp.67-68. See S. Dubow, Land, Labour and Merchant Capital, pp.13-15, for a discussion on the amount of merchant capital available.

of the border: the Nieuweveld now became the most densely populated part of the Beaufort district, and in 1844 the village of Victoria West was established, only 16 miles from the Xhosa settlement on Pramberg.<sup>44</sup> Though it was primarily conceived as a religious centre, Beaufort West merchants, including J.C. Molteno, soon set up shop in the village and, in positions of authority, people such as W. Cowan and W. Walton, as Justices of the Peace, set about gaining the best land for themselves.<sup>45</sup>

Speculators took advantage of the land situation. They requested huge amounts of land, and while their applications were still being processed in the Surveyor-General's office, prior to the sale being advertised in the Government Gazette, they 'sold' pieces of the land to poor white farmers who, unable to borrow money elsewhere, were overjoyed at the low terms offered, and as a result were often ruined.<sup>46</sup>

In 1845 the white stockfarmers began competing with the Xhosa for the use of the three perennial fountains on Pramberg and the extensive grazing on the mountain slopes. Throughout the year, Field-Cornet C.J. de Klerk of Pramberg sent requests from members of his ward for both leases on the Crown land of Pramberg and for surveys. M.P. van Staden's request place, 'Kwekwa', was surveyed in 1847. It clearly impinged

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44. CO 528, Memorial from Church Elders at Zeekoeigat, n.d. 1844; C. Fraser to Secretary, 10 July 1844; 5 September 1844, 15 November 1844; CO 2825, C. Pritchard to Secretary, 9 May 1845. In his Report, see: G7-'59, Auret's Report, p.13, J.B. Auret estimated that Pramberg was 24 miles from Victoria West. The fact that Pramberg is accessible from both the 'Kwekwa' side and the 'Spytpoort' side, probably accounts for this discrepancy.

45. P.A. Molteno, op.cit., p.53; 1/BFW 2/25, Criminal Cases 1850-1852, in Victoria, 10 July 1851.

46. 4/BFW 1/1/1/1, Minute Book of the Divisional Council, 7 October 1857; 1/BFW 9/4, Secretary to Civil Commissioner, 1 June 1848.

on the traditional Xhosa lands, but he was granted title to the place, on the recommendation of J.J. Meintjies, in March 1848, on condition that the spring on Pramberg, '...now used as a location for the Kaffirs...' was to be shared with them.<sup>47</sup> Conflict flared. White farmers began impounding Xhosa cattle for 'trespassing', and then charged exorbitant poundage fees for their release.<sup>48</sup> The Xhosa, as rich in herds and flocks as their persecutors, but without such easy access to colonial authority, retaliated by stealing and killing colonial cattle, and 'insolently' laughed in scorn at attempts to force them into service.<sup>49</sup>

Drought in 1846 and 1847 exacerbated the situation, and so did the war on the eastern frontier.<sup>50</sup> Only a few white farmers in the Victoria West area reluctantly obeyed the call to arms. The others excused themselves on the grounds that they had to protect the neighbourhood from the Xhosa on their doorstep.<sup>51</sup> Fears were expressed that strangers were daily swelling the Xhosa numbers, and an attack was imminent.<sup>52</sup> Vigilante groups were all set to patrol Pramberg, and Meintjies in Beaufort West was badgered to evict the Xhosa, who were

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47. 1/BFW 9/51, C.J. de Klerk to Civil Commissioner, many letters in 1845 and 11 August 1845; 1/BFW 9/13, 1845; LBD 78, Report on Memorial of M.J. van Staden, 19 December 1845.
48. CO 565, Three depositions from Victoria, 14 August 1847; CO 2839, Acting Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 28 August 1847.
49. 1/BFW 2/25, Examination of Kort Klaas and Goliath, 1850; 1/BFW 13/17, Rough Drafts, 2 September 1847.
50. 1/BFW 9/51, F. Muller to Acting Civil Commissioner, 4 April 1846; LBD 79, Claim No. 9(10), 1866.
51. CO 2832, S.J. Esterhuizen to Civil Commissioner, 25 June 1846; 1/BFW 9/51, S.J. Esterhuizen to Civil Commissioner, 28 May 1846.
52. 1/BFW 13/17, Rough Drafts, 2 September 1847; CO 565, Three depositions from Victoria, 14 August 1847.

represented as heathens and enemies - foreigners who had no right to live within the colony.<sup>53</sup>

William Kinnear, the Beaufort Clerk of the Peace, who was sent from Beaufort West to investigate the situation in August 1847, was convinced by the white stockfarmers, whose attitudes coincided with his. They argued that if the Pramberg Xhosa were not allied with those on the eastern frontier, they were certainly allies of Waterboer and of the Korana on the Orange River. As if that were not enough, they had even intermarried with the San from whom they were supposed to protect the colonists. Underlying these accusations were deeper antagonisms: the white farmers wanted a servile labour force, and were infuriated by people who not only refused to work for them, but who were as well armed and mounted as they were, and who considered themselves as good as anyone.<sup>54</sup>

Captain Hill, who was Acting Civil Commissioner while Meintjies was on sick leave in 1847, reported the matter somewhat differently: it was the white farmers' belligerence which had caused the unpleasantness.<sup>55</sup> The government acted on his advice. Unrestricted impounding was condemned, and the Xhosa, though threatened with removal if they behaved with the 'treachery' of their brethren in the east, were to be allowed to remain.<sup>56</sup> By December 1847 a semblance of peace had been restored and there were no strange Xhosa on Pramberg, only the original 32 families.<sup>57</sup>

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53. 1/BFW 9/51, S.J. Esterhuizen to Civil Commissioner, 28 May 1846; 1/BFW 9/52, C.J. de Klerk to Civil Commissioner, 18 August 1847; 1/BFW 13/17, Rough Drafts, 2 September 1847.

54. 1/BFW 13/17, Rough Drafts, 2 September 1847.

55. CO 2839, Acting Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 28 August 1847.

56. 1/BFW 9/3, Letter to Civil Commissioner from Grahamstown, 18 July 1846; Secretary to Acting Civil Commissioner, 9 September 1847.

57. 1/BFW 9/52, J.J. Human to C.J. de Klerk, 27 December 1847.

Similar competition over land developed at Schietfontein. Pramberg was arguably within the colonial borders before 1848; wishful thinking could not do the same for Schietfontein. Nevertheless, Meintjies' authorisation for the survey of various lands in the Kareeberge in 1846 was indicative of two attitudes: first, the almost complete lack of interest in the northern parts of the colony by the central government, and the consequent independence of action of officials in the north; and secondly, the fact that long before the Orange River became the boundary, in practice it was considered as such.

Applications for Schietfontein and Rhenosterpoort by white farmers in 1845 had been rejected by the government: unless the Xhosa became unfriendly they could remain.<sup>58</sup> But as soon as Meintjies gained control of land alienation, he sanctioned their survey. In June 1846, while surveyors and local white farmers were measuring the land around the Brak River, a traditional Xhosa grazing ground, they were confronted by Xhosa from Schietfontein whose demands for an explanation were met with a fusillade of shots from the white party. On the following day eight Xhosa '...attired in their war dress and armed both with assegais and Guns...' again demanded to know what was happening. Though eventually no fighting took place, the Xhosa expressed the hope that their compatriots on the eastern frontier would fight long and hard. The white men cited the incident as an example of Xhosa 'unfriendliness', and Field-Cornet S.J. Esterhuizen used it

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58. 1/BFW 9/3, Secretary to Civil Commissioner, 12 November 1845; T. Kirk, 'The Kat River Settlement', p.227.

as an excuse not to send his force of men to fight on the eastern frontier.<sup>59</sup> The fracas called forth a letter from the military commander in Grahamstown, approving Esterhuizen's actions, and warning the Xhosa they would be expelled if they were not peaceable.<sup>60</sup>

The measurement of land along the Brak River in 1846 presaged a spate of surveys after 1848.<sup>61</sup> J.J. Meintjies agreed to the application of J. van Stade (sic) to Kareekloof in 1848. The 300 Xhosa who had used the kloof for seasonal grazing had been forced through drought in 1847 to move up to the Orange River. Now they could not return.<sup>62</sup> However, the white pastoralists were just as vulnerable to exploitation. While van Stade's memorial for Kareekloof was still being processed in the Surveyor-General's office, the land was bought off him in 1849 by W. Walton, the Victoria West Justice of the Peace.<sup>63</sup> Rhenosterpoort, beyond which Kareekloof was situated, was becoming surrounded by white farms, and increasingly these white farms were controlled by wool men.<sup>64</sup>

It was clear that as the pressure on land increased, so friction would recur. If the Xhosa were to stay, white officials resolved it would be on their terms. Xhosa, placed in a mission reserve where their freedom of movement would be

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59. CO 2832, S.J. Esterhuizen to Civil Commissioner, 25 July 1846.

60. 1/BFW 9/3, Letter to Civil Commissioner from Grahamstown, 18 July 1846.

61. 1/BFW 9/57, C. Alheit to Civil Commissioner, 29 April 1849. (It should read 1848).

62. CO 2883, Secretary to C. Alheit, 25 October 1850.

63. 1/BFW 9/61, J. Molteno to Civil Commissioner, 12 April 1849; 1/BFW 9/57, C. Alheit to Civil Commissioner, 10 September 1853.

64. 1/BFW 9/57, C. Alheit to Civil Commissioner, 8 February 1850.

curtailed, and a suitable Christian humility instilled, might be acceptable. Thus a copy of W. Kinnear's report on the unrest at Pramberg was sent to the Stellenbosch headquarters of the Rhenish Mission Society, which had already established a mission among the Bastards on the Zak River at Amandelboom in 1845.<sup>65</sup> Simultaneously, a section of the Schietfontein Xhosa, aware of their lack of access to authority, and the need for a literate advocate, sent requests to the same source. The Society reacted promptly and a missionary was despatched in 1847 to minister to the Kareeberge Xhosa.<sup>66</sup>

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65. CO 565, Clerk of the Peace to Acting Civil Commissioner, 2 September 1847.

66. ibid., 30 September 1847; L. van Rohden, Missions-Gesellschaft, p.137.

C H A P T E R 5A MISSIONARY AT SCHIETFONTEIN

As early as 1836 there were reports that the Bastards and Xhosa of the northern Cape wanted a missionary. As a result the Revs. Leipoldt and Zahn of the Rhenish Mission Society, which had sent representatives to the Cape under the aegis of the LMS in 1829, visited the area in 1842, and the Rev. J.H. Lutz assisted by Mr J.W. Beinecke, was despatched to the Kareeberge in 1845.<sup>1</sup>

The country was so dry that Amandelboom, on the banks of the Zak River, appeared to be the only place where a settlement was possible. As they were welcomed by many of the nearby Bastards, their failure to move in among the truly heathen Xhosa as planned, was not condemned by their superiors. Indeed, when Lutz visited Schietfontein in 1846, where many of the Zak River Bastards had moved as a result of drought in 1839, he was assured by Jan Kaffer, the government-appointed leader, that the Xhosa still desired a missionary. This interest, combined with the strong desire expressed by the local officials of Victoria West and Beaufort West for a missionary to curb the independence of the Xhosa, pushed the society into further action, and in 1847 the Rev. C.W. Alheit was sent to Schietfontein.<sup>2</sup>

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1. GH 1/82, Secretary of State to Colony, 30 May 1831; E. Strassberger, The Rhenish Mission Society, p.1.
  2. CO 565, G. Esselen to Secretary, 30 September 1847.

The arrival of Rev. C. Alheit

Christoph Wilhelm Alheit was born in Thuringen, Germany, in 1817. He trained as a missionary under the Rhenish Society at Barmen, and when he arrived at the Cape he served a probationary period, between 1842 and 1847, under the Rev. G.A. Zahn at Tulbagh. This was a small and well-organised mission village, and from there he was sent to Schietfontein, marrying before he left Tulbagh, the daughter of the Rev. A. Vos.<sup>3</sup>

The widely scattered nature of the Schietfontein community was new to him, and on arrival he found a far more complicated situation than he had envisaged. Firstly, it was clear that Jan Kaffer's invitation had not been entirely disinterested. He had little real authority or support and obviously hoped to gain these as the aide of a missionary; particularly if that missionary could unify the Xhosa and halt white expansion onto the Schietfontein lands. By its nature the settlement at Schietfontein was diverse, and Jan Kaffer's poor leadership had compounded this disunity. There were frequent quarrels over marriages, dwelling places, cultivation and grazing rights, and traders had found a ready market for liquor.<sup>4</sup> The defection of 300 people from Kareekloof in Rhenosterpoort, to the Orange River, though precipitated by drought and the land squeeze, was also indicative of the prevailing dissatisfaction.

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3. Dictionary of South African Biography, III, p.16; E. Strassberger, Rhenish Mission Society, p.24.  
 4. 1/BFW 9/57, C. Alheit to Civil Commissioner, 29 April 1849 (it should read 1848); E. Strassberger, Rhenish Mission Society, pp.79-80.



**EERW. P. STERRENBERG (1865—1892).**

Source: *Feesuitgawe, N.G. Sendingkerk, Camarvon, 1847-1972, p.9.*



**C. W. Allheit.**

Source: *Standard Encyclopaedia of Southern Africa, p.304.*

Secondly, Alheit's welcome was by no means wholehearted. There were those who saw him as someone come to boost Jan Kaffer's authority, or as the forerunner of white, colonial control which they had no reason to trust.<sup>5</sup> Considerable numbers, under the ultimate leadership of Donker Malgas, left Schietfontein as a direct result of Alheit's arrival.<sup>6</sup> The reasons they gave for going were varied: they needed pasturage, Alheit frowned on polygamy, Christianity was unacceptable, and it was too expensive to stay. It was expensive: acceptance of Alheit's Christianity implied the loss of customary social values, a change in pattern from nomadic pastoralism to that of a settled agricultural community, a curtailment of trade, and a dependence upon an outsider who would inevitably draw them into the colonial web.<sup>7</sup>

A third nasty surprise for Alheit was the enormous distances over which his potential converts were scattered.

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5. L. van Rohden, Missions-Gesellschaft, pp.137-138.
  6. According to Piet Hendrick, Xhosa descendant of earlier Schietfontein settlers, there was a split in authority at Schietfontein at this time and the adherents of Donker Malgas (see p.141) followed him to the Orange River and beyond. There is evidence that he was living in Andries Waterboer's territory in 1852 though he and his three wives were settled on the southern banks of the Orange in 1867. He only assumed leadership of the Orange River Xhosa in the 1870s when they were pushed north of the Orange once more because of pressure on land. See: G61-'79, No.159, Special Commissioner, Northern Border, to Colonial Secretary, 10 March 1879; A.N. White, 'The Stockenström Judgment. The Warren Report and the Griqualand West Rebellion 1876-1878', p.125; P. Kallaway, 'The Xhosa of the Karreebergen', p.29; CO 3114, Return of Kafirs and Bastards living on Crown Lands in the Victoria West Division, n.d. 1867.
  7. L. van Rohden, Missions-Gesellschaft, p.138; CO 2873, Statement by Field-Cornet S.J. Jacobs, 20 June 1851; G61-'79, No. 159, Special Commissioner, Northern Border, to Colonial Secretary, 10 March 1879.

The Pramberg Xhosa, whose behaviour had initiated the despatch of Kinnear's report to the Rhenish Society, lived in the most inaccessible fastnesses of the rocky kloofs of the mountain, a stony, practically waterless 80 kilometres from Schietfontein.<sup>8</sup> As a homogeneous community of reasonably prosperous, independent pastoralists with a well-established tradition of polygamy, they were strongly antagonistic towards Christianity - particularly as it was immediately connected with the recent attempts to evict them.<sup>9</sup>

The southern banks of the Orange River, 400 kilometres from Schietfontein, had supported groups of Xhosa since the turn of the century. Although nomadic some of them used Prieska as a more or less permanent base, whereas others, from Schietfontein or Pramberg, only used the area when pushed there in times of drought or for trading purposes. Nevertheless there were close links between the shifting groups, so that the Kareekloof Xhosa, and subsequently those who broke away from the Alheit-Jan Kaffer combination, automatically moved to the Orange River, and Prieska became a haven for colonial Xhosa both Christian and heathen.<sup>10</sup> Drought always increased their numbers, but by 1850 the complement of the small settlements around Prieska was roughly equivalent to those of Schietfontein and Pramberg.<sup>11</sup>

None of the Xhosa communities was exclusive. There were several hundred Bastards living on the outskirts of

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8. CO 3021, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 13 July 1861; personal observation, September 1983.

9. L. van Rohden, Missions-Gesellschaft, p.138; CO 2883, Memorial of C.W. Alheit, 19 October 1852.

10. 1/BFW 9/57, C. Alheit to Civil Commissioner, 8 February 1850.

11. CO 2883, Copy of letter from Secretary to C. Alheit, 13 October 1850.

Schietfontein when Alheit arrived; the Pramberg Xhosa had married with their San servants and neighbours, and the Prieska Xhosa had continual intercourse with the Korana on the Orange River islands and with Waterboer's Griqua on the northern banks of the river. So although Alheit's primary concern was the Xhosa on the northern border, he could not avoid some commitment to the others.

Alheit's immediate preoccupation was to build a church and sort out the unsatisfactory system of government at Schietfontein. The fountains of Schietfontein and Harmsfontein, only seven or eight kilometres apart, were the focal points of the settlement, and he built a makeshift church with reeds and clay at Harmsfontein, which being the more accessible of the two springs, had enabled the 40 or so families settled around it, to become fairly successful grain growers, sometimes reaping as much as 1300 muids in a season. Very soon Alheit had planted a garden, and one of his first requests to the central government was that the land surrounding the fountain should be divided into erfs for cultivation only, and that Schietfontein's water, which was stronger and ran from a rocky outcrop into deepish pools, should be reserved for cattle drinking. He hoped in that way to put an end to the incessant friction over water, and also to encourage the development of private landownership and permanent settlement.<sup>12</sup> He had some success. Between 1848 and 1853 stone houses began to appear among the hartbeeshuisies, a store was opened by a Bastard, and irrigation and agricultural schemes developed.<sup>13</sup>

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12. F.J. Steynberg, 'Carnarvon', pp.11,16; CO 2947, Resident Magistrate to Secretary, 16 August 1857; 1/BFW 1/57, C. Alheit to Civil Commissioner, 29 April 1849 (it should read 1848).

13. P. Kallaway, 'Xhosa of the Karreebergen', pp.20-21.

Jan Kaffer was so unpopular that Alheit asked the government if the community could elect a 10 man committee to run its daily life, under the direction of the local white field-cornet.<sup>14</sup> This request was not acceded to, and the government was obviously reluctant to remove Jan Kaffer, who was baptised in 1849 and became a stalwart supporter of the mission.<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless, his authority now became nominal, while his son Daniel and other younger men became the new leaders, increasingly reliant on Alheit's literacy in their dealings with local and central government.

#### The impact of a missionary at Schietfontein

Within six months Alheit's energy had transformed the lives of hundreds of people. He started a school, and 115 children were taught the rudiments of reading, writing and arithmetic as well as the superiority of western values: he insisted that they discard their skins and karosses, and was soon able to boast that all the schoolchildren wore clothes! His church services were well attended, and so was an adult catechism class.<sup>16</sup>

Alheit was not only energetic but a man of great integrity, and as soon as he turned his mind to other aspects of life at Schietfontein he began to have problems, for it became clear that in order to achieve his avowed aim of converting the heathen Xhosa to Christianity he would

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14. 1/BFW 9/57, C. Alheit to Civil Commissioner, 29 April 1849 (it should read 1848).

15. F.J. Steynberg, 'Carnarvon', pp.10, 29.

16. 1/BFW 9/57, C. Alheit to Civil Commissioner, 29 April 1849 (it should read 1848).

destroy the community he had come to save. In the years which followed, the conflict between the idealist and pragmatist was often painful and was complicated by Alheit's growing disillusionment as he became aware of the corruption of local white government against which he was increasingly powerless. Many of his actions can be seen as attempts to solve these intractable problems, the most immediate being how to cope with the moral issues raised by illicit arms sales and by dubious cattle dealing.

Trade was a major aspect of life at Schietfontein: it remained an essential outspan for traders both going to and coming from the north, and many of the Xhosa, too, periodically traded beyond the Orange River - the commodities of prime value being cattle, and arms and ammunition.

The Cape markets always needed stock, and the northern districts were seen as a major source of supply, as is attested by the frequent references to the need for more and better trekpaths and outspan places between the Orange River and the south.<sup>17</sup> Similarly the demand, from the north, mostly but not exclusively from the Griqua and the Korana, for stock, cattle and horses was insatiable, and almost every stock farmer seems, at one time or another, to have been up to the Orange in order to trade.<sup>18</sup> Also, the northern

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17. 1/BFW 9/6, Under Secretary to Civil Commissioner, 25 July 1858; SG 1/1/1/3, Civil Commissioner to Surveyor-General, 31 July 1845; 1/BFW 9/61, Jan Kaffer to Civil Commissioner (written by C. Alheit), 20 September 1848.

18. CO 2723, Resident Magistrate of Clanwilliam to Civil Commissioner of Worcester, 28 July 1830; CO 2736, A. Kok to Civil Commissioner of Graaff-Reinet, 20 February 1832; CO 2899, Civil Commissioner to Acting Secretary, 11 May 1854; HA 80, Annexures, L. Anthing to Secretary, 10 August 1868.

trade was an ideal outlet for the disposal of stolen cattle. The network established between the Xhosa of Pramberg, Schietfontein and Prieska was extremely effective and cattle reiving in the Victoria West district and along the banks of the Orange River had developed into a fine art, the stolen beasts being disposed of via Schietfontein in either direction.<sup>19</sup>

Alheit was shocked by the size and frequency of the traffic. He realised cattle trading was an important means of livelihood, and made no attempt to halt it, though he made efforts towards controlling the traffic by demarcating strictly defined outspan places for the traders whose cattle and stock often depleted the thin local pasturage. By keeping a watch in this way Alheit hoped to curtail theft.<sup>20</sup> Inevitably his actions were seen as interference by some, who left the mission, whereas those who accepted them were unintentionally placed in an increasingly subordinate role.

