

- 1 In June 1895 Memorandum of understanding ... issued of the proposal
- 2 The news was received with
- 3 we have heard
- 4 ~~in the year 1895~~ ~~steps were taken for annexation~~
since Sept 1885, when for the
- 5 In May 1895
Chief Molala
- 6 Page 4 Unexpected help
White adv. Ned Shiffard
with these resources
Montshi was a very old man
Shiffard had access to a safe
letter to the Queen.
- 7 Page 60 Your Govt has been paid.
The High Commission
Shiffard before words to Boers
Akwaka, however
H. to Adm. & the Chief Mntsh's has lab.
mediated by the conflict
Hami gained a point

The new colonial gov was trying to
know his good address from

(V)
Min of the
Crown
May
(VI)

Since September 1885 when the Southern Bechuanaland was created into a Crown Colony, Rhodes had desired it to be annexed to the Cape Colony, but but the Cape House of Assembly had declined to shoulder the financial burden involved, and Britain the Imperial Government was left to nurse the baby. Now, it was generally felt in Parliamentary circles that the time was opportune to annex the Crown Colony, and as the British Government has always been ready to hand it over, there ~~was no difficulty when Rhodes requested the Colonial Office for~~ in fact almost anxious to get rid of the incubus, there was no difficulty when Rhodes, as Prime Minister of the Cape ~~requested~~ intimated that the Cape was prepared to undertake its administration and requested that it should be so handed over. The request and consent were a mere formality, as far as official circles were concerned. Not so with the Barolong of Montshiwa and the Bathaping of Mankurwane.

In May (1895) Montshiwa ~~addressed a petition to the High Commission~~ and his Council, "as loyal and obedient subjects of our lady the great and good Queen Victoria" addressed a Petition to High Commissioner Robinson against the annexation. The Petition was signed by the Chief himself, his son Besele and 48 princes and royal headmen representing 15,000 people.

Chief Molala Mankurwane of Taung, a political reflex of Montshiwa like like his father before him, acted in the identical manner. When Montshiwa heard that there was active canvassing among the European population of ^{making} so strengthen the case for annexation, he wrote to the Acting Administrator Francis J. Newton at Vryburg to protest against the step, and finished by saying "the Barolong nation dread the Government of the cape as rulers."

Montshiwa was strongly supported ~~in his opposition to the annexation~~ by the Wesleyan Missionary Society in his opposition to the annexation, through its Superintendent the Rev Owen Atkins. He wrote independently to the Colonial Office ~~that~~ representing that "the Annexation of British Bechuanaland to the Cape Colony would be disastrous to the interests of the natives residing in that country."

1895-

July
May
③ VII

Unexpected help for Montshiwa came from Vryburg when in July (1895) the people of that town also petitioned the High Commissioner against the annexation of British Bechuanaland to the Cape Colony as being against the interests of the country and people, and that "the petitioners have no confidence in the administration of the Cape Colony."

Taking quite a different course, the High Commissioner recommended to the Colonial Office that Native Reserves be made inalienable for forty years and also that a tax should be levied on the people of the reserves to force them to work - a tax in fact for laziness. These suggestions show, once more, the High Commissioner's total lack of sympathy with black people. His suggestions were, however, turned down by Joseph Chamberlain, the Colonial Secretary. In reply, he informed the High Commissioner that he would only consent to the annexation on certain ~~grounds~~ conditions, namely 1. The preservation of Native Reserves and other native rights.

2. Continuation of prohibition of sale of alcoholic drinks to Africans provided by the existing laws of British Bechuanaland.
3. The recognition of native laws and the jurisdiction secured to native chiefs under Proclamation 2. British Bechuanaland Proclamations 1885
4. The Cape Government to continue Montshiwa's pension of £300 per annum for life, and half that amount to his direct heir.

July

While Administrator Sidney Shippard and George Boyes, Magistrate at Mafeking were busy carrying out the High Commissioner and Rhodes behests to try and nullify Montshiwa's opposition to the annexation, Gerald Donovan was similarly employed at Taung carrying out instructions to neutralise Mankurwane Molala's objections. Both at Mafeking and Taung, the High Commissioner's and Rhode's emissaries were drafting statements of withdrawal of petition against annexation, and presenting them with specious and subtle arguments to the chiefs and their counselors for signature. To the conditions stipulated by the Secretary of State, two others were later added; namely that

the

1. the seat of European magistracy would be maintained at Mafeking,
2. The Glen Grey Act would not be introduced among the Bechuanas without the express legislation, and Her Majesty's consent.

