

THE TERRITORIAL EXPANSION OF THE CAPE COLONY EASTWARD

BETWEEN 1808 - 1836.

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A Thesis

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Master of Arts

by

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"A more difficult or complex problem than the South African native problem was never presented to people, and it is ever shadowed by the responsibility of keeping order in the land and of the defence of civilization against any turbulent or unruly element in the uncivilized masses". The Earl of Selborne-1907.  
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SECTION I.Introductory.

During the first thirty years of British Government at the Cape (excluding its brief regime between 1795 and 1803) the Colony did not experience much actual territorial expansion but what did take place reflected so truly the trend of European development in South Africa that this period may well be considered one of the most vital in the country's history. (The most important aspect of the frontier in those early days was the difficulty of dealing with the natives, a problem which had arisen through the extension of the Eastern districts of the Cape Colony until they came into contact with the native tribes.) To-day, the Bantu peoples are still an inferior race socially, dependent economically on the whites and with practically no political status; but the chief problem still remains how to give them lands adequate for a nation which is still developing and is gradually being civilized. This present day problem has its roots in the development of the Eastern frontier in the early nineteenth century, in the relations which grew up between the whites and blacks during the expansion of the Colony after 1806.

The two races had met long before 1806 in the district just west of the Great Fish River known as the Zuurveld; but from the very beginning there was ill-feeling between ~~before~~ them. (Those great historians, G.M. Theal and Sir George Cory, speak of cattle-raiding, which grew steadily worse as the years went by, as the cause of the incessant hostilities that took place, but behind this lay a much more fundamental motive. This was what has been called "land-hunger". The natural tendency of a young and healthy race to grow gives rise to an urgent need for land to supply its most primary wants and both the Boers and the Xosa (that off-shoot of the older Bantu tribes which, by 1775 was living on the Colonial border) were young races. . . . .

decide definitely in favour of oneseide or the other and in this case it declared for the natives -at the expense of the colonists .Thereupon, the settlers most adversely affected rebelled. Their rebellion took the form of a general exodus from the Colony, out of reach of the colonial authorities, with the avowed intention of managing their own affairs in the future.

Under the circumstances, the hostilities that took place on the Eastern frontier and the apparent ineffectuality of the Government to cope with them are not altogether surprising. Nor can the Colonial accessions be attributed particularly to the selfishness of the B<sup>o</sup>ers, nor to the inherant bad character of the native . Injustices, of course, occured often enough on both sides but the main trend of events seems to have been beyond the power of any government to control. Therefore, to understand the growth and development of the Eastern districts of the Cape Colony between 1808 and 1836, one must first examine the conditions obtaining on each side of the border.

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Before long, as might be expected, these neighbours were bitter rivals for the possession of land. The whole subject of the relationship between black and white arises from this question of land and nowhere in South Africa was the problem more serious than on the Eastern frontier, nor at any time more significant than during the first thirty years of the second British occupation.

In the struggle that followed, the very fact that the Colony succeeded in extending its Eastern boundry at all, points to the ultimate victory of the Europeans. This, however, was far less the outcome of any definite action taken by the colonists against the natives than the natural, though unfortunate, result of civilization in conflict with barbarism. Philanthropists, missionaries and other people of pro-native views, at various times have had much to say about the injustice of the whites towards the natives, of the greed of colonists and sufferings of the tribes under harsh and unsympathetic treatment. Others, again, are obsessed with the opposite point of view. To these the natives appear as thieves and scoundrels, dishonest, untrustworthy and full of cunning. They maintain that the frontiersmen suffered ruin and perpetual warfare at the hands of the natives and that, in spite of it, an unjust government sided with the savages against these long suffering colonists. But in view of the conditions prevailing on the frontier, of the types of people in contact and of the early development of each side, all that follows appears to have been almost inevitable. And all through this difficult period from (1808 to 1836) one is impressed with the same aspect of inevitability. Both settlers (and especially the frontier farmers) and the natives were characteristic products of their respective environments, which rendered disagreement in the advent of the two meeting practically certain. The government, as obvious arbitrator in any such quarrel, was torn between its duty to protect its subjects and that of doing complete justice to a weaker race. Between such unequal parties compromise was proved useless. The Government had to

decide/

## CHAPTER I.

Conditions on the Eastern Frontier in 1808.

The Colonial Pastoralists: their social activities; land tenure; need and desire for land. - The Xosa: their social organization; in contact with the whites in the Zuurveld; importance of land in their relations with the whites; early history of these relations. - Government frontier policy in 1808. - Colonel Collins' report on the Eastern frontier.

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To understand the development of the frontier situation in 1808 one must realize the enormous difference in outlook and custom that was the primary cause of misunderstanding between the colonists and their native neighbours. In 1808 the official boundary of the Eastern districts was the Fish River and the Government had repeatedly forbidden the colonists to cross this line into native territory. The Colonial frontiersmen themselves were pastoralists, men of hardy Dutch stock who lived on huge farms scattered throughout the frontier districts. The Eastern Province was still in the first stage of development and these Boer stock farmers constituted but a meagre population for so large a tract of country. Lack of social intercourse, the inevitable hardships of frontier life and perpetual strife with native mauraders brought out all that was brave, persevering and self-reliant in these people. But those same factors, together with an almost total absence of educational facilities and their isolation from the control of the government authorities at Cape Town, made them, as Jan Hofmeyr pointed out, <sup>(1)</sup> "limited<sup>in</sup> outlook, impatient of the restraints of Civil Government and difficult to unite in effective co-operation". Colonel Collins, too, <sup>(2)</sup> in reporting on conditions on the frontier remarked that "one hundred miles did not present resistance of more than one third that number of inhabitants" - a serious consideration in view of the proximity of numerous

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1. Hofmeyr - "South Africa"

2. Imp. Blue book. Vol. IV. No. 4. (Journal of tour to E. Frontier)

tribes of uncivilized natives. Nevertheless, the last thing the frontier Boers wanted was a closer settlement of their country. Cattle farming made it essential that they should have very big farms (most of which were about 6000 acres in extent) and the bigger and better pasture lands they had, the greater their opportunities for acquiring wealth in cattle. These cattle farmers of the frontier were by no means a settled community. (Early in the history of the Colony the burghers had found cattle farming more profitable than agricultural pursuits and even at the time of Adriaan van der Stel they were leaving the settled districts round about Cape Town and Stellenbosch and trekking inland - where they found land excellently suited to stock-farming. The Government granted extensive lands to these pioneers of the interior but far from checking their nomadic habits this served merely to foster them.) From their point of view, of course, there was always the hope of finding some other place, even better suited to their needs, that kept these men trekking. But it must be admitted that the official system of land tenure, under which all farms were granted, did more to discourage than to further permanent settlement.

This land tenure of leenings plaas was practically <sup>i</sup> universal in the Colony when the British took possession in 1806. Its operation was, briefly, as follows: A man would select a suitable spot and apply for permission to occupy it. A Government commission then reported on the position, as to whether the site interfered with anyone's rights and the suitability of the applicant. If the report was favourable, a lease of the land was granted at an invariable rent of 24 Rix dollars per annum - regardless of differences in size and value. Actually the lease was granted for one year only but it had become the custom to regard it as renewable on payment of rent. The occupant of such lands could at any time dispose of them by selling the buildings (opstal) on them while the government took the transfer duties and granted the lease to the purchaser.

The Government could, in theory, reclaim such lands at a year's notice, though it had to compensate the lessee for the opstal thereon; but in practise there were very few examples of this and even these were cases where the rent had not been paid for a very long time or where the occupant was eminently undesirable. Amongst the stock farmers this particular tenure was very popular. The fact that they held all their lands at the discretion of the government<sup>e</sup> who could resume possession on its mere arbitrary command, worried them not at all. Cases of land reverting to the government were rare and in any case the Boers did not want to secure a tenure. Their lands were valuable to them only in so far as they provided good pasturage. If the springs dried up or drought set in, if the grass turned "sour" or the farmer's herds grew too big for his present pastures, he would sell his farm and trek on until he found some other place more to his liking. When he found it he would petition the government for right of occupation. And so they went on trekking from place to place, always looking for bigger and better pastures - sowing the seeds of the wander lust that was to be so strong a characteristic of the Boer.

In spite of Boer partiality to this system, however, it had serious defects from a point of view of the community as a whole. For instance, because the farmers did not actually own their lands and because they could not be sure how long they would remain in one place, they were not willing to spend money on improving their properties nor in cultivating the land on a large scale. Then, too, the boundaries of these leenings plaatsen were ill-defined which led to interminable disputes about limits and grazing rights. Nor could they be divided up amongst the heirs. As Theal says<sup>(1)</sup> "This system prevented the growth of attachment to the soil which arises from any long residence and tended to scatter the population thinly over a wide area".

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(1) Theal. Vol. I. P. 265.

In 1813, it is true, Sir John Cradock instituted a new tenure - that of perpetual quit rent - under which land was to be held for fifteen years at an annual rental of from 4 to 8 shillings per morgen. The farms had to be properly surveyed at the expense of the occupant and a diagram registered in the Deeds Office. Cradock and many others in the Colony thought this a great improvement on the old leenings plaats system but the Boers hated the change. The old tenure was far more in accord with their inclinations and methods and gave them all the security and advantages they wanted. From their view-point the only drawback under the old system was their inability to divide up their farms among their children according to the Boer custom of inheritance; but since vast tracts of land lay before them they preferred that each child should receive a full sized loan place rather than a portion of a quit rent farm. Cradock's arrangement was, in itself, an improvement but as far as its effect on the "land policy" of the frontier pastoralists was concerned it came too late. The farmers were already imbued with the idea that all the land, for as far as they could trek, was theirs for the taking - for their use and that of their children for generations to come.

Apart from this desire for land, however, was the frontiersman's very real need for it. As cattle farmers they had to have the use of extensive tracts of pasture; but as often as not they had two farms, one for use in summer and the other for winter (a situation necessitated by the vagaries of the climate and of water supplies.) Nor could cattle be grazed on the so-called "sour" grass all the year round. The farmer whose fields were of this sort would drive his cattle further inland for several months of the year. In fact, the government often granted temporary <sup>grazing</sup> rights in the ~~interior~~ interior which in many instances were converted by usage into permanent tenures. Eventually the Boer came to look on it as his right, and often as the only means of preserving the cattle which made up his worldly wealth, that he should be allowed

to take possession of lands in this way. (In 1808 the frontier population was still very small - lamentably so from the point of view of defence or administration; but when, within a few years, the numbers increased, the Boers were anything but pleased. Cattle farming, as they understood it, needed plenty of space and the advent of new comers to the stock farming districts was the sign for another outward movement of trekking - the natural course for them to take in the face of difficulties as to land.) From almost the earliest times their ancestors had had unlimited land at their disposal and the frontier Boer of the early 19th century could not see why he, too, should not satisfy his needs in the same way. Dr. Phillip, writing in 1830, (1) commented "accustomed to large grants of land when land was abundant and colonists few, they still think that they cannot subsist unless a farm includes the same range of country which it did in the days of their ancestors. Their habits are pastoral, they seldom cultivate more land than is necessary for their own use, and their wealth is in their cattle. Having extensive herds they not only require much pasture but are not satisfied if they have not different places to resort to at different seasons of the year". An extravagant system, it is true, but one that had developed naturally in the early days and, at first, without hinderance for the aboriginal Hottentots they encountered in the interior were soon overcome and pressed into their service. It was fostered, too, by the characteristic nomadic tendencies of these early pioneers.

All these things, then, long usage, the existing system of land tenure, climatic and economic perversities and the prevailing wander lust, helped to whet the pastoralists' desire for land and thus to scatter a thin white population over a tremendous area of land. But this slow expansion, begun early in the eighteenth century, could not go on unimpeded for ever. About the middle of that century the advance guard of Bantu coming south had come into contact with the farmers on the Eastern frontier and by 1778 the two races were living side by side in the Zuurveld a tract

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(1). MacMillan. p. 24.

of country between the Fish and Sunday's Rivers. Here for the first time the interests of the white community came into contact with the land needs of the Bantu races - and the two things proved utterly incompatible. The Cape Government seemed the only authority capable of dealing with the situation, but it was at such a distance from the frontier that, far from realizing the social and economic problems involved, it resorted to force to meet the difficulty. This above all things was liable to aggravate the trouble, for it turned a natural rivalry into definite jealousy and ill-feeling.

The Bantu with whom the colonists first came into contact were those along the east coast, known as the Xosa, <sup>(1)</sup> the foremost group of tribes in the great migration of Bantu people which was moving from the north towards southern Africa. These Xosa were a much higher type than the Hottentots or Bush-men, the only other native peoples with whom the Boers had met until now, and had a far closer social organization. <sup>(1)</sup> They were pastoralists, whose cattle played a more than usually important part in their lives, but they had also learnt something of agriculture and regularly tilled their lands and sowed their crops of mealies and Kaffir corn. On the other hand, they were not a settled people. Their methods of cultivation rapidly exhausted the soil and this, coupled with an ever-expanding clan system of organization, made it difficult <sup>for a whole tribe</sup> to remain permanently in one place. Each of the tribal entities of the Amaxosa was under a so-called Paramount chief but the tribe in its turn was divided up into a number of clans, each under its own chief. (The practice of polygamy resulted in a large number of male children in the royal line, each of whom formed his own clan on growing up, thus continually dividing up the tribes.) It is obvious, then, that if they were to prosper the natives had to have a very big country in which to develop. They needed land for pasturage, to meet the needs of their somewhat wasteful agricultural methods and to provide settlements for the new clans as they formed, - and of these, the need for grazing grounds was probably the most urgent. The Bantu peoples even to this day, put enormous value on their

cattle, which constitute the wealth of the tribe and the normal form of currency. Cattle were used, too, in native religious rituals, and although the beasts were never killed expressly to provide food, milk was a staple item of native diet. It was therefore of vital importance to the Xosa to have the use of good and plentiful pasturage, (just as it was to the Boers.) Moreover, just as the Boers had, at first, taken the lands they wanted, with little or no opposition, so the advance guard of the Bantu migration had been able to settle in the lands along the East coast without let or hinderance.

