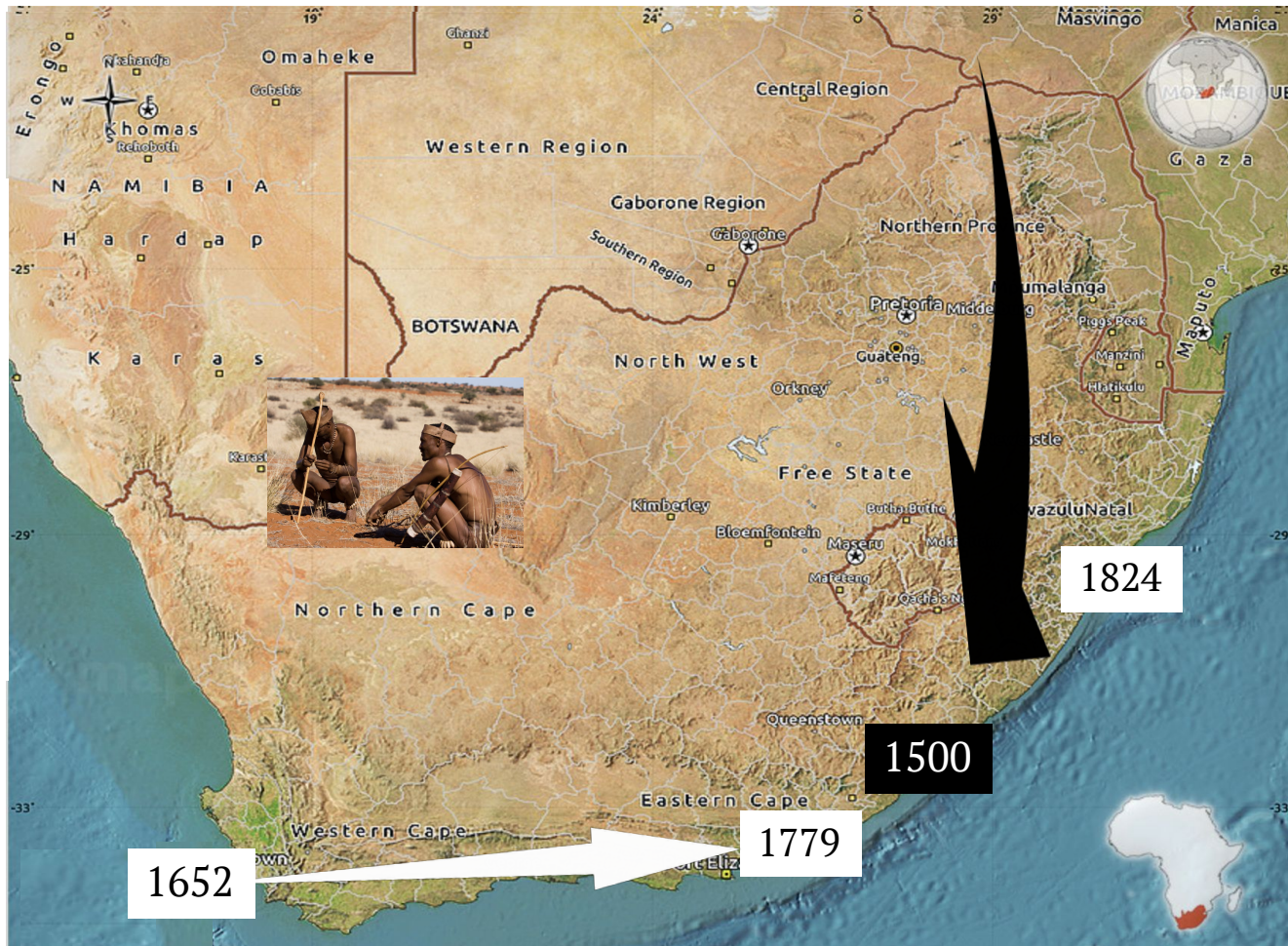


South African Skirmishes

Prepared for:
New York Collectors' Club

Prepared by:
Jan Hofmeyr

Date:
20 September 2023



Frontier Wars: 1779 – 1879

A series of 9 wars over shifting territorial boundaries

Dutch Farmers: 1779-1781 (Great Fish River); 1789-1793; 1799-1803

British Government: 1811-1812 – the "buffer zone" war

Gov. Cradock: no more bloodshed "than was necessary to impress on the minds of these savages a proper degree of terror and respect."

