

in clean water or in dirty water. The end result is the same, namely loss of life.

But Montshiwa had said it many times that he had the greatest confidence in the humanity and justice of the British Government and its representatives, while for the Government of the South African Republic he entertained feelings of distrust and dislike.

It is an undeniable fact that from ^{experience} ~~expreience~~ African tribes early learnt to look to the British missionary and British officials for justice and protection, while at the same time regarding the Boers and people of Dutch and German extraction with suspicion and dislike. These feelings, ^{of trust and faith} like the subconscious impressions of early childhood, though they might alter in intensity have never quite disappeared ^{even in ~~until~~ the middle of the 20th Century} either because of the limited sympathy of the present day missionary, trader or Government official, or because the African is more sophisticated, ~~and~~ ^{and} more critical; ^{and} more independent. No distinction is made now between Boer and Briton - be they preacher or politician.

"And ^{what} did all this agitation secure for those who were supposed to be British special proteges? Absolutely nothing.

Bechuanaland has ^S become a portion of the Cape Colony. Their chiefs who were so belauded in England in 1884 have been absolutely wiped out by forces, official and industrial, consecrated by the shadow of the British Flag." (J.R. Stratham Paul Kruger p.

172) Equally with the successors of Moshela, Matlaba and Mossou, the heirs of Montshiwa and Mankurwane have lost their country.

Mackenzie first went to Rooigrond to warn the Goshenites who were still in camp there that the Queen's authority was now extended over Montshiwa's country as defined by the London Convention. He was accompanied by Kebalepile, Montshiwa's eldest son and heir, Stephen Lefenya, the Chief's secretary and the Rev. Stuart Franklin, the Wesleyan missionary stationed with Montshiwa.

As Gey van Pittius however declined to meet Mackenzie, the latter returned to Mafikeng ^{where} ~~while~~ he wrote out a public notice

and sent it to him: Public Notice.

"To the Europeans now residing ~~at~~ on the boundary line between the South African Republic and the Barolong country at a place Rooigrond and to all whom it may concern:

Public notice ~~is~~ hereby given that it has pleased Her Majesty the Queen to establish a protectorate in Bechuanaland and for that purpose among other steps, to enter into a treaty with the chief Montshiwa, by which that chief concedes to Her Majesty jurisdiction and authority over all white ^{and black people} people within the Barolong country.

In terms of my commission as Deputy of His Excellency the High Commissioner and in accordance with the treaty now mentioned, I hereby declare the whole of the Barolong country to be under the protection, jurisdiction and authority of Her Majesty the Queen etc (C.4194. 50).

On Thursday the 22nd of May 1884, a treaty was entered into between the chief Montshiwa and Deputy Commissioner John Mackenzie representing Her Majesty's Government, whereby Montshiwa ceded jurisdiction of his country to the Queen's ^{Government} Government. The ceremony was performed in the royal kgotla ^{or forum} before a large and excited gathering of tribesmen, who applauded the chief and the commissioner to signify their approval.

After the treaty had been signed (or marked) by the chief and his son Kebabépile and ^Xhis nephew Israel Molema and other princes, Christopher Bethell, Stuart Frankiln, Edgar Rowland and J. Mahon attested the signatures. A prayer of thanksgiving was next offered at the request of the chief, and then Montshiwa's cannon and a volley of musketry was fired to mark the historic occasion and the joy of the people.

The crowd had not yet dispersed when there was a report that the Rooigrond freebooters had gone across the line on the north-east from the direction of Zeerust, and had raided Montshiwa's cattleposts at Tlapeng taking hundreds of cattle and

(taking hundreds of their cattle and) sheep. This was an early indication to Mackenzie and Montshiwa of the contempt with which Gey van Pittius and his men treated the Imperial Government's assumption of authority over Montshiwa's country, and that the chaotic state of affairs reigning in the western Transvaal border was most likely to continue.

Mackenzie followed up the captured cattle to Zeerust, and there made representations to the landdrost Otto, and also reported the matter to the British Resident at Pretoria, and to the High Commissioner, but no tangible result was obtained.

Leaving Mafikeng Mackenzie travelled westward along the Molopo River and concluded treaties of submission to the Queen with Chief Makgobi at Phitshane, Chief Bonokwane at Morokweng, and Chief Letlhogile at Anyesa, and then returning to his station at Kuruman on the 21st of June to write out a report for the High Commissioner. By Mackenzie's treaties the whole of the country north of Cape Colony, west of the Transvaal, and east of the 20th meridian of east longitude became a British sphere of influence.