X The meeting of the Boer and Bantu in the Zuurveld marked<sup>e</sup> the beginning of the struggle on the Eastern frontier. Not only did their mutual need for land cause dissension but their customs with regard to the acquisition and holding of such lands were so entirely different, and each side was<sup>so</sup> incapable of appreciating the other's point of view that the original ill-feeling was increased a hundred fold. (I). (From the outset, then, it must be understood that the Bantu had no idea of permanent private property in land. All the territory occupied by a tribe belonged to that community as a whole and although it was divided up among the various families for purpose of cultivation, once the harvest was gathered, it became communal pasturage again.) The individual tribesman might, with the consent of the chief, have the use of certain lands but on his death these reverted to the tribe. All tribal lands were held to be vested in the chief of the tribe, but not in any personal capacity. He could not, for example, alienate any tribal lands without the full consent of his "amapakati" (council), nor could he at any time, even with this consent, alienate them permanently. He was, to quote E.H. Brookes and Professor MacMillan, merely "trustee" for the administration of tribal lands, (Allegiance in the case of the Bantu was tribal not territorial and because they knew nothing of individual land tenure, they could not understand the meaning of a definite boundary line - which in 1808 was the Fish River.

To European minds, on the other hand, the fixing of the colonial boundary at the Fish River conveyed the idea of annexation, with exclusive rights of control up to that point.

The two points of view were absolutely irreconcilable.

E.H. Brookes further points out that at the time when the frontiersmen first encountered the Xosa, apart from the inability of the individual native to own land, almost the only form of moveable property he possessed was live stock. This he acquired by inheritance, gift or "ukulobola" (marriage settlement). There were no other methods of exchange - barter was uncommon and sale absolutely unknown. It is not surprising, therefore, that they could not understand the European system of land tenure nor European claims to exclusive use of areas which the native considered unalienable tribal lands.

The older South African historians, including Theal and Cory, claim that the root of the Eastern frontier quarrel lay in the continual cattle thieving committed by the natives. Actually, however, these depredations caused more trouble on the Boer side than on the Xosa. From the point of view of Bantu ethics, it was no crime to steal cattle from an enemy kraal - nor from a European farm for that matter; and if the farmers made good their losses from the tribal herds it spurred the natives onto fresh efforts. It must be admitted that great temptation was put in the way of men who were, after all, mere savages. The Commissioners sent out to inquire into colonial affairs <sup>in 1825</sup> noted this in their report: (I) "On the other hand, the Boers occupying extensive tracts of pasture land, generally from 5000 to 10,000 acres in each farm, and their property consisting almost exclusively of cattle, committed to the charge of a few ill-paid Hottentot herdsmen, the strongest temptation was held out for the thefts of the Caffres." Thenative raider risked little on these expeditions. If he was overtaken he himself might be ruined, but usually the tribe was merely

reprimanded and threatened with commandos. When, later on, the tribe itself was made responsible for all thefts, on the Bantu principle of communal responsibility, as long as frontier authorities could enforce the system, the thieving abated to a considerable degree. Great stress has been laid on the resentment caused by the often unjust confiscation of native cattle made under this reprisal system but in spite of all this the question of land was always a far more important consideration. ( Step by step, in their efforts to maintain their position against native pressure, the colonists encroached on native lands -- for although the Xosa were not the aborigines of this part of the country they could claim prior occupation to the Europeans. Even according to European standards the land was theirs and violation of this particular tribal right could not end in anything but war.

The first phase in the struggle between the BOers and the Xosa was an attempt by each side to get possession of the district in which they had met, the Zuurveld. The raids made by the natives on colonial cattle were increasing in number and frequency and were on occasion attended by murder and farm burning. (I) As indicated above, the temptation before the tribes was very great, but the farmers were not likely to accept this as mitigating their really serious position. They had built up their homes in the face of all the hardships and privations implied by pioneering, and loss of their cattle meant ruin to these pastoralists. The inevitable conclusion was that they and the Xosa could not live side by side on the same land, and since, to them, it was a case of civilized white against savage, murdering black, the native had to go. It was more easily said than done, however, After the wars of <sup>1779</sup> 1788 to 1793 the Xosa had enjoyed a tacit victory by remaining <sup>h</sup> where they were and continuing their depredations. They repeated this success after another attempt to expell them from the Zuurveld in 1799. (II.)

During the first part of the second British occupation, moreover, the Xosa were penetrating still further west, several clans going considerably west of the Sunday's River and one chief actually established a kraal on the Gamtoos River. (1).

In the Zuurveld itself, Ndhambi, probably the most powerful chief among the Xosa (with the exception of the paramount, Hintza, who lived <sup>east</sup> west of the Kei River) and his people were gradually ousting the remaining Zuurveld farmers and adding to their own herds. By September 1807, the chief Cungwa, regardless of the orders of landdrost and fieldcornet, left the Bushman's River district and migrated beyond Algoa Bay where he set up several kraals along the Van Staaden's River. Another petty chief, Habana, nephew of the powerful Ndhambi, had settled on the Gamka River, still further west, by October 1808. The frontier farmers, <sup>e</sup> realizing the natives' increasing hold on the country and their own inability to defend themselves or to repulse the intruders, developed an attitude towards the natives which favoured strong measures, with no compromise.

This was the stage which the Eastern frontier quarrel had reached when the British took over the government of the Cape in 1806. As in nearly all other branches of administration, the British merely took over the frontier policy of the Batavian government, intending to make no changes until they knew if the Cape was to remain permanently under their control. The Batavian government, mindful of quarrelling between the farmers and the Xosa, retained the old policy instituted by the Dutch East India Company. Both these earlier governments had strictly forbidden any intercourse between the blacks and whites, and it was this policy the British authorities intended to continue. The Fish River had been proclaimed the boundary between colonial and native territories, in 1778 by Governor van Pleténberg <sup>(2)</sup> who had made some agreement to this effect with the border chiefs.

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~~1. Imp. Blue Book. Vol. IV. No. 2.~~

1. Cory. Vol. I. Ch. VI.

2. Imp. Blue Book. Vol. IV. No. 4. (p. 41.)

It was restated by Earl Macartney in 1789<sup>(1)</sup> and was still the official frontier line in 1806. Colonists were strictly forbidden to cross the River into native territory either to settle there or to trade with the natives,<sup>(2)</sup> nor could they hunt in the interior without a government permit. As for the natives they were not to enter Colonial service nor cross the boundary to trade, and any of them found on colonial soil could be treated as enemies and shot. There was to be no communication whatsoever between the frontiersmen and their Xosa neighbours. This, at least, was the theory of the policy of non-intercourse, but it was a dead letter before ever the British authorities decided to administer it.

In the first place, contact had already been made between the two races and would henceforth be exceedingly difficult counteract. to ~~prevent~~ A policy of non-intercourse seemed impossible in face of the juxtaposition of black and white in the Zuurveld, for short of entering into another war with them, the natives there could not be induced to return to their own side of the Fish River. Even this boundary was unsatisfactory on account of the thickly wooded nature of the surrounding country which enabled the Xosa to cross it frequently, unperceived, and to remain hidden in the thickets for considerable lengths of time. In addition the river is practically dry in summer and therefore offered no barrier to native encroachment west-ward. This point was important because the government could not afford to maintain a military defence of the frontier adequately, and relied on the Xosa observing the agreement about the boundary. It was this lack of military protection that caused the burghers to band themselves together in commandos, a system recognized by the Government at the Cape, which appointed a Field Commandant to each district and a field cornet to each subdivision of the district. In ordinary cases of theft and petty depredations these commandoes were given permission to proceed into the native country and try to recover the stolen cattle.<sup>(3)</sup> When the thieving became really bad, however, the farmers were forced to

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1. Imp. Blue Book. Vol. IV. No. 8.  
 2. Imp. Blue Book. Vol. IV. No. 8.  
 3. Imp. Blue Book. Vol. IV. No. 26.

make good their losses as best they could. This, unfortunately led to some abuse of the reprisal system and gave the tribes a very real grievance. The Boers did not limit themselves to recovering the cattle stolen but took native cattle to repay themselves for the time and trouble it cost them -- a perfectable<sup>ly</sup> justifiable motive but one which led to gr<sup>e</sup>at hostility among the natives.

With regard to the farmers, then, the British Government intended to keep them away from the natives who had caused so much trouble, and at the same time allowed them their commando system to make good the deficiencies of frontier defence. On the native side, apart from the fact that they were to have no intercourse with the frontier Boers, the authorities intended to follow a policy of conciliation. This was instituted by the Earl of Caledon, first Governor at the Cape under the British regime, partly Theal says, <sup>(1)</sup> because of his own liberal views and partly because instructions from the Secretary of State warned him to avoid disputes and, above all, hostilities. His maxim was to be that of the fiscal Van Ryneveld—"It is better to submit to a certain extent of injury than risk a great deal for a prospect of advantage by no means certain." To keep on constant good terms with the natives beyond the Eastern boundary was a matter of considerable difficulty since the various tribes settled between the Fish and the Kei Rivers had their own friendships and hostilities and if the Colony declared its friendship for one it must also, in some cases, tacitly imply its hostility towards others. It was consequently decided that the British Government should recognize one of the more important chiefs as paramount over all the rest, should treat with him alone and rely on him to compel the other Xosa tribes to observe<sup>r</sup> the terms of such treaties. The Governor's choice fell on Gaika, nominal chief of all the Xosa west of the Kei. It was an unfortunate one,

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1. Theal. Vol. I. p 248.

however, for this chief was very poor and not nearly as powerful as Ndhlambi, his relative and rival of the Barabe clan who was supported by the formidable Hintza.<sup>(1)</sup> From the outset, moreover, the clans of Amabala, Amantinde, and Amagwali refused to acknowledge Gaika as paramount, and even claimed the right to ally themselves to his rivals if they wished. Under these circumstances it is not surprising that the conciliation scheme failed to put a stop to the depredations which were so harassing the frontier farmers. In 1809, the Earl of Caledon, realizing he knew next to nothing of what was to be the most difficult of his administrative duties, despatched Major--- later, Colonel-Collins on a tour of the north--east--and eastern districts. He was to report on frontier conditions and make recommendations on which the Governor might base his future actions. To give Collins as much scope as possible in the execution of his duties, he was appointed special commissioner of Uitenhage and Graaff-Reinet and was empowered to issue any instructions he might consider necessary for the public welfare. (2)

This Colonel Collins left Graaff-Reinet on March 3rd. 1809 accompanied by Andries Stockenstrom and Dr. Cowdry of the 83rd. Regiment.<sup>(3)</sup> He had already completed a tour of the north east districts and now intended to interview the Xosa chiefs. His route lay across the Amatola mountains to the eastern bank of the Great Kei River where he found the country comparatively thickly inhabited. Here he spoke with Buku, chief of a large section of the Galeka tribes, and with Hintza, paramount chief of all the Xosa west of the Kei, who was, as Colonel Collins soon realized, far greater in importance than either Gaika or Ndhlambi.<sup>(4)</sup> He professed great friendliness towards the Colony, promising to send back fugitives and to prevent others from taking refuge in his country; but with regard to Gaika and Ndhlambi he said quite definitely that he would not maintain

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1. Cory. Vol. I. p. 170. ff.

2. Theal. Vol. I. I. p. 229

3. Imp. Blue Book. Vol. IV. No. 4 (supplement)

4. Vol. I. p. 180. - Cory.

amicable relations with them unless they kept their distance. If they crossed the Kei into his lands he would risk everything to drive them back, though, he added, he had not the same objections to Cungwa. Collins and his party then returned to the upper Keiskamma valley where they interviewed Gaika and found him suffering from extreme poverty. (It was at this stage of his report that Collins remarked that the country between the Kei and the colonial boundary was entirely uninhabited except in the valleys of the Kat and the Keiskamma Rivers.) Probably the most difficult part of his work, however, was to interview Ndhlabi in the Zuurveld. This chief was well aware that <sup>opinion</sup> frontier/was anxious that he and his people should be driven back across the Fish River. Secure in the Xosa victories of the 1790's he had settled permanently between the Bushman's and Sunday's Rivers, and he now gave Collins to understand that neither he nor his son Umbala had the slightest intention of leaving the Zuurveld.

As a result of his investigations Colonel Collins' report of August 1809 <sup>(1)</sup> stressed the urgent necessity of returning to the policy of strict non-intercourse which, latterly, had been allowed to lapse considerably. He even went to the length of issuing an order that farmers in the Uitenhage should dismiss their native servants, and should have no communications whatsoever with the Xosa. This policy, he maintained, was absolutely essential to the peace of the frontier, for contact between the two races invariably led to trouble. He further recommended that as a first step towards perfecting this policy the Zuurveld should be cleared of Ndhlabi and his allies, that this area should be settled with as dense a European population as possible and that more magistrates should be appointed on the frontier to prevent communication with the tribes. --The facility with which the Caffres have always entered the Colony may be principally attributed to the weakness of the population of the Eastern Frontier. The system of granting farms of such considerable

"extent ,necessary perhaps in some parts of the settlement, is exceedingly impolitic in this part of the district. When a line of nearly one hundred miles does not present a resistance of more than one third that number of inhabitants, it is not to be wondered that little respect should be paid to it . It is only surprising that the settlers should have been enabled so long to remain on any part of it, in the vicinity of a numerous people, continually endeavouring to encroach upon their possessions." Collins suggested meeting this difficulty by making small land grants, of about 120 acres, to any farmer willing to return to the Zuurveld . In the Bruintjies Hoogte district, however, where the inhabitants were very scattered, he recommended either dispossessing the farmers there of their lands and granting them others further south to increase the density of the population in the Zuurveld, or extending the colonial boundary at least as far as the Kat River. This would not only strengthen the frontier by closer settlement but Collins thought it would also form a shorter and more easily defended frontier line. As to what the natives might think of such a move he said - "The loss of this part of their territory would occasion no inconvenience to the Caffres for they have not a single hut on its whole extent---but they would at all events be easily induced to transfer their rights to it for an adequate payment in cattle."<sup>(1)</sup> From this it is obvious that Collins did not understand the nature of land tenure or he would have realized the unwisdom of trying to buy land from the natives in the European manner.

There was nothing new in Colonel Collins recommendations. The non-intercourse policy had been in favour since early company days and the weakness of European frontier resistance had been proclaimed loudly enough by the farmers themselves. Nor could he suggest any new ways of meeting these difficulties other than those advised by everyone who was acquainted with frontier conditions. The difficulty was that

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1. Imp. Blue Book. Vol. IV. No.4. (p.70)

that the Cape Town authorities, to say nothing of the Colonial Office, were most unwilling to undertake the difficulties and expense of a war against Ndhlabi, and even if they decided to clear the Zuurveld, closer settlement among the pastoralists was practically impossible. The only solution to the problem would have been to keep a strong military force in the Eastern districts and to keep the natives out of the Colony by sheer force. This would have entailed great expense besides causing permanently hostile relations with the Xosa.-- an equally undesirable prospect. There is one passage of Colonel Collins' report, however, which is interesting in that it seems to foreshadow the establishment of a tract of empty land as barrier between the Boers and the natives, as was done by Lord Charles Somerset in 1819. He said:- "In concluding a treaty with the Caffre people it would be very advisable to stipulate that their kraals should be withdrawn to their ancient territory, which is beyond the Kyskamma, and to require that, although the country situated between this stream and the Colonial boundary should be considered and respected as their territory, yet that they should not enter it except for the purpose of hunting."