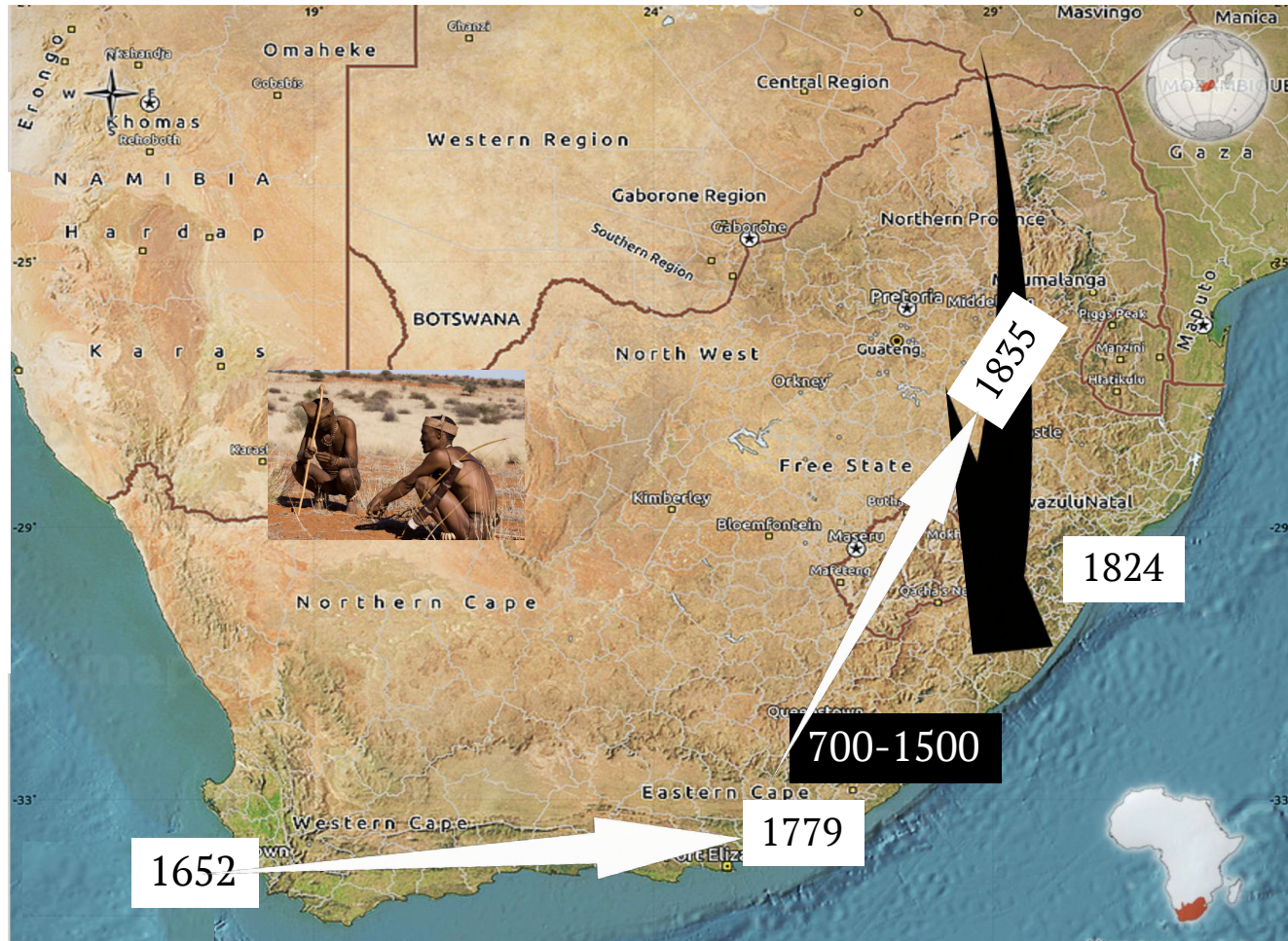
British Government: 1818-1819 – the Civil/Treaty War; Keiskamma "100k buffer"

Concept of "friendly" natives. Huge displacement of people.