Similarly, guns, powder and shot were in great demand.<sup>21</sup> Although the government continued to insist on controlling their disbursement, the rules were easy to bend, and traders in either direction were able to get signed authorisations from chiefs and resident magistrates without much difficulty.<sup>22</sup> Nevertheless, demand always exceeded supply, and merchants were assured of the highest prices. All the northern Xhosa relied upon illegally procured arms for hunting the game which was a

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19. 1/BFW 13/17, Rough Drafts, 2 September 1847.

20. 1/BFW 9/61, Jan Kaffer to Civil Commissioner (written by C. Alheit), 20 September 1848.

21. CO 2706, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 18 September 1828.

22. CO 2905, Evidence of L. van Maltitz, 22 August 1854.

major source of food, and they were always short of supplies, particularly in times of drought when they needed them most and could afford them least. Alheit could not condone the illicit gun-running, yet sympathised with the Xhosa need for these commodities. By emphasising the dangers of the illegal trade to both the central government and Civil Commissioner, J.J. Meintjies, he slowly gained their trust and certain rights of distribution, and was thus able to provide his people with more powder and shot, legally acquired. He could not forbear, however, once he held this power, from using it to his own ends: only baptised Xhosa and Bastards, or those who were given a good character by Field-Cornet S.J. (Jacobus) Jacobs became recipients of his bounty, which led to bad feeling and more defections.<sup>23</sup>

Until the arrival of a missionary, the Xhosa captain at Schietfontein had heard legal disputes, and though his judgment was ultimately subject to colonial authority, both the Xhosa, albeit critical of Jan Kaffer, and the Bastards on the outskirts of the settlement had acknowledged his legal jurisdiction. Now, however, as further evidence of Alheit's increasingly dominant role, the Bastards began to question the authority of Daniel Kaffer, Jan's son, and although Alheit realised that a breakdown of the accepted local legal practices would ruin the community, he was unable wholly to condemn the Bastard desire to adopt colonial mores which were, after all, part of the new outlook he had presented to them.<sup>24</sup>

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23. 1/BFW 9/57, C. Alheit to Civil Commissioner, 24 May 1848, 29 July 1849 (it should read 1848); 22 May 1852, 30 August 1852.

24. ibid., 2 June 1852.

Although these shifts in the power structure at Schietfontein had enormous long-term implications they were minor compared with the overriding need for land.

Alheit's attempts to gain security of tenure for the northern Xhosa

By 1847, white encroachment in the Kareeberge had already begun to disperse the Xhosa, and those remaining at Schietfontein looked to Alheit to help them retain what was left. It soon became clear to him that the reluctance of the government to guarantee them security of tenure was bound to herald further encroachment. Besides, at this early stage of his mission, Alheit was by no means convinced that Schietfontein was the best place for his community to be. At the same time as he fought to secure the Schietfontein Xhosa their necessary grazing grounds, he knew that, because of the frequency of drought, his potential converts would probably never be able to settle for long enough to really benefit from his teaching.

Before long he hit upon a plan of action which seemed to solve not only the problem of land but also his need to gather all the Xhosa into one place, a plan which would include the Pramberg and Prieska Xhosa as well. Alheit accepted that pastoralism was the basis of Xhosa life, but believed that, if they lived in an area where agriculture was also a possibility, they would no longer be so dependent upon large flocks which demanded frequent migration. The southern banks of the Orange River, now crown land in the New Territory, and therefore available for colonial settle-

ment, were possibly irrigable and already housed many Xhosa. If the Pramberg and Schietfontein Xhosa were moved to the vicinity of Prieska he might be able to achieve all in one move; the white stock farmers would buy Schietfontein and Pramberg, and a grateful government would reward him with a mission reserve on the Orange River.

Thus in 1850 a committee from Schietfontein went to inspect the banks of the Orange River.<sup>25</sup> They were welcomed by many of the Xhosa there and also by Waterboer whose friendship treaty with the colony in 1834 had given him a direct interest in the inhabitants of both banks of the river.<sup>26</sup> On their advice Alheit decided to ask the colonial government for a 42 kilometre stretch of land on the southern banks, up and down the river from Blinkfontein to Uitdraai (see Map No.9, p.82), and including Prieska, which had the only strong fountain and was recommended by Waterboer as the site for a village.<sup>27</sup> The adjacent lands would be used as pasturage, for although there were no trees, and no water at all in the higher parts, there were karoo bushes in the valleys, and the banks of the river itself were fertile and well wooded. Alheit hoped to be able to use the river water for irrigation, by blasting a furrow at Uitdraai, 15 kilometres from Prieska.<sup>28</sup>

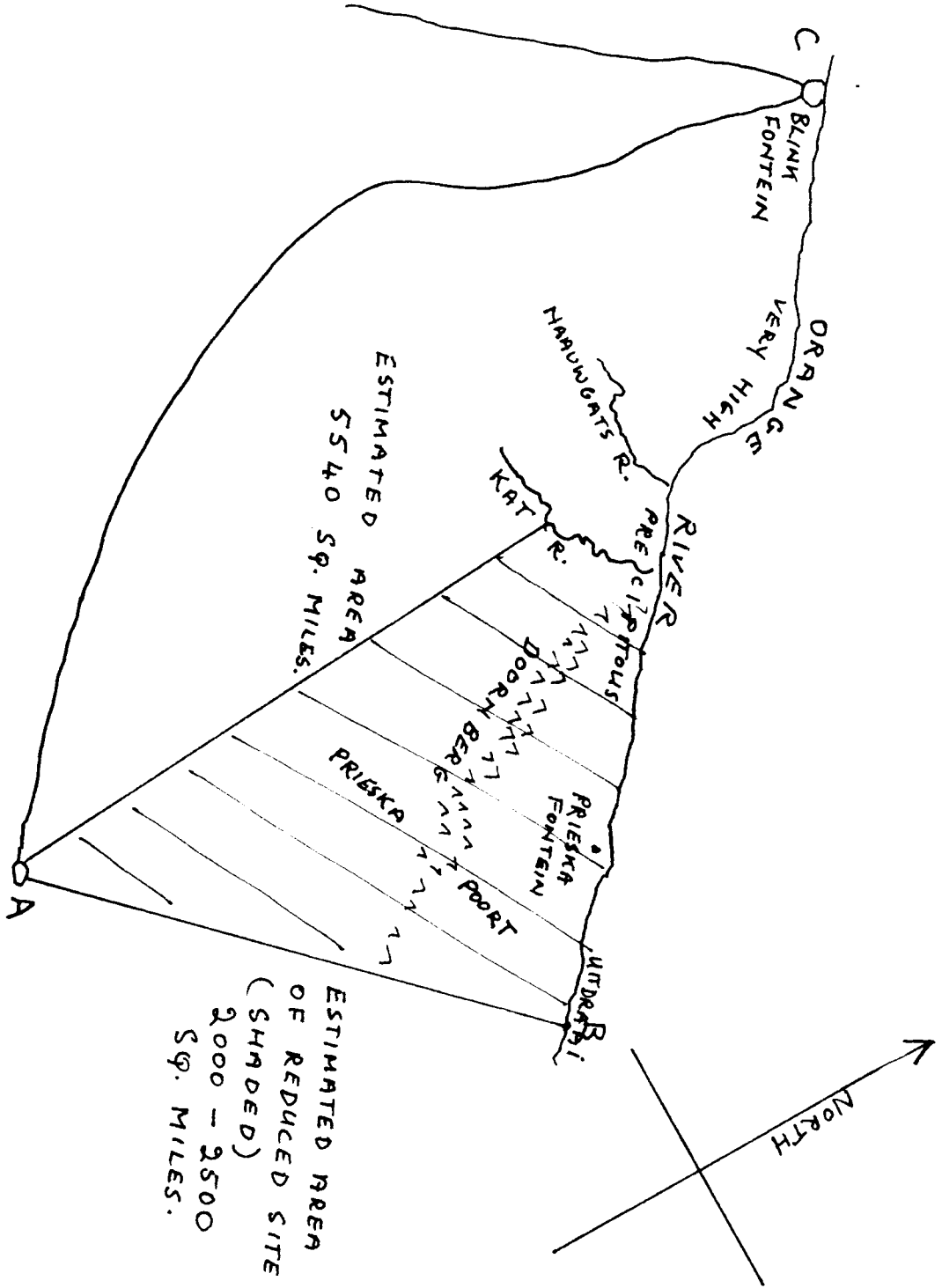
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25. 1/BFW 9/4, Memorial of C. Alheit, 22 February 1850; CO 2883, Copy of a Memorial from the Colonial Office, 7 September 1850.

26. CO 2883, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 15 April 1852; 1/BFW 9/57, C. Alheit to Civil Commissioner, 8 February 1850; G. Theal, *History*, VI, p.58.

27. 1/BFW 9/4, Memorial of C. Alheit, 22 February 1850; C. Alheit to Secretary, 23 February 1850; CO 2883, Sketch map of proposed location, 1852.

28. CO 2883, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 7 February 1852.



Map No.9: Rev. C. Alheit's Sketch of proposed site on the Orange River.

On the committee's return from the Orange River, Alheit formally sent a request to government on behalf of the Rhenish Missionary Society in conjunction with the Schietfontein Xhosa that they be granted the land on the Orange River in lieu of the lands of Pramberg and Schietfontein, which would duly be sold. If this exchange was not possible, the community was prepared to pay for the survey of the new location, and thereafter to pay a substantial annual quitrent. However, if the government insisted on applying the 1844 land law in the New Territory, then the Society, for the Xhosa could not afford to do so, would probably have been prepared to buy the site at the reserve price of two shillings per acre.<sup>29</sup>

They were not called upon to do this, for when Alheit and two committee members personally took their request to the governor, Sir Harry Smith, he agreed to the move as an exchange, subject to detailed information on the size of the proposed reserve, the type of soil, the width and depth of the Orange at that point, what people already lived there, and who had to be evicted. It was estimated that about 900 people, with 200 horses, 50 000 sheep and goats, and 5 000 cattle would be moved from Pramberg and Schietfontein.<sup>30</sup> They would be reunited with the 300 Kareekloof Xhosa, and Alheit envisaged the other groups of Xhosa, San, Bastards and Korana scattered along the river banks, all living within the reserve and benefitting from his teaching.<sup>31</sup>

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29. 1/BFW 9/4, Memorial of C. Alheit, 22 February 1850; 1/BFW 9/57, C. Alheit to Civil Commissioner, 8 February 1850, 8 August 1853.

30. CO 2883, Memorial of C. Alheit, 19 October 1852; Secretary to Civil Commissioner, 12 September 1850; copy of a Memorial from the Colonial Office, 7 September 1850.

31. 1/BFW 9/4, Memorial of C. Alheit, 22 February 1850.

It was agreed that the inhabitants of the mission would be controlled by a superintendent chosen by Alheit and appointed by the government. The superintendent would also be the schoolmaster and would maintain law and order with the help of five 'natives' called corporals, chosen by the people but appointed by the government. The land of the reserve was to be inalienable, subject to the good conduct of its members. Irrigable land would be divided into plots, which could be owned and inherited as long as the reserve existed. The remainder of the land would be commonage. Each head of family was to pay £1 per annum for the salary of the superintendent. Once the government had issued a ticket of occupation, all land regulations were to be made by the missionary, superintendent and occupants, who must become self-supporting, educated and Christian.<sup>32</sup>

Civil Commissioner J.J. Meintjies was instructed to visit and report on the site as soon as possible. Besides being lazy, Meintjies disapproved of housing the Xhosa in a reserve anywhere within the colony, so he procrastinated, using as his excuses the fact that he was ill, he needed leave in order to re-marry, the drought would prevent any horses reaching the Orange, and that the war on the eastern frontier, which had precipitated another outburst of friction on Pramberg, made his presence nearby essential.<sup>33</sup> During the two years of this delay, 1850-1852, anti-Xhosa feeling in the northern districts hardened. The Pramberg Xhosa were violently opposed to moving, and were belligerently supportive

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32. CO 2883, Copy of letter from Secretary to C. Alheit, 15 October 1850.

33. CO 2873, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 22 February 1851, 6 December 1851, 21 June 1851.

of their compatriots fighting on the eastern frontier. Both these and the Schietfontein Xhosa were labelled riotous and thieving by their Boer neighbours and there was considerable local white opinion that to move them to the Orange River would merely extend the present problem; the only satisfactory solution would be their total expulsion from the colony.<sup>34</sup>

The Commander of the forces on the frontier believed that expulsion would be impolitic, and in distant Cape Town, Secretary John Montagu considered that the Xhosa at Prieska would be remote enough to constitute no danger to the colony.<sup>35</sup> Although he threatened not to grant them the land along the Orange if they continued to upset the white farmers, the prospect of revenue from the sale of their present, far more valuable lands, was really too attractive to forego.<sup>36</sup> As soon as Meintjies was prodded into inspecting the Prieska site in February 1852, the Government Gazette advertised the sale of the Pramberg and Schietfontein lands,<sup>37</sup> which had been surveyed into 80 farms by the government surveyor, Meiring, in 1850.<sup>37</sup> The government was fortunate that the precipitate auction followed the usual pattern, with no public buyers, for when Meintjies's report, grudgingly conceding the possibility of a successful reserve, arrived, and Montagu realised that Alheit was requesting 14 350 square kilometres, he was

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34. CO 2883, Translated copy of letter from S. Karstens to Civil Commissioner, 17 June 1851; W. Cowan and J.D. de Wit to Resident Magistrate of Richmond, 25 June 1851; Statement of Frans Janse jnr., 30 August 1851; 1/BFW 9/28, Minutes of meeting in Victoria West, n.d.; CO 2892, Civil Commissioner to Acting Secretary, 15 January 1853.

35. 1/BFW 9/28, Reply to Civil Commissioner, 30 July 1851; CO 2883, Secretary to Civil Commissioner, 12 September 1850, 15 April 1852.

36. 1/BFW 9/4, Secretary to Civil Commissioner, 10 July 1851; CO 2883, Secretary to Civil Commissioner, 15 April 1852.

37. CO 2883, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 7 February 1852; C. Alheit to Secretary, 3 February 1852; P. Kallaway, 'Xhosa of the Karreebergen', p.10.

able to defer the sale until the Prieska site was reduced to an acceptable size.<sup>38</sup>

Alheit agreed to do this on condition that the proposed mission still included the spring at Prieska and that the Waterboer treaty would enable the Xhosa to move safely into Griqua territory, which they would now be forced to do in order to have sufficient grazing.<sup>39</sup> (See sketch, p.82). A local farmer, Boorman, privately offered to buy Schietfontein, but the move was delayed once more when a new governor, Cathcart, was appointed in 1852. He had to be put into the picture, and by the time that had been done, it was too late for the Xhosa to move because the necessity of sowing and reaping their crops meant that it was only possible to leave between March and June.<sup>40</sup> At this stage Alheit became convinced that the discovery of copper and diamonds in the north was the cause of the government's reluctance to part with land which might be rich.<sup>41</sup>

However, by 1853 it had become clear that a reduced site on the Orange River was also unacceptable to the Karreebergen Xhosa, who had been living in a state of suspense since 1850. The Waterboer treaty was not renewed, and those pastoralists who remained at the mission after the 1851 drought had pushed even more away, were reduced to such

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38. SG 1/1/3/17, Secretary to Surveyor-General, 23 February 1852; CO 2883, C. Alheit to Secretary, 3 February 1852; Report by Surveyor-General, 27 March 1852; Secretary to Civil Commissioner, 27 March 1852.
39. CO 2883, C. Alheit to Secretary, 8 March 1852; 1/BFW 9/57, C. Alheit to Civil Commissioner, 27 June 1853.
40. CO 2883, C. Alheit to Secretary, 8 March 1852; Secretary to Lieutenant-Governor, 15 April 1852; C. Alheit to Civil Commissioner, 19 October 1852.
41. G. Theal, History, VII, pp.85-87; 1/BFW 9/62, F. Rawstone to Civil Commissioner, 29 March 1854; P. Kallaway, 'Xhosa of the Karreebergen', p.12.

penury by the drought of 1853 that a move was no longer possible. Alheit decided to cut his losses, and concentrate on salvaging what remained. If the Pramberg heathen were moved to Schietfontein, his mission would have more point, and Alheit would gain the support of the farmers who took over the Pramberg lands. He therefore asked Meintjies to move the Pramberg Xhosa, increase the extent of the Schietfontein lands, and give the settlement security of tenure.<sup>42</sup>

Alheit was foiled by the wool men, and by the need of Meintjies to gain and keep the support of all sorts of people who would be voting for a representative parliament in the 1853 elections. Civil Commissioner Meintjies, whose personal power in Beaufort West was becoming threatened by J.C. Molteno, who was standing for election, was determined that his own son-in-law, James Christie, should represent the Beaufort district in the new legislature.<sup>43</sup>

Thus, in order to win the white stock farmers' vote, Meintjies was prepared to turn a blind eye when they trespassed on Xhosa land, or illegally impounded Xhosa cattle.<sup>44</sup> Similarly he was happy to accede to the land demands of the commercial farmers. In June 1853 Alheit recommended that in exchange for Pramberg, if the proposed Xhosa removal took place, the land at Schietfontein should be extended by 20 000 acres to include Karelsgraf, Rhenosterkolk, Brak, Goedeskloof, Moordenaarsgat and Kareekloof. It was the survey of the Brakfontein lands in 1849 which had precipitated

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42. CO 2883, Alheit to Secretary, 8 March 1852; 1/BFW 9/57, C. Alheit to Civil Commissioner, 27 June 1853; L. van Rohden, Missions-Gesellschaft, p.140.

43. CO 2886, J.C. Molteno to Civil Commissioner, 22 June 1853; Civil Commissioner to Acting Secretary, 21 July 1853.

44. 1/BFW 9/57, C. Alheit to Civil Commissioner, 28 September 1853, 19 October 1853.

the community's original search for a new home on the Orange. They had since reverted to the crown and were now freely available.<sup>45</sup> Meintjies made his request public, and the commercial farmers immediately made it clear that these were lands which they were in the habit of leasing for grazing purposes, and they were certainly not prepared to give them up.<sup>46</sup>

Alheit was deeply hurt by what he saw as Meintjies's treachery. He informed both the Civil Commissioner and the Surveyor-General that his application was to buy the land and as it was the first one it should be given priority.<sup>47</sup> Meintjies wriggled out of the situation by intimating to the Surveyor-General and to Alheit that the issue would have to be shelved until the new representative legislature had investigated and determined the whole question of who had the right to hold land and in what form it was to be held; meanwhile the Xhosa claim did not entitle them to sole use of the land in question, which would remain freely accessible to other graziers.<sup>48</sup>

In the five years since his arrival Alheit's perception of the situation had changed, and though he remained certain that the removal of the Pramberg Xhosa to Schietfontein was necessary, he increasingly allied himself with what the Xhosa considered their real needs, and during the

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45. 1/BFW 9/57, C. Alheit to Civil Commissioner, 27 June 1853, 19 October 1853.

46. *ibid.*, C. Alheit to Civil Commissioner, 8 August 1853; 1/BFW 9/13, Surveyor-General to Civil Commissioner, 22 November 1853.

47. 1/BFW 9/57, C. Alheit to Civil Commissioner, 8 August 1853; 1/BFW 9/13, Surveyor-General to Civil Commissioner, 22 November 1853.

48. SG 1/1/1/3, Civil Commissioner of Beaufort to Surveyor-General, 1 December, 1853.

following years, as their tenure came under heavier pressure, fought persistently, diplomatically but firmly on their behalf. His presence alone though, had given the Xhosa definition as a group. Until his arrival they had been considered 'Kaffers', sometimes 'foreigners' or 'heathen'; but were nevertheless seen as individuals who enjoyed a freedom of movement and an equality which were hard to dispute. Now they came to be regarded both by the local whites and officialdom as a group of people who lived under the control of a missionary and within the confines of a mission reserve.

CHAPTER 6WOOL FARMERS vs. PASTORALISTS:THE STRUGGLE FOR PRAMBERG AND SCHIETFONTEIN

The struggle for Pramberg took place in the 1850s and was caused by the increased pressure on land. The lines of conflict had been shaped in the previous decades: established white stockfarmers, dispossessed by encroaching wool farmers, used violence and the support from the local authorities on which they could depend, to remove the Xhosa from land the Boers now saw as necessary for their own survival. Thus competition for pasturage between wool farmers and traditional stockfarmers, and the subsequent establishment of the village of Victoria West in 1844 had meant that the dry plains surrounding Pramberg had become sought after: at first by the poorer white farmers who were pushed there by the wool men, and were driven into action by the land law; later by the commercial farmers who expanded there too, causing the trekboers who could not afford to buy land to move yet further north.<sup>1</sup>

Boer encroachment onto the Pramberg lands

These developments had affected the Xhosa pastoralists on Pramberg before the 1850s. In 1839 Civil

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1. 4/BFW 1/1/1/1, Minute Book of Divisional Council, 7 October 1857. For discussion of the 1844 land law and its implications, see Chapter 4.

Commissioner Meintjies had defined the extent of their land on the mountain as 22 000 morgen.<sup>2</sup> There were only three perennial fountains, and the pasturage was always insufficient in dry seasons, when the Xhosa moved their flocks onto the surrounding plains which they shared equally with other nomadic graziers.<sup>3</sup> In 1847 there were 400 Xhosa, living in several kraals on the mountain, and as pressure on the land became stronger, the occasional clashes of the past became more frequent in the 1840s.<sup>4</sup>

In 1846 surveyor Villet arrived, and during the year surveyed many of the farms requested.<sup>5</sup> This served the interests of the wealthier local stockfarmers who had taken advantage of the 1845 amendment to the 1844 land law, which allowed for the annual leasing of unsold crown land. Instead of buying the land, they leased it far more cheaply.<sup>6</sup> For example, the 29 112 morgen of 'Kwekwa' was rented for £7 per annum and the 42 546 morgen of 'Uitvlugt' for £12 per annum.<sup>7</sup> Not only did these new farms include the commonage relied upon for so long by the Xhosa, but they also encroached, with Meintjies's approval, on the Xhosa land itself. 'Kwekwa' actually included one of their springs.<sup>8</sup> The Xhosa refused to recognise the changed status of the common grazing grounds and became angry when the new, individual lessees of the land began to impound their cattle

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2. G7-'59, Auret's Report, p.13, Annexure c3, p.23.

3. ibid., Annexure A, p.20.

4. L. Van Rohden, Missions-Gesellschaft, p.138; CO 2825, C. Pritchard to Secretary, 9 May 1845; CO 2883, Copy of a Memorial from the Colonial Office, 7 September 1850.