With these reservations, and after many meetings, special pleadings, assurances, protestations and promises by Sidney Shippard, Montshiwa was ultimately induced to partially withdraw or modify his petition against Annexation, but even then, without grave misgivings. Sidney Shippard jumped at this sign of weakening and at once wired the High Commissioner that Montshiwa had withdrawn his Petition against Annexation. In fact, however, the Chief had done nothing of the kind. He had not met his council to put the matter before them in its new light, and when he did, the majority were to reject the Annexation and retain the status quo. They also spoke strongly against the intention of the British Government to hand over their lands in the Bechuanaland Protectorate to the administration of the Chartered Company. They supported the action of the three chiefs, Sebele, Kgama and Bathoen, who were about to proceed to England to protest against to the Colonial Office against the contemplated transfer of their lands to the Chartered Company.

Montshiwa was a very old man (80 years old) at this time, and would very much have liked to join the three Protectorate chiefs, but had to content himself with deputing his son Besele, and his secretary Stephen Befenya to join the three Chiefs and represent him at the Colonial Office.

Aug

Shippard had of course to notify the High Commissioner, and the latter the Secretary of State of the new developments; "Montshiwa has modified his previous withdrawal of his Petition against Annexation, and also petitions against transfer of his Protectorate lands to the British South African Company."

On the 17th of August, Prince Besele, and Montshiwa's secretary, Stephen Befenya left Mafeking to join the three Protectorate Chiefs at Cape Town. They carried the following letter :

Mafeking, 16th August 1895

"To the Queen of England and Her Ministers,
We send greetings and pray that you are all living nicely. You will know us. We are not strangers. We have been your children since 1882 1885.

Your Government had been good, and under it we have received much blessing, prosperity and peace. We are sorry you have taken our land from us and given it to the Cape Government. We do not know their ways and laws. Please make it very just that the Cape shall not have the power to take away the piece of land you gave us in the land settlement of 1886.

Again we Barolong are very astonished ~~that~~ because we hear that the Queens' Government wants to give away our country in the Protectorate to the Chartered Company, we mean the B.S.A. Company.

Our land there is a good land, our fathers lived in it and are buried in it, and we keep all our cattle in it. What will we do if you give our land away? My people are increasing very fast and are filling the land.

We keep all the laws of the great Queen. We have fought for her, we have always been the friends of her people; we are not idle; we build houses, we plough may gardens; we sow lots of mealies, kaffir corn, wheat and forage. Our people work in the gold fields.

Why are you tired of ruling us? Why do you want to throw us away? We do not fight against your laws. We keep them and were living nicely. Our words are No; No. The Queens Government must not give my people's land in the Protectorate to the Chartered Company.

I have given that land in farms to some of my headmen. The farms have been measured a long time ago, and the Administration has promised to register the titles. That land is my people's and we are just sitting quiet until we get the Registered Titles/Deeds of those farms as promised by the Administration.

Wessels my son and heir, and Stephen Lefenya, one of my sub-chiefs who carry this letter will speak all our words to the Queen.

Peace to you all, We greet you.

Please send a good word back.

I am etc

Montshiwa.

If the great monarchs ever read some of these ^{quant. epistles brimful of pathos + childlike} ~~pathetic and trusting~~ letters from their devoted subjects, then surely, though uneasy may be the head that wears a crown, yet it cannot ~~be~~ wholly ~~withou~~ be without some compensation of parental amusement and the assurances of filial confidence.

The High Commissioner was furious at the bold step taken by Montshiwa without previous consultation with him. He wired to Administrator Shippard "I understand Lefenya, Montshiwa's representative accompanied Kgama's party to England." He feared that the Secretary of State would not be able to see Montshiwa's representatives and asked Shippard to urge upon Montshiwa to recall them.

Actually, however, neither Besele Montshiwa nor Stephen Lefenya left for England. The Chiefs Sebele, Khama and Bathoen sailed on the 20th of August 1895 without them, and they returned in due course to Mafeking.

