



1. ANDREW GEDDES BAIN, about 1854.

From a tinted photograph on glass presented to the Albany Museum by W. B. Lanham, Esq., of Highlands, Albany.

JOURNALS OF ANDREW GEDDES BAIN

Trader, Explorer, Soldier, Road Engineer
and Geologist

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CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS WITH NOTES	v
PREFACE	vii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	ix
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH	xi
I JOURNEY TO THE NORTH, 1826	3
Journal of A. G. Bain written during a journey to Dithubaruba near Molepolole in Bechuanaland.	
APPENDIX I Draft of a letter from Bain with reference to the journey.	71
APPENDIX II A list of Meridian Altitudes of six and the latitudes of eight of the places visited. The observations were taken by J. B. Biddulph.	75
II JOURNEY TO THE UMZIMVUBU RIVER, 1829	79
Journal written by Bain during the journey.	
APPENDIX An extract from <i>Relation du Naufrage du Navire français l'Eole sur la Côte de la Caffrerie</i> , by C. E. Boniface, Cape Town, 1829.	125
III HUNTING EXPEDITION TO THE MOLOPO RIVER, 1834	131
A letter from Bain to J. C. Chase describing the journey and the attack made on his party by the MaTebele.	
APPENDIX Extract from a letter written by the Rev. P. Lemue, a French Missionary at Motito. ..	156
IV MILITARY JOURNAL, 1836	163
A rough journal kept by Bain while in command at Fort Thomson.	
APPENDIX Extract from <i>The Graham's Town Journal</i> , 1847.	186
V KAATJE KEKKELBEK	193
The original rough draft and the <i>Sam Sly's Journal</i> version of <i>Kaatje Kekkelbek</i> .	
VI TWO LETTERS ON ROADS	205
1. Draft of a letter from Bain to <i>The South African Commercial Advertiser</i> , 1825.	
2. A letter from Bain to John Montagu, 1846.	
VII GEOLOGY OF THE EASTERN PROVINCE	217
Draft of a letter from Bain to Sir Henry de la Beche, Foreign Secretary to the London Geological Society, dated 1844, with the list of fossils which accompanied the letter.	
INDEX TO NAMES OF PEOPLE AND PLACES	239

I had thus the satisfaction to see the first fruits of my hunting expedition fall by my side & a comely prize it was for a young sportsman. It was larger than any ox I ever saw & must have weighed at least 1000 lbs. The Bechuanas followed the report of my gun & without any ceremony commenced skinning the unwieldy animal. Their eyes sparkled with joy in anticipation of a glorious feast but, when they perceived the fat with which the creature was covered, they seemed to be in complete raptures. Our waggons soon arrived when I heard that Old Barend had brought his eland close down to the waggon & Mr. Biddulph jumped off & shot him. They were both males, (as were all the troop we had hunted) exceedingly fat and heavy & consequently not in condition for running. I found, close to the place where I shot the eland, an ostrich nest with 25 eggs, so that by the bounty of providence our table was abundantly spread in the wilderness.

After loading up the meat we continued our journey through a deep sandy country thinly covered with camelthorn⁵³ & hook thorn⁵⁴ trees. The ground was covered with the tracks of Rhinoceroses & Camelleopards but we did not get a sight of any of them. At sunset we reached the Mashow River⁵⁵ (or rather its course for it contained no water here, tho' we found some very poor Bechuanas living on its banks at the distance of at least 3 miles from the water). What their reasons can be for building their houses so far from that necessary article of life I never could learn, but true it is that the Bechuanas seldom live within a mile or two of water & some even as far as 4 miles distant. The most probable reason that I can assign is that their presence there would prevent the wild animals from coming to drink at the same pools which supply them & consequently deprive them of the game which they catch in pitfalls in the vicinity of those places.

We continued our journey down the south bank of the river & on our way Mr. B. shot a fine large Springbok. At six o'clock we reached 2 pools of water (called Messowby) in the bed of the river under a craggy rock, where we halted for the night. Our oxen had been without water from yesterday at noon & on being unyoked flew to the pools with avidity.

⁵³ Kameeldoorn. *Acacia giraffae*.

⁵⁴ *Acacia delinens*.

⁵⁵ Mashowing.

August 1st. Our first work this morning was to cut up the flesh of the 2 elands into what is called by the Dutch *Tasaal vleesch*.⁵⁶ It is merely performed by cutting the meat into very thin slices & drying it in the sun, by which means it keeps well without salt. The Bechuanas lent their cordial assistance to this work and did not forget to lay aside for their own use such tit bits as suited their hungry palates.