5. 1/BFW 9/13, Assistant Surveyor-General to Civil Commissioner, 2 March 1848.

6. See Chapter 4.

7. LBD 78, Memorial from Board, n.d.

8. ibid., Report on Memorial of M.P. van Staden, 19 December 1845.

for trespassing.<sup>9</sup>

As had been the case in 1835, the outbreak of war on the eastern frontier in 1846 heralded a concurrent surge of hostility on the northern frontier.<sup>10</sup> Boer complaints about the Xhosa at this time were heeded to some extent by the government. Although the authorities refused to evict the Xhosa, they warned them of this likelihood in the event of future misbehaviour, and (as has been mentioned) a missionary was despatched to civilise them.<sup>11</sup> The advent of the Rev. C. Alheit, however, did nothing to resolve the tension, because the Pramberg Xhosa refused to interest themselves in Christianity, and very soon Alheit was also seen as an instrument of the whites who wanted to force them to leave Pramberg. They refused to countenance any removal to the Orange River.<sup>12</sup>

#### The effect of drought and war on the eastern frontier

In 1851 drought devastated the Pramberg livestock.<sup>13</sup>

The number of people living in the mountain was 69 heads of

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9. CO 565, Three depositions from Victoria, 14 August 1847; 1/BFW 13/17, Rough Drafts, 2 September 1847.
  10. 1/BFW 13/17, Rough Drafts, 2 September 1847; CO 2839, Acting Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 28 August 1847; C.J. de Klerk to Civil Commissioner, 18 August 1847; S.J. Esterhuizen to Civil Commissioner, 28 May 1846.
  11. 1/BFW 9/3, Secretary to Civil Commissioner, 9 September 1847; Governor's Secretary to Civil Commissioner, 18 July 1846; CO 565, Clerk of the Peace to Acting Civil Commissioner, 2 September 1847; G. Esselen to Secretary, 30 September 1847. For discussion of the establishment of Alheit's mission see Chapter 5.
  12. L. van Rohden, Missions-Gesellschaft, p.138; CO 2883, Memorial of C. Alheit, 19 October 1852.
  13. F.J. Steynberg, 'Carnarvon', p.12.

families, 137 men, 96 women and 156 children. Their cattle and stock had dwindled alarmingly from 1 100 cattle and 2 100 sheep for 40 heads of families in 1824, to 966 sheep, 34 draught oxen, 73 breeding cattle and 34 horses in 1852.<sup>14</sup> The white stockfarmers were as severely affected, and the increase of stock became of paramount importance to both groups.<sup>15</sup>

As soon as the villagers of Victoria West heard of the outbreak of another war on the eastern frontier in 1851 they called a public meeting where it was decided that, because of the danger of attack (i.e. cattle theft) from the Pramberg Xhosa, no-one ought to leave the district when called up to fight in the east.<sup>16</sup> White stockfarmers from as far afield as the Winterveld and Middelveld used rumours that the Pramberg Xhosa were buying ammunition and sending their wives and children away in preparation for battle, as a reason for not going, and were soundly taken to task by the author of a letter in Truth in February 1851, for using the peaceful Xhosa as an excuse for their cowardice. Forty volunteers from Victoria West proved that there was no real cause to be nervous.<sup>17</sup>

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14. CO 2883, List of Pramberg Xhosa, 1852; BPP No. 50 of 1835, p.137.

15. LBD 79, Land Claim No. 9(10) for Jakkalsput by J. van der Westhuizen; further Declarations concerning Land Claims 1-13(1861).

16. 1/BFW 9/28, Minutes of Meeting held in Victoria, n.d.

17. ibid., Civil Commissioner of Colesberg to Civil Commissioner, 22 January 1851; Zuid Afrikaan, 10 February 1851, 13 February 1851; CO 637, Copy of letter from Truth, 12 February 1851. Among these volunteers however, there was only one white man, the others were mostly Khoi. See: CO 2873, Roll of volunteers, 8 February 1851.

The Battle of Pramberg

However, as the effects of the drought increased, so did tension. Spytpoort at the base of the mountain on the Victoria West side, had been leased by a white farmer, J.J. Kotze. Although it was a bleak place with an erratic water supply (the river which ran through the poort had been dry for so long that a trader had established his wagon in its bed), it supplied the most convenient grazing for the Xhosa who lived on that side of the mountain.<sup>18</sup>

In June 1851 two leading Xhosa men, Kort Klaas and Goliath, stole two cows from Kotze in what was apparently an act of vengeance and warning, for when confronted with the crime they said it was the forerunner of more if they were not allowed to graze their stock on the plains. They were nevertheless prepared to come to a working arrangement with the white farmers, for 11 Xhosa men obeyed a summons to appear before the local field-cornet on the following day. Discussions broke down. The Xhosa strongly resisted pressure on them to move to Prieska and said it would only be by force, and that if their demands for grazing were not met they would resort to war.<sup>19</sup>

A posse of white farmers rode out to Pramberg a few days later, ostensibly to arrest the cattle thieves, but also ready for a fight. At each kraal no men were to be found and only when the white men had penetrated deeply into the fastnesses of the mountain were they confronted by 33

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18. CO 2873, Translated copy of letter from J.J. Kotzee (the spelling of his name varied) to S. Karstens, 12 June 1851; personal observation, September 1983.

19. CO 2873, Translated copy of letter from J.J. Kotzee to S. Karstens, 12 June 1851; J.J. Kotze to S. Karstens, 14 June 1851.

Xhosa, who, in full war dress, had been preparing for battle in a war dance. The Boers, taken aback and at a disadvantage, fired upon them, and with shouts of 'We now see that war will come from the Boors' pursuing them, beat a hasty retreat, with no prisoners, and loudly determined that if the government did not remove the Xhosa they would do so themselves, violently.<sup>20</sup>

For all their talk, the local farmers who were directly involved were afraid to act alone for they had little hope of support from others who were unconcerned about their distant neighbours' quarrels, and the Victoria West J.P., W. Cowan, wrote asking Meintjies in Beaufort West to come and arrest the thieves.<sup>21</sup> Nightly patrols were reinstated and when Meintjies reluctantly arrived in the village after a sharp reprimand for tardiness by the Commander-in-Chief on the eastern frontier, a second public meeting was held in July, during which the 49 men who attended, repeatedly demanded the eviction of the Xhosa.<sup>22</sup> Fired by rhetoric, the white farmers left the meeting and gathered reinforcements. They were so angry that only the most determined and united efforts of C. Alheit and J.J. Meintjies prevented more than 100 of them from riding off to lynch the enemy.<sup>23</sup>

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20. CO 2873, Translated copy of letters from A.S. Karstens to Civil Commissioner, 17 June 1851, 19 June 1851; copy of letter from W. Walton to J. Kotze, 17 June 1851; 1/BFW 9/62, H. Hatting to J. Kotsie, 17 June 1851.
21. CO 2873, W. Cowan to Civil Commissioner of Beaufort, 19 June 1851.
22. 1/BFW 9/4, Secretary to Civil Commissioner, 4 August 1851; 1/BFW 9/58, Reply to J.J. Meintjies, 30 July 1851; 1/BFW 9/4, Secretary to Civil Commissioner, 21 July 1851; 1/BFW 9/62, H. Wernich to Resident Magistrate, enclosing minutes of public meeting, 8 July 1851.
23. CO 605, C. Alheit to Secretary, 1 September 1851.

Instead, Meintjies, at separate meetings, heard complaints from both the Boers and the Xhosa, and then arranged a meeting at the end of July at Rhebokfontein. The Boer protagonists were led by Field-Cornet S. Karstens, who had played a leading role in what became known as the Pramberg battle of 1851.<sup>24</sup> The Xhosa were conciliatory, and Goliath and Kort Klaas were handed over for trial.<sup>25</sup> Meintjies appointed a new 'Headman', Groot Klaas, and was confident that the security of the white farmers was now assured.<sup>26</sup>

The 'enemy' on this occasion was specifically those Xhosa living on the Spytpoort side of the mountain, for although the Pramberg Xhosa often acted in concert, they did not consider themselves a single unit bound by a common loyalty. And though 'Pramberg kaffers' was a useful label, the local stockfarmers thought of the Xhosa in individual terms. The fluctuation in population on Pramberg as a result of trading and pastoral nomadism encouraged family rather than wider loyalties. Thus at the same time as the Spytpoort conflict flared, Xhosa on the north western side of the mountain were prepared to

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24. 1/BFW 9/57, C. Alheit to Civil Commissioner, 30 August 1852.

25. Kort Klaas had originally come from north of the Orange, but Goliath had been born in 'Kaffirland' and had the distinctive pagan characteristic of the Xhosa, a missing joint on a finger of the left hand. They were both found guilty of theft and sentenced to ten years imprisonment with hard labour. While being transported to the convict station at Bain's Kloof they made an escape bid and Kort Klaas was shot dead by the constable accompanying the prisoners. This constable was subsequently found guilty of his murder, see: CO 2882, Return of Prisoners Sentenced, 31 December 1851; 1/BFW 2/25, Examination of Kort Klaas and Goliath, 1851, case against Thomas Fraser, Constable, February 1852; J.P. Peires, House of Phalo, p.65.

26. 1/BFW 9/4, Secretary to Civil Commissioner, 4 August 1851.

ally with the white stockfarmers against other Xhosa pastoralists. When Plaatjie Fingo, servant of the other Victoria West J.P., Dirk de Wit, was sent after missing cattle and found the spoor on the 'Kwekwa' side, he was able to enlist the help of 16 men from Jacob's kraal in confronting those of Booy's kraal who were suspected of the theft.<sup>27</sup>

How big a part the frontier war played in the above events is uncertain. Both Boers and Xhosa used it as an excuse for their actions, but there also seems to be some evidence of new Khoi and Xhosa movement into Pramberg during 1851. Searching for volunteers to fight on the frontier, J.A. Devenish was assured that he would find plenty of 'loose Hottentots' there.<sup>28</sup> One of the newcomers was Frans Janse who was pinpointed as a probable instigator of trouble. A Bethelsdorp-educated teacher, he had moved to Pramberg because

'...he did not approve of civilizing the Natives by proceeding against them with a bible in one hand and a gun in the other.'

Although he was arrested several times as a troublemaker in the months following the July settlement, Janse persisted in living amongst the Xhosa and acting as their adviser.<sup>29</sup>

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27. 1/BFW 2/25, Case before Justices of the Peace, J.D. Wit and W. Cowan, at Victoria, 10 July 1851.  
 28. CO 2873, W. Cowan to Civil Commissioner of Beaufort, 19 June 1851; W. Cowan and J.D. de Wit to Resident Magistrate of Colesberg, 25 June 1851; 1/BFW 9/28, J.A. Devenish to Civil Commissioner, 12 January 1851.  
 29. CO 2873, Statement of Frans Janse Junior, 30 August 1851; W. Cowan to Civil Commissioner of Beaufort, 18 September 1851; Frans Janse Junior to Civil Commissioner of Beaufort, 18 September 1851; statement of J.J. Human, 4 October 1851; Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 18 October 1851.

Boer attempts to dispossess the Pramberg Xhosa

Good rains fell in 1852 and though white farmers continued to press sporadically for the removal of the Xhosa, a certain modus vivendi was achieved until 1854 when not only were the effects of the 1853 drought being felt but it was evident that Alheit's proposed removal of all the Xhosa to the Orange River had finally foundered.<sup>30</sup> Thus it was, that in 1854 when a party of Pramberg Xhosa returned from Griqua territory where they had been trading and grazing their flocks, they were denounced by Boers as the forerunners of a combined Xhosa-Griqua attack on the colony.<sup>31</sup> When this alarum failed to rouse the colonial authorities, the white farmers of Victoria West began to complain once more that they dared not leave their farms even to go to church for fear of arson and worse.<sup>32</sup> Also, as the number of wool sheep in the Beaufort district had doubled between 1850 and 1855, so had the demand for labour from the commercial farmers: this demand the Pramberg Xhosa were not prepared to satisfy.<sup>33</sup>

A major incident occurred in July 1855, at Spytport once more, now leased by Jan van Niekerk, who lived there

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30. L. van Rohden, Missions-Gesellschaft, p.140; CO 2886, C. Alheit to Civil Commissioner, 10 September 1853. (See Chapter 5).

31. 1/BFW 9/62, F. Rawstone to Civil Commissioner, 29 March 1854; CO 2899, Civil Commissioner to R. Southey, 7 May 1854; Acting Civil Commissioner to Acting Secretary, 11 May 1854; translated copy of letter from G. Joubert to Civil Commissioner, 13 May 1854; Civil Commissioner to R. Southey, 15 May 1854; CO 2898, S.J. Jacobs to Civil Commissioner of Beaufort, 4 August 1854.

32. CO 2910, Translated copy of letter from N.S. van der Merwe to Civil Commissioner of Beaufort, 23 December 1854.

33. H.B. Thom, Skaapboerdery, p.326; CO 2910, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, n.d. March 1855.

with his brother-in-law, Zwarts, and his family. It was Sunday morning and Adam and Saul, two Xhosa men, together with two Xhosa women, were helping the van Niekerks cut up an ox. Several Xhosa men who had been to the trader's wagon in the river bed came via the house on their way home and one, Jan, as he bent from his horse to speak to Saul, was deliberately and provocatively knocked off by Zwarts, who beat him to the ground as he struggled to his feet, and then rushed into his hut, returning with three guns with which he threatened the Xhosa. Having wrested the guns from him, the Xhosa left Zwarts to cool down or sober up.<sup>34</sup>

They returned to Spytport for an explanation on the following day, to be met by van Niekerk and Zwarts and reinforcements in the shape of Field-Cornet S. Karstens and other Boers, who tied up four of them, viciously beat them with sjamboks and threatened them with the Beaufort gaol.<sup>35</sup> When he discovered that one of his victims had not even been at Spytport on the previous day, Karstens paid him ten shillings as compensation, but made no mention of this assault when he reported the incident to Meintjies as an example of Xhosa trespass and insolence, and as a reason for their removal. A week later he posted a declaration from the members of his ward, which conveyed their impatience with the government for its procrastination in moving the Xhosa, which, they asserted, it had promised to do four years before.<sup>36</sup>

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34. CO 2916, Deposition of Xhosa, Adam, 1855.

35. *ibid.*

36. *ibid.*, Resident Magistrate to Secretary, 27 September 1855; CO 2910, Translated copy of letters from A.S. Karstens to Civil Commissioner, 5 July 1855, 11 July 1855.

Meintjies approved these claims. Alheit was pressing for the inclusion of the Pramberg Xhosa in the settlement at Schietfontein, and the recurrent clashes were becoming a nuisance.<sup>37</sup> A more important consideration was that the wool men were beginning to demand land in the vicinity.

Thus Meintjies sent Karsten's letters to the central government and strongly endorsed them, emphasising that in lieu of Pramberg a vast extent of land was available for the Xhosa in the Kareeberge.<sup>38</sup> Eventually, at the end of July 1855, permission was granted - the Pramberg Xhosa could be moved to Schietfontein on condition that they were willing to go, and that no injustices occurred. Meintjies knew that neither of these conditions would be fulfilled, so he gained permission to supervise the move personally.<sup>39</sup>

Meintjies arrived in Victoria West in September and on the 9th he visited Pramberg where the angry inhabitants informed him of the assaults by Zwarts and Karstens. Meintjies assured them that justice would be done, sent their revealing depositions to the Attorney-General, and recommended the dismissal of Karstens as unfit to be a field-cornet.<sup>40</sup> Karstens duly resigned from his post, and the Attorney-General, though he instructed the Beaufort Clerk of the Peace, William Kinnear, to institute proceedings against Karstens, made it clear that no other punishment need be forthcoming.<sup>41</sup>

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37. 1/BFW 9/57, C. Alheit to Civil Commissioner, 28 September 1853; CO 2883, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 15 April 1852.

38. CO 2910, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 13 July 1855.

39. 1/BFW 9/5, Secretary to Civil Commissioner, 24 July 1855; CO 2910, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 3 August 1855.

40. CO 2916, Resident Magistrate to Secretary, 27 September 1855.

41. CO 2910, A.S. Karstens to Civil Commissioner, 31 October 1855; 1/BFW 13/14, Clerk to Attorney-General to Clerk of the Peace, 8 November 1855.

Destruction of the Pramberg Settlement

Meintjies managed to convince many of the Pramberg Xhosa that the central government had given them no option but to move. Ryk Booy, who proved most recalcitrant, he silenced with threats: although he had lived on Pramberg since boyhood, brought there by Captain Hermanus, he was a Mantatee<sup>42</sup> and his occupation was therefore illegal. To emphasise his own powerful position, Meintjies also refused to accept Ryk Booy's claim for compensation on the wheat crop he would lose when they moved, on the grounds that Booy's kraal was on the 'Kwekwa' side of the mountain and therefore his wheat belonged to A. Olivier who now leased 'Kwekwa'. Acquiescence, on the other hand, was rewarded, and Malagas, for example, was paid £6 in compensation for his wheat.<sup>43</sup>

Two of those Pramberg men who were prepared to concede defeat, accompanied Meintjies to Schietfontein where discussions were held about how the newcomers could be accommodated. The Schietfontein Xhosa were justifiably anxious about the effect of more stock on their limited grazing grounds, but Alheit was so pleased at the prospect of unity and conversion he was prepared to accept no more than they already had: shared grazing with J. Kruger on the mountain slope to the west of the settlement, which both parties leased from the government, and the continued use,

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42. The Mantatees were formed into a horde by refugees during the Mfecane. Led by the formidable Mnatatise and her son Sikonyela, they had traversed Basutoland before being defeated by the Griqua in 1823. The group then broke into several parts, Mnatatise and Sikonyela returning to the Caledon River where they later became known as the Batlokua. Many other Mantatees moved, in a state of starvation, into the northern Cape where they were generally apprenticed to white farmers. See: G. Theal, History, V, pp.442-446; E. Walker, A History of South Africa, pp.182-183.

43. CO 2916, Resident Magistrate to Secretary, 27 September 1855.

to both Boers and Xhosa, of the commonage of Rhenosterkolk, De Put, Garstkolk and the land around the Brak River. Meintjies magnanimously guaranteed them these rights. Alheit and Captain Daniel Kaffer returned to Pramberg with Meintjies, a census was taken, and the 69 heads of families, 92 women and 265 children were told they had to leave before the 15th October.<sup>44</sup>

In December 1855 the Pramberg lands were let to Edzard Grimbeek for £25 per annum on condition that he did not sub-let them to anyone without the approval of the Civil Commissioner. By February 1856 however, 12 Xhosa families with 100 cattle and 2 000 sheep had returned from Schietfontein and were leasing, in several smallish units, farms from Grimbeek at ten shillings per month. Apparently many more were about to return, and farmers complained that as soon as their servants' contracts expired they planned to leave them and join these independent lessees.<sup>45</sup> J.B. Auret who was Acting Civil Commissioner at the time, moved swiftly. Grimbeek was evicted on the grounds that he had broken his contract, and the Pramberg lands, divided into five portions were re-let, not to the Xhosa, but to white farmers who were purposely given the power to impound cattle as a means of forcing the Xhosa away.<sup>46</sup>

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44. CO 2916, Resident Magistrate to Secretary, 27 September 1855.

45. CO 2923, Acting Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 29 February 1856; Resident Magistrate of Victoria to Civil Commissioner of Beaufort, 6 February 1856; translated copy of letter from A. Olivier to Civil Commissioner of Beaufort, 22 February 1856; 1/BFW 9/41, Resident Magistrate of Victoria to Civil Commissioner, 5 March 1856.

46. CO 2923, Acting Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 29 February 1856.

The alacrity with which Edzard Grimbeek sub-let the Pramberg land back to the Xhosa was another example of the lack of group cohesion among both Boers and Xhosa. Similarly, throughout these years it was only the farmers directly affected by the Xhosa who were interested in their removal, and the general reluctance for confrontation on both sides was also evident on the occasions when the Xhosa were prepared to deliver cattle thieves to colonial justice.

Nevertheless, when pressure on the land became acute the local authorities once more considered the Xhosa as a unit. Auret's prompt action at Pramberg was successful, and Meintjies, back at the helm, was able to inform the central government in May 1857 that the land was clear.<sup>47</sup> The Pramberg community had ceased to exist.<sup>48</sup>

The removal of the Pramberg Xhosa relieved the immediate pressure on the grazing lands near Victoria West. The lack of clarity over the right to hold land further north however, was a matter of concern to all the people who lived in the New Territory.

#### Changes in land-holding during the 1850's

The election of the Cape Parliament in 1853, with J.C. Molteno and Dr James Christie as members for Beaufort,

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47. CO 2936, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 12 May 1857.

48. It is interesting to note that in 1970 Xhosa labourers on Montana, the farm on which Kafferskloof is now situated, refused to acknowledge that they were Xhosa, and insisted that they were Kaffirs.

and J.J. Meintjies chosen to represent Albert, encouraged hopes among all the inhabitants of the northern frontier that the whole question of land holding in the area would soon be satisfactorily resolved.<sup>49</sup>

Millions of morgen had been added to the Beaufort district by the extension of the northern border in 1848. As the land was gradually surveyed the poor white stockfarmers who had lived in the New Territory as squatters or on request places, found themselves in competition with the commercial wool farmers who were beginning to require even these remote pastures. Buying the land was generally out of the question for the poor men, who were then successfully outbid for it at the annual leasing auctions.<sup>50</sup>

Accordingly, when the legislature met for the first time in 1854, 59 stockfarmers in the New Territory signed a petition asking for the sale of Crown lands either to revert to a perpetual quitrent system or change to one where housing tenures were for 10, 15 or 20 years.<sup>51</sup> Through long term leasing, the poor men hoped to gain some security of tenure but for less capital outlay than if the land had to be bought in freehold.

As a result of this and many similar requests, a Parliamentary committee was formed to investigate the leasing of crown land. Its proposals, published in September 1854, were far-reaching. Besides the important recommendation that

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49. G.M. Theal, History, p.140; 1/BFW 9/57, C. Alheit to Civil Commissioner, 10 September 1853.

50. CO 2884, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 31 March 1852; P.A. Molteno, Life and Times, p.53; A65-'63, Lands 1855-1890, J. Alport to Acting Secretary 1861.