British Government: 1834-1836: Poverty, drift back, cattle raids

Gov. D'Urban: Kei river = new British territory (170 kms),
London fired D'Urban, accused Dutch of being the problem.
Settlers withdrew to Keiskamma. Stockenstrom treaty period.

The consequences of 1835



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London fired D'Urban, accused Dutch of being the problem.
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Robert Godlonton: "the British race was selected by god himself to colonize Kaffraria" Treaties null and void in 1844.

Seventh “War of the Axe”: 1846-1847

(The first of Sandile’s Wars)



A Chief had stolen an axe, escort killed by Xhosa raiders.

Massive mobilization – civilian slaughter, Xhosa led by Sandile.

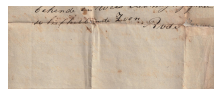
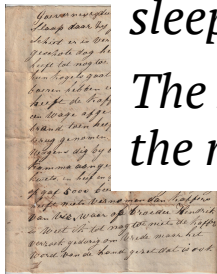
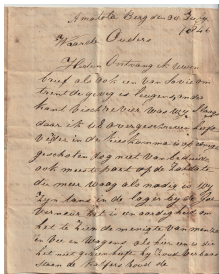
Brits on losing side until joined by the Dutch.

Details of the letter: 30 July 1846 in the Amatola Mountains

No franking privilege. “To Pay” Manuscript “6” is the 4^d rate + 50% penalty.

"The Kaffirs keep the Governor night after night without sleep, as they continuously shoot at the camp..."

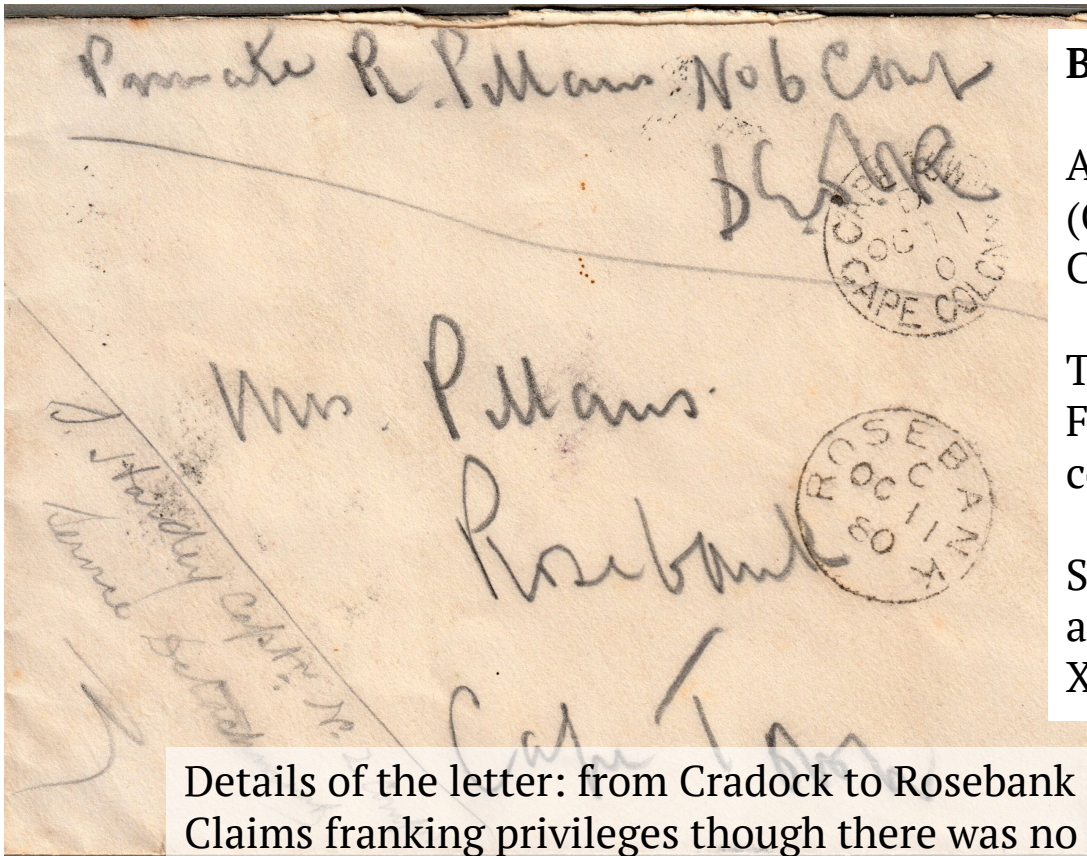
The Kaffirs constantly ask for peace but it is refused. That is the reason why the Kaffirs keep shooting at the camp."