I saw 3 men dragging away the eland's neck and asked them what they wanted to do with it, when one of them claimed it as his prize for having carried my gun to the hunting field. This, it seems, is a perquisite of the gun bearers always given by the Griqua hunters. I had no objection to it as our waggons were already too heavy, besides we had more meat than we wanted. Travellers in this country need seldom be at a loss for food if they have one or two good marksmen among their number. Our bill of fare this day was rather respectable for the midst of a desert. It was as follows:

Salt mutton, Do. beef, 2 elands, 1 hare, 1 springbok, 2 plovers, 1 koran, 3 partridges, 2 wild ducks & 25 ostrich eggs. To which we hoped, in a day or two, to add 1 buffalo, 1 rhinoceros, 2 camelleopards & 1 koedou!!

Our little party now presented rather a busy scene. The meat being all cut up into thin flakes was spread out on the rocks & bushes to dry & had all the appearance of a bleachfield of flesh. A great number of fires were lit, round which sat picturesque groups of Bechuanas in all the various attitudes of roasting, boiling, grilling & eating. Many strangers had joined us without our knowing whence they came, for, as Old Barend expressed it, "They seemed on such occasions to rise out of the ground."

About noon some women came down from the Kraal we had passed last night to fetch water. They seemed to be very poor, being quite without any beads, a sure sign of poverty among the Bechuanas. Each had about a dozen ostrich egg shells which were wrapped in a skin on their backs to carry water in & some had bladders, small buck skins, etc., for the same purpose. We gave them some tobacco and some elands flesh. They then filled their vessels & went away contentedly.

⁵⁶ Literally tassel meat. Usually called *biltong*.

Having filled all our water casks we left Messowby about 1 p.m., taking a circuitous route to avoid the numerous pitfalls for game which are hereabout dug by the natives. They make travelling in the night very dangerous for, should any of our cattle or dogs fall in, they are sure to be spiked to death.

At sunset we passed a sort of cave called by the Griquas, Kliphuis, where there is, occasionally, water in small quantities but seldom enough for 2 or 3 span of oxen. At 7 o'clock we span'd out in the midst of a thick wood of camelthorn & in the night had a serenade of lions.

Augt. 2nd. At sunrise this morning we continued our journey through a beautiful woody country where we had a sight of 2 Rhinoceroses, but we could not spare time to hunt them on account of our oxen having been the preceding night without water. We started 3 Buffaloes, at which we had a shot, but they escaped & we did not follow them.

At $\frac{1}{2}$ past 12 p.m. we reached Honing Valley or Choorie,⁵⁷ a periodical lake of about 12 miles in circumference, but at present dry except for a few small springs in one corner. Some women & children filling their egg shells with water seemed to be afraid of our approach & scampered off in great haste.

This evening, while sitting reading in my waggon, I could plainly hear the clumsy rhinoceros pacing cautiously by to the water, & the loud roar of two lions made the rocks under which we were span'd out resound. It was too dark to shoot them, so I contented myself by humming over some of my native airs, which, contrasted to the stillness of the night & the occasional hollow chorus of the dread monarch of the Forest (as he has been injudiciously called), had an effect which I am at a loss to describe. I contrasted this scene to the peaceful valleys of Caledonia where, free from every danger, I have in my youthful days chaunted the self same songs. Pleasing recollections crowded on my mind. They transported me to the midst of my native country, to the bosom of my family and friends, while a lonely stranger in the deserts of Africa.

Augt. 3rd. After having ascertained the latitude of this place to be [omitted]⁵⁸ we started in a more easterly direction

⁵⁷ Honing Vlei or Chue Lake, Northern limit of Burchell's journey.

⁵⁸ Latitude 28° 18' in Biddulph's list, appendix II.

& were joined by some fresh game eaters who were going to the Baralong country. In the course of an hour we reached another periodical lake, but entirely without water. After travelling over a level country entirely destitute of grass, which had all been eaten up by the locusts, we arrived at the skirt of a wood where we halted for the night without finding water.

Augt. 4th. At day-light we resumed our journey through the wood & soon got thro' it to an open plain of deep sand & lime stone. Here we started a large rhinoceros. Mr. Biddulph shot him. He stumbled but soon ran away again. I followed him on horseback, dismounted & gave him a shot which brought him on his knees. One of Barend's people coming up gave him one thro' the head, when he instantly died. He could not have survived the wound he received from Mr. B. tho' he ran a considerable distance before I overtook him. I took a drawing of the monster as he lay dead. It was a male of the sort called by the Griquas the Zwart or Black Rhinoceros. During the time I was taking the sketch the Bechuanas stood by with their knives & assagais in readiness to cut him up & evinced great impatience to commence their operations, wishing me (I believe) far enough. I no sooner told them I was done than they flew to it with the avidity of hungry wolves &, in less than half an hour, not a bit of the carcass was to be seen there. They cut it up in small slips & ran away to the bushes round about & hung it up to dry, leaving us but a very small proportion.