Nevertheless, this, like the rest of Collins' recommendations was not put into force, nor did the idea of what may be termed a "barrier" area, reappear until Somerset's day; but it was a small indication of the Cape Government's attitude for many years to come. To the authorities, though mindful of the Secretary of State's instructions to avoid hostilities with the natives, their primary duty at the Cape seemed to be to ensure the peace and safety of the Colony. To do this it was essential to take some steps to protect the frontier farmers from complete ruin at the hands of the natives. As yet the land needs of the natives were not realized in the Colony and the frontiersmen were undoubtedly suffering badly. The Government and most of the colonists saw the situation simply as a case of excessive cattle thieving on one side and an unfortunate though inevitable system of reprisals on the other. In its efforts to deal with this problem the government embarked on a course which greatly

intensified the rivalry between the Bantu tribes and their Boer neighbours. The Cape Government was the only body that could have acted as arbitrator in the dispute, but there were serious obstacles in the way of its making any satisfactory settlement. First and foremost it lacked that military strength so essential to awe the barbarians into respecting any agreements they made. Moreover, should the frontiersmen, who (as has been pointed out already) were an independent, self-reliant people, disagree with the government's frontier policy, they would not easily be persuaded to accept it; and communications between Cape Town and the Eastern districts were so bad that the Government had little real control over its own subjects on the frontier. Finally, ever pressing to the Home Government there was the question of expense. Everything possible must be done to curtail expense in the Colony -- and native wars and strong frontier defences were not conducive to more economical administration. Whatever may be said of Government action later in the 19th century, it must be admitted that in 1808 its path with regard to the Eastern frontier was anything but clear. Only one thing seemed obvious and that was that contact between the Boer farmers and the Xosa tribes had been the origin of all the frontier trouble.

CRADOCK.

Zwager's Hoek.  
Somerset East.  
SOMERSET.

Wintbergen.  
KAT RIVER SETTLEMENT.  
Eland's Post.  
Esterhuys Poort.

Ft. Beaufort.

Knapps Hope.  
Ft. Willshire.

King William's Town.

Grahamstown.  
ALBANY

ZURVELD.

Ft. Peddie.

Fredericksburg.

UITENHAGE

Uitenhage

Bethelsdorp

Port Elizabeth.

Sunday R.

Kariega R.  
Bushman's R.

Kowie R.

Great Fish R.

Chalumna R.

Keiskamma R.

Buffalo R.

Black Kei R.

Amatolas.

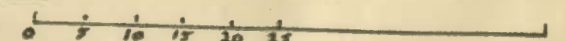
HINTZA'S

TEMBU.

QUEEN ADELAIDE PROVINCE  
S A.

### THE EASTERN FRONTIER. 1808 - 1836.

- Eastern boundary of Cape Colony in 1806.
- - - Eastern boundary as established in 1829
- - - Boundaries of Neutral Territory [1819]
- Area occupied by 1820 Settlers.



[Copied from E.A. Walker's Historical Atlas of South Africa. No. 11.]

SECTION II.Chapter II.The Clearing of the Zuurveld.

The Xosa in the Zuurveld. Government action hindered by "conciliation" policy. Cradock's arrival and the Fourth Kaffir war. Settlements after the war. Significance of these disturbances.

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By 1810, the British authorities realized that unless they expelled the Xosa from the Zuurveld the district would have to be given up to the natives altogether - and a real injustice done to those Boers whose farms were in this area. Both Governor van Plettenberg of the Dutch East India Company and Earl Macartney, in the days of the first British occupation, had entered into agreements with the Border chiefs by which the Fish River was to be recognized as the colonial boundary. In spite of this however, many native clans had crossed the river and settled in the Colony. Chief among these, of course, was Ndhlabi, who, in December 1809, built a kraal near Commadagga, at the junction of the two Fish Rivers, while Cungwa, head of the Gunukwebe tribe had penetrated west of the Gamtoos and set up his kraal in Langekloof. Theal maintains the presence of various other groups of Xosa: <sup>(1)</sup> Imadange clans under the captains Noba, Habana, Kasal and Gola; two sections of the Amambala tribe whose chief resided with Gaika in the Kat River valley; the Amantinde under Tshatshu and the minor Amagwali tribe. Ever since about 1775 they had been gradually drifting across the Fish River. Efforts of the Colonial Government to expell them in the last quarter of the 18th. century had been unsuccessful and frontier commandoes which were, unfortunately liable to make whole kraals suffer for the losses inflicted by individual raiders, only caused strong resentment among the natives. Thus a generation of young natives was growing up with the idea that these were their ancestral lands. This outlook, Cory thinks, was fostered by the "conciliation" policy instituted by the British Government which

limited

reprisals and forbade active hostility towards the invaders. Had it not been for the continual cattle thieving together with certain serious cases of murder and house -burning, the two races might have been left together in the Zuurveld-though with what results one can scarcely conjecture. Under the existing conditions, however, the frontiersmen of the early 19th. century could hardly be expected to display any forbearance towards what they considered unprincipled savages. To refrain from punishing them when the occasion offered would have been suicide, not philanthropy, in their eyes. From their point of view it was clear that the natives must be driven from the Zuurveld.

It was difficult for the Government to take effective measures at this stage for people as uncivilized as the Xosa still were would not respect any authority which could not express itself in actual force - and the colonial authorities were forbidden to use force unless it became absolutely essential for the safety of the Colony. Nevertheless, when Cuyler and Steckenstrom (landdrosts of Uitenhage and Graaff-Reinet respectively) appealed to the Governor, Lord Caledon, for military assistance, he decided some action must be taken to protect these unfortunate British subjects. Since Ndhlabi had refused to listen to any suggestions that he should leave the Zuurveld, troops were now sent up to the Eastern frontier to confront him. (L) At first the natives were intimidated by the display of authority and Ndhlabi abandoning his new location at Commadagga returned to the Bushman's River kraal. But moral influence alone was certainly not enough to impress the natives for any length of time. When they found that the British force did not intend to proceed actively, they took it to mean that the authorities could not act - that they had not the strength of arms. Consequently raiding went on unchecked. Similarly/ineffectual measures were taken against Gungwa who had settled in Langekloof. Caledon feared that if he was allowed to remain there, all the coast lands as far west as

Plettenberg Bay would have to be abandoned by the whites. In October 1809, therefore, he had given Cungwa the choice of occupying a permanent location nearer Cape Town, separated from the rest of the tribe, or returning to his own country beyond the Fish River. The chief accepted the latter alternative and promised to remove himself at once but, contemptuous of colonial authority, he actually went into the mountain country east of the Sundays River, which formed an excellent base for extensive raiding operations in the future. (1)

By April 1810, almost every farm east of the town of Uitenhage had been abandoned and that part of the district was overrun by natives. The Boers leaving Uitenhage moved north into the Graaff-Reinet district with the result that the latter was now on the immediate frontier. Stockenstrom saw in this exodus only a complication of the problem and did everything he could to induce the Uitenhage farmers to return. He promised compensation and protection and even threatened to cancel the leases of loan places which had been deserted. (2) These measures were fairly successful in the parts further from Kaffirland (as the territory East of the Fish River was generally known) but in the more exposed Bruintjies Hoogte district the farmers refused to return on any consideration. The Zwagger's Hoek district was in a similar condition while the field cornetcy of Buffel's Hoek was entirely deserted. Lord Caledon himself realized the uselessness of the so-called "conciliation" policy as a means of keeping peace on the frontier but was not free to act as he wished. In the first place he knew with what disfavour the Colonial Office would regard war against the Xosa. Moreover, he was expecting to be relieved before long and did not wish to commit his successor to a hostile policy of which he might not approve. He therefore took no action and did not direct Landdrost Cuyler to take any, but he made it quite clear for his successor's benefit that some definite action must be taken to drive the Xosa out of

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1. Theal. Vol. I. Ch. XII. P. 250.

2. Cory. Vol. I. Ch. VII.

the Zuurveld unless the Governor was prepared to give it up to the natives entirely. Such an action would not only ruin all the farmers in that district but might <sup>r</sup>very possibly jeopardize the safety of the whole ~~country~~ Colony.

The arrival of Sir John Craddock on 6th. September 1811 marked the end of the "conciliation" policy for some time to come. Craddock at once decided to clear the Zuurveld of its Xosa intruders and on the 8th. October 1811 instructed the landdrosts of Swellendam, George, Graaff-Reinet and Uitenhage to call the burghers out on commando. Lieutenant John Graham, of the Cape Regiment was appointed commandant-general of the force on the frontier and special commissioner for the Eastern <sup>r</sup>districts. He was instructed to try persuasion first but if this was unsuccessful he was to use every means possible to drive the Xosa back across the Fish River. <sup>(1)</sup> The preliminary parley between Major Cuyler and Cungwa, however, was followed almost immediately by an attack made by that chief on the colonial forces and operations commenced in December 1811. This, the Fourth Kaffir war lasted until March 1812, and during the course of it Cungwa was killed and Ndhlabi forced to retreat. There followed a general exodus of all the Zuurveld Xosa across the Fish River into kaffirland. By January the 31st, 1812, the whole of the coast country between the Sunday's and Fish Rivers was cleared of natives. By March, Habana and various other petty chiefs who considered themselves independent of Ndhlabi, had been driven out of the Rietburg and Zuurburg districts. In fact so successful was the movement that for the first time since the Europeans and natives had been in contact, the Eastern Province was completely cleared of Xosa. According to Theal <sup>(1)</sup> over ten thousand of them had been driven across the Fish River during the war, but now the difficulty was to make sure that they remained on their own side. Some system of defence had to be evolved which would prevent their return, and to this end a double line of military posts, ~~the~~ garrisoned partly by soldiers and partly by burghers of Graaff-Reinet and Uitenhage, was set up on the further bank of

the Fish River. Cradock further insisted on a general system of patrols, small parties of about ten men being stationed at various points best suited for protecting the frontier line. Neither of these precautions, however, had the desired effect, for in April 1812 it was found that the Xosa were gradually drifting back into the Colony unobserved by the patrols. It was in view of this that Colonel Graham decided the whole of the Cape Regiment should, in future, remain permanently stationed in the Zuurveld. <sup>(2)</sup>

Cradock's chief hope of keeping the Xosa out of the Colony lay in another direction. He realized that a sparsely populated frontier line could only be a source of temptation to the natives to trespass on the good lands beyond it. The return of the frontiersmen to their deserted farms and a closer settlement wherever possible was the beginning of his scheme for securing safety in the Eastern Province. In a letter to Colonel Graham he said:—"the view of all the Dutch systems from the beginning was to extend and scatter the habitations; I ~~consider~~ <sup>conceive</sup> it will be the credit and strength of all the English proceedings to take the opposite course, and concentrate the population to form villages whose mutual aid can be given...." His desire for closer settlement found expression in the new system of land tenure promulgated on August 6th. 1813 which established the tenure of perpetual quit-rent. As a matter of fact, since March of the previous year Colonel Graham and the landdrosts of Graaff-Reinet and Uitenhage had been fairly successful in persuading the frontiersmen to return to their farms, so that the decision contained in this new law, to cancel all loan places forthwith, was not well received. According to the new system, grants of land (which in future were not to be on loan) would be smaller and as near as possible to the proposed military posts, principles which were impossible to apply as was intended since the farmers had resumed possession of their huge pastoral farms. Eventually

special conditions were made to meet the needs of those who had returned, but otherwise the new land tenure was applied in the Zuurveld as it was elsewhere in the Colony. In spite of this concession the change was unpopular among the frontier farmers who loved their isolation and whose chief desire was always for more land. To them closer settlement meant overcrowding, and they began to look for new country into which they might trek. Across the boundary excellent grazing grounds tempted them but these were tribal lands belonging to the Xosa.

This new land tenure, the military arrangements on the frontier and a restatement of a policy of strict non-intercourse were the chief items in the settlement made after the Fourth Kaffir war. In the comparative peace that followed, the Eastern Province saw considerable development. An attempt was made to settle the district east of the Sunday's River, which had so recently been vacated by Ndhlabi and Cungwa, lands being offered to the first fifty applicants free of all rent for ten years.<sup>(1)</sup> In July 1812 Grahamstown was given a deputy-landdrost, subordinate to the Uitenhage landdrost. In January 1814, however, the Zuurveld was raised to the status of the district of Albany and the deputy landdrost of Uitenhage became landdrost of Grahamstown.<sup>(2)</sup> At about this time, too, the town of Uitenhage grew considerably.

The general appearance of prosperity and progress was somewhat deceptive, however, for the chief problem - that of relations with the natives - had still to be solved. The Xosa had quite recovered from their fright of 1812 and were more than ready to cross the Fish River again. In spite of outposts and patrols, the nature and extent of the country and the easy crossing afforded by the Fish River made it practically impossible to keep them out. On the other hand, it must not be thought that this renewed encroachment on the part of the natives was due to sheer malice, nor prompted solely by the hopes of cattle-stealing.

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1. Cory. Vol. I. P. 265.

2. Cory. Vol. I. P. 265

When the Xosa had been driven out of the Zuurveld, they had fallen back on other tribes who were living between the Fish and the Keiskamma Rivers. Ndhlabi in particular, once more came into conflict with Gaika in the Kat River valley. (1)

Then, too, since the chief subsistence of these people was derived from their herds, the use of extensive pasture lands was essential to them. The retreat of the fugitives had naturally led to mutual inconvenience and had increased the ill-feeling that already existed amongst the tribes. It may well have seemed to some of these clans that the colony with its often ineffectual patrols and commandoes was a lesser evil than their ruthless kinsmen - hence their return to colonial territory. By November 1813 the state of affairs was, once more, so bad that Cradock himself visited the frontier to investigate the endless complaints of depredations. He found these complaints so justified that he sent out the whole of the Uitenhage and Graaff-Reinet burgher force to get what restitution they could from the natives; but the commando accomplished nothing. Cory speaks of this effort as "Perhaps the feeblest demonstration in the whole history of Kaffir warfare" (2) and as such was heartily to be regretted, for it was this kind of thing that led the natives to believe that inaction on the part of the government meant weakness.

In his memorandum of this tour, Cradock stresses the fact that the increasing Xosa raids were not the result (as so many people thought) of the colonists ill-treating and oppressing the natives but the result of lack of protection on the frontier against the inroads of uncivilized tribesmen. But Cradock missed the significance of the position. Ndhlabi, to take only the most important of the Xosa chiefs in the Zuurveld, had been driven back with about twenty thousand of his people onto Gaikawho was neither able nor willing to make room for them. It was a question of land, the most vital aspect

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1. Imp. Blue Book. Vol. IV. No. 26.