Still bristling with anger, the High Commissioner again wired to the Administrator a message which he sent in transmission to the Chief "Montshiwa had behaved in a vacillating and shuffling manner. He had first petitioned against the Annexation of British Bechuanaland to the Cape Colony; he had then withdrawn his petition; he had next repudiated his withdrawal and then ratified it, and finally he had sent two men to England to petition the Queen against the Annexation. That it was difficult to place any reliance upon any engagement made by the Chief," and he had lost all faith in him.

Montshiwa chuckled at this intended censure, and said he had learnt his vacillating diplomacy from the High Commissioner. As for faith he had lost faith in that high official so long ago as 1881 on the occasion of negotiations of the Pretoria Convention.

Aug 18

XI 2

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XII

Understand by the conflicting currents of thoughts and action the process of annexation... of August the British Bechuanaland Act of Annexation was passed by the Cape Parliament... received Royal Assent on the 3rd Dec 1895. and the Annexation... duly authorised by the order in Council. Haggling and bargaining... Shippard "It does not make sense... Montshiwa withdraws his petition... + it is undesirable to make any contract with him or bargain.

with him on the subject except as regards his pension.
Please inform Montshiwa that, and that as he seems to
be unable to make up his mind, the petition can stand."

August 28

fr. 4-1

Sheffield therefore wrote to Magistrate Boyes of Mafeking 21/8/95
① Mr. Montshiwa by all means to recall Wessels (Besse) and
Stephan Kefenge at once. Arrive here he will do more harm
than good by sending messengers to England at this
crisis. It is ^{quite possible} that promises
made to him will be carried out - provided he does not
renew his petition against Annexation. Point out that his
position is a very different one from that of the Chiefs
Bathole, Sebele and Kgamae none of whom pay hut-tax and
who are not actually subjects of the Queen as he is, but
merely protected chiefs... I depend upon his showing his
loyalty and faith in the Queen's promises by recalling
Wessels and Stephan Kefenge at once. (C. 7932, p. 27)

5 Still trusting with ^{again word} ^{to convey to Montshiwa}
of ^{of student Lawrence} ^{a message of which he meant to}
Oct. 1. 1895: H.C. to Administrator Mafeking
1895: "The Chief Montshiwa has behaved in such a shuffling manner that I
do not attach any importance to his withdrawal. He first petitioned
against Annexation, then withdrew his petition, then repudiated his
withdrawal, and then ^{re-}stified his withdrawal. Finally I learn by today
press telegrams that he has sent two men to England to petition against
annexation and that he has done this without consultation with me. I
feel that it is difficult to place any reliance on any engagement made
by him, and I ~~must~~ must refuse to make any contract or bargain with
him in regard to the Annexation of the Crown Colony beyond what is emb-
raced in the Annexation Act. I think he ought to know that I am displ-
wased by his conduct, and informed of the position I assume in this
matter." (C. 7932 pp 32, 33)

(7) There is no doubt that the Chief Montshiwa had no mind of
his own in the matter of the Annexation of his country to the C.
He was ~~foolish~~ ^{foolish} and ~~had~~ ^{had} reached that age when the intellect is
apt to be feeble & the mind unsteady especially with issues that
are ^{immediately} ~~problems~~ ^{problems} that are foreign to custom and tradition. While
the Chief ~~was~~ ^{was} disposed to support protection and ~~rule~~ ^{rule} represented by the
Rebillion he could not and dreaded colonial rule the
oppression of ~~what~~ ^{what} ~~was~~ ^{was} ~~to~~ ^{to} ~~him~~ ^{him} ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~his~~ ^{his} ~~interests~~ ^{interests} by the
me + some official as High Comm. & Gov of the Cape was always pushing
to him ~~any~~ ^{any} ~~other~~ ^{other} ~~dis~~ ^{dis} ~~advancing~~ ^{advancing} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~Conf~~ ^{Conf} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~advice~~ ^{advice} ~~he~~ ^{he} ~~received~~ ^{received}
from ~~his~~ ^{his} ~~officials~~ ^{officials} ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~Gov~~ ^{Gov} ~~officials~~ ^{officials} ~~left~~ ^{left} ~~him~~ ^{him} ~~un~~ ^{un} ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ ~~formed~~ ^{informed}.