51. CCP 1/2/1/1, Index to Annexures and Select Reports, No. 625, 1854.

Crown lands should no longer be sold in freehold, but leased at an annual quitrent, Sections 8 and 9 of the committee's report had particular relevance for the Beaufort district.<sup>52</sup>

Section 8 stated that Crown land lying between private properties should be attached to one or another, and allotted accordingly by the local land board at a reasonable price. It would then be subject to quitrent in the same way as other Crown lands.<sup>53</sup>

Section 9 made provision for those people who had occupied land in the New Territory prior to 1847. This land, it suggested, should be granted to those occupants in lots of '...reasonable extent, subject to a moderate quitrent, and without purchase price, beyond the costs of inspection, survey and title deeds.'<sup>54</sup>

A Bill for the establishment of Divisional Councils had already been introduced in the House of Assembly, so the Committee suggested that each Divisional Council should also become a Land Board. As such boards, they would have the power, subject to the approval of the Surveyor-General, to inspect, survey and divide Crown lands. A further, strongly emphasised function would be to prevent squatting.<sup>55</sup>

Thus, when the Beaufort Divisional Council met in 1855, it was required to act as Land Board for the district, and to use the recommendations of the committee on a trial basis before they became law.<sup>56</sup>

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52. CCP 1/2/1/1, Index to Annexures and Select Reports, op.cit., No. 583, 8 September 1854.

53. ibid.

54. ibid.

55. ibid., No. 713, 21 August 1854; CCP 1/2/1/2, No.81, 3 May 1855.

56. G.M. Theal, History, VII, p.149; CO 5935, No.2, 8 January 1856.

The Beaufort Divisional Council as Land Board

The north was depressed during the 1850's. Throughout the decade drought was almost continual, while lungsickness in 1854 and horse distemper in 1855, together with over-hunting, increased the prices of meat and transport, and reduced the amount of game for trade. Simultaneously, the ivory trade had moved too far north to be profitable any longer.<sup>57</sup> All the people on the frontier were affected as trading activities ground to a standstill. 'For a dreary down-on-your luck retreat try Beaufort West,' wrote a visitor during those years. The municipal chest was insolvent and business dead.<sup>58</sup>

The only growth was in the wool industry, and astute businessmen recognised a favourable opportunity to gain land and labour from those who had been defeated by drought or bankruptcy.<sup>59</sup> Thus Molteno opened his bank in 1854, which gave loans against the security of mortgage bonds; and when the Divisional Council was formed in 1855, with considerable power over the alienation of land, it was these wealthy men who became members. As Civil Commissioner, J.J. Meintjies became chairman of a Divisional Council which included among its members J.R.G. Luttig and Henry Rose, both big landowners and directors of the Beaufort Bank; J.C. Molteno; Hendrik Jacobs; Charles Pritchard, and the auctioneer William Thwaites.

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57. LBD 79, Land Claim No19 (10), further Declarations concerning Land Claims 1-13, 13 March 1860; Claims No.4, No.10; W.G.H. en S. Vivier, Hooyvlakte, p.37; G.M. Theal, History, VII, pp.151-153; K.T.J. Shillington, 'Land Loss, Labour and Dependence: The impact of colonialism on the Southern Tswana c 1870-1900,' pp.60,79.

58. Ds A.P. Smit, Gedenkboek van die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Gemeente Beaufort-Wes (1870-1945), p.138.

59. CO 2910, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, n.d. March 1855; H.B. Thom, Skaapboerdery, p.326.

All of these men energetically favoured the expansion of the wool industry.<sup>60</sup> By 1854 the Colony's wool exports were more than all the other exports put together, and the increased demand meant that more pasturage and more labour were required.<sup>61</sup>

The disturbances at Pramberg suited the needs of the Divisional Council. The claims of the Pramberg Xhosa to land they had occupied, with government sanction, for 50 years, would have been hard to gainsay. However, the government directive permitting their removal to Schietfontein solved this problem.<sup>62</sup> As a result of their removal, the land they had occupied on Pramberg became waste crown land, and those farmers who had leased the surrounding farms were able to benefit, through Section 8 of the report by the addition of most desirable land. (See p.105).<sup>63</sup> Also, after the disastrous cattle killing in the east in 1857, there was a great influx of Xhosa into the Colony in search of work. The Pramberg Xhosa were no longer so important as a labour force, and a location was soon established in Victoria West in order to cater for the newcomers.<sup>64</sup>

At the same time, the transfer of the Pramberg Xhosa to Schietfontein would not increase in any way the amount of land the Schietfontein Xhosa could claim through Section 9 of the report, for the Prambergers would be new arrivals. The influx of Pramberg Xhosa would indeed place such pressure on the defined lands at Schietfontein that it ought to have the effect of pushing more Xhosa into service with white farmers.

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60. 4/BFW 1/1/1/1, Minute Book of Divisional Council, list of members 1856.

61. G.M. Theal, History, VII, p.142.

62. See Chapter 5.

63. CO 2593, Acting Resident Magistrate of Victoria to Civil Commissioner of Beaufort, 1 May 1858.

64. 1/BFW 9/6, throughout 1858 there was an influx of Xhosa, see: Secretary to Civil Commissioner, 21 May 1858; CO 3025, Resident Magistrate, 7 March 1861.

With the steep rise in the number of wool sheep in the district however, the land itself at Schietfontein became desirable. From only 29 per cent in 1855 the percentage of wool-bearing sheep rose to 82 per cent in 1865.<sup>65</sup> The development of commercial farming also accelerated and the Beaufort West Divisional Council thus turned its attention to Schietfontein.

Victoria West was the best sheep farming area in the north and became the centre from which wealthy farmers expanded.<sup>66</sup> In 1855 it became a magisterial district. Although the Xhosa of Schietfontein and Prieska now fell under its jurisdiction, Victoria West only became a Division with its own Civil Commissioner in 1858, and land disposal remained in the hands of the Beaufort Divisional Council until 1859.<sup>67</sup>

Section 9 of the Land Report was amended in 1856. It now emphasised that the whole of the New Territory was to be regarded as waste crown land (i.e. freely available to be used by all) until all claims to these lands had been fully investigated and fairly settled. Thereafter, the remaining land would be surveyed, and according to the new recommendations, no longer sold, but leased according to a quitrent system once more.<sup>68</sup>

The members of the Beaufort Divisional Council realised that Section 9 could be used to their advantage, and Molteno insisted that the council have the right to give its opinion on the disposal of Crown lands in the division.<sup>69</sup>

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65. H.B. Thom, Skaapboerdery, p.326.

66. SB, Insp. 1/1/173, Inspection Reports, Victoria West 1865-1880, 15 November 1866.

67. 1/BFW 9/57, W.A. Krige to Civil Commissioner, 21 November 1854; G.M. Theal, History, VII, p.148; CO 2962, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 27 May 1858; CO 759, n.d. 1860.

68. CCP 8/1/52, Government Gazette, Notice No. 357, 4 November 1856.

69. 4/BFW 1/1/1/1, Minute Book of Divisional Council, 28 May 1856.

Although open to conflicting claims, most of the land in the New Territory was available to be surveyed as individual farms. The exceptions were the two Rhenish Mission settlements, the one for Bastards at Amandelboom and the other at Schietfontein. As instances of communal land holding they were bound to be investigated. If only individual land claims were recognised, the investigation could lead to their dissolution which would be to the advantage, particularly at Schietfontein, of the wealthy wool farmers.

CHAPTER 7THE RESOLUTION OF BASTARD AND XHOSA LAND CLAIMS, 1858

The Parliamentary Select Committee which was appointed to inquire into the system of selling Crown lands, published its report in 1854. Divisional Councils, which it suggested become local land boards, were asked to implement its recommendations on a trial basis.<sup>1</sup> This the Beaufort Divisional Council proceeded to do with vigour, allowing itself sole power to dispose of the land affected by Sections 8 and 9 of the report (see Chapter 6, p.105). These sections gave stock-farmers easier access to land.

When the report was adopted by Parliament at the end of 1856, however, the power of the Divisional Councils was diminished, and the inhabitants of the mission stations at Amandelboom and Schietfontein began to hope that through Section 9 they would gain security of tenure. The Beaufort Divisional Council though, continued to act as if the report was the law. Except for a sharp reminder from the central government in 1856 that this was a false presumption, it appears that no real effort was made to control this action.<sup>2</sup> Thus the members of the Beaufort Divisional Council, who had ensured that they were in an advantageous position vis-a-vis

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1. CCP 1/2/1/1, No. 583, Report of Committee, 8 September 1854; CO 5935, Circular No.2, 8 January 1856.
  2. CCP 8/1/52, Government Gazette, 4 November 1856; Notice No.357, 31 October 1856; CO 674, Report from H. Kuys, 5 November 1856.

land claims in the New Territory, were hopeful that their attempts to occupy the land and gain the labour available at the mission settlements, were liable to succeed.<sup>3</sup>

Throughout the 1850's the British authorities showed a total lack of interest in the northern frontier; and a desire to curb expenditure there continued to be the overriding concern of the government in Cape Town.<sup>4</sup> When it reluctantly did remember its obligations in the area, its actions were generally influenced by Molteno, Christie and Meintjies, the members of Parliament.

#### Amandelboom

Disputes over land at Amandelboom were long-standing and complex. Since the turn of the century nomadic Bastard pastoralists had used the Zak River as a base, and Boers from Clanwilliam, Tulbagh and Worcester had also used the area for seasonal grazing.<sup>5</sup> The Rhenish missionaries, J. Lutz and J. Beinecke, arrived at Amandelboom in 1845. They aimed to establish a settled agricultural community and asked the government for land in order to form such a settlement.<sup>6</sup>

The government replied in 1846 that the area was beyond the colonial boundary, but this was negated when that border was

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3. See Chapter 6.

4. SG 1/1/3/21, Secretary to Surveyor-General, 7 August 1856. All Government House correspondence 1850-1870 ignores the northern frontier.

5. G. Theal, *History*, V, pp.103,184; BPP, No.50 of 1835, p.77; CO 2679, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 21 March 1826.

6. CO 550, Memorial to Government from J. Lutz and J. Beinecke, n.d. 1846; 1/BFW 9/57, J. Lutz to Civil Commissioner, 15 October 1853; L. van Rohden, Missions-Gesellschaft, p.139.

extended to the Orange River in 1847. Amandelboom was then included in the Clanwilliam district, and when the missionary request for land was repeated, it was rejected in favour of the Clanwilliam Boers, who demanded that the whole area should remain crown land - general commonage - for the use of which licences were to be paid.<sup>7</sup>

Friction increased as Boers, aided by their field-cornets, pushed licensed Bastards from watering holes.<sup>8</sup> Another dimension was added to the conflict in 1855, when Amandelboom was placed in the Beaufort district, whose white farmers wanted the land surveyed and sold. Many Bastards wanted individual land rights too; those who had lived there prior to 1848 claiming these rights through Section 9 of the Report. (See Chapter 6, p.105). The missionaries, whose desire for a settled community of converts was threatened on all sides, used Alheit, who by now was well known and respected by the central government, to apply for tickets of occupation for the Bastard members of the settlement in 1856.<sup>10</sup>

The consequent announcement by the government that it was prepared to give tickets of occupation to Bastards who could prove they had lived there in 1848, brought matters to a head.<sup>11</sup> The Beaufort Divisional Council was enraged: its members disapproved of tickets of occupation, and were

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7. 1/BFW 9/4, Copy of a reply by Secretary to Memorial from Rhenish Missionaries, n.d. 1848; Copy of Memorial from Bastards to Governor, n.d. 1848; Trekveld regulations, 12 December 1848.
  8. 1/BFW 9/57, C. Alheit to Civil Commissioner, 19 June 1849; CO 677, Memorial from Amandelboom Bastards, 14 June 1856.
  9. CO 692, Civil Commissioner of Calvinia to Civil Commissioner of Beaufort, 4 August 1858: objections by Beaufort Divisional Council, n.d. 1858; G7-'59, Auret's Report, pp.4-5.
  10. SG 1/1/3/21, Secretary to Surveyor-General, 12 March 1856.
  11. 1/BFW 9/6, Secretary to Civil Commissioner, 21 February 1856.

determined to control the disposal of land in the New Territory in spite of the interference from the central government which they claimed was based on ignorance of the true state of affairs. They played their trump card, by insisting that the government conform with Section 9 of the 1856 land law which stated that all claims to land must be dealt with before a fair settlement could be made.<sup>12</sup>

The central government was forced to back down. In order to save expense, it announced that the 'impartial' surveyor chosen to sort out the conflicting claims to land at Amandelboom, would be J.B. Auret, Clerk to the Civil Commissioner of Beaufort, who was instructed, again in order to save money, to inspect the area in conjunction with the Beaufort Divisional Council!<sup>13</sup> Although Auret, the most highly respected man in the district, tried his best to remain objective, the result of his inspection was a foregone conclusion.<sup>14</sup> He rejected even those Bastard land claims which fulfilled every requirement for individual ownership, on the grounds that the loss of the springs on those farms would be detrimental to the mission. Instead he recommended 8 000 morgen be granted to the mission (though he recognised that ten times that amount would not give sufficient pasturage to the Bastard flocks), and the rest of the land should be regarded as crown land, to be dealt with by the Divisional Council.<sup>15</sup>

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12. 4/BFW 1/1/1/1, Minute Book of Divisional Council, 28 May 1856, 15 October 1856.

13. CO 2923, Extract of letter from Surveyor-General to J.B. Auret, 16 August 1856; SG 1/1/3/21, Secretary to Surveyor-General, 7 August 1856, 11 October 1856.

14. SB Insp. 1/1/173, Inspection Reports, Victoria West, 9 January 1869.

15. G7-'59, Auret's Report, pp.6-7.

That decision marked the end of the mission. Most Bastards moved away, many to Schietfontein, as the Clan-william Boers forcibly insisted on their trekveld rights. Those Bastards who remained as part of the mission settlement held erfs under the control of a Management Committee established by the missionaries, whose attempts at retaining authority over the ownership of the erfs ended when the owners were granted title deeds in 1860.<sup>16</sup>

By 1859 the Divisional Council, with Beaufort interests at heart, allowed the survey and leasing of the Amandelboom trekveld.<sup>17</sup> The remaining Bastard pastoralists were no longer in a position to compete against white pressure. Brandy sales soared and the missionaries, seen as a threat by the white Boers who wanted a solely white church for their bi-annual attendances, were harried from Amandelboom and joined their flock wandering the still unclaimed land up to the Orange River. The church and school buildings fell into disrepair, and by 1870 no vestige of the Bastard community survived.<sup>18</sup>

### Schietfontein

Despite the precedent of Amandelboom, the members of the Beaufort Divisional Council knew that the Xhosa at Schietfontein would be more difficult to disperse. Firstly, there was no doubt the Xhosa had legal rights to some of the

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16. L. van Rohden, Missions-Gesellschaft, pp.144-145; CO 2973, Minutes of meeting at Amandelboom, 5 August 1859; Report of Surveyor-General, 6 August 1860.

17. 4/BFW 1/1/1/1, Minute Book of Divisional Council, 5 January 1859.

18. L. van Rohden, op.cit.

land they claimed, and secondly, Alheit was a tenacious fighter on their behalf. Nevertheless, the Council was hopeful of success.

The mission at Schietfontein was flourishing in 1857.<sup>19</sup> Although the Xhosa numbers had dwindled in 1852 to 213, with 123 Bastards on the outskirts of the settlement, competition for both resources and trading rights on the Orange River had increased during the following lean years, and many Xhosa had returned to Schietfontein,<sup>20</sup> where in 1857 there were 53 families. Of the 350 people, 279 were baptised and 79 children attended the mission school. They owned 16 000 small stock, 450 cattle, 200 horses, and about 20 wagons. Although most of them were independent, and some had San servants, several men supplemented their income by hiring themselves out as labourers to nearby white farmers.<sup>21</sup> In addition, the Pramberg Xhosa were finally settled at Schietfontein in 1857. None of them were baptised and only three children attended the school, yet they increased the numbers on the land by 60 families, 460 people. They had 12 000 small stock, 500 cattle, 250 horses and about 18 wagons.<sup>22</sup>

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19. L. van Rohden, *op.cit.*, p.142.

20. CO 2883, List of people at Schietfontein in 1852.

21. CO 694, Statistical Return of Mission Station of Schietfontein, 1857; CO 2947, Resident Magistrate to Secretary, 4 August 1857, 16 August 1857; 2/BFW 9/57, C. Alheit to Civil Commissioner, 6 October 1857.

Though Xhosa labour was better than nothing, employers in the northern areas preferred hiring the more submissive labour supplied by the Mantatees and other northern tribes. There was an influx of Xhosa labour into the colony during 1858 as a result of the cattle killing of 1857. This was not enough however, to satisfy the demand. See: 1/BFW 9/6, Secretary to Resident Magistrate, 29 December 1857, 3 April 1858; Secretary to Civil Commissioner, 21 May 1857; CO 2967, Resident Magistrate to Secretary, 14 July 1858; CO 2942, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 3 October 1857.

22. CO 694, Statistical Return of Mission Station of Schietfontein, 1857; CO 2947, Resident Magistrate to Secretary, 16 August 1857.



**Schietfontein-sendingstasie, 1858. (Die kerkgebou en Koeëkop is duidelik herkenbaar.)**

Source: Feesuitgawe, N.G. Sendingkerk, Camarvon, 1847-1972, p.18.

However, the greatest increase in numbers, both to the mission and on the grazing lands, was accounted for by the influx of Bastards, many from Amandelboom. There were, in 1857, 100 families, comprising 742 people. They were noticeably wealthier than the Xhosa, with 44 500 sheep and goats, 1 178 cattle, 513 horses and 66 wagons. Though only half of them were baptised, 116 of their children attended the school (which had a high reputation and a roll of 199, 10 of whom were white).<sup>23</sup>

Although these appear formidable numbers to disperse, the Beaufort Divisional Council knew that the government felt no obligation to the Bastards, who would also be unable to claim prior rights to any of the land, and thus it virtually ignored them and their claims during the following years, though some wealthy individuals did acquire leases for farms, and there were instances of groups of Bastards clubbing together to lease land.<sup>24</sup>

The first assault on Schietfontein began in February 1857. The Divisional Council sent Henry Rose and Hendrik Jacobs to inspect H.P. van der Westhuizen's ward in the New Territory. Claims for 107 farms had been made, 80 of which were by white Boers to the lands of Rhenosterpoort, Garstkolck, Zandput, Rhenosterkolck, Minaskolk and Kareekloof (Kaffers-kloof), all either legally used by the Xhosa or promised by J.J. Meintjies as commonage for the Pramberg Xhosa in lieu of the land they had lost.<sup>25</sup>

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23. CO 694, Statistical Return of Mission Station of Schietfontein, 1857; CO 2947, Resident Magistrate to Secretary, 16 August 1857.

24. G7-'59, Auret's Report, pp.16-17; CO 3038, Letter from 'Coloured People', of Schietfontein, 16 January 1862; G7-'59, Auret's Report, p.18; CO 3132, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 21 April 1868.

25. CO 692, Report of Inspecting Officers, n.d. 1857; List of 107 farms inspected, n.d. 1857; L. van Rohden, op.cit., p.143.

Alheit's bitter reproaches that this represented a breach of faith were countered by Meintjies on the grounds that the Pramberg grazing rights had been a temporary measure until the representative government decided how to deal with the land. It was now up to the Xhosa, Bastards and San who lived in the area to make their claims to the inspecting officers, and if these were not granted according to Section 9 of the law (see Chapter 6, p.105), they could then apply to lease land in equal competition with others.<sup>26</sup> As the Pramberg Xhosa would not be able to benefit under Section 9 and only 10 000 morgen of the Schietfontein lands still remained unclaimed, Alheit's rage at this apparent treachery was understandable.<sup>27</sup>

He went into action on two fronts, writing to both the Divisional Council and the central government, insisting upon the government's duty to provide land for the displaced Pramberg Xhosa. He enclosed his own proposals for a reasonable extent. (See Diagram, p.118). The Divisional Council said that the mission would have to conform with Section 9 of the law; the Cape authorities, more sympathetic, halted the survey of the lands until a decision was made.<sup>28</sup> Resentful of external interference, the Beaufort Divisional Council proposed a solution to the problem similar to that achieved at Amandelboom: a defined area was to be divided into erven with ample commonage, and once Xhosa claims to the erven had been settled, the rest would be sold by public auction.<sup>29</sup>

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26. CO 694, Memorial of C. Alheit to Governor, 6 February 1857; Report by J.J. Meintjies, 20 March 1857.

27. L. van Rohden, *op.cit.*, p.143.

28. CO 694, C. Alheit to Secretary, 13 May 1857, 2 June 1857; 4/BFW 1/1/1/1, Minute Book of Divisional Council, 24 June 1857, 25 June 1857.

29. 4/BFW 1/1/1/1, Minute Book of Divisional Council, 5 August 1857.