2. Cory. Vol. I. P. 278.

of the whole Eastern frontier problem, but it was not realized by the Colonial authorities. In 1811, Ndhlambi said of the Sunday's River settlement <sup>(1)</sup> "this land is mine, I won it in war and intend to keep it". War was threatening, as he well knew, yet he claimed land, not cattle, as his primary interest. The colonists, faced with ruin through the loss of their cattle, and unable to defend themselves, could only see their side of the question. As for the Cape Government, even had it comprehended the true state of affairs, it would have been hard put to it to secure justice for both sides.

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### CHAPTER III.

#### The Establishment of a Neutral Territory.

Unrest among the Xosa tribes. Somerset's Reprisal system of 1817. Failure of Reprisal system. Inter-tribal warfare.

The Neutral Territory established. Question of cession. The native point of view. Impracticability of Neutral Territory.

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The next definite <sup>t</sup> step towards the expansion of colonial territory was the establishment of Lord Charles Somerset's "Neutral Territory" between the colony and the native settlements. This was done in 1819 to meet the new situation which had developed after the Xosa had been driven out of the Zuurveld. Lord Charles Somerset arrived at the Cape to relieve Sir John Cradock on the 6th. April 1814 and, in spite of the latter's efforts to straighten out the frontier problem, Somerset found the frontier Boers still complaining of Xosa incursions into the Colony, and cattle-stealing on as large a scale as ever. The natives themselves had been very restless since the expulsions of 1812 and regarded the colonists in anything but a friendly light. This active hostility together with the fact that the clans were once more cautiously encroaching across the Fish River

— made the settlement of Albany as planned by Cradock impossible. The one hundred and forty five families who had accepted the special-term farms offered under his system found they could carry on neither agricultural nor cattle farming successfully, so destructive were the Xosa raids. To show how bad things were at this time Theal quotes the government returns for 1817 <sup>(1)</sup> which state that ~~ninety~~ <sup>ninety</sup> families had to abandon the district and that within six months 3,600 head of cattle were stolen. In spite of this unfortunate beginning, however, Somerset continued Cradock's efforts to ensure a dense white population in the frontier districts. He sent instructions to the landdrost, deputy landdrost and heemraaden of Uitenhage to use every endeavour to induce the former occupants of the Zuurveld to return and offered grants of land to other farmers on a tenure of personal residence and a very low quit-rent, after free occupation for ten <sup>e</sup> years.

— In April of the same year (1817) Somerset visited the Eastern frontier with the intention of <sup>interviewing</sup> ~~visiting~~ the Xosa chiefs and making some new arrangement. At his camp on the Kat River there came to him the rivals Ndhambi and Gaika—the latter very reluctantly and attended by a guard of 300 armed men. The lesser chiefs Botumane, Nqeno, Maqomo and Jalousa were also present. (2) To these men Somerset explained the new policy which he intended to put into force. He proposed, he said, to institute a new reprisal system based on their own native <sup>e</sup> customs. Actually, this was the policy of collective responsibility which was to arouse such bitter controversy between the partisans of the natives and those of the Colony. It implied that stolen cattle should be traced to the kraal to which their spoor led by the owner and a small body of troops. If the cattle were there they could be retaken without further ado; but if they had already been driven off, the kraal should be made responsible for tracing the spoor further. If the natives concerned either would not or could not do this the number of

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1. Theal. Vol. I. page

2. Cory. Vol. I. page 301.

animals stolen should be made good from the cattle of that particular kraal while the captain of the kraal would be left to obtain redress from the thieves through their own chiefs. The basis of this system was, undoubtedly, Bantu custom and Somerset hoped its very stringency would act as a deterrent to further thieving. Unfortunately he overlooked the fact that most of these raids were the acts of individuals, of which the chiefs were probably aware, but which seldom had the co-operation of a whole kraal. Moreover, the system was very open to abuse. The innocent were liable to suffer for other people's thefts and cases were known of farmers making good their former losses or compensating themselves for the time and trouble these reprisals cost them, from the first native cattle they encountered. One can sympathize with their point of view, but it did not make the position on the frontier any easier.

The other part of Somerset's proposal was to re-establish the old policy of treating Gaika as paramount chief and making him responsible for the general pacificism of the others. Gaika himself protested that he had neither the authority nor the power to control the other Xosa chiefs and that many, even of those present, were independent of him and did not admit his authority. In spite of this, however, Somerset pressed his point and since he refused to treat with any of the other chiefs except through Gaika, the latter accepted the arrangement, too overawed by his surroundings to resist any longer. As for Ndhlambi, he did not openly oppose these measures for in view of his very poor circumstances at this time he may have thought it wiser to agree; but the Government's partiality for Gaika merely added to his dislike for his rival and caused greater tension in native relationships.

The last part of this verbal agreement arranged that, twice a year, Xosa fairs should be held at Grahamstown for trading purposes - a significant point at this juncture, for together with Somerset's reprisal system these were the first steps towards breaking down Cradock's policy of non-intercourse.

Somerset himself intended to strengthen this policy as far as he could. He prohibited all intercourse between the Europeans and the natives except through the official sources, that is, through Gaika, at the Grahamstown fairs, or in the course of one of the official reprisals. Any native found in the Colony without a permit after this date would be treated as an enemy. To enforce these arrangements a closer settlement of Albany was again projected and Somerset rearranged and increased the number of the military posts established by Cradock, in order to check the entrance of the natives into the Colony. Moreover, trespassing by the colonists upon tribal lands was equally strictly forbidden. The new reprisal system was intended to provide the cattle farmers with some effective remedy for their cattle losses which would, at the same time, fit in with Bantu ideas of justice. With regard to the clause about fairs, this was an attempt to put an end to the continual illegal trafficking that took place, but in doing so Somerset made it impossible for the non-intercourse policy to stand. If it had been possible to keep the two races strictly apart, to impose a really insuperable barrier to their trespassing on each others land, non-intercourse might have proved a solution to the problems of relations between the whites and blacks; but with these rivals in such proximity, it was impossible to keep them apart. Both the Xosa and the frontier pastoralists were growing communities whose needs cried out for more room in which to grow and in each case expansion could only be at the expense of their neighbours. Under a set of conditions which opposed civilized Europeans to a backward race such as the Xosa, there could be little doubt as to who would be the ultimate victor.

Somerset's reprisal system was not a success. In the first place the chiefs did not feel themselves bound by an agreement made between Gaika and the Colonial authorities. Cattle thieving continued and within a month of the conference, almost before the new military posts were completed, a daring theft of cattle belonging to Hottentots within the Colony was effected. Habana, the Imadange captain was found to be

implicated, but he refused to accept the principle of communal responsibility and the cattle had to be retaken by force at the expense of five natives' lives and many wounded. <sup>(1)</sup> The incident was unfortunate, happening as it did, so soon after the 1817 settlement, and it caused marked resentment among the other tribes. The Governor's expectations were still further checked by the reduction of the Cape Garrison in June and July of that year. The Imperial Government, feeling the urgent necessity of economising wherever possible, sent the dragoon regiment on to India, leaving the Colony without its most useful troops. In JULY nearly all the artillery was removed and at the same time the old Hottentot regiment was disbanded. At Home this move seemed perfectly just, since Imperial policy with regard to the natives was definitely anti-war and in any case it was thought (somewhat unfairly) that the burghers might do more to defend their own lands. This weakening of the frontier defence ~~weakened~~ <sup>wrecked</sup> all Somerset's hopes of an amicable settlement, which could only have been maintained under a system of defence so strong that it would have prevented the natives entering the Colony at all.

Meantime, a yet more serious aspect of the situation was developing. This, too, due in some measure to the Conference of 1817. As a result of the Colony's apparent partiality for Gaika, several other of the more important chiefs had drawn together, hostile to both the Europeans and their Xosa favourite. Dushane, Ndhlabi's powerful son who had been allied to Gaika, now left the latter and effected a reconciliation with his father. Ndhlabi, moreover, was a friend of that influential <sup>1</sup> ex-witch-doctor Makana (whom the natives called Nxele and the government reports spoke of as Lynx). <sup>(2)</sup> At this time Gaika was living in the very fertile country of the Tyumie valley and, pressed as they were for the need of new pastures, Ndhlabi and Makana, between them, seem to have decided to take these lands from Gaika. The campaign began by the theft of the chief's cattle, a direct insult which

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1. Cory. Vol. I. p. 306-7.

2. Theal. Vol. I. p. 328-9

drew him, against the advice of his council, into active conflict with Ndhambi. A great battle was fought on the Amalinde plains during which the Gaikas were<sup>e</sup> beaten off with great slaughter. Gaika himself, with the remainder of his people, fled to the Great Winterberg mountains and sent an urgent appeal for help to his European allies at Grahamstown. Bound as it was by the 1817 agreement by which Gaika promised to help the Colony in time of need, the latter could not refuse to go to his assistance in such a crisis. Then, too, the Cape authorities considered the safety and perhaps the very existence of the frontier districts depended on their reinstating Gaika and thus impressing the Xosa chiefs with the fact that they intended to enforce the terms of the treaty.

In December, 1818, therefore, a burgher commando under Lieutenant-Colonel Brereton crossed the Fish River and joined Gaika's men in their advance against Ndhambi. Brereton had been instructed to proceed as cautiously as he could and, if possible, to settle the quarrel by conciliatory methods. When he found that Ndhambi had retired towards the Keiskamma<sup>e</sup> before his advance and that the ferocity displayed by Gaika's troops would certainly destroy any hopes of conciliation, he withdrew his men, taking with him large numbers of native cattle, 9,000<sup>(1)</sup> of which were handed over to Gaika on his re-instatement. On reaching Grahamstown, the burghers were disbanded and allowed to go home. This was an opportunity of which Ndhambi was not slow to take advantage. He attacked Gaika and compelled<sup>him</sup> to flee, this time to the mountains near the junction of the Baviaan's and Fish Rivers, and then let his hordes loose in the Colony to make good their enormous cattle losses. By January 1819 the district of Albany was almost as completely in possession of the natives as it had been before the expulsions of 1812,<sup>(2)</sup> even the London Missionary Society station at Theopolis and the Moravian station being attacked. The culmination of the hostilities was an attack made on the military head-quarters at

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1. Cory. Vol. I. Ch. 12.

2. Cory. Vol. I. Ch. 12.

Grahamstown in broad daylight (April 1819). The result of this was an entirely <sup>unexpected</sup> reverse for Ndhlambi, and in July 1819 the colonial forces moved into Kaffirland, determined this time to break Ndhlambi's power. They <sup>e</sup>were aided by the turn of events among the enemy. Three of Ndhlambi's warrior sons were killed and his most influential ally, Makana, was taken prisoner. About the same time, too, Hintza, the powerful Xosa paramount, was restored to at least nominal friendship with Gaika. Ndhlambi himself <sup>e</sup>escaped, but his career was practically at an end and his people and their allies were driven Eastward, with heavy losses, to the Kei.

An unparalleled opportunity now seemed to offer for dictating a settlement to the Xosa, and Somerset determined to make contact between black and white an impossibility once and for all. He realized by now that treaties had little binding force among savages to whom boundaries were only vague <sup>r</sup>terms. <sup>(1)</sup> Contact resulted inevitably in the cattle stealing which was reducing the frontier to destitution, for the Colony had not the means of forcing the two races to keep apart. The only possible solution to the problem seemed to be to remove the natives from the sphere of temptation altogether. On October 15th., therefore, he met Gaika and the chiefs of the other local tribes - Botumane, Kqeno, Habana, Congo and Kasa - in conference <sup>(1)</sup> and told them that henceforth the new western boundary of Kaffirland was to be the Keiskamma River, which they were not to cross. The eastern boundary of the Colony was still to be the Fish River and the country between these two rivers was to be a neutral area, where neither black nor white were to reside. Actually this land belonged by right of hereditary occupation to the Gunukwebe clans, but since these had been amongst the bitterest of the colony's enemies in the late war, Somerset considered himself justified in confiscating it. All Xosa tribes were to remove themselves to the east of the Keiskamma, though it was agreed that Gaika might keep the lands in the valley of the Tyumie. ~~Gaika himself knew he had not the authority to sign~~

Overawed by Somerset's superior force ( which had so recently convinced him of its strength) Gaika himself consented to the Governor's scheme, although he knew he had no authority to dispose of tribal lands, more particularly those belonging to other chiefs. Thus, with Gaika's nominal concurrence Somerset defined the boundaries of the Neutral Territory as lying between the Keiskamma, the lower Tyumie, the hills to the west of that river, the Ealandsberg, the Winterberg, the junction of the Baviaan's and Fish rivers and the old colonial boundary. (1)

In the historians' accounts and official reports of the transaction, one finds this-"Nomansland" alluded to somewhat indiscriminately as the "Neutral" territory or the "ceded" territory, but it was precisely this variation of definition that indicates how all the trouble about this area<sup>e</sup> arose. Somerset certainly intended it to be neutral, but he also considered that Gaika had, on behalf of the other Xosa chiefs who had been living in that area, definitely given it into colonial possession. In his report of the matter to Earl Bathurst, (2) he spoke of it as "an augmentation" and said that Gaika ceded it to him. From his point of view there could be no other aspect of the case, The land taken, he declared at the conference, was to be purely neutral, to be kept free of all inhabitants and to be occupied by neither black nor white. From a purely European standpoint, it was a perfectly legitimate attempt to settle a very difficult problem. After all, the Government could not in justice allow the frontier farmers to be persecuted any further without taking some steps to protect them. On the other hand, the Colonial office would not allow him to keep an expensive military force on the frontier, nor did it favour an attitude of hostility towards the natives. To make contact between the two races a physical and geographical impossibility, by the establishment of a buffer area between them, seemed the only chance of ending the continual bickering that took place. Finally, the lands that Somerset intended to use for this

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1.C.C.Records. XII. p.338.

2.C.C.Records. XII. p.337.

purpose were, he considered, forfeit in the due course of war from a vanquished enemy. In theory the scheme appeared not only justifiable but practicable as well; but Somerset had overlooked the effect of it on the natives, in practice.