At noon we ordered the waggons to proceed to the water, which was only about an hour's ride from where we had killed the rhinoceros, & Mr. B., myself, Old Barend & one of his people went out on horseback to hunt the rhinoceroses which abound in this place.

We passed a herd of Buffaloes which we did not attempt shooting, our object being other game, & in half an hour we perceived one of those tremendous animals we were in quest of. We rode up to within 200 yards of him &, giving our horses to our gun bearers, we crept close up to him when we perceived another lying asleep by him. Old Barend, Klaas & I let fly, my gun missed fire, but Klaas's shot wounded the one slightly &, the other getting up, they both galloped off very swiftly. We mounted & followed them a great distance

thro' a very rough stony plain full of those troublesome bushes called by the Dutch *wagten beitjes*. Barend & Klaas kept to windward & we to leeward when the fierce animals, smelling them, turned round & gave them chase. We came up to their assistance & succeeded in turning them & in a short time, coming close to them, we all dismounted & gave them another volley. The largest one then received 2 wounds which did not seem to impede his progress in the least, so we reloaded & pursued them further when they made a short stand. Old B. & myself gave the same one each a shot which pierced his shoulder a little too high to be mortal. We had now hunted them about 8 miles when they seemed a little exhausted and another shot from Old B. brought him on his knees. Mr. B then gave him one in the neck which made him spring up again & he attempted to run at us, when Klaas & I, having time to take a steady aim, brought the fierce monster to the ground.

This was now the second we had killed today &, our horses being tired, we did not think of pursuing the smaller one which was a calf of the one we had shot. The young one, however, did not lose sight of its mother but remained close by. Barend was in the act of loading at the side of the dead carcass when we perceived the enraged animal approaching us, ploughing the stony ground (which seemed to tremble under him) with the death dealing instrument with which his nose is armed. I let fly almost at random, for it was within 6 yards of me when I fired, tho' Mr. B. was much nearer but screened by a small bush. We being right before him he pursued us &, had not Barend called to me to turn behind a bush, he certainly would have trampled me to death. I did as he directed &, the creature's eyesight being very bad, he galloped past me & was soon out of sight.

Having rested ourselves a little on the dead animal I found my legs dreadfully lacerated & bleeding, from the effects of the hook thorns thro' which it is very painful to ride without leather trowsers & gaiters, with neither of which I was provided. We covered the carcass with bushes & rode on to our waggons which we reached in an hour, where we found a great number of strange Bechuanas which the smell of the first rhinoceros had attracted thither. They were feasting luxuriously &

doubtless considered our visit as a very fortunate circumstance, & were not a little over-joyed on hearing that we had shot another.

August 5th. This morning I rode off on horseback to take a drawing of the Rhinoceros, which was of a different kind from the one we first shot & called by the Griquas the White Rhinoceros. I am not aware that this animal has been described by any naturalist. Its horn is much longer than that of the Black one & is perfectly straight. Its nose is broad & flat like that of a Sea Cow⁵⁹ & its ears have the appearance of being placed on its shoulders. It is exceedingly swift &, tho' clumsy, is a handsome animal compared to the other. Its dimensions were as follows:

From the root of the tail to the ears	..	9 ft. 2 in.
Girth of the body	13 "
Tall	1 " 8 "

The foragers that accompanied me evinced the same impatience that they had shewn yesterday while I was taking the drawing. Their number was now much increased & a dreadful slaughter they made the moment I gave the signal to begin. Some mounted on the huge creature's belly to get the best cut of the ribs, others round about in all directions as thick as they could stand. Several with uplifted axes were chopping off the head, while others who could not come nearer were obliged to be content with a foot. As soon as they made an incision thro' the ribs the wind, that burst out of the carcass like the report of a gun, knocked one fellow down & filled the air with a strong disagreeable smell proceeding (I suppose) from the great quantity of blood which filled its inside. A dreadful scramble now took place for the intestines, stomach, heart, liver, etc., which they dragged away like vultures, shook the dung out of the former &, returning, jumped into the carcass over the ancles in blood & filth, with which they filled the intestines & carried them off triumphantly to make Bechuan puddings. In a few minutes the whole carcass was cut up & carried away & a hundred fires seemed to rise behind the bushes covered with flesh. Innumerable steaks were consigned

⁵⁹ Hippopotamus.

else was to be had in the neighbourhood. This was poor consolation to us, for we intended resting here 2 or 3 days, but what could we do? We were travellers & must expect such treats occasionally in the sterile deserts we were crossing.