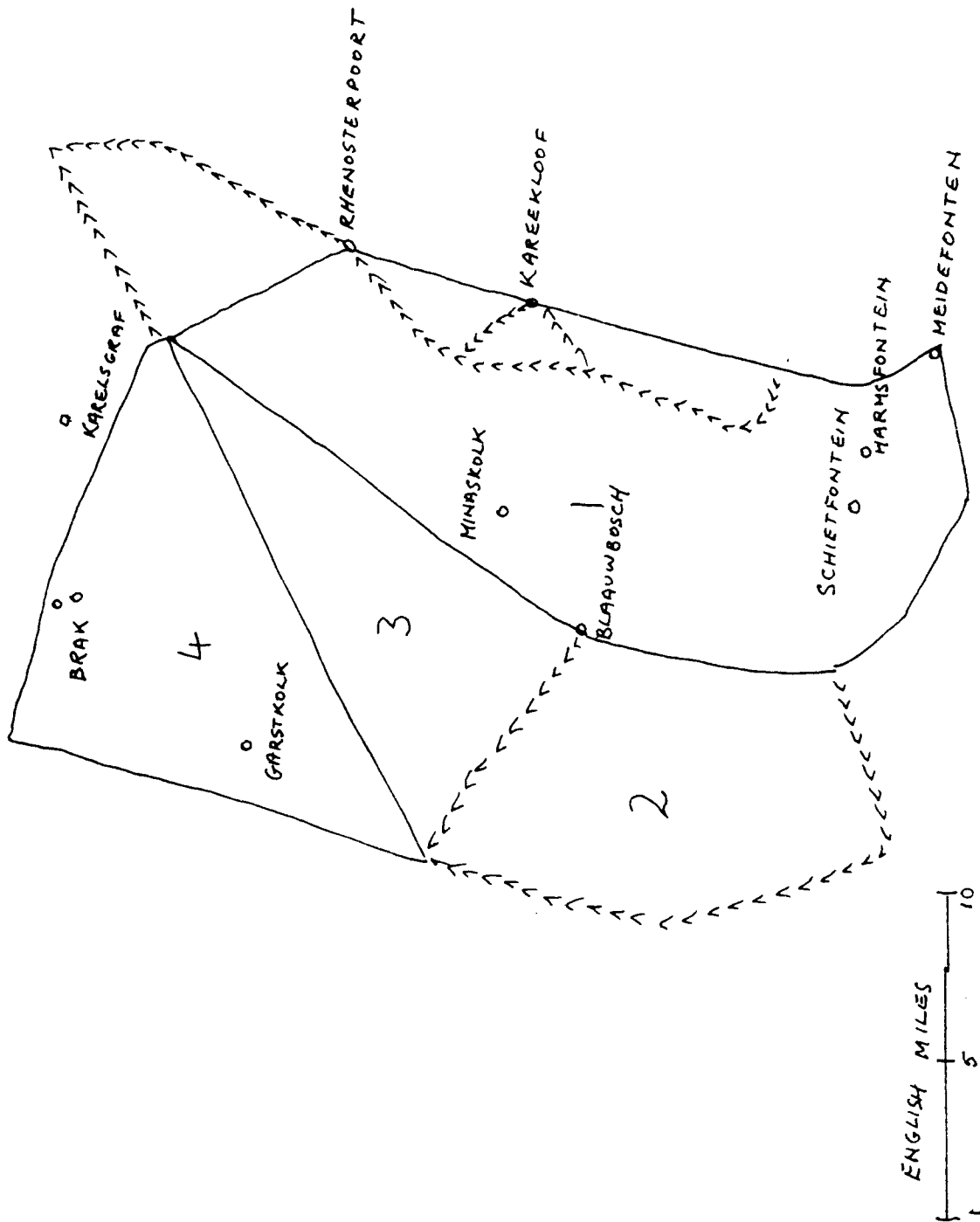


Diagram : Copy of Alhelt's proposed extension of Schietfontein, 1857.

Alheit roundly condemned this proposal. The division into erven assumed a change to agriculture which the type of country precluded. If the Xhosa land was removed, they would be forced to disperse and all the benefits of Christianity and 'civilisation' would be lost. If the government insisted on a village, the only way to save the community would be to compensate the Xhosa for the land lost in the formation of that village and its commonage by increasing the extent of their grazing grounds by that amount, and making them inviolate, quite separate from the village commonage.<sup>30</sup>

Fearing however, that a village was inevitable, Alheit was determined that, unlike the Amandelboom experience, it would at least be built on his terms. He thus proposed that it be divided into pasture erven which would be for Xhosa only. These would entitle the owner to use the specially reserved grazing, extended in compensation for that lost by the formation of a village. Each head of a Xhosa family presently living in the area should qualify for a pasture erf. Garden lots, which were limited, must also be made available for the Xhosa settlers.<sup>31</sup> The non-Xhosa, i.e. Bastard members of the congregation, who numbered more than 50 families, should be granted, before public sale, a dry erf each which would enable them to use the village commonage - though he knew that this would overstock it immediately.<sup>32</sup> Because the Xhosa had little concept of individual land-holding, Alheit requested that the erven be made inalienable for a while, and that the owners should only gain title deeds for them (and hence the

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30. CO 694, C. Alheit to Secretary, 17 September 1857.

31. ibid.

32. ibid.

right to sell) once a house had been built upon the erf.<sup>33</sup>

The Divisional Council rejected these proposals. It ignored the fact that agriculture was impossible and insisted that the formation of a village would attract many to agriculture, and the village commonage would protect them from encroachment. Only individual titles would be countenanced, and all erven would be immediately alienable.<sup>34</sup>

As a last desperate resort, Alheit led a deputation of two Bastards and three Xhosa to Cape Town at the end of 1857, where they gained a small reprieve. The governor personally assured Alheit that the original Schietfontein Xhosa lands would remain untouched, and though no such assurance was made concerning the Pramberg Xhosa, the Divisional Council was reminded not to dispose of the lands of Brak, Garstkolk, Rhenosterkolk, Minaskolk, Rhenosterpoort and Kareekloof until J.B. Auret, who had resolved the Amandelboom land question so conscientiously, should have made a similar investigation, and reported on the situation at Schietfontein.<sup>35</sup>

#### J.B. Auret's survey of Schietfontein

Auret's instructions from the governor were to keep in view '...the requirements of the Inhabitants of the Institution so as to allot to them a reasonable extent of land for their support and maintenance of stock,' and also to

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33. CO 694, C. Alheit to Secretary, op.cit.

34. 4/BFW 1/1/1/1, Minute Book of Divisional Council, 22 December 1857.

35. L. van Rohden, op.cit., p.143; 1/BFW 9/57, C. Alheit to Civil Commissioner, 10 March 1858; 1BFW 9/13, Acting Surveyor-General to Civil Commissioner, 24 December 1857.

survey Harmsfontein in order that it be laid out as a village.<sup>36</sup> He saw his task as the resolution of four areas of concern: the Pramberg Xhosa must be fairly compensated for the loss of Pramberg, the land claimed by the Schietfontein Xhosa must be defined, white land demands must be satisfied, and finally, some provision must be made for those Bastards who were members of the mission.

Auret dealt methodically and exactly with each question in turn, using the letter of the law as his guide. He visited Pramberg and gathered from the white farmers there that only 22 000 morgen of the mountain had ever been used solely by the Xhosa. He ignored their constant use of extensive common grazing grounds, and therefore sought at Schietfontein land which would correspond only to the 22 000 morgen lost. Finally, because the land at Schietfontein was of a poorer quality than that of Pramberg he said that 29 000 morgen was the minimum they should be allowed, and recommended indeed, 38 600 morgen.<sup>37</sup>

On paper, to a government remote from the realities of the border, the figures may have appeared fair. They were not. Auret recognised that most individual farmers in the district required between 10 000 and 12 000 morgen to survive.<sup>38</sup> This grant gave each of the 65 Pramberg families the use of only 594 morgen.<sup>39</sup>

Auret arrived at Schietfontein towards the end of 1858 and held an explanatory meeting in the schoolhouse, which was attended by 50 Boers and 120 Xhosa and Bastards. He spent the

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36. G7-'59, Auret's Report, pp.15-16.

37. ibid., pp.13,14,16.

38. ibid., p.16.

39. Similarly, if numbers of small stock were taken into account, modern reckoning, which supposes the advantages of windmills, roughly estimates that one sheep at Schietfontein would require between five and six morgen. The Pramberg stock, 21 630 by 1858, even if half were goats, would require at least 55 000 morgen.

following weeks hearing arguments from interested persons and forming his own judgments. He was deeply impressed by Alheit and the work of the mission and resolved it was worth salvaging.<sup>40</sup> He measured and defined the original Xhosa lands as 59 900 morgen. Though legally there was no gainsaying his assessment, the white farmers opposed it, and his recommendations concerning the formation of a village.<sup>41</sup>

Auret suggested that Harmsfontein, the site of the mission buildings, be divided into 200 erven; 47 to go to Schietfontein Xhosa, 65 to Pramberg Xhosa, 55 to Bastards who belonged to the Mission and one to the mission itself. He recommended that the remaining 32 erven be sold by public auction and the proceeds be given as an endowment for the mission.<sup>42</sup> The 12 000 morgen surrounding the village, and which included the waters of Schietfontein, would become general village commonage upon which every erf-holder would have the right to graze 25 sheep and goats and 14 cattle. Only Xhosa erf-holders would have grazing rights on the remainder of the Xhosa land, and then only for 500 sheep and goats and 30 cattle per erf-holder.<sup>43</sup> The total amount of land the Xhosa were entitled to was the sum of the Pramberg compensation plus the traditional Schietfontein lands which Auret estimated as 98 000 morgen. From this was subtracted the amount used in the establishment of the village and the 12 000 morgen of village commonage. The remainder was to be reserved Xhosa commonage, a fraction of the 120 000 morgen they needed to remain viable.<sup>44</sup> The Bastards, save the 55

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40. G7-'59, Auret's Report, pp.13,19.

41. ibid., p.14.

42. ibid., pp.17,15,19.

43. ibid., p.17.

44. L. van Rohden, op.cit., p.144.

eligible for erven, would have to move away, and those who remained could only do so by changing their whole mode of existence.

The government's acceptance of Auret's recommendations came as a shock to the local white farmers. They had demanded that the Xhosa have a village at Harmsfontein with 15 000 morgen commonage and no other land at all. They had confidently expected that the remainder of the 98 000 morgen, all of which had been inspected for them by the Divisional Council, would be granted to them, as would their request that they acquire Schietfontein as the site for a village of their own.<sup>45</sup>

Thwarted and angry, the Boers sent a deputation to Cape Town under Field-Cornet Jacobus Jacobs, and Alheit, subjected to considerable harassment as well as being only too aware of the gross limitations of the settlement, offered to give up all the land if the community could find somewhere else to go.<sup>46</sup> The local farmers jumped at the opportunity, and in order to circumvent the rich wool farmers, secretly formed a syndicate and offered to buy Schietfontein for £17 000.<sup>47</sup> The Divisional Council, furious at being by-passed, did not have to intervene however, for the Xhosa search party which had set off early in 1859, hoping to find land in the vicinity of the Hartebest River, last major hide-out of San bands, was unable to find sufficient water for a settlement, and thus the

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45. G7-'59, Auret's Report, Annexure B, p.21, also p.14. I assume the 1 500 morgen mentioned in 6a on p.14 is a misprint.

46. CO 719, C. Alheit to Secretary, 20 November 1858.

47. UG 41-'26, Report of the Rehoboth Commission, p.28.

Boer offer came to nought.<sup>48</sup> The Xhosa, disappointed, were forced to accept the crumbs offered in Auret's Report.

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48. 4/BFW 1/1/1/1, Minute Book of Divisional Council, 5 January 1859, 6 April 1859; UG 41-'26, Report of the Rehoboth Commission, p.28; L. van Røhden, op.cit., p.143; 1/BFW 9/57, C. Alheit to Civil Commissioner, 6 October 1857; A39-'63, L. Anthing's Report on the destruction of the San along the banks of the Orange River.

CHAPTER 8DISPERSAL OF THE SCHIETFONTEIN XHOSA, 1859-1868

Between 1859 and 1868 the Schietfontein and Pramberg Xhosa suffered dispossession twice over. First, they lost their rights to the lands of Schietfontein against an economic background of drought and depression with which the Schietfontein Management Committee was unable to cope politically. Secondly, as a result of the loss of these rights, the Xhosa moved onto crown lands further north, at the same time as the expansion into the area of the commercial farmers, who rapidly gained such control over the disposal of crown lands that the Xhosa were pushed right up to the Orange River.

Metamorphosis of Schietfontein

Eventually, in 1860, Auret's Report having been accepted by the government, plans for the division of Schietfontein<sup>1</sup> were completed, and the 200 erven handed out; 112 pasture erven for the Xhosa, 55 dry erven for the mission Bastards, and one erf for the mission itself. The remaining

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1. Although the 12 000 morgen of the new village was officially Harmsfontein, while the reserve pasturage was called Schietfontein, common usage ignored the name of Harmsfontein, and the entire area was always known as Schietfontein. See: M.C. Kitshoff, Kudde van Carnarvon, p.30.

32 erven were to be sold by public auction and the proceeds used as an endowment for the mission.<sup>2</sup>

A government proclamation in 1860 formally granted these lands in freehold, to be possessed in perpetuity - subject to several limitations. An endorsement to the proclamation stated that a building worth £25 had to be erected on each erf within three years, or the property would revert to the government, and erven would only become alienable after five years. Moreover, stock-owning on a large scale was restricted: if one person owned more than three erven he was forbidden to graze more than three times the stipulated amount of stock on the reserved commonage.<sup>3</sup>

The endorsement included guidelines for the establishment of a Management Committee to run the affairs of the village until a municipality was formed. It was to consist of a chairman elected by all erf-holders; and five other members. Two were to be chosen by holders of dry erven and three by those who owned pasture erven. Subject to government approval, the regulations of the Committee would be binding, though a state-appointed white superintendent was to oversee the village and collect taxes.<sup>4</sup>

Ten years after the implementation of Auret's Report, Schietfontein had become a predominantly white village. Forty white children were enrolled in the mission school in 1864; by 1868 the mission 'Heidenfest', a celebration held every seven years, was largely supported by whites and proved

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2. S.G. 1/1/3/24, Secretary to Surveyor-General, 14 October 1859; G7-'59, Auret's Report, p.17.

3. CO 3001, Government proclamation, n.d. 1860.

4. ibid.

to be the last one; and the Standard Bank inspector was able to report in 1874 that '...the Kaffers are receding and a white population taking their place.'<sup>5</sup>

This rapid dispersal of the Xhosa and Bastards from Schietfontein was hastened by the economic and political conditions which prevailed during the 1860's. The drought of 1859 was considered the worst the district had experienced - until that of 1862. In fact, between 1859 and 1868 there were only one or two good rains and the period was one of great hardship, exacerbated by depression.<sup>6</sup>

Largely because of the drought, but also because some Xhosa were not prepared to forfeit their large flocks, or, in the case of Bastards, pastoralism itself, many of those eligible to become erf-holders had left Schietfontein by the time the erven were allotted. (By 1859 many Xhosa were already working on the diamond fields).<sup>7</sup> The Pramberg Xhosa, strongly opposed to being trapped in a mission settlement, also left; those who remained became recalcitrant and aggressive.<sup>8</sup>

Right from the start many erven remained unclaimed. Some were kept by the government, to be sold in order to defray expenses and raise money for official buildings, while

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5. U.G.41-'26, Report of the Rehoboth Commission, p.28; L. van Rohden, op.cit., p.145; F.J. Steynberg, 'Carnarvon', pp.15-16; SB, Insp. 1/1/173, Inspection Reports, Victoria West, 4 July 1874.
  6. G.M. Theal, History, VI, p.176; SB, BFW A 1/1/1, Minute Book of the Beaufort Bank, 7 February 1860, 5 February 1861; CO 3038, W. Dawson to Civil Commissioner of Victoria West, 10 October 1862; CO 3132, Extract from Minutes of Divisional Council, 21 February 1868.
  7. CO 2987, Statement by G. Diamond, 20 April 1859; CO 2980, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 10 December 1859; The Cape Argus, Rev. J. McKenzie on disturbances in Bechuanaland, 24 August 1859.
  8. CO 3114, Return of Kafirs and Bastards living on Crown lands, 1867; CO 3025, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 28 September 1861. For Pramberger hostility towards the mission, see Chapter 5.

10 others, all pasture erven, were given to the mission to sell in order to increase the endowment gained through the sale of the 32 dry erven.<sup>9</sup> As grazing failed, more and more Xhosa and Bastards trekked northwards as they had always done. There were still two million morgen of unsurveyed Crown lands in the Victoria West district. They could squat on these and use the better grazing nearer the Orange River. Thus by the time the Management Committee began to function and the superintendent, William Dawson, arrived in 1861, the likelihood of a settled village community of Xhosa and Bastards was already remote.<sup>10</sup>

As soon as they received their plots, the remaining erf-holders were overwhelmed with new expenses. They discovered that they were expected to pay the costs of Auret's journey and visit to Schietfontein, his surveying fees and also stamp duties on the erven. Because of the drought, and concomitant loss of stock, many were unable to do so.<sup>11</sup> Some abandoned their erven, which were still inalienable, and moved onto Crown lands, others went into service in order to raise cash, or mortgaged their erven to white entrepreneurs.<sup>12</sup>

These difficulties were increased by the drought of 1862 which broke many inhabitants. It became clear that very few houses would be completed within the three years stipulated for prices had soared, and even when owners managed to raise the necessary funds, building materials were not procurable.

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9. CO 2980, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 10 December 1859.  
 10. SG 1/1/1/8, Civil Commissioner to Assistant Surveyor-General, 11 December 1860; CO 3001, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 14 February 1860.  
 11. CO 760, C. Alheit to Secretary, 7 January 1860.  
 12. CO 3038, C. Alheit to Civil Commissioner, 21 October 1862; SB, Insp. 2/1/37, Manager's Profit/Loss Reports, Victoria West, June 1867.

The government extended the period allowed for building to 1865, which coincided with the five year limit before erven became alienable.<sup>13</sup> Long before then, however, as the drought continued, rents and grazing dues fell into arrears and dozens of erven were abandoned and reverted to the government.<sup>14</sup>

Most of the original erf-holders' houses were only half built by 1865, and though Alheit gained a further extension of building time to May 1866, it was too late to save many, because by then the district was in the grip of depression.<sup>15</sup>

The drought coincided with a drop in the price of wool. Victoria West, considered the best sheep country in the colony, with over 80 per cent of the sheep in the district wool-bearing, suffered severely.<sup>16</sup> One of the effects of the depression was that white farmers, who had lived considerably beyond their means during the fat years now found themselves in straits. Those who had gained mortgages on Xhosa and Bastard erven had frequently used these as security in order to get credit from merchants or to borrow from the bank.<sup>17</sup>

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13. CO 3038, Minutes of Schietfontein Management Committee, 21 October 1862; C. Alheit to Civil Commissioner, 21 October 1862; CO 3084, C. Alheit to Civil Commissioner, 26 July 1865; NGK, SK, G 8 1/1, Minutes of Schietfontein Management Committee, 29 December 1862.
  14. NGK, SK, G 8 1/1, Minutes of Schietfontein Management Committee, 21 September 1863, 20 July 1864, 1 August 1864, 20 November 1865.
  15. CO 3084, C. Alheit to Civil Commissioner, Victoria West, 26 July 1865.
  16. SAL, J.C. Molteno Manuscripts, No.3, H. Jackson to J.C. Molteno, 5 July 1861; J.A. Henry, A Century of Service 1862-1961. The Standard Bank's Earliest Years, p.4; SB, Insp. 1/1/173, Inspection Reports, Victoria West, 15 November 1866; H.B. Thom, Skaapboerdery, p.326; CO 3132, Extract from Minutes of Divisional Council, 21 February 1868.
  17. SB, Insp. 1/1/2, Inspection Reports, Beaufort West, 16 December 1868; SB, Insp. 1/1/173, Inspection Reports, Victoria West, 9 January 1869.

Unable to pay their debts, these men lost the mortgages which their creditors then called in. Erf-holders, suffering equally from the loss of revenue from wool, were evicted and the erven sold - at considerable profit. Plots attached to the reserved commonage, originally worth about £145 were being sold for £250 in 1866.<sup>18</sup>

### The Management Committee

Politically, the Schietfontein Management Committee was unable to counter the economic disasters. William Dawson was appointed Superintendent in 1850, with a salary of £200 per annum from the government, which was supplemented by £40 per annum from the community.<sup>19</sup> Dawson was married to a 'coloured' woman which precluded both increases in salary and preferment, and he remained at Schietfontein until he was retired in 1874. The village was renamed Carnarvon and gained its own magistrate, Mr Pett, in 1875.<sup>20</sup>

As Superintendent, Dawson immediately established a lock-up in the village, appointed a constable, and earmarked the proceeds from the sale of six unclaimed erven in 1862 for the building of a gaol.<sup>21</sup> A periodical court was held every alternate month, in the mission schoolroom until the sale of

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18. SB, Insp. 2/1/27, Manager's Profit/Loss Reports, Victoria West, List of Securities, 30 June 1867, 31 December 1867; Half-yearly Return, 30 June 1868; NGK. SK, G 8 1/1, Minutes of Schietfontein Management Committee, 20 August 1866.
  19. CO 3007, Acting Resident Magistrate to Secretary, 29 December 1860; CO 3045, W. Dawson to Civil Commissioner, 5 April 1862; NGK, SK, G 8 1/1, Minutes of Schietfontein Management Committee, 20 July 1864.
  20. CO 3045, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 9 July 1862; F.J. Steynberg, 'Carnarvon', p.30.
  21. CO 3021, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 13 February 1861; CO 3057, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, Revenue and Expenditure of the Reserved Commonage of Schietfontein, 1862.

more erven made it possible to build a courtroom. When the Civil Commissioner of Victoria West was unable to preside, Dawson acted as magistrate.<sup>22</sup> He was also able to issue passes and attest contracts, a power the authorities had been reluctant to grant Alheit.<sup>23</sup>

The membership of the Management Committee changed little during the early 1860's. Dawson became chairman, and Alheit was the secretary and treasurer until he left the mission for Stellenbosch in 1865. Daniel Kaffer, Booï Haas and Abraham Armstrong represented the pasture erf-holders while E. Adriaanse and Klaas Tron (Theron) were the original members for the dry erf-holders.<sup>24</sup> After Alheit's departure, as more and more erven were sold, the names of the committee members became increasingly 'European'. Although Dawson was replaced as chairman by the Bastard, E. Adriaanse, and then by A. Armstrong, in due course the post was filled more frequently by P. Sterrenberg, the new missionary or by merchants such as John Setten.<sup>25</sup>

The concerns of the Management Committee were initially rural. Daily business consisted of allotting the few, coveted garden plots and controlling their water supply, accepting tenders for the building of dams, carefully watching over the use of fountains, guarding against squatters, dealing with

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- 22. CO 3007, Acting Resident Magistrate to Secretary, 29 December 1860; CO 3001, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 26 April 1860; CO 3021, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 13 February 1861; CO 3025, Resident Magistrate to Secretary, 1 October 1861.
  - 23. CO 3021, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 10 August 1861.
  - 24. CO 3038, Minutes of Schietfontein Management Committee, 20 October 1862; NGK, SK, G 8 1/1, Minutes of Schietfontein Management Committee, 4 September 1865.
  - 25. NGK, SK, G 8 1/1, Minutes of Schietfontein Management Committee, 10 November 1866, 22 April 1867, 17 October 1870.

cattle diseases and deciding upon grazing dues to be paid by visiting traders.<sup>26</sup> The Committee's most important function however, right from the start, was deciding who had forfeited rights to erven and then organising the sale of these erven. Because so many erf-holders were unable to pay quitrent on the reserved pasturage, or their grazing dues and householders' rates, the Committee frequently found it expedient to sell abandoned or reverted erven in order to make up the shortfall. For several years the Committee sold erven as a means of raising funds for development. For instance, in August 1864, 13 erven were auctioned by the Management Committee in order to buy the Superintendent a house, build a wall round the burial ground, supply books to the poor, improve the commonage, maintain the gaol and do away with the hated grazing dues which were extremely difficult to collect.<sup>27</sup>

From 1862 onwards, the white population of the village grew rapidly; there were more white tenders for the building of dams and furrows, a white man became poundmaster, carpenters and blacksmiths opened businesses and settled with their wives and families. J. Setten and C. Mosenthal were among numerous merchants who set up shop. A wool-washery was established by Messrs. Findlay McRobert and Co. and even a race course was built.<sup>28</sup>

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26. NGK, SK, G 8 1/1, Minutes of Schietfontein Management Committee, 28 November 1862, 9 March 1863, 4 May 1863, 20 July 1863, 2 May 1864, 1 August 1864, 15 May 1865.
27. *ibid.*, 21 September 1863, 20 July 1864, 20 November 1865, 1 August 1864; C. Alheit to Secretary, 1 August 1864; CO 3071, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 10 August 1864.
28. NGK, SK, G 8 1/1, Minutes of Schietfontein Management Committee, 29 April 1867, 29 December 1862, 17 July 1871, 15 December 1873, 7 August 1871; Anglican Church, Baptismal Register for Victoria West, 24 June 1866, 20 January 1868, 8 April 1869; STB, Insp. 2/1/37, Half-yearly Return, 31 December 1868.