The chief point on the native side of the case was the fact that, according to Bantu law and custom, Gaika had no authority whatsoever to alienate tribal lands and that, in any case, his consent to the "cession" was not freely given. Apart from the fact that many of the Xosa chiefs living between the Fish and the Keiskamma would <sup>not</sup> acknowledge the paramountcy thrust on Gaika by the Colony in 1817 and were therefore not bound by his agreement, Gaika's position as chief was, as Macmillan and Brookes so often emphasise, one of trustee in relation *r elation* to the tribal land. It was vested in the community as a whole and only by consent of the whole tribe and of the "amapakati" could such land be permanently alienated. In 1819 it is quite certain that neither the Gunukwebe clans nor those under Ndhlambi would have agreed to a measure which, far from gaining them the new pastures they sought, took away those which they had come to regard as their rightful heritage. It is more than probable that Gaika never considered he had ceded the territory. He undoubtedly understood and accepted (though reluctantly and protested <sup>ing</sup> his inability to do so) Somerset's proposals with regard to the neutrality of this area; but what the Governor did not realize was that the Bantu mind would not even be able to comprehend such an alienation as Gaika was supposed to have made. As for that chief's protestations with regard to his incapacity, Somerset seems to have ignored them as another instance of the wiliness of the savage. In any case it seems fairly certain that the government authorities, at least, considered the result of that interview was the <sup>v</sup> <sub>^</sub> cession of the territory to be held as neutral ground.

Somerset and his successors, General Bourke and Sir Lowry Cole, constantly referred to it in their <sup>s</sup> <sub>^</sub> despatches as

"Ceded Territory". General Bourke, it is true, seems to have had some doubts as to the correct designation and nature of <sup>is</sup> the area. In a despatch of February 3rd. 1827 <sup>(1)</sup> he said- "I quite agree as to the observation in your letter that the territory on the left bank of the Great Fish River ought not to be called neutral, if in point of fact it has been, and is to be considered as ceded, but the former is the appellation by which it is universally recognized in the Colony, but to which Lord Charles Somerset's <sup>S</sup> despatch of the 15th. October 1819 gives no title, as the word ceded is used throughout.

I know not who first introduced the term neutral, which has certainly led to some misconception" -- a misconception indeed, which was, in its turn, to be misunderstood by the natives who could <sup>only</sup> ~~not~~ understand that they had been deprived of their land apparently under false pretences. Clergymen and missionaries, on the other hand, who lived closer to the natives and understood their customs better, saw the other side of the picture. The Revd. J. J. Freeman, (Inspector of the L.M.S) for instance, said later: <sup>(2)</sup> - "I think you will not find a single kaffir who would say that Gaika ever did cede that territory to us." The Reverend Adamson considered this episode the origin of the Xosa's dread of being dispossessed of their land by the Europeans which was to keep them in a constantly hostile attitude towards the Colony. <sup>(3)</sup>

If it had only been possible to keep this territory <sup>in</sup> neutral and unhabited, as Somerset had promised, all might even now have been well and his 1819 settlement justified by its good results; but it was not and could not be kept clear, with the unfortunate result that the natives lost their lands to no effectual end. The whole root of the matter lay in the fact that the very similarity of Boer and Bantu needs drew them together again. Years later a missionary said of this scheme <sup>(4)</sup> "Perhaps if you could really secure an absolutely

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1. C.C. records. XXX. p. 339  
 2. Report on Kaffir tribes (1851) - Qst. 146.  
 3 do. do. " 1075.  
 4 do. do. " 117.

Reference ?  
 "neutral, unoccupied ground, it might have that result (i.e. of keeping the peace); but where there was a beautiful piece of pasturage and beautiful springs and streams, I think it would be impossible upon the one side and the other. You could not keep the kaffirs who were in sight of it from trespassing, and you could hardly keep some of our own colonists either from doing so...." And that was what actually happened. Both Europeans and Xosa, prompted by various needs and motives, gradually encroached on the neutral territory until the old problems of the Fish River line were merely repeated along the Keiskamma. Somerset thus gained nothing for the Colony beyond a fierce resentment on the part of the natives that their land had been taken from them and given to the colonists.

Curiously enough, it was Somerset himself who was the first to violate the neutrality of this area but once again his hand was forced by the circumstances of the case. He had stipulated that the Neutral Territory was to be kept empty of both black and white, but he knew better than to suppose that the tribes would observe the neutrality unless there was some actual and powerful deterrent to prevent them from crossing the Keiskamma. Somerset determined to supply this preventive in the shape of two military posts to be established, one on the Gaga River and one on the Gwanga River and a permanent military station at Fort Wilshire. Not only were the two former posts to be in the Neutral Territory but in October 1819 the Hottentot Cape Corps was enlarged so that it might act as a permanent patrol in that area. <sup>(1)</sup> The new government policy was asserted to be one of enforced non-intercourse, with the Neutral Territory as the strongest check on any form of communication. Nevertheless, Somerset's military posts were the first step onto the forbidden ground and his arrangements to have Kaffir fairs twice a year at Fort Wilshire merely acknowledged the growing interdependence of black and white in the economic sphere. These arrangements were disastrous

to the fulfillment of the 1819 plan, but they can at least be explained on the grounds of the necessity of keeping a check on trespassing on the Neutral Territory, while the establishment of fairs at Fort Willshire merely legalized an otherwise inevitable illegal traffic. But how can Somerset's promise to Gaika in relation to this area be reconciled with a passage in a letter of 15th. October 1819 to Earl Bathurst which recommends the Neutral Territory to his Lordship's attention as being suitable for "systematic colonization"?<sup>(1)</sup> Since Somerset really believed the land to have been really ceded he, was, from his own point of view, quite entitled to populate it, but it was quite inconsistent with his policy of a buffer area. If the Neutral Territory was to be granted out as farm land to the colonists it defeated the whole point of taking these lands from the Xosa tribes. In fact it would simply move the frontier problem eastward to the Keiskamma and intensify it, for, as in 1812, the natives driven out of the Neutral Territory caused restlessness and overcrowding among the tribes east of that river. Could the neutral territory have been maintained the expatriations of 1819 might have done some good. As it was, the scheme was doomed to failure from the outset and gave the Xosa a grievance of a far more fundamental nature than anything which could have arisen from commandos and reprisals.

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#### CHAPTER IV.

##### The 1820 Settlers.

Arrival and location of British Settlers. Failure of settlement as an agricultural proposition. Development of the Eastern Frontier. Donkin's definition of Albany as including the Neutral Territory.

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Lord Charles Somerset's plans for the security of the Eastern Frontier did not stop with the establishment of a Neutral Territory nor with the stationing of troops within

that area . Like Colonel Collins and Sir John Cradock before him, he enthusiastically advocated dense population of the frontier districts in order to intimidate the border tribes by the colonists' mere strength of numbers. It occurred to him, therefore, to divert towards South Africa the stream of emigrants which was at this time flowing steadily towards the North American countries, and to locate as many of these people as he could in the Zuurveld. Unlike the grants of cattle farms made both <sup>by</sup> himself and Cradock, he intended this settlement to be a much closer affair, and agricultural instead of pastoral, to ensure a comparatively thick population. In 1817 and 1818, parties of emigrants had come out to the Cape under purely private enterprise and had been settled with considerable success. Somerset now inspired Earl Bathurst, the secretary of State for the Colonies, with some of his enthusiasm, with the result that the House of Commons was persuaded to vote a sum of £50,000 in aid of emigration to the Cape, and a scheme of settlement was drawn up. (1)

According to this, parties of emigrants were to band themselves together under "leaders" who, on arrival, would be granted land at the rate of one hundred acres per family. The lands were to be granted on a perpetual quit-rent tenure, but rent for the first ten years was to be remitted and after a conditional occupation for three years the settlers were to receive a free title to them, the Government even undertaking the survey expenses. If the land was not cultivated within a certain time or was abandoned, it was to revert to the Government. This great period of emigration from the British Isles to the Cape took place between March 1820 and May 1821 during which time about five thousand settlers arrived in this country. The great majority were settled in the Eastern frontier districts, though a Scotch party was located in the valley of the Baviaan's River, in the sub-district of Cradock, and the Irish group and some other parties were sent to the

Western district of Clanwilliam. This last settlement, however, was a failure and most of its members were eventually given lands with the other 1820 settlers in the Zuurveld. In accordance with Somerset's views with regard to frontier defence the settlements first made under this scheme formed a rough line from the mouth of the Fish River to Grahamstown. ("The first line of the frontier defence", Cory calls it.) Then, behind that, the land between the Kleinmonde and Kowie Rivers was filled up and finally the lands along the Kariega and Bushman's Rivers, still further west were granted. (1)

The theory of this 1820 settlement was sound enough but like so many others evolved by the Colonial Government, in practice the scheme did not work out as was expected. From the point of view of a "dense agricultural population" the settlement was a decided failure. The greatest mistake made by the instigators of this scheme was the fact that, for the sake of getting a closer population on the frontier, they had tried to establish an agricultural community on lands that were best suited for pastoralism. When they found, as they soon did, that the vagaries of the Eastern Province climate were fatal to agricultural, they would willingly have turned to stock farming had their farms being anything like big enough. In his efforts of 1817 to encourage the Boers to return to their abandoned farms, Somerset had offered the same terms as he now offered to the settlers -- ten years remission of rent and, at the end of three years, a title free of charge or expense of survey, but with this difference - the colonists were offered farms of 2,000 morgen while the immigrants were allowed 100 acres per family. As Messrs Bigge and Colebrooke pointed out when they reported on the progress of the settlement in 1825, (2) Somerset proposed to establish from twenty five to fifty effective settlers, with their families, on the space usually allotted to one colonist. The Governor, they said, relied on the industry of

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1. Walker. Hist. Atlas. No. 12.

2. C.C. records. XXI. p. 292.

the settlers together with the fertility of the soil and the "most salubrious climate" to produce profitable agricultural farms from these small grants. He was doomed to disappointment, however. The "salubrious Climate" produced droughts in 1821 and 1822 which, in addition to the virulent blight known as "rust", destroyed their crops for those two years. In 1823, excessive floods swept away most of the produce growing on the best lands, which were situated on the slopes of ravines. This was practically the end of any hopes of successful agricultural farming. It remained to be seen if the settlers would be more successful with cattle. Meantime, other factors had helped to disappoint Somerset's preconceived ideas<sup>e</sup> as to the nature of his new frontier settlement. Chief among these was the fact that very many of the settlers were not farmers at all but artisans, craftsmen and small tradesmen. These people naturally gravitated towards the towns, especially when confronted with the arduous business of farming in the Eastern Province; and in spite of the efforts of the magistrates to stop it, many contracts were broken and many leaders were deserted by the labourers under contract to them. Then too, the quality of the lands granted varied greatly, some being very fertile and others quite useless for agricultural pursuits; and in allotting farms, no allowance had been made for grazing grounds, a most important feature in this part of the country. Even when, later on, this was rectified by allowing the settlers to graze their cattle on the tracts of (1) land between the settlements, these pastures proved too small.

Less than a year's residence in the Colony showed up the total inadequacy of the lands granted and from this time on, as the settlers turned gradually to cattle-farming, more and more requests for increased land grants were lodged. The Eastern districts were progressing, too, in spite of the farming difficulties of 1820 to 1823. Since 1819 there had been complete cessation of cattle raiding. Thenatives were,

perhaps, intimidated by the war of 1819 and the establishment of the Neutral Territory. Perhaps, as Cory suggests, they were waiting to see the results of the Zuurveld settlement and the building operations at Fort Wilshire. Whatever the cause for this armistice, it gave the frontier districts a chance to develop. In May 1820, Sir Rufane Donkin, acting Governor, in Lord Charles Somerset's absence, found it convenient to set up a new township in Albany, which was to be the seat of a magistracy. This, in honour of the Secretary of State, he called Bathurst, and hoped it would provide a market for the settler's produce and a means of coping with the numerous complaints. Although Somerset subsequently countermanded Donkin's measure for a new magistracy at Bathurst the prospect of a township in the midst of the new settlement had already lent considerable impetus to the efforts of the new comers and to that extent helped on the progress of the Eastern frontier. There was, however, another aspect of the growing prosperity. The frontier Boers had never had any liking for the closer settlement plan. Their idea of ideal farming conditions was to be able to live out of sight of the smoke of their neighbours' chimneys and to be able to trek away in search of new pastures whenever they thought necessary. As a matter of fact, their methods of stock-farming did require a vast, empty country. The arrival of nearly 5,000 Britons at the frontier, therefore, merely increased their endless cry for more land, more particularly when the settlers themselves took to pastoralism and began to echo the complaints of the Boers. Thus, although Somerset's immigration scheme did have the good effect of consolidating the population of the Eastern frontier, the very nature of the country forced on the settlers the same difficulties and standpoint as the old inhabitants experienced - which merely strengthened the determination of the frontiersmen to seek new lands.

As things stood at the moment, their natural outlet, eastward across the Fish River, was closed to them by the establishment of the Neutral Territory. But on the

other side of that area, Xosa tribes, resenting their expulsion from their hereditary lands, were determined to recover the country between the Fish and the Keiskamma if they could. The Xosa, moreover, were beginning to feel the pressure of the fugitives from Chakás wars who, in groups and broken tribes were beginning to make their way down from the North and north-west. This influx, which began about 1821, was to last until 1828 and was an important factor in pressing the Xosa tribes in upon the Colony, in an instinctive search for more lands.

One final point should be noticed in connection with this new settlement on the frontier in 1820, since it must have clearly conveyed to the natives the government's intentions with regard to the Neutral Territory. When Somerset persuaded Gaika to agree to the establishment of an empty area between the Fish and Keiskamma Rivers he had expressly stipulated that it would be occupied by neither blacks nor whites.

Although he had to build forts in that area to enforce the scheme, Somerset fully intended by this means to keep the colonists and the tribes well apart. Sir Rufane Donkin, however, did not seem to comprehend fully his predecessor's policy. In October of 1820 he thought it advisable, in view of the recent settlements, to re-define the extent of the district of Albany. His proclamation ran <sup>(1)</sup>: "I do hereby give notice to the Province of Uitenhage shall henceforth be limited and bounded on the East by Bosjesman's River and consequently that the country to the Eastward thereof, with The newly acquired territory between the Great Fish River and the Keiskamma, and including the field cornetcies of upper and under Bosjesman's River, of Bruintjes Hooghte, and Albany proper, shall form the Province of Albany..." He thus included in Albany the seat of a new colonization scheme, the whole of that country which Somerset had promised should be kept as free of colonists as of natives. One cannot altogether blame Donkin. He had been on his way Home from India when he was

appointed acting Governor at the Cape to relieve Somerset, so knew nothing of conditions in this country. At the time of his arrival (January 1820) the Xosa tribes had been removed beyond the Keiskamma and the frontier was quieter than it had been for many years. As for the nature of the 1819 agreement, he would probably have learnt of it from Somerset's accounts (as Earl Bathurst did) as the "ceded" Territory and, as such, would probably have considered it expedient to include it within his formal definition of the Eastern boundaries. But from now on the natives had no doubt that they were doomed to forfeit their lands. Thus from 1821 until the next outbreak of Xosa hostility in 1834 the story of the so called Neutral Territory is a long and painful account of encroachments by black and white alike. Each side was spurred on by its primary need for land -- the increasing number of colonial pastoralists desiring new farms bigger grazing grounds, better pastures; the natives determined to recover what they had lost to the colonists through the treachery of Gaika.