In spite of this ^{the freebooters} continued to attack Montshiwa, and on the 20th of June there was heavy fighting. The Barolong had gone out to reap their lands at Dishwaing (corresponding to Buurmansdrift and Lucydale). The reapers were supported by three regiments - Madisakgomo (Captain: Kebalepile), Matsetse (Captain: Besele) and Magodu (Captain: Tawana) - 24 years to 32 years age groups. Altogether they numbered about three hundred men. They were attacked by the men from Goshen and Zeerust, and intercepted on their return to Mafikeng. A sharp ^{skirmish} engagement ensued and continued for about three hours, and many were killed on both sides - 16 ^{of} among among the Barolong, among whom was Makgetla, Montshiwa's son, and also his cousins Isaka Mococe and Morwenyane Leteane. The Boers lost perhaps half that number. When the Barolong depleted regiments arrived at Mafikeng in a funereal mood by reason of the death of their prince, Montshiwa upbraided them; "Who think you must die for the fatherland if not the princes? Think you an enemy's bullet or ball respects a king's son, or that a king's son is dearer to ^{his} ~~its~~ parents anymore than a commoner's son to his parents? Away with your heaviness of heart: Makgetla has died gloriously because he has died as we should all be prepared to die; So on with the struggle for our land and our freedom."

For this attack on Montshiwa and the loss of life inflicted after the Queen's protection had been proclaimed, the British Resident and the High Commissioner made feeble remonstrances with the Transvaal Government, but that Government knew that that was just so much waste of breath and time and paper, and the

and the men of Goshen carried on undeterred in their intention and activities to sieze Mpntshiwa's country.

Mackenzie had left ^{i.e.} Mafikeng at the end of May. As soon as he had turned his back, there was renewed activity in recruiting for the ranks of Moshete's volunteers, and on the 24th of June, Gey van Pittius had published in a Pretoria paper -Die Volkstem a "Declaration of War in the fullest sense against Montshiwa" and invited "All true Sons of ~~Africa~~ South Africa" to join the ranks of the Volunteers upon the understanding that they would share in the land booty to be procured, which "with Gods's help we hope to bring to pass."

When the British Resident complained of this to the Transvaal Government, the latter issued a proclamation "stringently prohibiting anyone from engaging in the hostilities, and enjoining the Transvaal officials, that is-fieldcornets and land-drosts immediately to report to the Government all persons contravening the order.

At the same time the High Commissioner formally notified the Transvaal Government that a "British Protectorate had been established over Bechuanaland, and a cession of jurisdiction had been accepted from the Chief Montshiwa." But ofcourse no one in the Transvaal took ~~took~~ these prohibitions and notifications in earnest, nor paid the slightest heed to them, and raiding and fighting went on just as before, and were in fact working up to a grand climax.

On the ^{12th of} July, Montshiwa received alarming news. Chief Tshipinare Moroka of Thaba Ncho had been assassinated by his halfbrother Samuel who claimed to be the rightful successor of Moroka, chief of the Seleka branch of the Barolong at Thaba Ncho. Tshipinare was both ^{Montshiwa's} nephew and son-in-law, being married to Buku, Montshiwa's only child by his principal wife.

On the 31st of July 1884 some 300 Boers from Rooigrond raided the ^{and Bangwaketse} Barolong; cattle-posts at Tlapeng, sixteen miles to the north-west of Mafikeng, and drove off over 3,000 herd of cattle. News of the raid had been received, and in the early morning the Barolong were assembled in a ~~text~~ letsholo - a war-munt or battle muster, preparatory to going to dispute the possession of the cattle with the Rooigrond volunteers. Matlhare Nkgwang the M.O.H and royal magician was still busy sprinkling the warriors with his protective ~~herbs~~ infusions, and immunising them with incisions, scarifications ~~and~~ inunctions and incantations against military accidents, and Montshiwa was still giving final orders when the enemy came in sight. On return from Tlapeng, they had driven their loot along the west and south of the Barolong village of Mafikeng, purposely near enough to be seen, and thereby lure Montshiwa's men to fight. (Sure enough, unable to resist the desire to recapture their cattle)

Sure enough, unable to resist the desire to recapture their cattle, the Barolong at once went out to attack. A severe engagement followed on the Lotlhakane and Magogwe spruits four miles to the south of Mafikeng village, ebbed and flowed, now ~~backwards~~ forwards ~~and~~ towards Lotlhakane, and now backwards towards the village as the Barolong or the Boers dominated the fight.

In the afternoon a contingent, consisting of farmers from ^{who had just arrived at Rooigrond} and Stellaland and Harts river district ~~arrived~~ came to assist their ~~kinsmen~~ kinsmen, and turned the scales against the Barolong, who were, in any case already running short of ammunition. The Barolong were utterly defeated, and suffered severe losses in 181 killed and about as many wounded. Of the killed, 67 were Bangwaketese tribesmen, whose cattle had been among those stolen, and which they had followed up. The Rooigrond volunteers lost about 50 men, among them two Coetzee brothers. This was a decisive battle, and to the Barolong the most disastrous ^{ie} field of the campaign, wherefore they call it "Tigele", meaning collapse, prostration, subsidence or submergence.