The Management Committee was deeply in debt by 1868 and was unable to pay quitrent fees to the government which refused to give them time to find the money.<sup>29</sup> All sorts of money-making schemes were introduced, the most lucrative being the sale of numerous spirit licences, hawkers' licences and a gunpowder licence for a private magazine, as well as the sale of dry erven as premises for wholesale and retail shops, and, in 1866 two erven as a site for an Episcopal Church.<sup>30</sup>

Thus by the time both the drought and depression ended in 1869, Schietfontein, with a population of 960, was on the way to becoming a thriving town.<sup>31</sup>

#### Dispossession, 1859-1868

At first, the Xhosa and Bastards did not consider the loss of erven at Schietfontein to be serious. Few of the Schietfontein community had previously lived in the village. They had been scattered in a 30 mile radius.<sup>32</sup> Because Act 24 of 1857 had given them equal citizenship rights with whites and Bastards, the Xhosa were confident that they would be able to squat on the Crown lands further north, or

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29. NGK, SK, G 8 1/1, Minutes of Schietfontein Management Committee, 15 February 1869, 15 November 1869, 6 December 1869.

30. CO 3177, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 5 November 1870; SG 4/65, Reference Book on Victoria West, 8 September 1866.

31. The Beaufort Courier, 12 November 1869; CO 3177, Resident Magistrate to Secretary, 5 November 1870; SB, Insp. 1/1/173, Inspection Reports, Victoria West, 24 October 1872, 4 July 1874.

32. CO 2497, Resident Magistrate to Secretary, 16 August 1857.

if necessary, lease Crown land at the annual leasing auctions for as little as £3 per annum for 30 000 morgen.<sup>33</sup>

Their outward movement coincided with a surge of land grabbing by the commercial wool farmers who also gained increased control over the disposal of Crown land in 1859.<sup>34</sup> Poor white Boers, Bastards and Xhosa were equally unable to withstand the pressure and so lost their access to land.

As the drought took its toll on the area, white farmers, few of whom owned land, trekked onto Crown lands where they and their flocks came into contact with the Xhosa and Bastards who had also had to move further afield than was usually necessary, because the grazing grounds of Schietfontein were no longer available to them. Such an influx onto the already depleted resources caused considerable unrest on the colonial side of the Orange River. Competition between San, Korana, Bastards, Xhosa and Boers became intense, violence flared, and predatory San were destroyed.<sup>35</sup>

Civil Commissioner M. Murray, accompanied by Field-Cornet G. Hendricks, rode from Victoria West to investigate the trouble in 1859. They were both murdered by a Xhosa, Taaibosch, at Buisvlei. Although an isolated incident, it was used by Boers throughout the area (and for many years afterwards) to fan their growing antagonism towards the

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33. CCP 8/1/53, Government Gazette, 30 June 1857, Act No. 24 of 1857, 29 June 1857; CO 2980, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 1 October 1859; CO 3012, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 24 August 1861; CO 3016, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 18 October 1867.

34. CO 2953, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 31 July 1858.

35. CO 2987, Statement by G. Diamond, 20 April 1859; CO 3038, W. Dawson to Civil Commissioner, 20 May 1862; Copy of letter from W. Dawson to Civil Commissioner, 10 October 1862; CO 3057, Farmers from Doornberg Ward to Civil Commissioner, 23 March 1863; H.P. van der Westhuizen to Civil Commissioner, 3 April 1863, 23 May 1863; Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 4 July 1863; A39-'63, Anthing's Report.

Xhosa.<sup>36</sup> The survey of Schietfontein had not only reduced land available to the Boers, but had not even succeeded in containing the Xhosa. Indeed Act 24 of 1857 had given them, with citizenship, as much right to squat on, or lease crown lands, as that held by the Boers.

Previously, Xhosa had been removed from crown lands on the grounds that they were 'foreigners', and had been discriminated against as 'heathens', or because of their close connections with the 'enemy' on the eastern frontier.<sup>37</sup> As these criteria for discrimination became more difficult to use, and pressure on land increased, the northern frontier Boers who were unable to gain security of tenure and who were competing for land with the Xhosa and Bastards, now began to use colour as a sole reason for discrimination. For example, the Amandelboom Boers had such a bad white field-cornet they had to rely on the services of the Bastard field-cornet belonging to the mission. They considered that, because of his colour alone, this was not fitting.<sup>38</sup> Also, Boers squatting on crown lands further north complained that because they were white it was demeaning that their ability to use land was on a par with that of Xhosa squatters.<sup>39</sup>

In 1859 the members of the Beaufort Divisional Council formulated a set of conditions which were specifically intended to solve the difficulties of disposing of crown land

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36. CO 2973, J.B. Auret to J. Horak, 8 April 1859; CO 3132, Extract from Minutes of Victoria West Divisional Council, 21 February 1868; 1 NBM 5, M. Jackson to Secretary, 25 October 1870; G61-'79, No. 159, Special Commissioner, Northern Border, to Secretary, 10 March 1879.

37. See Chapter 6; CO 2980, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 1 October 1859.

38. CO 2981, Complaint from Boers of West Nieuweveld, 4 May 1859.

39. CO 2980, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 1 October 1859.

in the New Territory. Because so little of this was surveyed, it was still subject to annual leasing which brought in a negligible amount of revenue, did not encourage improvements, and because of the long distances lessees had to travel, was inefficient.<sup>40</sup> The Divisional Council thus announced that Crown lands were to be leased for three years, and in order to save time and expense, extraordinary powers were placed in the hands of local field-cornets who could point out boundaries and set beacons. They were to be arbiters in all land disputes, and their decisions could only be upset by the Civil Commissioner, whose decision was final. The field-cornet also decided on what was a 'reasonable' number of people to live on the leased land, and no sub-letting was permitted without the permission of the Civil Commissioner.<sup>41</sup>

Although the Attorney-General was disturbed at the powers given to field-cornets, and by the vagueness of the leasing arrangements, the government gave its assent to the proposals and the new system came into operation in January 1859.<sup>42</sup> Field-cornets abused their power immediately and indiscriminately. If they or their friends wanted a piece of land, they carefully forgot to apprise the lessee when it was due to be re-auctioned, and in that way many white, Xhosa and Bastard tenants lost rights to land.<sup>43</sup>

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40. CO 3106, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 18 October 1867; CO 2953, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 31 July 1858, n.d. December 1858.

41. CO 2953, Conditions for leasing Crown lands in Beaufort submitted by Civil Commissioner, 11 September 1858.

42. *ibid.*

43. CO 3038, Letter from 'coloured people' written by A.J. Armstrong, 16 January 1862.

However, the local authorities in Beaufort and Victoria West were subject in their turn, to pressure from the wool men, particularly J.C. Molteno and his cronies, who controlled the Divisional Councils of both districts.<sup>44</sup> If, for instance, a non-advertised auction took place, with only a few, privileged bidders who paid low prices for the land they wanted, and this land happened to be where the commercial farmers wanted to expand, the first auction could be, and was, declared null, and the land re-let, for such high prices that even combinations of small farmers were unable to compete.<sup>45</sup>

The rich businessmen, many of whom had moved to Cape Town, also used their agents to intimidate the local populace, so that often no one dared bid at leasing auctions. In that way, the wool farmers gained the right to 'use' the unleased land, at no cost, until it came up for auction once more. Though angry, the local farmers were no match for this kind of dealing.<sup>46</sup> Another money-making opportunity was sub-letting. Neither Civil Commissioner J.G. Devenish in Beaufort, nor

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44. CCP 4/19/5, Lands, 1855-1890, A65-'63; Copy of Plan of Resurvey of Area in Beaufort West; J. Alport to Acting Colonial Secretary, 7 December 1861; The Beaufort Courier, 1 April 1870, Letter signed 'Farmer', 22 March 1870; CO 3106, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 6 December 1867; Letter from Surveyor-General (249), 4 February 1868. For the names of members of the Beaufort Divisional Council, see Chapter 6. Members of the Victoria West Divisional Council in 1868 were J.B. Auret, John Adams, A.L. Devenish, G.P. Kempen and N. Keyser. See: CO 3132, Extract from Minutes of Divisional Council, 21 February 1868.
45. CO 3038, Letter from 'coloured people', written by A.J. Armstrong, 16 January 1862; Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 25 March 1862; CO 3071, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, concerning lands not put up for auction, n.d. 1864.
46. CO 3124, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 9 December 1868; CO 3165, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 23 March 1870, 2 May 1870; The Beaufort Courier, 1 April 1870, Letter signed 'Farmer', 22 March 1870. It is interesting to note that by 1870 A.L. Devenish of Victoria West, brother-in-law of J.B. Auret, owned 20 farms on the borders of the Lydenburg district in the north eastern Transvaal. See P. Delius, The Land Belongs to Us, p.129.

W.H. Auret in Victoria West, enmeshed as local men in local politics, was able to withstand pressure from the rich men who would, for example, lease a piece of land for the normal sum of £3 per annum, and then sub-let it to a poor man who desperately needed it, for as much as £21 per annum.<sup>47</sup>

The private interests of the members of the Divisional Councils also led to malpractices. A poor farmer, Hanekom, who had leased land and improved it, was unable to re-lease it three years later because the Divisional Council did not make it available for auction. The man who farmed next door to the land in question, who happened to be a member of the Divisional Council, wanted to use it himself!<sup>48</sup>

The result of this control over Crown land was that attempts by Xhosa, Bastard and Boer pastoralists to lease land either as individuals or as part of a combination, generally failed, and the land of Victoria West became '...simply sheep runs for the benefit of the few...'<sup>49</sup>

Two options remained open to the Xhosa and Bastards, and both were taken. They could move with their flocks onto poorer land yet further north, or remain where they were and either become hired labour on someone else's ground, or move into Victoria West as casual labour, living in the 'Kaffer Location', established to house the influx of Xhosa in the years after the 1857 cattle killing as well as the increase in migrant labour from the north which was preferred to Xhosa labour as the people from the north were more docile. The

47. CO 3124, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 14 September 1868.

48. *ibid.*; A. Hanekom to Civil Commissioner, 3 July 1868.

49. CO 3038, Letter from 'coloured people' written by A.J. Armstrong, 16 January 1862; A39-'63, Anthing's Report; CO 3106, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 18 October 1867.

white pastoralists too could either move on, give up their independence by becoming bywoners, or become village dwellers, which, as they were squeezed off the land more and more did, becoming constables, gaolers, messengers or shop assistants.<sup>50</sup>

The enormously disruptive changes of this decade, and the resulting pressure on the only Crown land left unsurveyed, the southern banks of the Orange River, meant that the anarchical frontier moved away from the Kareeberge to the Orange River, and the focus of friction from Schietfontein to Prieska.<sup>51</sup>

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50. CO 3038, C. Alheit to Civil Commissioner, 21 October 1862; L. van Rohden, *op.cit.*, p.145. According to Piet Hendricks, descendant of early Schietfontein settlers, when the Xhosa lost their erven they either moved to the Orange River or went to work on farms or on the asbestos mines at Prieska and Koegas. However, by 1861, there was a 'kaffer Location' in Victoria West. See: CO 3025, Conviction of 'Kaffer' Jonas, 7 March 1861; Victoria West Municipal Records, File on Roads, 21 September 1865; P. Delius, *op.cit.*, p.110.

51. CO 3153, Memorial from Lessees of Unsurveyed Crown Lands to Civil Commissioner, Victoria West, 30 March 1869.

CHAPTER 9THE END OF XHOSA INDEPENDENCE IN THE NORTH

The final decade of Xhosa independence in the north was marked by two outbursts of violence, both focused on the middle reaches of the Orange River. These wars, in 1868 and in 1878, also coincided with periods of severe drought and with wars on the eastern frontier. In 1868 intervention by the colonial government was tardy and reluctant. But the situation on the northern frontier had changed by 1878 when both wool and diamonds played a more important role in the Cape economy. J.C. Molteno, who had become Prime Minister of the Cape in 1872, represented the interests of the wool farmers whose economic value had become enormous; for instance, over three million pounds worth of wool was exported in 1872 compared to less than half a million pounds worth of skins and hides, the colony's next most valuable export.<sup>1</sup> Thus when the interests of the wool farmers were threatened by violence in 1878 the colonial government was quick to intervene. There was also the possibility that the Orange River area might contain diamonds. Government troops had been stationed at Kimberley, centre of the diamond fields, and as the nearest available force they were immediately sent to the Orange River when war broke out in 1878.

From its junction with the Hartebest River in the west, to Uitdraai, just beyond Prieska in the east, the Orange River

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1. G. Theal, History, VIII, p.152.

provided enough water and grazing to support numerous small settlements. A sketch map Robert Moffat drew in 1856 (see p.10 ) showed Korana villages on both sides of the river, as well as Xhosa settlements along the southern banks.<sup>2</sup> The Xhosa exodus from Schietfontein increased the population along the Orange River. By 1868, there were more than 500 people, living at Nauga, Beestevlei, Buisvlei, Luisdraai, Kalkfontein, Naauwte, Rietfontein, Kat River, Dragoonders Put and Middewater. (See Map No. 10 , p.142). Most of these settlements appear to have contained a mixture of Xhosa, Bastards, San and Korana, though there were also smaller, purely family units.<sup>3</sup>

Raiding and trading activities and the recurrent need for grazing meant that the groups were extremely flexible and that there was constant movement over the river. For instance, Donker Malgas, said to be originally from Pramberg, lived at Naauwte in 1867, with his three wives, children and stock.<sup>4</sup> From there he moved into Waterboer's territory, known as West Griqualand where he held land with permission from Nicholas Waterboer, as did other colonial Xhosa.<sup>5</sup>

Several major Korana groups lived along the northern banks of the river; Lukas Pofadder nearest to the Hartebeest River, Piet Rooy, Jan Kivido and Gert Ruiters below Olyvenhouts Drift, and Klaas Lukas just above the drift. They used the islands in the Orange River for grazing and as hideouts during raids. They also considered the southern banks of the river as Korana territory, refusing to acknowledge the colonial

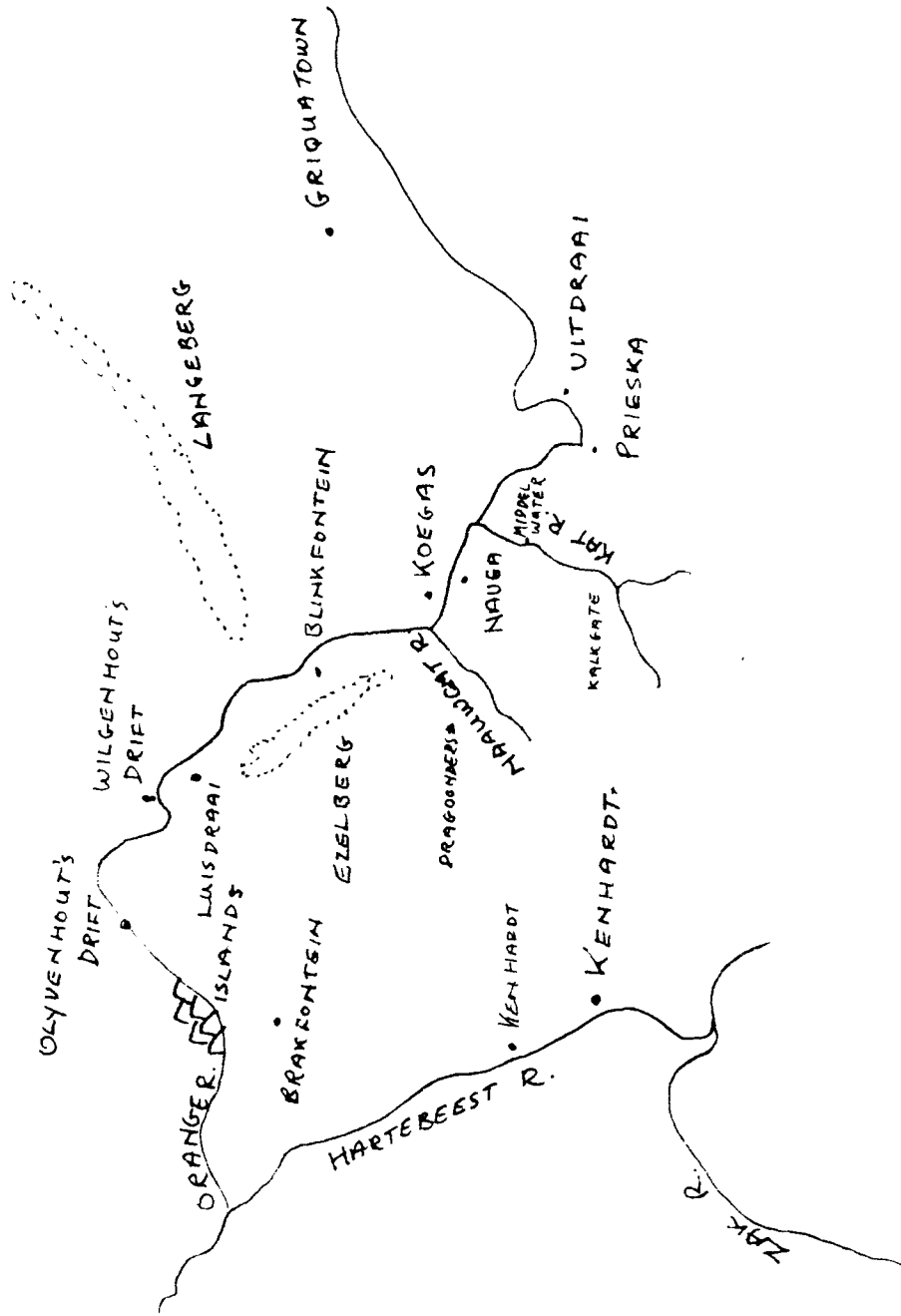
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2. Cape Archives, Maps, M 1/2598.

3. T. Strauss, War Along the Orange, p.59; CO 3114, Return of Kafirs and Bastards 1867, Report by Civil Commissioner, 17 December 1867.

4. A.N. White, 'The Stockenström Judgment. The Warren Report and the Griqualand West Rebellion 1876-1878', p.96; CO 3114, Return of Kafirs and Bastards 1867.

5. Cape Argus, 13 May 1879; G. Theal, History, VIII, p.369.



Map No. 10 : A detailed Sketch Map of the Middle Reaches of the Orange River.

border extension of 1847.<sup>6</sup>

### The War of 1868

In 1868 the inherently lawless, freebooting situation along the Orange River erupted into war. Although there was a certain amount of internecine fighting among the Korana groups, the fundamental reason for friction was that the wave of Xhosa and Bastard immigrants had increased pressure on the land, and this became intolerable during the drought of 1868.<sup>7</sup> The normal migratory nomadism of all the pastoralists was no longer possible because of the increase in numbers: they were gravely threatened by lack of water and grazing, and stock losses became critical. The last remnants of independent San unable to find any prey, wandered from their haunts in the dry Hartebeest River in a state of starvation.<sup>8</sup> In desperate attempts to gain stock the Xhosa, Korana and Bastards began raiding each other and the Boers, whose own raiding took the form of taking all the stock they could during reprisal raids, or by claiming ownership of land and then impounding any stock on it.<sup>9</sup>

Violence was initiated by a Xhosa band, gathered from settlements on both sides of the Orange River, which raided a group of Xhosa on the southern banks in April 1868, killing

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6. G.M. Theal, History, VIII, pp.96-98; T. Strauss, War Along The Orange, pp.20-26, Map facing p.8.

7. T. Strauss, ibid., pp.26-28, 36.

8. 1/NBM 5, M. Jackson to Secretary, 6 April 1869.

9. CO 3132, J.B. Auret to H.P. van der Westhuizen, 20 August 1868; 1/NBM 5, M. Jackson to Secretary, 6 April 1869; M. Jackson to A. Griff, 18 September 1869; M. Jackson to Civil Commissioner of Victoria West, 29 September 1869.

several men and removing considerable stock which they drove over the river into the safety of Griqualand West.<sup>10</sup> A commando, made up of Boers and Xhosa, was unable to stop them and, because of the drought, those threatened by the raiders were unable to move into a laager for mutual protection.<sup>11</sup> As a result, the Civil Commissioner of Victoria West wrote asking the government to send a body of police to protect the northern border from further raids.<sup>12</sup>

At the same time, the Korana, led by Jan Kivido and Piet Rooy, were raiding from their advantageous position on the islands of the Orange River. Using the thick mimosa bush along the bed of the Hartebest River as protective covering they penetrated as far south into the colony as Amandelboom which they virtually destroyed. They knew the terrain and were excellent swimmers so that they managed to herd stolen cattle onto the islands long before the clumsy Boer-Bastard-Xhosa commandos could catch up with them.<sup>13</sup>

Louis Anthing, still pursuing his investigations into the destruction of the northern San, wrote to the government in August 1868 that unless it was prepared to annex both sides of the Orange River, in order to sort out the conflicting claims to the land, and provide a protective border police force, the Korana and Xhosa raids would increase.<sup>14</sup>

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10. CO 3139, Letters from Victoria West, 22 April-18 May 1868.