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## CHAPTER V .

### The Development of Relations between the Colonists and the Xosa until 1834.

Europeans in the Neutral Territory. Establishment of Fredericksburg . The Kat River Settlement. Bourke's scheme of settlement. Natives in the Neutral Territory. Effect of Zulu wars on the Border tribes. Expulsion of Magoma and Tyali. Vacillation of Colonial policy. Other points of contact between the two races.

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The first encroachment on the Neutral Territory was made by Somerset himself when he established his two military posts on the Gaga and Gwanga Rivers. The next move was made by Sir Rufane Donkin, a man with no practical knowledge

of frontier conditions in South Africa but faced with the most intricate border problems. In August 1820, then the Acting Governor encountered the further problem of dealing with the men of the disbanded African Corps and decided to extend the system of colonization then in progress in Albany into the Neutral Territory by formation of military villages there. The general idea of his plan was that officers should associate themselves with between sixty and a hundred men each (who would act as their servants) and each group would then receive a land grant of 2,000 morgen. The whole community was to form a fortified village to protect the new township of Bathurst and the district of Albany against native inroads. Donkin selected a position along the right bank of the Baka River (with Gaika's express permission) and named the new settlement Fredericksburg. As it happened, this settlement was a failure from the beginning. It was too close to the Xosa tribes for safe farming; the soldier servants did not receive their promised pay and were consequently dissatisfied; the government surveyor did not arrive and, finally, Somerset heartily disapproved of the whole scheme and in December 1821 he withdrew the military protection on which it depended. Soon after April 1822, Fredericksburg had ceased to exist, but its disappearance did not materially alter the Xosa's feeling of deep grievance at seeing the country of which they had been dispossessed, occupied by whites. The Colony had failed in its attempt on this occasion, it was true, but having once crossed the Fish River it might do so again -- and next time with more success!

This was not all, however, In 1822, when the natives were beginning to drift back across the Keiskamma, Somerset had another blockhouse built on the Lower Kat River, a little north of its junction with the Fish "to act", he said, "as a check on Magomo". The land was being divided up for farming purposes, too. In March 1825, the Governor annexed a portion of the Neutral Territory to the district of Somerset, calling it the field cornetcy of the East Riet River, in which he proposed

to settle over two hundred families who had applied for grants of land there. <sup>(1)</sup> In the same year the Commissioners of Inquiry actually recommended General Bourke to allow the Neutral Territory to be acquired by the South African Trading Company. <sup>(2)</sup> The re-statement of the Eastern boundary in 1829 really marked the end of this neutral belt. It advanced the official colonial boundary still further towards the heights west of the Tyumie, the lower Tyumie and a line meeting the Kat River below Fort Beaufort. <sup>(3)</sup> It should be noticed, however, that in taking these measures, the Colonial authorities, Bourke and, later, Sir Lowry Cole, were acting under the impression that the Neutral Territory had actually been ceded. In a letter of 13th. April 1827, General Bourke wrote <sup>(4)</sup> - "In my despatch of 19th ~~May~~ last I thought it my duty to bring under Earl Bathurst's notice the actual circumstances of the ceded or, as it is called Neutral Territory, and the different opinions which prevailed as to the parole treaty of 1819. His Lordship has decided that it is competent to the Colonial Government to occupy that territory, and such being the fact, I would venture to recommend that the annexation made by Lord Charles Somerset should be confirmed...." In their ignorance of Bantu customs, these Cape Governors had no idea that their conclusions and actions were doing the expatriated Xosa tribes a grave injustice.

The biggest step taken by the Colonial authorities into the Neutral Territory, however, was the establishment of the Kat River settlement. An ordinance (No. 50) passed in 1829, abolished the Pass and vagrancy Laws which had bound the Hottentots to the places in which they worked. One result of this measure was to leave about one quarter of the total Hottentot population at a loose end. Numerous complaints of vagrancy, trespassing and thieving together with the Hottentots own invidious position made it clear that some definite

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1. C.C. Records. XXXI. p. 287
  2. C.C. Records. Vol. 23. p.p. 204 and 206
  3. Walker. Hist. Atlas. p. 14. C.C. Records. XXI. p. 288
  4. C.C. Records. XXI. p. 289

habitation and occupation should be found for these people. At Captain Stockenstrom's suggestion, therefore, a community of nearly three thousand Hottentots and half-breeds was set up on the lands along the Kat River from which the Xosa chief, Magomo, had been expelled earlier in that same year, (1820). The settlement was divided up into a number of locations in which each family was given a small plot to cultivate. Ground not suitable for cultivation was to be used as common pasturage, and the Hottentots were to remain five years on probation. At the end of this time those who had built cottages and cultivated their plots were to be given their properties in freehold, while any land not usefully occupied was to revert to the Government. Now, there were plenty of excellent reasons why a location of this sort should have been established, chief of which was the fact that, as the true aborigines of South Africa, these dispossessed Hottentots were, in justice, entitled to a certain amount of land. Nor could one do anything but applaud an attempt to settle this feckless, wandering people on the land. The trouble was that they were settled in the Neutral Territory. From the native point of view it was adding insult to injury for not only had they lost their tribal lands through an illegal alienation, but now, in addition, Magomo had been driven out apparently to make room for other non-Europeans, whose inferiority the Bantu had proved long ago. To add to the list of their grievances, the farms granted to colonists East of the Fish River, in violation of the 1819 Treaty, were allowed to remain.

This Kat River settlement did not offend the Xosa tribes only. The frontier Boers, too, were highly indignant that Hottentots should be given preference to themselves (as they saw it) in the very fertile Kat River lands. From the very first their complaints of the location were loud and numerous, ranging from dislike of its London Missionary Society advisors to accusations of gun-running and conspiracy with the Xosa against the Colony. Eventually, as it happened,

the Kat River settlement failed. In the first place the Hottentot character was not suited to conditions of individual land-owning. Then, too, Magomo's brother Tyali, who was allowed to remain in the valley of the Mancazana when the former was driven out, with the assistance of the lesser chiefs Nqúeno and Botumane so harassed the Hottentots with cattle-raiding that their efforts at farming were rendered useless. The very fact that it had existed, though, was enough to mark another step towards the climax of 1834, for it had played its part in stimulating still further the desire and determination of both the colonists and the Xosa to gain possession of what Somerset had promised should be a neutral country.

The final episode in the account of actual encroachment by the colonists onto the Neutral Territory took place in August 1830 when Sir Lowry Cole decided to allot to Europeans on military tenure all lands in that area not occupied by Kaffirs or Hottentots. The idea, of course, as in the case of the Kat River settlement, was to strengthen the colony's means of resistance in face of native pressure from the east and in spite of totally inadequate military defence on the frontier. With certain reservations as to excluding Dutch farmers (who had been accused of ill-treating the natives) from the so-called ceded land, the Secretary of State, Lord Goderich, sanctioned the scheme in May 1831, adding ~~to~~ a clause in 1832, to the effect that in future all crown lands should be sold by auction, including that available in the Neutral Territory. This "Neutral" Territory was now, in fact if not in theory, colonial property. In view of the fact that subsequent inquiries made by the Home Government (1) affirm conclusively that the 1819 agreement with Gaika stipulated for complete abandonment of the area by the natives but made no mention of cession, (which in any case was <sup>a</sup> conception beyond Bantu powers of comprehension) it was a most ~~important~~ and unfortunate thing that just and capable men of the type / ~~and~~ of Somerset, Bourke and Cole, did not realize the existence of this disastrous misunderstanding. They seem

to have been so obsessed with the difficulty of preventing stock-thefts that they could not perceive the far more important native grievance behind it. Perhaps they were too close to the colonists in outlook to view the whole matter impartially, for their trespassing in the Neutral Territory was the result of sincere efforts to meet the more immediate needs of the frontier farmers -- to secure the lives and property of British subjects without unduly harassing the uncivilized tribes beyond the border.

But the story of encroachment into the Neutral Territory was not one-sided. The natives, too, were moving westward across the Keiskamma into it. In the case of the Europeans it was nearly always some plan for closer settlement or the pastoralists' "land-hunger" that caused the penetration across the Fish; but the Xosa were driven by various motives -- pressure from native tribes in the rear, the effect of the Colonial Government's vacillating frontier policy, inter-tribal warfare and, over and above all else, their bitter resentment at losing their lands to the Colony in 1819. It has already been noted that during the first year of their <sup>residence</sup> at the Cape, the British settlers found the frontier unusually peaceful and free from native onslaughts. By 1822, however, the cattle raiding was in full swing again, causing endless anxiety to both old and new farmers on the frontier. The reason for this is easily found in the gradual return of the Xosa to their old haunts west of the Keiskamma. Gaika, of course, had remained in the Tyumie valley, according to the terms of the 1819 agreement, but since then his son Magomo had been allowed to build a kraal near one of the sources of ~~that river~~ the Kat River. (Magomo had lately come to the fore, a brave, reckless warrior of great intelligence, who was to cause the colonial authorities much anxiety in his day). Ndhlabi, too, had returned tentatively to his former haunts and had renewed a suspicious friendship with his old enemy, Gaika. The Colonial Office was made aware of these settlements but as, at the moment

everything on the frontier was quiet, no action was taken against the intruders. Gradually, however, the depredations grew more numerous and cattle losses rose rapidly in number until January 1822, when a group of Gaika's people attacked the Tyumie mission station and drove off all the cattle. This raid had, almost certainly, the approval of the chief himself, that "friend" of the Colony, and when he was accused of it he promised full restitution; but the restitution was so long forthcoming that Lord Charles Somerset ordered him to be seized and held until payment was made. Gaika escaped in time to avoid arrest but he had to move his kraal to the district near the source of the Keiskamma -- from where he made payment with renewed protestations of friendship for the Colony! Nevertheless, from now on he and Magomo seem to have worked together to rob the farmers of their cattle.

East of the Keiskamma a period of extreme restlessness among the border tribes was beginning. Between about 1821 and 1828 the Bantu peoples of South Africa were feeling the effects and repercussions of the Zulu wars instigated by the great warrior-chief, Chaka. <sup>(1)</sup> In Natal, Chaka's wholesale destructions had, amongst other things, let loose a horde of fugitives, later known as the Mantatis who, led by the mother of the chief Sikonyela, swept across the country massacring the tribes that crossed their path. By 1823, homeless starving fugitives were pouring into the South-Eastern districts in thousands, many of whom were definitely hostile to the earlier inhabitants. This in itself was sufficiently unsettling for the border tribes, but even more alarming was the rumoured approach, in the same year, of a great horde of Tembus from East of the Kei. Actually, the Tembus had been attacked by a particularly ferocious band of fugitives known as the Fetcani (also the victims of Chaka's wars), and had fled before them towards the Colony. On this occasion, however, the combined forces of the chiefs Hintza, Jalousa, and Nhlambi defeated the Fetcani and the Tembus were re-established in their old

country. This fear of pressure from the tribes further east just at a time when they had lost their lands west of the Keiskamma was probably a big cause of the renewed thieving activities 1823 and subsequent years -- the outcome of fearful anticipation and intense restlessness. Between 1827 and 1828, there was great distress in the costal belt between the Umzimvu\_bu and Fish Rivers, which was devastated by the Matiwane (another band of hostile refugees) and some of Chaka's men. The Põndo tribe was particularly badly hit while a section of the Tembus was expelled from its lands altogether. These last turned naturally from the scourge that was threatening them in the north and east to the south western districts where they came into contact with the Xosa. In addition, all those detribalized, half starved fugitives who had banded themselves together as Fingoes, were making their way down from Natal towards the Colony. The pressure upon the border tribes was really <sup>e</sup> serious and it was a vital question to them as to where all these people intended to settle. The Xosa seemed caught between the tide of Europeans coming North and their own kinsmen fleeing South. So great was the subsequent danger that threatened the tribes east of the Kei that in August 1828 colonial forces were sent to their aid, and in the course of the warfare, met and defeated the <sup>s</sup>destructive Fetcani hordes. It is significant that the Cape Government regarded this as a war of self-defence, since extermination of the Xosa, either by Fetcani or by Chaka's men, would have <sup>meant</sup> the presence of far fiercer and more warlike tribes on the Colony's immediate frontier.

When Sir Lowry Cole arrived as Governor to relieve Lord Charles Somerset (9th. September 1828) he found conditions almost of war prevailing on the frontier, in spite of the nominal peace. The "Neutral" Territory was occupied by colonists and natives alike, the colonial communities being the Kat River settlement and the farms on the land lying between the Koonap and the Fish Rivers. The Xosa clans

(1)  
 meanwhile, were chiefly grouped round the Kat River valley. Ndhlabi was dead by this time and Gaika died in November 1829, but the latter's son, Magomo, was now the most powerful chief on the border and lived on the lands between the Tyumie and the Keiskamma. Tyali, his half-brother, occupied the MancaZana valley, while Botumane and his Imadange clans were on the west bank of the Tyumie "from the present village of Alice down to Fort Wiltshire"<sup>(1)</sup>. Nqeno and the Amabala had settled on the west bank of the Keiskamma between Fort Wiltshire and the Gwanga; and the Gunukwebe's (hereditary possessors of the Southern portion of the Neutral Territory) under the chiefs, Pato, Kama and Kobe, had the land further down, between the Keiskamma and the Fish, the Gwanga and the sea. These last had even persuaded the missionary, the Reverend Mr. Shaw, to write to Somerset in 1825, asking him to allow them to reoccupy the land between the Fish and the Keiskamma. The Governor had refused and the Secretary of State likewise forbade it in the following year, when General Bourke forwarded the request to the Colonial Office. Somerset, however, had allowed them certain temporary grazing privileges of which they had made more than full use. Where their cattle led there followed the tribesmen and kraals -- hence the settlement Cole founded in 1829. Then, because the Cape Government had taken no steps to have them removed, other clans had soon followed them across the Keiskamma, and the Governor realized he would not be able to move them without bloodshed.