The Rooigrondmen and their allies were masters of the ~~fight~~ ^{after} field, and mopping up small pockets of resistance, they collected their slain and wounded, and triumphantly drove their booty ~~to~~ over the Transvaal border at Rooigrond.

There was much weeping and lamentation in the Barolong town that night as one after another ~~of~~ corpse of the men who had given their lives for their country and for freedom was brought in. Among the slain were several ~~of several~~ Barolong princes, Tawana Molema, Makgetla and his brother Makgetlanyana Phetihu. The Barolong ~~also~~ also lost two Europeans who had been assisting them—Christopher Bethell and Nathan Walker. The circumstances of Bethell's death were unsavoury, and led, afterwards to much correspondence between the British authorities and the Transvaal Government, not without bitterness. According to Rev. J. Mackenzie, "Mr Bethell and Israel Molema, a nephew of Chief Montshiwa and member of the Wesleyan Church among the Barolong prepared to escape together. While doing so, however, Israel's horse was first shot, and then he himself was shot through the shoulder. Mr Bethell attempted to lift Israel on to his own horse, intending to spring

on behind him, but did not succeed in this. Israel was unable to help himself and begged Mr Bethell to leave him and make his escape. While still persisting in his efforts to carry off his companion, Bethell was shot in the face. The bullet almost missed him, but entered below one eye which was destroyed, passing out in front of the ear. Thus wounded he fell to the ground and his horse ran away. The first freebooter who came to the place was an Englishman. He recognised Bethell and taunted him with his condition. Bethell asked the Englishman to take him to the camp as a prisoner. This man consented for himself but said he would not answer for the Boers. Then two Boers came up, and after taunting Bethell shot him through the head, both firing at him. Israel Molema feigned death successfully while all this took place and after nightfall made his escape to Mafikeng, where he announced to Mr J. Wright and to Montshiwa the manner in which Bethell had met his death." (Aust^ral Africa Vol. 1 p. 389). Wright, who was captured by the freebooters upon the day following, had also opportunities of hearing ample corroboration of the story from Boer sources, as it was at this time rather boasted of as an achievement." (Ibid)

Two days after the engagement, Commandant J.P. (Kotie) Snyman Of Marico, the same who had dictated the/peace terms of October 1882, came to Montshiwa to ask for his submission as it was clear to friend and foe alike that England would not, or could not help him. Though torn and bleeding, Montshiwa was, however, neither 'mors-dood' (stone dead, nor despondent, and he declined Snyman's proffered hand. The commandant returned to Marico breathing out threatenings and slaughter against Montshiwa and his tribe.

Although Mackenzie had been appointed Deputy Commissioner by the Secretary of State at the special request of Sir Hercules Robinson, it was surprising how completely the latter/succumbed to colonial views and prejudices and aligned himself with Mackenzies opponents. ~~xxxxxxxx~~ Mackenzie was now accused of being too partial to the Batswana, and being a liberal, whose attitude ~~xxxxx~~ towards the blacks was disliked, and his policy was steadily undermined by Colonial officials - Sir Thomas Upington (Prime Minister), Graham Bower Colonial Secretary, and Cecil J. Rhodes, who wielded great influence with the High Commissioner.

Collection Number: A979

Silas T MOLEMA and Solomon T PLAATJE Papers

PUBLISHER:

Publisher:- Historical Papers, University of the Witwatersrand

Location:- Johannesburg

©2012

LEGAL NOTICES:

Copyright Notice: Copyright for all materials on the Historical Papers website is owned by The University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg and is protected by South African copyright law. Material may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, displayed, or otherwise published in any format, without the prior written permission of the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

Disclaimer and Terms of Use: Provided that you maintain all copyright and other notices contained therein, you may download material (one machine readable copy and one print copy per page) for your personal and/or educational non-commercial use only.

People using these records relating to the archives of Historical Papers, The Library, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, are reminded that such records sometimes contain material which is uncorroborated, inaccurate, distorted or untrue. While these digital records are true facsimiles of paper documents and the information contained herein is obtained from sources believed to be accurate and reliable, Historical Papers, University of the Witwatersrand has not independently verified their content. Consequently, the University is not responsible for any errors or omissions and excludes any and all liability for any errors in or omissions from the information on the website or any related information on third party websites accessible from this website.

This document is part of a collection owned by the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg and deposited at Historical Papers at The University of the Witwatersrand.