11. *ibid.*; A. Erasmus to Civil Commissioner, 19 October 1868.

12. CO 3132, Civil Commissioner to Governor. 16 June 1868.

13. CO 3139, Report and Letter, 10 October 1868; A. Erasmus to Civil Commissioner, 19 October 1868; T. Strauss, *op.cit.*, pp.21-22, 18; L. van Rohden, *Missions-Gesellschaft*, p.145; 1/NBM 5, M. Jackson to Secretary, 18 December 1868.

14. HA 80, L. Anthing to Secretary, 10 August 1868; T. Strauss, *op.cit.*, p.26.

Finally, in October 1868, after the Victoria West Civil Commissioner had declared the northern border to be in a state of war, the government passed the Northern Border Protection Act. Provision was made for the appointment of a special magistrate who was to have jurisdiction over all territory in the north which was 25 miles distant from a magistracy. On the same day an act was passed for the formation of a northern border police force.<sup>15</sup>

Special Magistrate M.J. Jackson gathered a force of 50 police under Inspector Wright, and set up his headquarters at Kenhardt in December 1868.<sup>16</sup> A quick sortie up the Hartebest River produced a good number of strays who were sent to the gaols of Victoria West and Schietfontein, and by Christmas Jackson reckoned the southern banks of the Orange River were free of Korana and available for settlement, which he saw as the only long-term solution to the problem.<sup>17</sup>

Jackson soon discovered that the Korana had merely sneaked away to the islands from whence they continued their necessary sorties. Determined upon their destruction, he requested help from the Frontier Armed and Mounted Police, (FAM), and gathered a local commando to strengthen his own police force. They were defeated by the Korana in an engagement near de Tuin, but the arrival of Currie's FAM Police tipped the balance, and after three fights in July the Korana were sufficiently demoralised for Currie and his troops to return to the troubled eastern frontier. By November 1868

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15. HA 80, Resident Magistrate of Victoria West to Secretary, 24 October 1868; T. Strauss, *op.cit.*, p.38; G. Theal, *op.cit.*, p.97.

16. G. Theal, *op.cit.*, p.98; HA 80, 1 December 1868.

17. 1/NBM 5, M. Jackson to Secretary, 18 December 1868, 5 January 1869, 11 January 1869; CO 3139, W. Dawson to Resident Magistrate, 28 December 1868; CO 3162, Resident Magistrate to Secretary, 20 March 1869.

Jan Kivido and Piet Rooy had been captured and the Korana threat was over.<sup>18</sup>

### Removal of squatters

During this year Jackson had realised that Korana raiders were only one of several factors which made the frontier potentially explosive. His attempts to secure peace were based on the conviction that only permanent settlement would put an end to the raiding which he saw as an extension of feckless squatting. As a result of the drought and war, there were truly destitute San and Korana, with no social systems to uphold them any longer. As potential and actual thieves and equally as vulnerable prey, they needed to be got rid of in the opinion of Jackson, who proceeded to send them into the colony to be indentured.<sup>19</sup> Reaction to this was overwhelming. Requests for labour poured in, and however willingly Jackson worked to satisfy them, demand always exceeded his supply.<sup>20</sup> After 1869, this convenient method of eliminating unwanted people, enemies and prisoners, on the northern border, became common practice.<sup>21</sup>

Jackson considered that the Xhosa settlements should also be removed since they were the real source from which

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18. 1/NBM 5, M. Jackson to Secretary, 11 January 1869, 18 May 1869; M. Jackson to W. Dawson, 18 May 1869; HA 80, Report by W. Currie, 4 July 1869; G. Theal, *op.cit.*, pp.98-99.
  19. 1/NBM 5, M. Jackson to Secretary, 6 April 1869; CO 3162, Acting Resident Magistrate to Secretary, 11 December 1869.
  20. CO 3162, G. van Heerden to Resident Magistrate, 18 June 1869; CO 3153, Acting Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 10 August 1869.
  21. 1/NBM 5, M. Jackson to Secretary, 2 September 1872, 10 October 1872; G17-'78, Blue Book on Native Affairs, R. Nesbitt to Secretary, 13 September 1877.

trouble sprang. He wanted the land they occupied surveyed and made into farms big enough to stop the need for migration, with leasing conditions attractive enough to encourage settlers who would be prepared to fight in order to keep them.<sup>22</sup> Acting on his advice, the central government announced in November 1879 that 200 farms on the border, of up to 20 000 morgen each, would be leased to approved applicants for 21 years at nominal rents. The conditions attached to the leasing were that the lessees had to be under 45, possess at least 500 stock and have three or more men living with them prepared to protect the border.

When no one applied for the farms, it was believed the conditions were too stringent, so the government amended them in 1871. As there were still no applicants, it then gave Jackson carte blanche. He was allowed to allot the land in any way to anyone he chose.<sup>23</sup> By this time Jackson had become acutely aware of the difficulties with which he was faced. Because the land was as yet unsurveyed, it was subject to annual leasing under the jurisdiction of the local field-cornet who was liable to favour his family and friends.<sup>24</sup> Thus only the few desirable tracts of land with water were leased.

Kalkputs was one such place. C. Mulder had managed to persuade the field-cornet to incorporate five water holes within his farm, leaving thousands of morgen useless.<sup>25</sup>

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22. 1/NBM 5, M. Jackson to Secretary, 25 October 1870.

23. T. Strauss, op.cit., pp.55-57; Government Gazette, 22 November 1870, Notice No. 467; G. Theal, op.cit., p.100; Government Gazette, 1 August 1871, Notice No. 276; 1/NBM 5, M. Jackson to Secretary, 28 August 1871.

24. See Chapter 8, p.136; Beaufort Courier, 9 December 1870.

25. 1/NBM 5, M. Jackson to Secretary, 29 September 1869.

Land surveys would not suit these men, who as well as land, had collared much of the trans-Orange trade, and wanted to maintain the status quo. On the other hand, the rest of the land was so unattractive that it was not leased at all and was only used by pastoralists after rain when the shallow pans filled.<sup>26</sup>

Thus if people were occupying land already they saw no attraction in leasing it, and if they were leasing land advantageously they had no desire to lose it. Jackson pressed for what he believed was the only solution to the stalemate - wholesale eviction of the Xhosa squatters, and their replacement by young colonists lured from places such as Grahamstown, Port Elizabeth and Graaff-Reinet.<sup>27</sup>

He was hampered by the Xhosa's equally firm determination to stay. A deputation consisting of Platjie Snel and Jan Krediet visited the Governor in Cape Town in 1872 and gained his assurance they would not be forced away. The Governor's suggestion that a reserve be established was patently out of the question because of the virtual impossibility of agriculture in those circumstances.<sup>28</sup> Instead, E. Garcia, the new Civil Commissioner of Victoria West, suggested to the threatened Xhosa of Buisvlei, Prieska and Blinkfontein that they were quite wealthy enough to be

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26. CO 3153, Acting Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 21 June 1869; G20-'81, Historical Account of the Northern Border, pp.83-84.

27. 1/NBM 5, M. Jackson to Secretary, 25 October 1870, 17 September 1871; CO 3200, M. Jackson to Secretary, 1 August 1871 (it should read 1872); CO 3132, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 22 May 1868.

28. 1/NBM 5, M. Jackson to Secretary, 2 September 1872; CO 3200, M. Jackson to Secretary, 6 September 1872, 19 October 1871 (it should read 1872), 15 October 1872.

able to compete for leases when the time came.<sup>29</sup> Such cynical advice must have been galling, for Jackson, in whose gift the leases lay, had made his attitude quite clear: he considered the Xhosa thieving, murderous vagabonds who could become a formidable threat to the colony. His aim was their dispersal and destruction: the destitute to be despatched as labour into the colony, the remainder returned to beyond the eastern frontier, at gunpoint if necessary.<sup>30</sup>

Jackson and his force were sent to the troubled diamond fields at the end of 1872. He had been influential in beginning to encourage white settlement along the southern banks of the Orange River. Soon the wool farmers arrived and Katkop, for instance, which had been laid out as a village, was bought as a farm by a single wealthy man.<sup>31</sup> White settlement was also encouraged by rumours that the islands of the Orange River were diamondiferous.<sup>32</sup> In 1872 there was a minor rush to Prieska itself. Though no diamonds were found, people stayed, and in 1873 the government gave permission for Prieska to become a village, with erven and commonage rights at prices affordable for poor white farmers.<sup>33</sup>

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29. CO 3200, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 4 July 1872.

30. *ibid.*, M. Jackson to Secretary, 19 October 1871 (it should read 1872), 15 October 1872; 1/NBM 5, M. Jackson to Secretary, 17 September 1871, 2 September 1872.

31. G. Theal, *op.cit.*, p.100. Jackson was sent to the diamond fields in 1871 but was returned to the northern border after further Korana raids, and remained until October 1872; see: CO 3200, M. Jackson to Secretary, 15 October 1872; C17-'78, Blue Book on Native Affairs, W. Hare to Secretary, 10 January 1878.

32. CO 3200, L. Rawstorne to Civil Commissioner, 15 March 1872; 1/NBM 5, M. Jackson to Secretary, 28 August 1871.

33. A61-'80, Correspondence concerning grant of Erven at Prieska.

Although government surveys were in full swing all along the southern banks of the Orange River by 1876, and many large groups of Xhosa, such as those at Buisvlei, were evicted, they were able to move into Griqualand West which prevented pressure on the land from becoming critical.<sup>34</sup> Nevertheless, the Xhosa on both sides of the river were increasingly insecure about their ability to hold onto the land they used.

#### The War of 1878

No doubt because of the increase in population, the drought along the southern banks of the Orange River in 1877 had appalling consequences. For the first time people, unable to move, were reduced to such straits that their food was gum and a syrup of boiled leaves only.<sup>35</sup> The cis-Orange Xhosa began to raid once more. They were encouraged by the outbreak of war on the eastern frontier in 1878, and by similar uprisings in West Griqualand.<sup>36</sup>

Those Xhosa who had moved into Waterboer's territory had even greater cause for resentment than their colonial brethren. Led to believe that the land they had been granted was rightfully theirs, they were horrified to discover that their names as claimants had not been included in Nicholas Waterboer's lists which he had given to the British when they took control

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34. T. Strauss, *op.cit.*, p.58; A.N. White, 'The Stockenström Judgment', p.86; G61-'79, Report on affairs on the Northern Border, No. 159; M. Jackson to Secretary, 10 March 1879.

35. T. Strauss, *op.cit.*, pp.68-69; G17-'78, Blue Book on Native Affairs, W. Hare to Secretary, 10 January 1878.

36. G61-'79, Report on affairs on Northern Border, p.IV, Annexure No. 11; A23-'78, Despatch by Lieutenant-Governor of Griqualand West, No.44, 12 May 1878; Cape Argus, Despatch by Colonel Warren, 13 May 1879.

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of the territory in 1877. Donker Malgas and others appealed to the British Land Court which had been established, under Lieutenant-Colonel Charles Warren, to investigate the various claims to land. Warren disallowed their appeal, and recommended that the Xhosa be placed in reserves.<sup>37</sup>

For Malgas this was the final betrayal, first Pramberg, then Schietfontein and Prieska, now this. His call to arms against the colonial government marked the beginning of a general rebellion in Griqualand West, and he had considerable response from other disaffected Bastards and Xhosa who with their families and herds, came to join him at his stronghold in the Langeberg mountains near Koegas. (See Map No. 10, p.142).

Major Lanyon and a force were sent from Kimberley to confront the rebels. They set up headquarters at Koegas, and when Walton, Lanyon's emissary to Malgas, was killed, Lanyon ordered an attack on the Langeberg. His troops were ambushed and were forced to retreat to Koegas until reinforcements arrived.<sup>39</sup> His call for help was answered by Major R. Nesbitt, Special Magistrate for the Northern Border, who was stationed at Kenhardt. He led his police force across the Orange River, and the second attack on the fortified mountain succeeded in July 1878. Malgas and his followers were forced to retreat towards the Orange River with Nesbitt in pursuit.<sup>40</sup>

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37. A.N. White, *op.cit.*, p.96; Theal, *op.cit.*, p.423; Cape Argus, 13 May 1879; C. Warren, 'Report on The Land Question in Griqualand West, 1880', No.166, pp.106-107.

38. G61-'79, Report on Northern Border, p.IV, No.159; M. Jackson to Secretary, 10 March 1879, No.180; T. Upington to Secretary, 17 April 1879; T. Strauss, *op.cit.*, p.79.

39. G. Theal, *op.cit.*, p.427; A23-'78, Despatch No.44, W. Lanyon to Governor, 12 May 1878; G61-'79, Report on Northern Border, No.159; M. Jackson to Secretary, 10 March 1879.

40. T. Strauss, *op.cit.*, pp.79-80; G. Theal, *op.cit.*, XI, p.29; G61-'79, Report on Northern Border, Annexure No.15, 27 June 1878.

There are conflicting stories of what happened when the fleeing Xhosa were cornered by Nesbitt at Wilgenhout's Drift. Without a shot being fired, the colonial forces captured several hundred Xhosa men and 400 women and children, 2 000 cattle, 8 000 sheep and 12 wagons. Nesbitt explained the surrender by saying the Xhosa were so cowed at the sight of his men they voluntarily laid down their arms. The story told by Captain de Klerk, who was also there, rings truer. Nesbitt had told the Xhosa that they would be allowed to retain their cattle and continue on their way if they laid down their arms. When they had done so, they had been taken captive. The prisoners were taken back to Koegas and from there the men were despatched to the diamond fields as labourers, and the now destitute women and children were sent into service in Victoria West.<sup>41</sup> For these Xhosa the long battle to retain their independence was over.

Malgas and the few others who had escaped capture, were determined to fight on. They straggled to the safety of the Orange River islands, and from there gathered new recruits. This was easy. The inhabitants of both banks of the river were in a state of turmoil already. During the first six months of 1878 Klaas Lukas had led so many Korana raids from Olyvenhout's Drift, across the islands and into the colony that in May, Joseph Sississon, a volunteer officer, and his troops had been despatched from the eastern frontier to the

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41. T. Struass, *op.cit.*, pp.80-81; G61-'79, Report on Northern Border, No.14, R. Nesbitt to Civil Commissioner of Victoria West, 24 July 1878; No.69, J. van Niekerk to Civil Commissioner, Victoria West, 3 November 1878; No. 94, Civil Commissioner of Victoria West to Secretary, 10 December 1878.

north.<sup>42</sup> At the same time the cis-Orange Xhosa still at Prieska had shown their support for the rebels by sporadic outbursts of violence. By September 1878 Malgas had a force of 500 'Kaal Kaffers'. As he could also rely on his Korana allies under the leadership of Klaas Lukas, he presented a formidable military challenge to the colonial forces.<sup>43</sup>

Although the Griqualand West rebellion continued north of the Orange River until November 1878, the war with the Xhosa and Korana, referred to by Schietfontein Xhosa ever since as 'Donker Malgas se oorlog', now became concentrated on the banks of the river.<sup>44</sup> Major Nesbitt and his Northern Border Police, together with Sississon's troops had sole responsibility for its conduct.

Nesbitt was not well and appears to have been inefficient, but his numbers were small and the lack of forage made movement difficult for his men who made no attempt to engage the enemy. Instead, they, and local forces who were prepared to form commandos for brief spells, allowed Malgas to build up his forces while they patrolled the southern banks of the river, often surprising peaceful groups and taking their cattle.<sup>45</sup>

In October 1878 the Xhosa, San and Korana settlement at Luisdraai was attacked by a Boer commando led by J. van Niekerk. Among the 46 they killed (with one of their men

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42. T. Strauss, *op.cit.*, pp.76-78; G. Theal, *op.cit.*, XI, p.32.

43. G61-'79, Report on Northern Border, Annexure No.11, W. Hare to Secretary, 12 April 1878; No.51, Civil Commissioner of Victoria West to Under-Secretary, n.d. September 1878; No.180, T. Upington to Secretary, 17 April 1879.

44. G. Theal, *op.cit.*, VIII, p.431. Both the old Xhosa men I spoke to at Schietfontein referred to the war in these terms.

45. T. Strauss, *op.cit.*, pp.82-85.

wounded) were 10 women and children. Others, wounded, were shot on the spot, whilst further summary killing of the wounded who were among the 32 prisoners taken, occurred at different points along the way as they were marched, first to Koegas and then to swell the labour force in Victoria West. The affair which became known as the 'Koegas Atrocities', was investigated, and a trial, which was almost farcical except for its tragic implications, took place in Victoria West in September 1879. The court interpreter, the Rev. D.P. Faure, was horrified by the way in which this trial was conducted, and particularly by the fact that the man responsible for ordering the shooting, van Niekerk, was not even called as a witness, while one of the acknowledged killers, C. van der Merwe, was not only never indicted, but was called to serve on the jury instead. So deep was Faure's indignation that he publicly condemned Thomas Uppington, the Attorney General, for his handling of the case. The ugliest aspect of all was the hostile attitude of the citizens of Victoria West towards the Koegas victims whose plight was the occasion for rejoicing.<sup>46</sup>

This and other Boer attacks were merely legalised raiding. Nesbitt's troops became increasingly ill-disciplined, and were further demoralised in November 1878 when an attack by Malgas succeeded in immobilising them by stealing all their horses.<sup>47</sup>

M.J. Jackson was recalled to replace Nesbitt in December 1878, and set about restoring some order and building a force strong enough to confront Malgas. He did not see them

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46. T. Strauss, op.cit., p.86; D.P. Faure, My Life and Times, pp.69-85; J. Rose-Innes, Autobiography, pp.41-43.

47. T. Strauss, op.cit., pp.88,92.

in action however, for parliament, after a year of spending £10 000 a month on the war began to demand reasons for its continuation. In March 1879, Upington was sent to investigate. Jackson, the man on the spot, was a convenient scapegoat, and Jackson was forced to resign. He was replaced by Commandant MacTaggart who attacked the islands in April 1879, dispersed the rebel forces, and took 400 prisoners who were sent into the colony as labour.<sup>48</sup>

MacTaggart was presumptuous in considering the war over. Malgas and Lukas regrouped, and it was only the mustering of the cannons which had arrived in December, and the consequent shelling of the islands by the colonial forces in May 1879, that drove the two rebel leaders into the Kalahari. Captain A. Maclean, who was sent in pursuit, attacked them in June. He captured 175 men and although Lukas managed to evade imprisonment until the end of the year, Donker Malgas was killed in the engagement and his death effectively ended the war.<sup>49</sup>

Although Charles Warren and Thomas Upington insisted that this northern border war was purely the result of general hatred and unrest, encouraged by the war on the eastern frontier, it was made quite clear by the Xhosa concerned that their only reason for fighting was their loss of land.<sup>50</sup> John Scott,

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48. T. Strauss, *op.cit.*, pp.92-93, 97-99.

49. *ibid.*, pp.100-106; I. Sutton, 'The 1878 Rebellion in Griqualand West and adjacent territories', p.326; A30-'80, Papers concerned with Affairs on Northern Border, No.24, J. Scott to Secretary, 13 May 1880.

50. Cape Argus, 13 May 1879; G61-'79, Report on Northern Border, p.IV; I. Sutton, *ibid.*, p.239; G. Theal, *op.cit.*, XI, p.29; Cape Argus, 13 May 1879.

who was appointed Special Commissioner for the northern border, in 1879, was convinced that dispossession had been the cause of the war. He suggested that the scattered remnants of Xhosa, Damaras, Fingoes, Griqua, and no doubt colonial Bastards and San, which still remained on the southern banks of the river should be placed on a reserve: removing squatters did not solve anything, '...unless we could cut their throats it only puts the difficulty somewhere else, and most likely increases it.'<sup>51</sup> The official solution was simpler: all squatters on either side of the Orange River were to be sent into the northern districts of the colony as labourers. (Later many moved to work on the asbestos mines at Koegas and at Prieska.)<sup>52</sup> The fierce struggle by the independent frontiersmen to cling to a mode of existence which had become anachronistic, had failed.

The harsh environment of the Northern Cape was crucial in the history of the area. The profitability of the wool industry depended on the wool farmers' ability to control huge tracts of land. Because the original wool farmers were men with capital who also held sway over local politics, the Xhosa were unable to compete through their inability to hold enough land. The poor white farmers who were in the same position were able to adapt by finding alternative forms of livelihood in the growing villages, or as bywoners on others' farms. Partly because white racial attitudes had become highly developed in the 1860s and 1870s, the only role open to the

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51. A30-'80, Papers concerning Northern Border, No.11, J. Scott to Mr Ayliff, 3 October 1879.

52. ibid., No.25, J. Scott to Secretary, 13 May 1880; evidence of Piet Hendricks, September 1983.

Xhosa both in the towns or on the farms was that of servant. If the Xhosa lost their stock, they lost forever the possibility of maintaining their independence. Trade without stock as the means of exchange was increasingly difficult. War was the final option, and the Xhosa may well have known in 1878 that all it would amount to was a last, defiant gesture.

CONCLUSION

It was specifically the loss of land in the 1870s which led to the final break-up of the independent Xhosa groups which had moved to the banks of the Orange River. The deeper cause of their frustration and angry despair, however, was their inability to retain a way of life. Stock-farming, hunting and trading on the northern frontier required mobility associated with access to large tracts of land which were used seasonally. (There is no evidence of Xhosa turning to wool farming, and the expense involved, together with competition from rich wool farmers, seems to suggest it was never a possibility. In any event, wool sheep required as much grazing land as Cape sheep.)

Thus, those Xhosa who left Schietfontein in the 1860s and 1870s did not believe that forfeiting their rights to land at Schietfontein was a sign of failure, because there was still plenty of freely available land further north. It was when encroaching whites hemmed them in south of the Orange River and they simultaneously lost the right to use land in Griqualand West, that they realised they had lost. Only then did they resort to the final option of war. Defeated, they became labourers either on the diamond fields or on colonial farms.

The core of Xhosa who never left Schietfontein accepted, together with Christianity, a radical change to their way of life. They were tied to their houses, erven and allotted grazing grounds, and accepted an increasingly white local authority. The Management Committee was soon dominated by townsmen and wool farmers whose interests were commercial and expansionist.