Ninth (Gov. Frere Confederation) War: 1877-1879

(Sandile's last war)

The Cape at Peace with the Xhosa (1853-1876): frontier lightly policed by European settler police with Fengu tribal allies; territory and property respected on both sides; mutually beneficial trade.



British Imperial Ambition

A Southern African confederation (Canadian model), rejected by the Cape.

Tribal conflict used as an excuse by Frere to conquer an independent country.

Short summary: a war of Britain against both the Cape and the Xhosa. Sandile defeated and killed.

Details of the letter: from Cradock to Rosebank in October 1880
Claims franking privileges though there was no such thing at the time
Granted by the commanding officer.

Basuto (Gov. Frere Imperial) Gun War: 1880-1881

England lost

Frere “Preservation of Peace” Act: disarm all black people and confiscate land for white settlement and double what was called “the hut tax”!



Details of the letter
On Active Service.
Stamps unobtainable.
Arrived in Cape Town: 21
July 1879.
No franking privilege.
Rate = 6^d, penalty = 100%

London fired Frere.

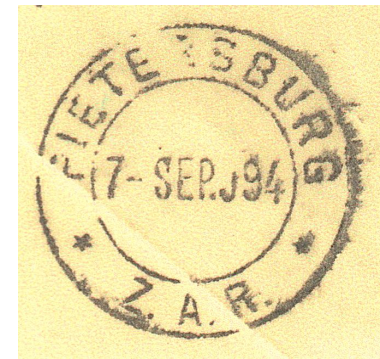
Independent Kingdom under the protection of the British Empire

Makgoba Campaign - Soutpansberg (115 kms): 1895

ZAR annexed land – resistance started in 1894

Chief Makgoba led guerilla resistance for two or three years

Captured and beheaded by Swazi soldiers fighting on behalf of the ZAR



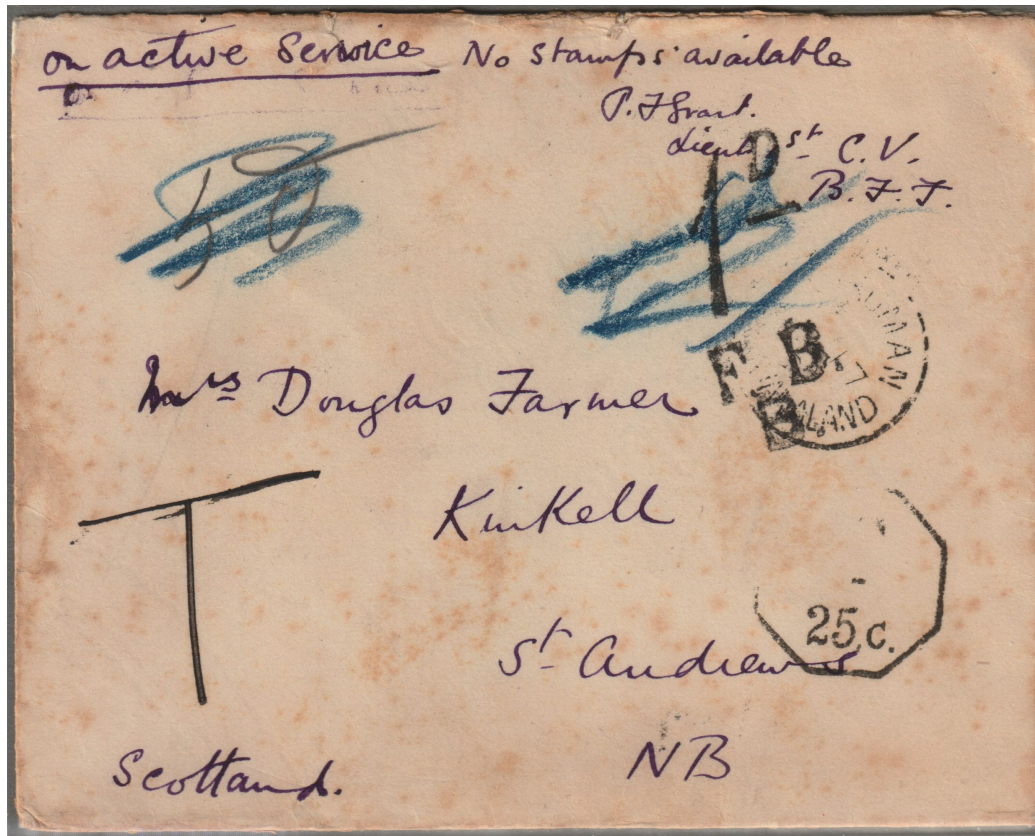
Details of the letter
"Velddienst" means
active service.