(21/8/1895)

14 ✓ August: Administrator Shippard therefore wrote/excitedly from Vryburg to Magistrate Boyes at Mafeking "Urge Montshiwa by all means to recall Wessels (Besele) and Stephen Lefenya at once. Assure him he will do more harm than good by sending messengers to England at this crisis. He is quite safe and may be sure that promises made to him will be carried out provided he does not renew his Petition against Annexation. Point out that his position is very different from that of the chiefs Bathoen, Sebele and Khama none of whom pay hut tax, and who are not actually subjects of the Queen as he is, but merely protected chiefs.. I shall be Mafeking Wednesday and will discuss the whole matter with him. I depend upon his showing his loyalty and faith in the Queen's promises by recalling Wessels and Lefenya at once." (C.7932.p 27) 1/2 Montshiwa

13 ✓ 2 Actually, however, neither Besele nor Stephen Lefenya had left for England. The Chiefs Sebele, Khama and Bathoen sailed on the 20th of August 1895 without them, and they returned to Mafeking in due course. Undeterred by these conflicting currents of thought and action, the plan of Annexation went on inexorably to fruition, and at the end of August (1895) the British Bechuanaland Act of Annexation was passed by the Cape Parliament.

16 ✓ 3 Having thus gained a point, and tired of haggling and bargaining, the High Commissioner Robinson wrote the Administrator Shippard - " It does not matter now whether Montshiwa withdraws his Petition or not, and it is undesirable to make any contract or bargain with him on the subject except as regards his pension. Please inform Montshiwa this, and that as he seems unable to make up his mind, the Petition can stand ." The Annexation received Royal assent on the 3rd of October, and the Annexation Proclamation was duly authorised by an Order in Council.

June 1895 ✓ 4 In June (1895) rumour and news of the British Government's intentions of withdrawing from Bechuanaland Protectorate and ceding it to the Chartered Company was filtering through to the Bechuanaland Chiefs. When in August British Bechuanaland was annexed to the Cape Colony, no more proof was necessary that the British Government was shading the ~~fact~~ anxious to shed Bechuanaland and its Batswana people.

July 1894 ✓ 5 In view of the original definition of the field of operation of the British South African Company as included in their Charter, and also because of the definite promise of the Colonial Office (Knutsford, Ripon and his successors Ripon and Chamberlain) to transfer the administration of Bechuanaland Protectorate to the Company as soon as the latter was able to undertake it. Rhodes now demanded that the promise should be implemented. Provision was now made for the transfer of the Protectorate, its lands, its people and its chiefs- like so much baggage- to the Chartered Company. *It became necessary to extend the railway from Vryburg to Mafeking northwards*

The news was received by the Batswana chiefs and people with unfeigned alarm. To be handed over lock, stock and barrel to the Chartered Company which had just furiously displayed its temper by smashing up the powerful Matebele tribes of Lobengula and ruthlessly disposing of that potentate himself : Was it for this the Batswana had asked for British protection? To be sold and handed over like tobacco without as much as consulting them as to their feelings:

" We have heard's statements", they wrote to the Colonial Office on the 31st of July 1895; We have heard statements that have startled us and we are in distress concerning them. We cannot believe or think that it possible that the Government under which we have found rest and peace can thus leave us and put us under another Government, especially that concerning which we have heard such deeds in Matebeleland. Such a prospect is not one to which we can look forward except with weeping and distress, and we beg of you to help us if there can be found a means of escape and we will thank you with all our hearts ". ... Is the British Government weary of us us ? We refuse to be thus cast away. We wish to remain under the protection of the Queen of England ... Hear we beseech you, the prayer of your petitioners which is the petition of the three chiefs and their three tribes, namely Bathoen, Sebele and Khama.

A month later (29th August 1895) Lentwe Pilane of Mochudi on behalf of himself and his Bakgatla tribe also sent a Petition to the Queen:- " We do not expect any good from the Chartered Company. We know that we will be slaves in their hands. We know that all the rights will be taken from us Our utmost prayer is that we should remain in Your Majesty's protection. "

On the 20th August the chiefs went to Engl

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