The water at Schietfontein was valuable and considerable pressure was placed on erf holders to sell. Early in the twentieth century the Management Committee persuaded the government to allow buildings on the inner commonage, which were built and bought by white farmers and speculators, and in 1926 the outer commonage was surveyed and sub-divided into 204 private erven.<sup>1</sup> Thus the Schietfontein Xhosa lost their flocks and herds, and they too became labourers, some retaining their garden lots and a few goats. This loss of Xhosa independence can be traced to changes which occurred during the nineteenth century.

Although lured by trading prospects the people who moved onto the northern frontiers of the Cape during these years were generally those who had been pushed away from better grazing in the south and the east. For the first 20 years of the century, poor nomadic pastoralists, though competing for pasturage, saw each other in individual terms and as equals.

The slow but steady movement of white trekboers into the northern Cape, however, brought an extension of colonial control. Beaufort became a magisterial district in 1818 and white pastoralists gained an advantage over the others because they now had access to local government through the field-cornets who, as stock-farmers themselves, represented white trekboer interests. The intrusion of colonial control in the 1820s and 1830s limited Xhosa independence of movement and boundary extensions in 1824 and 1847 were practical evidence of increased colonial interest.

Nevertheless, frontier lawlessness remained largely unchecked until after 1840 when, as a direct reaction to

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1. P. Kallaway, 'Xhosa of the Karreebergen', p.38.

demands from Britain and depressed wine prices in the colony, merchant capital, in the form of immigrant wool farmers, their agents and traders, moved into the northern districts of the colony. Their arrival heralded a changed society: an economy which had been barely reliant on commerce now became part of it. The acquisition of huge farms by the wool men unleashed a chain reaction. The land laws of the colony were in a state of flux and the commercial farmers were able to use them to their own advantage, depriving stock-farmers, white, Bastard and Xhosa of their grazing lands.

Pushed into severe conflict the white pastoralists used every means available to them to remove the Xhosa from land they now coveted. A missionary was despatched to Schietfontein in the hopes that he would encourage stable settlement and a servile community. The missionary was also used as a means of removing the Xhosa from Pramberg and settling them within the confines of a mission settlement. By the time the Pramberg Xhosa were moved to Schietfontein between 1855 and 1857, the wool farmers had reached as far north as that and the trekboers then had to set their sights on Schietfontein itself.

Because missionary Alheit identified with Xhosa needs, the trekboers were disappointed in their attempts to gain the land around Schietfontein, and Auret's Report in 1859 granted the Xhosa security of tenure although it lessened their chances of becoming or remaining wealthy by limiting the amount of stock they were allowed. But once more the wool men arrived. Beset by drought and critically affected by the depressed wool prices of the 1860s, the Xhosa Bastard and Boer stock-farmers

were unable to resist their advance. By 1879 the majority of Xhosa had lost their erven and reserved pasturage, and if not forced into labour, were reliant, in competition with others, on the ever decreasing crown lands just south of the Orange River. The movement of commercial farming was inexorable and in the 1870s it coincided with the rush for diamonds just north of the Orange River. The Xhosa were no match for the land barons who could now rely on military support from the central government.

Although a certain number of pastoralists did adapt to a changing society, the processes of change were too strong for the majority, who did not. The Xhosa who went to war for their independence were obvious losers, but many of the poorer white farmers suffered a similar loss of land and another study may be undertaken of the way they adapted to this.

Though at the time it appeared that the Xhosa were dispossessed as a result of droughts, the arrival of a missionary, adverse changes in the land laws of the colony and an inability to adapt, the overriding process in their dissolution was the emergence of commercial farming, which ensured that power was in the hands of people who controlled the resources of the area.

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By 1984 there were only 14 Xhosa householders left at Schietfontein, on 10 morgen of land.<sup>2</sup> These people have been classified as coloured and though there has been considerable

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2. Ons Eie, 22 Mei 1981.

intermarriage, most of them proudly remember their Xhosa heritage. The older members still speak Xhosa and have passed on to their descendants tales of their independent past.<sup>3</sup>

The Xhosa's right to possess their reduced erven has been constantly under review and there is deep insecurity within the community. In 1958 they reacted to the threat of eviction by marching on the town hall with pitch forks!<sup>4</sup> More recently, because of squatters at Schietfontein, local officials have been able to use the argument that the community could become a health hazard to the town of Carnarvon only a few kilometres away.<sup>5</sup>

In 1972 a letter from the Department of Community Development informed the inhabitants that Schietfontein had been proclaimed a white area. No official action was taken though, beyond frequent threats of expropriation, and the announcement in 1981 that as each erf holder died, his heirs would forfeit their rights. It was mooted that the whole area should become a recreation ground with a stone memorial as a reminder of Schietfontein as part of Carnarvon's history.<sup>6</sup>

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3. Two of these stories are borne out by written evidence. One is the tale of how the Battle of Pramberg was initiated in 1851, when the Xhosa purposely stole and slaughtered the pet ox of the young daughter of Boer Kotze, see: CO 2873, Civil Commissioner to Secretary, 21 June 1851. The second story tells of an attack by 'wild Bushmen' on the Lorentz family in 1862. They had set up their tent at Kalbasput and their 'tame Bushmen' servants explained to their wild counterparts that the canvas was penetrable. The 'wild Bushmen' were further helped by the suggestion that they use the dust raised by the sheep in which to hide as they approached the camp. They shot arrows from this camouflage and the only survivor of the family was a daughter who was found and brought to safety by a party of Xhosa a few days later, see: CO 3038, W. Dawson to Civil Commissioner, 17 May 1862, 20 May 1862.
4. Interview with de Wet Nel, Carnarvon, 1983.
5. Ons Eie, 22 Mei 1981.
6. ibid.

By this time a section of the white community, led by Sheila Snyman and de Wet Nel, had been roused to action on behalf of the Schietfontein community. Though they were unable to prevent a government announcement in December 1981 that all immovable property at Schietfontein would be expropriated by the end of the month, they did gain a stay of expropriation, and in 1983 the government withdrew the notice. At the same time, it stated that the present owners had life time rights to their erven and provided that direct descendants inherited the property they could stay. It was not possible however for white erfholders to sell them back to their original owners.<sup>7</sup>

In 1984, the community was still unsure of its legal position and the people were told by officials that the status quo would remain until Schietfontein's fate is decided by the House of Representatives in the new tricameral parliament.<sup>8</sup>

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7. Ons Eie, 18 December 1981, 27 May 1981; Interview with Sheila Snyman, Carnarvon, 1984.

8. Interview with Sheila Snyman, Carnarvon, 1984.

NOTE ON SOURCES

Most of this study is based on archival material, the Cape Archives in Cape Town proving a rich source. The Colonial Office papers, containing letters from civil commissioners and resident magistrates provided much evidence, both direct and indirect, on the northern frontier Xhosa. As pertinent were the Beaufort and Victoria West papers, particularly the letters from field-cornets and from the missionary, C. Alheit, which were a guide, not only to events, but to white attitudes at the time. Direct evidence from the Xhosa was slight but there was a considerable body of writing which gave clues to their thinking. Depositions, trial records, and letters from Xhosa at Schietfontein, provided some insight into their way of life and attitudes.

The Minutes of the Schietfontein Management Committee are in the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk Argief in Cape Town. They provided information concerning the membership of the Committee, the running of the daily affairs of the community at Schietfontein, the financial problems encountered and how these were dealt with. Papers in the Standard Bank Archives in Johannesburg were particularly helpful concerning the sale of erven in the 1860s and the poor state of the economy in the same decade. Bank managers' letters provided clear, often sharp character assessments of the bank's more important clients - those men who controlled the affairs of Beaufort and Victoria West. J.M. Orpen's papers, in the Cory Library at Rhodes University, contained a wealth of material on the

Xhosa leader Danster, and on Xhosa movement over the Orange River in the 1830s.

I did not consult the archives of the London Missionary Society. For a brief period in the early years of the nineteenth century the society had an unsuccessful mission at Toverberg (Colesberg). Otherwise the nearest LMS station at Kuruman was too peripheral to affect events on the Cape's northern frontier. Where necessary, I have relied on Peter Kallaway's use of the LMS archives in his paper on 'Danster and the Xhosa of the Gariep'.

Published British Parliamentary Papers, which included J.B. Auret's report on Schietfontein, were useful. Other published contemporary sources were the journals of the travellers, Henry Lichtenstein, William Burchell and George Thompson, as well as G. Theal's Records of the Cape Colony. The Shaping of South African Society, eds. R. Elphick and H. Giliomee, M. Legassick's thesis, 'The Griqua, the Sotho-Tswana and the Missionaries', Economy, and Society in pre-industrial South Africa, eds. S. Marks and A. Atmore, and The Frontier in History, eds. H. Lamar and L. Thompson, were stimulating points of departure. I used the footnotes in The Cape Coloured People by J.S. Marais as a guide to source material, while G. Theal's History, vols. V-XII, was generally used for historical background to events, and for factual data.

Specific writing on the northern Xhosa has been sparse.

J. Peires, in his thesis, 'A History of the Xhosa', and his book, The House of Phalo, provided background material.

The two papers by Peter Kallaway, 'The Xhosa of the Karree-bergen' and 'Danster and the Xhosa of the Gariep', were both useful. I have drawn upon the work of the Rhenish Mission historian, L. von Rohden, who wrote Geschichte der Rheinischen Missions-Gesellschaft, but have relied on Kallaway for evidence from Leiden und Freuden Rheinisch Missionare by J.C. Wallman. These works were also used as sources by J.S. Marais in The Cape Coloured People and by E. Strassberger in The Rhenish Mission Society in South Africa. Because they relied on hearsay evidence for the history of the mission congregation at Schietfontein prior to the arrival of a missionary in 1847, and always desired to place the mission in a good light, the evidence of both historians has been cautiously dealt with. Although the annual reports of the mission society are available in Stellenbosch, I did not consult them as they are written in German, and would have required translation.

There has been earlier treatment of the wars on the Orange River dealt with in Chapter 9. See: G. Theal, History VIII, pp.427-453; T. Strauss, War Along The Orange; J.S. Marais, The Cape Coloured People, pp.90.94; I. Sutton, 'The 1878 Rebellion in Griqualand West and adjacent territories'; and A.N. White, 'The Stockenström Judgment'. The Warren Report and the Griqualand West Rebellion, 1876-1878'. The emphasis in all the above works, however, was on the Griqualand West rebellion and not on the Xhosa war.

I paid several visits to Beaufort West, Victoria West and Pramberg, Carnarvon, Schietfontein and surrounding areas. The Anglican Church Registers in Beaufort West included marriages, baptisms and deaths of anglicans in Victoria West and Schietfontein for the period under review and indicated that many of the wealthy members of society were anglican, and that the baptism of bastard children by leading men in the community was common. They also pointed to the movement of white families into Schietfontein. The Dutch Reformed Church had no register. I searched the collection of photographs in the Beaufort West Museum but none of them were relevant. In Victoria West, I was given access to local municipal papers which told of the establishment of a location in the village. I was taken to the main Xhosa site on Pramberg where there was considerable evidence of Xhosa settlement. I saw similar sites outside Carnarvon and at both Carnarvon and Schietfontein I gathered valuable oral evidence during several interviews. Generally, these visits also helped me to see and understand the context against which events could be viewed.

B I B L I O G R A P H Y1. UNPUBLISHED SOURCESArchives

- A. Cape
- B. Standard Bank
- C. Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk
- D. Cory Library
- E. South African Library

2. PUBLISHED SOURCES

- A. Official Publications
- B. Compilations of Official Documents
- C. Contemporary Works
- D. Books and Articles
- E. Unpublished Papers and Theses
- F. Newspapers
- G. Maps

1. UNPUBLISHED SOURCESOFFICIAL MANUSCRIPTSA. Cape Archives, Cape Towna) Colonial Office (CO)i) Letters received from Beaufort West

CO 2772 (1837); 2778 (1838); 2787 (1839); 2803 (1841);  
 2808 (1842); 2813 (1843); 2819 (1844); 2825 (1845);  
 2832 (1846); 2839 (1847); 2848 (1848); 2858 (1849);  
 2865 (1850); 2868 (1850); 2873 (1851); 2883 (1852);  
 2886 (1853); 2898 (1854); 2910 (1855); 2916 (1855);

2923 (1856); 2936 (1857); 2941 (1857); 2953 (1858);  
 2963 (1858); 2973 (1859); 2981 (1859); 2991 (1860);  
 3003 (1860); 3012 (1861); 3030 (1862); 3039 (1862);  
 3049 (1863); 3065 (1864); 3078 (1865); 3106 (1867);  
 3115 (1867); 3124 (1868); 3133 (1868); 3142 (1869);  
 3155 (1869); 3165 (1870).

ii) Letters received from Colesberg

CO 2842 (1847); 2884 (1852); 2886 (1852); 2892 (1853);  
 2899 (1854); 2905 (1854); 2911 (1855); 2937 (1857);  
 2942 (1857); 2964 (1858); 2991 (1860).

iii) Letters received from Graaff-Reinet

CO 2559 (1807); 2564 (1808); 2567 (1808); 2575 (1811);  
 2606 (1817); 2612 (1818); 2618 (1819); 2625 (1820);  
 2633 (1821); 2641 (1822); 2649 (1823); 2658 (1824);  
 2667 (1825); 2678 (1826); 2694 (1827); 2695 (1827);  
 2706 (1828); 2715 (1829); 2722 (1830); 2729 (1831);  
 2736 (1832); 2743 (1833); 2750 (1834); 2757 (1835);  
 2764 (1836).

iv) Letters received from Tulbagh

CO 2587 (1813); 2609 (1817); 2614 (1818); 2620 (1819);  
 2627 (1820); 2635 (1821); 2643 (1822); 2651 (1823).

v) Letters received from Victoria West

CO 2947 (1857); 2962 (1858); 1967 (1858); 2980 (1859);  
 2987 (1859); 3001 (1860); 3007 (1860); 3021 (1861);  
 3025 (1861); 3038 (1862); 3045 (1862); 3057 (1863);

CO 3063 (1863); 3071 (1864); 3076 (1864); 3084 (1865);  
 3089 (1865); 3099 (1866); 3114 (1867); 3132 (1868);  
 3139 (1868); 3153 (1869); 3162 (1869); 3172 (1870);  
 3177 (1870); 3187 (1871); 3200 (1872).

vi) Letters received from Worcester

CO 2669 (1825); 2679 (1826); 2707 (1827-1828); 2716 (1829);  
 2723 (1830).

vii) Letters received from Tulbagh and Worcester on Lands

CO 844 (1821).

viii) Circulars

CO 5935 (1 June 1854 - 29 December 1857).

ix) Letters received from Clergymen and Missionaries  
(entitled Letters Ecclesiastical and Educational after 1843)

CO 501 (1841); 519 (1843); 528 (1844); 540 (1845); 550 (1846);  
 564 (1847); 574 (1848); 605 (1851); 612 (1852); 637 (1854);  
 677 (1856); 694 (1857); 719 (1858); 741 (1859); 760 (1860);  
 775 (1861); 851 (1866).

x) Letters received from Divisional Councils

CO 674 (1856); 692 (1857); 759 (1860); 886 (1868).

xi) Miscellaneous Letters received, and from Heads of  
Departments

CO 4417 (1864).

xii) Letters from the Supreme Court

CO 379 (1830); 408 (1832).

b) Beaufort West (BFW)i) Civil Commissioner and Resident Magistrate (1/BFW)

2/25 Criminal Cases, 1850-1851

4/1 Criminal Record Books 1848-1857

8/1/1 Civil Record Book of the Courts of the Resident Magistrate of Beaufort 1831-1853

9/1-9/6 Letters received from Colonial Office 1818-1858

9/13 Letters from Surveyor-General 1837-1870, Letters from Surveyors 1819-1879

9/16 Letters from Special Justices of the Peace 1836-1838, 1879

9/23 Letters from Superintendent of Education (SGE) 1840-1881, Teachers 1824-1863 Commissioners of Enquiry 1824-1827

9/24 Letters received, Military, from Field-Commandants and Justices of the Peace 1830-1846

9/28 Letters received relating to the Kaffir War 1850-1851

9/35-9/38 Letters received from Civil Commissioner and Magistrate of Graaff-Reinet 1828-1837

9/39 Letters received from Landdrosts of Cape Town, Stellenbosch and Somerset 1819-1827

9/40-9/41 Letters received from Civil Commissioners and Resident Magistrates

9/50-9/52 Letters received from Field-Cornets and Justices of the Peace

9/57 Letters received from Clergymen, Missionaries and Church Officials 1819-1876

9/61-9/62 Letters from Private Individuals 1834-1858

10/8 Miscellaneous Papers 1821, 1879

11/15 Beaufort Letter Book 1825-1826

13/14 Clerk of the Peace: Miscellaneous Letters received

13/17 Clerk of the Peace: Drafts and Rough Copies of Letters 1836, 1841-1847

ii) Municipality, Council Minutes (3/BFW)

1/1/1/1 Council Minutes 1848-1851

iii) Divisional Council (4/BFW)

1/1/1/1 Minute Book 1856-1859

7/2/6 Applications for Crown Lands

c) Government House (GH)

1/80-1/111 General despatches from Secretary for State for Colonies 1831-1836

1/188 General Despatches 1847

1/191-1/196 General Despatches February 1848 - September 1848

1/200 Letters from Government House 1849

18/2 His Majesty's Commissioners of Inquiry 1827

19/1 Commission of Inquiry re Land Matters 1821-1826

23/16 Despatches from Sir Peregrine Maitland to Secretary of State for Colonies 1846-1847

23/17 Despatches from Sir Henry Pottinger to Secretary of State 1847

23/18 Despatches from Sir Harry Smith to Secretary of State 1847-1849

23/23 General Despatches 1853

28/39 Enclosures to Despatches 1847

28/41 Enclosures to Despatches 1847-1848

d) Graaff-Reinet (GR)

8/8-8/20 Letters received from Colonial Office 1818-1830

10/40 Letters received from Private Institutions and Societies. Miscellaneous 1798-1904

11/2/11/6 Letters received from Beaufort 1818-1821

11/16-11/17 Letters received from Beaufort 1831-1842

14/27 Land Transfers and Coloured Land-holding

14/20 Letters received from Churches and Missions 1798-1880

e) House of Assembly (HA)

80 Annexures 1869

f) Land Board (LBD)

78 Board of Commissioners for Lands 1848-1868

79 Land Claims and Reports from Victoria West

100 Letters received from Government

g) Northern Border Magistrate (NBM)1/NBM 5 Letters despatched from Special Magistrate of  
Northern Border 1868-1872h) Stellenbosch (STB)1/STB 10/165 Briewe van Veldwagmeesters en Private Persone  
1795-1798i) Surveyor-General (SG)

1/1/1/3 Letters received from Civil Commissioners 1830-1859

1/1/1/8 Letters received from Civil Commissioner, Victoria  
West, 1860-18681/1/3/1-1/1/3/24 Letters received from Government Offices  
1831-1859

4/65 Reference Book on Victoria West

j) Worcester (WOC)1/WOC 11/11-11/12 Letters received from Colonial Office  
1830-1834k) Accessions (ACC)

302 J.M. Orpen Papers

B. STANDARD BANK ARCHIVES (SB)

BFW A1/1/1 Minute Book of the Beaufort Bank 1855-1861

ARCH 1/4/GMO Copies of original letters from General Manager  
to London office 1865-1866

Insp 1/1/12 Inspection Reports, Beaufort West 1866-1883

Insp 1/1/173 Inspection Reports, Victoria West 1865-1880

Insp 2/1/37 Manager's Profit/Loss Reports, Victoria West  
1864-1879

C. NEDERDUITSE GEREFORMEERDE KERK ARGIEF

Sending Kerk (SK)

G8 1/1 Minutes of the Schietfontein Management Committee  
1862-1877

D. CORY LIBRARY, RHODES UNIVERSITY, GRAHAMSTOWN

Cory Accessions (MS)

1196 Orpen J.M. Notes : British Occupation of South Africa

1211 Orpen J.M. Affairs North of the Orange River

1214 'Scrutator', Letter to Cape Monitor, OFS.

1218 OFS Volksraad Minutes (extracts)

1230 Orpen J.M. Notes : OFS Affairs

1234 Orpen J.M. Notes : OFS Affairs

1236 Orpen J.M. Notes : OFS Affairs

1242 Orpen J.M. Letter and Notes on Basutoland

1244 Orpen J.M. Memo : early Basuto History

1258 Orpen J.M. Extracts from H. Lichtenstein's Travels

1259 Orpen J.M. Notes : Native Affairs North of the Orange  
River

E. SOUTH AFRICAN LIBRARY, CAPE TOWN

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J.C. Molteno Manuscripts Nos. 3,5,6.

2. PUBLISHED SOURCESA. OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONSi) Cape Colony

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Annexures to the Votes and Proceedings of the House of Assembly

(The series number, A by order of Assembly, G by order of Government, is followed by the number of the paper and year in abbreviated form, followed by the title)

- G7 - '59 Report of an Inquiry as to the Claims of certain Natives residing at the Missionary Institutions of Amandelboom and Schietfontein in the Division of Beaufort to the Lands on which they are located.
- A39- '63 Message from His Excellency the Governor, with Enclosures, relative to Affairs in the North-Western Districts of the Colony.
- A25 - '68 Reports from various Public Officers in the Divisions of Victoria West, Fraserburg, Calvinia and Namaqualand relative to the unsettled state of a tract of country lying south of the Orange River.
- G31 - '73 Geological Report, 1872, by E.J. Dunn.
- A23 - '78 Despatch to His Excellency the Governor by the Lieutenant-Governor of Griqualand West on the subject of Native Disturbances.
- A30 - '78 Further correspondence on the subject of the recent Native Disturbances in Griqualand West.
- G61 - '79 Report on and Papers connected with Affairs on the Northern Border.
- A30 - '80 Papers connected with Affairs on the Northern Border.

A61 - '80 Correspondence and Papers in connection with the  
proposed Grant of Erven at Prieska.

G20 - '81 Blue book on Native Affairs.

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8/1/39 Government Gazette 1843.

8/1/45 Government Gazette 1849.

8/1/52 Government Gazette 1856.

8/1/56 Government Gazette 1860.

ii) Great Britain

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