The position could not last, however,. The occupation of the Neutral Territory had reestablished contact and the old tale of depredations and commandos was repeated within that area as it had been on the Fish River line, this time with Magomo as chief accomplice. In January 1829, following a quarrel between that chief and the Tembus who had settled in the Winterberg district (a quarrel originating in a particularly audacious theft of Tembu cattle by Magomo) the chief was ordered to retire from the "Neutral" Territory. He was allowed two months grace in which to gather his crops but delayed so

<sup>1</sup>. Theal. Vol. I. Chapter 22.

long that it became evident that he did not mean to obey. In May, therefore, a combined force of burghers and troops were sent to the district he occupied, and after a completely useless conference between Colonel Somerset and the recalcitrant chief, they proceeded to set fire to the kraals and take enough cattle to recompense the Tembus. Magomo was thus forced to go and he subsequently settled in the district <sup>e</sup> near the mission station of Knappshope, east of the Keiskamma (and it was in the lands he vacated that the Hottentot settlement was now made). At the same time the other chiefs in the "Neutral Territory" were informed that unless they behaved they would suffer the same fate as Magomo. This warning together with a fairly big and successful commando against Tyali in 1830 caused considerable abatement in cattle stealing for a time; but it was resumed again in 1833 on a very extensive scale. Determined to break the Xosa of their unprincipled habits, Cole now expelled Tyali from the valley of the <sup>n</sup> Macazana whereupon, Theal says <sup>(1)</sup> "that chief did not resist but settled quietly in the land along the Gaga, from its source to its junction with the Tyumie -- from whence he caused as much trouble as ever". It seemed quite impossible for the two races to maintain contact with amicable relations. The Xosa, particularly, were on the defensive, for while the colonists were steadily encroaching on their western lands, Bantu pressure from the rear was threatening their country beyond the Kei.

The climax of this period, of course, was the so-called Sixth Kaffir war of 1834 - 1835. At the moment the mutual and conflicting need for land, which was the basis of the whole relationship between the colonists and the border tribes, was expressing itself in a relentless struggle for possession of the land handed over to the Government by Gaika in 1819. Nevertheless, in considering the development of this relationship, from the time the Neutral Territory was

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1. Theal. Vol. II. p. 50.

established until Sir Benjamin D'Urban's arrival in 1833, two other<sup>e</sup> things must be taken into account, since they so aggravated ill-feeling that any idea of conciliatory settlement became out of the question and war practically inevitable. The first of these was the lapsing of the Government's frontier policy of non-intercourse. This automatically stimulated the second ~~one~~ development - that of increasing contact and dependence between black and white. The extraordinary inconsistency of government policy not only led the natives into believing that the Cape authorities acted always and only for their own advantage, but also bred in the frontiersmen a profound distrust of the government's methods of dealing with the native problem. Lord Charles Somerset had definitely re-established the principle of non-intercourse in 1819, and had established the Neutral Territory in support of his policy; but even he had had to build forts in that area and to concede the bi-annual Kaffir fairs at Fort Willshire. In the short period of his acting-governorship, Donkin did much to break down this policy. In July 1821<sup>(1)</sup> he greatly increased the number of fairs to be held and he even admitted the natives into the Colony to hunt in the forests along the Fish River -- a proceeding which greatly alarmed the frontier farmers. Much annoyed at this reversal of his plans, Somerset in his proclamation of 25th. November 1823<sup>(2)</sup> strictly prohibited all intercourse with "the Caffres" under pain of the severest penalties; but he found his injunctions so often violated by both settlers and natives that he thought it best to establish definite official fairs with licensed dealers, to eliminate the necessity for this illicit traffic. (July 1824)<sup>(3)</sup> Apart from this matter of trade, however, Somerset meant to enforce the non-intercourse policy,

1. Imp. Blue BOOK. Vol. IV. (Part II) No. 28.

2. do. do. do.

3. do. do. do.

as he clearly showed in his disapproval of Donkin's settlement at Fredericksburg.

Nevertheless, while Somerset was still in office at the Cape, the Commissioners of Enquiry wrote <sup>(1)</sup> in 1825 ,  
 " Although the salutary effects of enforcing the system of defence established by Lord Charles Somerset had been recently experienced, we must ascribe the tranquillity that prevails on the frontier in a still greater degree to the intercourse that has ensued from the recent establishment of fairs, and it is much to be regretted that a measure so well calculated gradually to supercede the necessity of coercive measures, and thereby reduce the expense of maintaining a large military force, should not have been earlier effected by which the benefits that have resulted to all parties would at the same time have been attained."

The same thing happened with regard to the "Reprisal" system . The method of recovering stolen cattle which had been established by Somerset in 1817, had been revived -- in fact it had never really lapsed -- when it became apparent that the Neutral Territory was not going to prevent cattle-stealing. In the very weak state of frontier defence, it was a matter of great importance to the farmers for it was practically their <sup>only</sup> ~~own~~ safeguard against complete ruin at the hands of the

natives. It was, too, a system based on the Bantu principle of communal responsibility and therefore quite comprehensible to the Xosa tribes. But here again the system lost much of its value through being applied differently by each governor who came to the Cape. Under Somerset a reprisal consisted in the injured party following the spoor of the cattle (where possible) to the kraal to which they had been taken, whereupon it devolved upon that kraal to restore the stolen animals or make good their value in native cattle. When General Bourke arrived, however, there were drastic changes in government policy.

On April 11th. 1826, he issued to Lieutenant Colonel Somerset, Commandant of the Frontier, orders which practically amounted to complete abandonment of Somerset's reprisal system. There was, henceforth, to be no invasion whatever of kaffir country for the recovery of stolen cattle. The animals could only be recovered if overtaken/they were driven across the frontier. This policy of forbearance was intended to conciliate the chiefs in their complaints of wrongful reprisals but the Xosa were not, as yet, sufficiently civilized to react accordingly. They simply redoubled their efforts because punishment was now almost an impossibility.

A still bigger change in policy was effected by Bourke's Ordinance 49 of 1829 which repealed all former laws prohibiting intercourse with the natives. It allowed them to enter the Colony (under a nominal system of passes) to trade and take service with the colonists -- aliberty of which the natives were not slow to take advantage. The indirect effect of the Ordinance among the border tribes seems to have been to renew their hope of recovering the "Neutral" Territory. Already very disturbed conditions prevailed amongst them, generated by fear of overcrowding in their own lands (the temporary appearance of the Tembu and the arrival of other lesser groups of fugitives having given them good cause for such a fear); and plundering amongst themselves was leading to increased onslaughts on colonial possessions. The raiding of this period led eventually to the expulsion of Magomo and Tyali from their settlements (1833) but the necessity for such an action was largely due to the vacillations of government policy.

Sir Lowry Cole arrived in South Africa at a critical time (September 1828). Colonel Somerset, with a combined military/force, was then on the frontier driving back the Fetcani, while his treacherous Xosa allies were exploiting the opportunities offered by Ordinance 49. Indeed, the position of the frontier farmers was so miserable

that one of Cole's first acts was to repeal this Ordinance and revert to Somerset's policy of non-intercourse. This was undoubtedly a wise and just action in view of the state of the frontier but it helped to create an appearance of incompetent indecision on the part of the Cape Government, which in no way lessened the difficulty of the situation.

Then, lastly, the influence of other points of contact must be mentioned. It was by no means only the frontiersmen and government officials who were in touch with the natives beyond the boundary. Missionary enterprise, illicit trading and the rapid increase of trekking were all factors in bringing black and white together; but in every case there were elements that led rather to greater ill-feeling than to better understanding. In the case of the missions, for instance, the number of these increased considerably in the ten years before D'Urbans arrival. Theal gives a list <sup>(1)</sup> of the missions in existence in 1829 - 30 and one finds that the various groups - London Missionary Society, Moravians, Wesleyans and the Glasgow Society - were well represented through-out Kaffirland. Now, leaving aside the controversial question of the activities of Dr. Phillip and the London Missionary Society, it must be admitted that these missionaries did do a great deal of good civilizing work among the Bantu tribes. The trouble that arose was due to the fact the native chiefs turned to the missionaries, as their European advisers, to put the native point of view before the Cape Government, and to plead the native cause generally. But since this view almost invariably clashed with colonial interests the natives must have been unfavourably impressed by the harshness of the government as opposed to missionary sympathy. The frontiersmen, on the other hand, did not favour an attitude which prompted fellow whites to advocate measures (such as the suppression of the commando system) inimical to colonial interests.

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1. Theal. Vol. II. p. 50.

Illicit trading was another notable feature of this period. Economic relations between black and white had developed considerably and the fairs established by Somerset (and even, Donkin's wider system) were<sup>r</sup> inadequate as an outlet for trading activities. Consequently, adventurers, ignoring the law, penetrated far into the native territories on illegal trading expeditions and so lucrative was this pursuit that it persisted in spite of very stringent government regulations. By its very nature this traffic was demoralizing and since it was carried on mainly by a doubtful type of person, the tribes were, again, not likely to get a favourable impression of the white man's methods. The missionaries of the time, moreover, commented quite frequently on the disturbances among the natives caused by these activities and the increasing<sup>e</sup> tendency of the Boers to trek. With regard to the latter point, Macmillan has condemned<sup>n</sup> the trek spirit as arising purely from a greed for more land on the part of the Boers. Actually, however, their motives went far deeper than mere covetousness -- the pressing need they felt to get away from the closer settlement schemes on the frontier and a deep discontent with British rule, being their chief grievances. There were many concrete instances to illustrate their point of view. The conciliatory native policy which was so ruinous to the frontier Boers, the insulting Black Circuit of 1811, Slagter's Nek Rebellion in 1815, the new and unpopular system of land tenure with its increased rents and auctioning of Crown lands, the Kat River settlement -- these and many others determined the Boers to move out of reach of British authority. Once they were independent they intended to set up a form of government more to their liking and at the same time their old system of land holdings and their old methods of dealing with unscrupulous<sup>l</sup> savages. The casual periodical migrations of the Boers were developing into deliberate and voluntary exile -- but the only path those on the Eastern frontier could take out of British territory led on to native land. 1836 was the

great year of the trek but the spirit of it was sufficiently developed by 1833 to constitute a definite threat to the Xosa. Every aspect of the frontier situation pointed to trouble and D'Urban took over the reins of government just as all this seething discontent and misunderstanding was to explode in the war of December 1834.

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S E C T I O N III:-

Chapter VI.

The Sixth Kaffir war. 1834 - 1835.

D'Urban's "conciliation" policy. Disturbances on the frontier and Phillip's visit to the tribes. The Sixth Kaffir war. D'Urban's May settlement. The September settlement. Justification of D'Urban's arrangements.

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Sir Benjamin D'Urban arrived in Cape Town at an exceedingly critical juncture. (16th. January 1834). His term of office is one of the most important episodes in South African history. In his person whig Liberalism took its seat in the Governor's chair. Not only was he under orders to establish the new constitution and to retrench still further, but he was to set up municipal councils if possible, to carry through slave emancipation and to frame a <sup>a</sup> satisfactory native policy. <sup>(1)</sup>

This summary of D'Urban's instructions shows clearly the enormous programme of work drawn up for him. To frame a satisfactory native policy alone was sufficient to tax all his abilities, since it was a problem which had defied solution since Company days; but on account of the press of work arising from constitutional and slave emancipation questions, it was not possible for him to give the frontier the immediate and undivided attention it needed. The "conciliatory" native policy which he was instructed to

establish was the direct outcome of Britain's growing interest in social welfare and was prompted by the same spirit that passed Factory Acts, regulated the employment of woman and children and appointed the Aborigines committee in 1835. According<sup>d</sup> to his instructions, D'Urban was to alter the existing system of dealing with the natives who were henceforth to be treated with "kindness and consideration". The new system was to take the form of friendly alliances between the Colony and the border chiefs and at the same time government agents were to be established among the tribes as a means towards better understanding between the two races. The Governor, himself, was to cultivate the acquaintance of the "Kaffir" chiefs.

Although D'Urban was a liberal in outlook, he realized that he did not know enough of the actual conditions on the frontier to enable him to form any accurate judgment of the situation. In his quest for information he came under the influence of the London Missionary Society inspector, Dr. Phillip, who was so strong an advocate of the native point of view -- and so heartily disliked by the long suffering frontiersmen. On the new Governor's arrival, Phillip had sent him a long communication laying before him the native side of the frontier problem. He had recently been travelling amongst the Griquas in the north-east districts and amongst the Xosa and had been very alarmed at the hostility displayed towards the colony. He therefore stressed the fact that through the reprisal system was still being abused, the main native grievance was still the loss of their lands. Several of the chiefs with whom he had spoken complained that they had no fixed locations and Phillip pointed out that their need for settled lands must inevitably lead to disputes among the tribes themselves. This complaint might certainly have been voiced by the chief Magomo who, since his expulsion from the Kat River valley in 1829, had twice been allowed to cross the boundary to graze his cattle west of the Tyumie and twice been ordered away -- the second time (in 1833), his brother

Tyali been driven out with him. It was on the usual score of his peoples' cattle-stealing that he had been expelled but his position had now become one of constant insecurity. Not only had he no fixed residence but trekkers from Graaff-Reinet, Albany and Somerset were, in increasing numbers, penetrating into the native territories. Other chiefs besides Magomo were feeling the insecurity of this position and among the Xosa both East and West of the Kei their restlessness expressed itself in increasing raiding of the frontier farms.

Sir Benjamin D'Urban was not able to go to the frontier immediately on his arrival, but since he wished to establish amicable relations with the natives as soon as possible, in October 1834 he seems to have arranged with Dr. Phillip, who was about to visit the Xosa tribes should deliver a message for him. Phillip was to let the chiefs know that a new and friendly Governor would soon arrive among them to set up a new frontier system and redress their grievances. Certainly, during his subsequent visit to the tribes, the natives practically ceased their cattle-raiding, but at the same time they seem to have gained the impression that this redress would take the form of permission for them to re-occupy the Neutral Territory. Phillip may very likely have given them to understand this, for it is well known that he considered the events of 1819 were at the bottom of all the Xosa unrest. Then too, as he shows in a letter<sup>written</sup> to the London Missionary Society at this time, <sup>(1)</sup> he seems to have hoped great things for the natives from D'Urban's intention of introducing a new frontier system. In fact the one point he stressed above all others was that the natives should have their lands secured to them. Let the Colony annex all the land up to Delagoa Bay, if it wished, he said, provided the natives so brought under British jurisdiction. <sup>(2)</sup> were not driven off their lands.

There was another side to the picture, however, which Phillip did not bring so vividly before the Governor's eyes.