Backstamped Pietersburg
7 September 1894.

Franking privilege.

Galeshewe Campaign: 17 March 1897

1878: Cattle wander onto Dutch settler farm land. All shot for fear of Rinderpest. Led to a 20 year conflict. Galeshewe captured on 26 August 1897



Details of the letter

On Active Service. No stamps available.

Kuruman 17 March. Backstamped St Andrews 10 April.

No franking privilege: 25 centime penalty (2x rate)

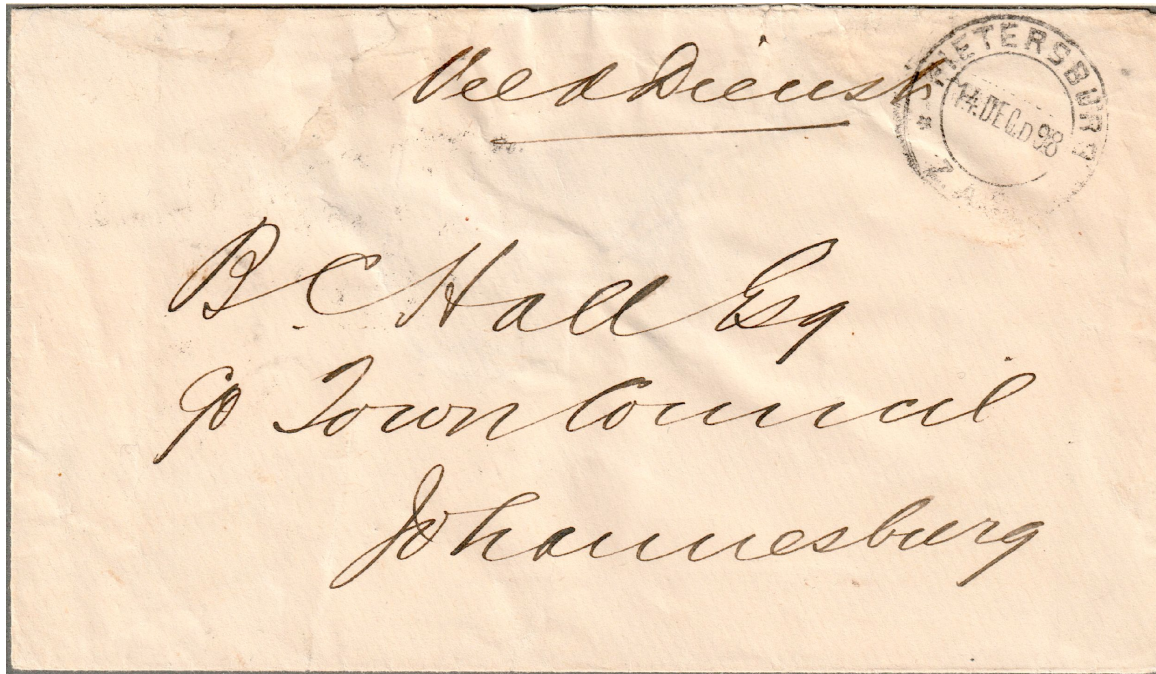
Incorrectly 1^d in the UK. Then correctly 5^d.

Crossed out and delivered free.

Mphefu War - Doorns River (207 kms): 1898

Not so much a war as a rout: 18 October to 31 December

Afrikaans settlers wanted land. Mphefu claimed the Doorn river as an international boundary. Afrikaners crossed the river and attacked. Torched Chief Mphefu's "kraal" – he fled to Zimbabwe.



Details of the letter

"VeldDienst"

Pietersburg 14 December.

Arrived in Johannesburg,
15 December.

Franking privilege: carried
free.

Thank you for
your stamina and
attention