1. Macmillan. p.98.

2. Walker. Hist. of S.A. p.190.

The natives were suffering, it is true, but the frontiersmen were in an equally unhappy position. The frontier was experiencing a period of unparalleled activity among the Xosa raiders and districts which had previously been in a flourishing condition received a definite set-back on account of their losses in 1834. But worse was to follow, for D'Urban came to the Cape with instructions to put a stop to the commando system, which Stanley, the Secretary of State, described as a "fearful scourge" to the natives. Now, because of the weakness of the frontier defence, this commando system was the only weapon the farmers had against raiding; and, as it may be imagined, the natives, already hostile, were quick to take advantage of what they thought weakness on the part of the British authorities. For a time, during Phillip's visit to the frontier, there had been peace. Eventually, however, after D'Urban had repeatedly postponed his promised visit, Phillip left the frontier and the old trouble began again. At length, in December 1834, Colonel Somerset determined to make good what losses he could and a reprisal party was sent to the chief Nqeno, who was suspected of being deeply implicated in these thefts. He resisted, with force, and the ensuing scuffle led to bloodshed. It also involved the wounding of Xoxo, brother of the chief Tyali, who was already embittered by his expulsion from the Tyumie valley in the previous year. With the tribes in such a turbulent mood, little enough was needed to stir them into drastic action, and the shedding of royal blood on this occasion was a definite insult. On December 21st. 1834, Magomo and Tyali (probably the most aggrieved of the native leaders) entered the Colony at the head of about 12,000 men and for two weeks they scoured the country from Delagoa Bay to Somerset East. Their grievances and final despair had culminated in what was afterwards known as the Sixth Kaffir war.

Magomo and Tyali were undoubtedly the leaders in this affair but they were aided by the other Xosa chiefs, Nqeno, Umhala, Siyolo, and Botumane and many tribes from the Gai<sup>e</sup>ka and

Gunukwebe clans. (1) The openly avowed object of these natives was to drive the white man out of their lands -- into the sea if possible --. And it is a significant fact that the Gunukwebe chiefs, Pato, Kobe, and Kama, who had been allowed to remain on their lands in the Neutral Territory, did not join in the revolt against the Colony. On the outbreak of war, Colonel Somerset managed to hold Grahamstown until reinforcements (and, at last, the Governor) reached the Frontier. By February 1835, he had succeeded in beating back Nqeno, BoTumane and Siyolo from the Zuurveld and Olifants Hoek districts to the Fish River/and between the 12th. and 15th. February a strong colonial force drove them across the Keiskamma. (2) Very soon, however, they returned to the attack. It was at this stage that the Government approached the Tembus and Pondos in the rear of the Xosa and obtained their promise to help; but Hintza, the paramount chief <sup>e</sup> west of the Kei, was playing a double game. On the one hand he professed friendship for the Colony but on the other he was acting as "receiver" of cattle stolen by the enemy. (3) It was the discovery of Hintza's duplicity that prompted D'Urban to push his forces as far as the Kei. In a despatch (4) of June 1835 he wrote, "This certainty, afterwards still more amply confirmed, had rendered it obviously at once just and necessary that my operations should embrace the country of Hintza as their concluding stage, and dictated the general outline of them..."

Eventually the colonial forces proved too strong for the Xosa warriors and Hintza came to terms on 30th. April 1835 (though in spite of this peace and of the nominal conquest of the country, the natives were still raiding the Koonap farmers and those in Albany in June and even in September.) (5)

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1. Theal. Vol. II. p.86
  2. Theal. Vol. II. p.100.
  3. Imp. Blue Book. Vol. XIX. (Part II) No.2
  4. do. do. do. No.3
  5. Macmillan. p.40.

Meantime, D'Urban had considerably altered his ideas with regard to a suitable frontier policy. When he arrived on the border in January 1835 he had been horrified to find Albany in ruins and as many as 7,000 British subjects ruined by the native inroads. ( After the war, a Mr. Hudson was appointed to assess the losses of the farmers and his account shows 111,418 head of cattle lost, 445 houses burnt and the 7,000 people mentioned above subsisting on rations during 1835. He stated that these losses took place between December 1834 and January 1835 but also mentioned 40 people murdered before the outbreak of war. <sup>(1)</sup>) The Governor considered the war had rendered his earlier policy out of the question and it was during this period of warfare that he evolved the idea of extending the eastern boundary of the Colony to the Kei River, as being a shorter and more easily defended line than the Fish River. <sup>(2)</sup> The outcome of this policy was the formal annexation of ~~formal annexation~~ the country between the Keiskamma and the Kei as Queen Adelaide Province (10th. May 1835). In the period immediately after the war, it was D'Urban's intention to exclude the natives from this district altogether and the official proclamation <sup>(3)</sup> of the new boundary therefore stated that from this land the chiefs Magomo, Tyali, Nqeno, Botumane, Ndhlabi and Dushane "with their tribes are for ever expelled" and were to be treated as enemies if found therein. The other terms dictated to Hintza, <sup>(4)</sup> who was, by now, admitted to be the most powerful Xosa chief, included an order to pay an indemnity of <sup>50</sup> 10,000 cattle (25,000 at once and the rest within a year) and to hold himself responsible for the cessation of hostilities. Finally, since the treaty demanded two hostages until the first instalment of cattle was paid, Hintza and his son Kreli gave themselves up to Colonel Smith as prisoners. Most unfortunately, Hintza was killed very soon after, while trying

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1. Report on Kaffir Tribes (1851) Questions. 2269-82
  2. Macmillan. p.110. Note I.
  3. Imp. Blue Book. Vol. XIX (2) Enclosure 12a in No. 3.
  4. do. do. Sub-enclosure to Enclosure 7 in No. 3.

to escape. The incident did not add to British prestige among the tribes but D'Urban could do nothing beyond liberating Kreli and establishing him as chief in his dead father's place as soon as possible. The other important Xosa chief, Magomo, was sent as a prisoner to Robben Island.

This, then, is very briefly the outline of Sir Benjamin D'Urban's May settlement. Its weakness lay in the fact that it was quite impossible to enforce the most important part of it, which declared all natives expelled from the new province. Colonel Smith had been put in command of a military headquarters at King Williams Town <sup>(1)</sup> and forts had been built between the Kei and the Keiskamma, but even so the colonial government had not the troops at its disposal to drive the natives out by force of arms. Nor could it afford the expense. And force would certainly have been necessary for the natives flatly refused to go of their own accord. Moreover, D'Urban could not with justice, expel the Fingoes (those 16,000 "dogs of the Xosa" whom he had placed on Gaika's lands at Fort Peddie in 1835 -- as British subjects. <sup>(2)</sup>); nor the Gudukwebe clans which had remained loyal to the colony during the war. To emphasise the impracticability of the scheme, missionaries of all denominations concurred in opposing it. D'Urban may have acted unwisely on certain occasions but he was a just man who sincerely wished to better frontier conditions (one cannot doubt his good intentions, having read the letters and despatches he wrote during the first year of his governorship). In September, therefore, he cancelled the May settlement and, through the agency of the Wesleyan missionaries Boyce and Shepstone, he made a new and fundamentally different arrangement with the chiefs (17th. September 1835).

The earlier settlement had been an attempt to carry on the old policy of non-intercourse but this was to be a deliberate system of contact between the two races. Since the chiefs could not be expelled and would not go voluntarily, they

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1. Walker. Hist. of S.A. p.192.

2. Imp. Blue Book. Vol. XEX (2) . Enclosure 7 to No.2

were to retain their lands as reserves within Queen Adelaide Province. They would henceforth be British subjects under colonial law; the chiefs were to hold themselves responsible for cattle thefts and no native was to enter the Colony armed or without a pass.<sup>(1)</sup> As a means of civilizing the natives, missionaries and government agents were to live with the tribes. Thus far, the plans tallied very nearly with that advocated by the Secretary of State and Dr. Phillip before the outbreak of war -- but D'Urban did not stop there. He now intended to settle Europeans round the forts and to grant out all the rest of the old Neutral Territory in farmlands (excepting the Hottentot lands on the Kat River and the districts occupied by the Fingoes and Gunukwebes). Even in Queen Adelaide he referred to "large tracts still left vacant for the occupation and speculation of Europeans". D'Urban himself had evolved a definite theory with regard to the native troubles. He hoped that by bringing the two races together the savages would gradually be educated to higher standards through contact with civilized habits and industry, religion and morality.<sup>(2)</sup> Thus the rising generation of natives, at least, might eventually be assimilated into the mass of colonists. D'Urban realized that no immediate solution to the problem could be found, for it was based on the inevitable conflict arising from civilization in contact with savagery. All he could do was to secure the natives their lands as best he could and establish a system whereby the tribes might be weaned from their present condition to more civilized habits as quickly as possible. The process would necessarily be both long and slow. Meantime, to protect the frontiersmen from future cattle losses (which must in the very nature of things, continue for a time) he proposed to deal with raiding by "energetic pursuit and chastisement of robbers by the authorities and farmers within the old borders".<sup>(3)</sup> That is, he intended to maintain the Commando system. D'Urban

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1. Walker. Hist. of S.A. p.193  
 2. Imp. Blue Book. Vol. XIX. (2) Enclosure 6 to No. 9.  
 3. do. do. do.

rounded off his settlement by re-defining the North-east frontier so as to include an area north of the Stormberg Mountains as far as the Kraai River, where a considerable number of Boer families were already settled. (1)

Nevertheless, neither Dr. Phillip nor the other missionaries recognized this settlement as the outcome of their advice. They had stressed above all else the necessity of protecting the natives' land. The principle behind this was a social one that realized that once the Bantu people were deprived of their lands they were doomed to degeneration and perhaps extermination -- and the missionaries had before their eyes the fate of the landless Bushmen and Hottentots. The fact that the British had annexed all the country up to the Kei did not seriously perturb them and they definitely approved of the appointment of "Resident Agents" to each of the principal tribal groups. What they did object to was the fact that Europeans were not only allowed to settle in these parts but encouraged to do so. As they saw it, the authorities had ignored the need for administrative and social reform on the frontier (as opposed to the military action taken by commandos and reprisal parties) and had simply created a new frontier on which the old trouble would begin all over again. Then, too, quite apart from the old hackneyed trouble of theft and reprisal, was a far greater and more subtle danger threatening the blacks, which Professor Macmillan brings out strongly. (2) He points out that to throw the Europeans and natives together deliberately must inevitably bar the latter's expansion and therefore hinder their progress and reduce them to a position of economic dependence on the whites. As has always happened in cases like this, the weaker uncivilized nation would succumb to the stronger.

From a purely native point of view the September settlement may well have caused the missionaries to fear for their protégés' future; but under the circumstances prevailing

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1. Imp. Blue Book. Vol. XIX. (2) Encl. 10 in No. 9.

2. Macmillan. p. 127.

in 1835, it is hard to see what other course the Governor could have adopted. The war of 1834 - 1835 had been rendered essential by the havoc created on the frontier by cattle-stealing and more especially so because the reprisal system was being abused, yet could not be abolished until the primary cause itself was eradicated. The damage inflicted during the first six weeks of the war, too, had to be <sup>avenged.</sup> At the conclusion of that fracas, it was out of the question to treat the natives as friends, as if nothing had happened; and to secure their lands against the colonists at this juncture would have implied that the Government wished to punish the colonials rather than the natives for the war. Savage tribes would certainly not have regarded such an action in its true philanthropic light. They would have seen it as weakness on the part of the whites while to the Boers it would have seemed unparalleled injustice to themselves. Moreover, what white man could bring himself to profit the blacks at the cost of increasing the sufferings of his harassed fellow Europeans? D'Urban's September settlement was condemned by the philanthropists as unfair to the natives while among the frontiersmen the May policy of total expulsion was more popular, but on examination it does seem to be a genuine attempt to meet the needs of both sides. It was impossible to adopt a "wait and see" attitude in the chaos that followed the conclusion of the war. Some kind of arrangement had to be made at once. Looking back, D'Urban must have seen that the long tried policy of non-intercourse was worse than useless, since it could not be enforced and its prohibitions merely irritated both colonists and natives. On the other hand, a policy of contact seemed normally to result in increased cattle stealing, unconsidered reprisals and mutual hostility. The policy he eventually adopted lay midway between the other two and might almost be called one of "regulated contact".

In his own words, it was an experiment and in view of the consistent failure of his predecessors to solve the

native problem, the explanation given in a confidential note<sup>f</sup> on the Treaties of September 1835<sup>(1)</sup> may be considered sufficient justification of his action:- "This is an experiment it is true, but it has never been tried before; it is worth the trying and must be tried fairly. However, if it should fail (and we must be prepared for some partial "contretemps" and for the exercise of some patience) we shall still have assumed, and secured, a stronger attitude by the arrangements now made, and by the immediate surveillance and magisterial power drawn round the several component bodies of the Caffre nation, the means will ever be at hand to subdue any serious resistance in detail, by the united application of civil and military authority."

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#### Chapter VII.

#### Glenelg's settlement and the abandonment of Queen Adelaide Province.

Glenelg and the Philanthropists . Glenelg's despatch . Phillip's inconsistency. Glenelg's new policy and instructions to D'Urban. Arrival of the Lieutenant-Governor and the repeal of martial law on the frontier. Queen Adelaide Province abandoned. Position on frontier thereafter. Conclusion.

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D'Urban wrote to the Secretary of State from Grahamstown on the 19th. June 1835<sup>(2)</sup> giving an account of the war and of his May settlement, with detailed reasons for the latter; but the Colonial Office was not convinced by his explanations. Hence the arrival of a despatch from Lord Glenelg, the Secretary of State<sup>t</sup>, completely reversing the whole plan. Theal criticises Lord Glenelg as a very incompetent

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1. Imp. Blue Book. Vol. XIX (2) Encl. 6 in No. 9  
 2. do. do. " No. 3.

man and one who was completely ignorant of South African affairs. But he was not that; nor was he the unreasonable fanatic that the frontier Boers seem to have considered him. Probably the worst that can be said of him was that he was prejudiced, and even this was not altogether his fault. At the very beginning of his reply to D'Urban's despatch <sup>(1)</sup> he complained that the Governor had not given him "any clear and comprehensive explanation of the causes which produced the irruption of the Caffres into the Colony". The fact of the matter was that D'Urban did not give any accounts of the events leading up to the war; he simply said what he himself had done, and why. Now, Glenelg was a philanthropist and inclined to sympathise with the weaker side, and since D'Urban did not supply him with the native aspect of the question, he had to get the information where and how he could. As it happened, Dr. Phillip and Mr. John Fairbairn (that very pro-native editor of the "South African Commercial Advertiser") were, at this time, trying anxiously to catch the attention of the Colonial Office; and having done so, they presented a very strong case for the natives as against Colonial frontier policy. In addition, Glenelg had before him the finding of the Aborigines Committee, a body appointed in August 1835 to inquire into the conditions of the <sup>t</sup>native races of the British Empire, and entirely in sympathy with the liberal outlook of Britain in the 1830's. This Committee was advised largely by Captain Andries Stockenström (for many years <sup>n</sup>commandant on the frontier) and the London Missionary Society, both of whom strongly disapproved of D'Urban's settlement. In view of the fact that he was surrounded by these enthusiasts in England and lacked further news from D'Urban <sup>for</sup> ~~from~~ months to come, it is not surprising that Glenelg was <sup>influenced in favour of</sup> ~~is not surprising~~ the natives.