Just as we had unyoked the oxen 2 quaggas came down to drink at the spring, both of which our people shot, & the natives coming down from the town about a mile distant on hearing the report of guns, we gave them the meat which was a great treat to them. Mallalla,⁶² the Chief, was among the first who came & his first salutation was '*Mpa Muchuco, Cy Nama*'⁶³—give me Tobacco, give me some meat. We satisfied him (at least we gave him a good portion of both) for there is no satisfying a Bechuana, especially a Chief, with either of those articles. The quantities of meat which we exposed to dry here attracted the olfactory nerves of the good people, for they flocked down in great numbers and as they approached us drew in their bellies as if they were starving, tho' well filled with locusts, & attacked us in their turn in the same words with their Chief.

At sunset they withdrew, for they seldom stir abroad after that time (a fortunate circumstance for travellers) on account of the wild beasts of prey which abound all over the country.

August 7th. Our cattle having strayed the preceding night, one of Old Barend's oxen was killed by a lion in the environs of the town. Mallalla brought down 3 fine elephants tusks for which he wanted a gun, which we declined giving him, so he sent them home again. Several others followed his example, but when they saw we would not yield to their wishes they sold them for beads.

In the afternoon I visited the town, or camp, or whatever one may call it, for I did not find a single house or hut, nothing but a number of Kraals for the cattle & similar ones for the people divided into several different wards. I found Mallalla stretched out at full length on a cow hide, basking in the sun. He did not rise up when I entered but gaped & yawned, & spoke to me lying on his face with his naked posterior exposed to the public gaze. Being very thirsty I asked him for some milk, thinking it might be cleaner than their water, but he

⁶² Molala, Tlhaping chief, brother of Mothibi.

⁶³ Mphe motsoko le nama.

denied having any, altho' I am convinced such a man is never without it—it being their principal article of food & his herds of cattle are very considerable. Had I offered a bit of Tobacco it would have been forthcoming in an instant, but gratitude & hospitality are virtues (I believe) quite unknown to the Bechuanas. At least I never saw them put in force, except the first time I visited Matebe when, after giving him a roll of Tobacco, some beads & other trinkets, he gave me a small cow, saying he would not suffer strangers to starve in his dominions. This is an old custom among themselves, when one Captain visits another they are (if on friendly terms) presented with an ox, but they look upon white people to be so very rich that they never can be in want.

I found a great number of people here, they consisted of Baralongs, Baklara & Basanes⁶⁴ who had been living on the Mallapo⁶⁵ River at different parts but had lately come together under Mallalla at this place on account, as they said, of the approach of the Mantatees, but I believe the real cause was the want of water as the pools [where] they were living were quite dried up.

On returning to the waggons I found most of the natives had gone home all well loaded with flesh, for if anything is to be had for asking they will not fail having it. In the evening we sent 4 of our people to watch at the Spring for Buffaloes or Rhinoceroses which came down in great numbers at night to drink. About 10 o'clock we heard the report of a gun & immediately after a tremendous groan. It was a buffalo they had shot & he fell a few paces from the spring.

Augt. 8th. This morning we sent our people to cut up the buffalo, in which employ they were assisted by hundreds who had been attracted by the powerful magnet of flesh to the spot. Very little as usual came to our share.

Very little in the way of trade went on today, Mallalla saying we must move nearer to the town, it being too far to carry the large teeth which they wished to barter. We complied with his wishes, at least by moving half way between the town & water, for we did not wish to be so far away from the latter.

⁶⁴ Dr. Schapera suggests possibly the Masiana of the BaKgalagadi tribe.

⁶⁵ Molopo.

a country slightly undulating & everywhere interspersed with beautiful clumps of trees. At a small dry river, Lorclaanie,⁷⁴ we were met by a deputation from the King Sibgho⁷⁵ whose capital was yet several days' journey off but, being now on the confines of his country, he had sent these people with a cow as a peace offering to welcome us to his country & having orders at the same time to render us every assistance. We were at a loss to know by what means he could have got notice of our arrival, as we were told that he had [had] no communication with the Baralngs for some time & we had only met with the few natives yesterday at Korea, who could not possibly have conveyed him the intelligence in such a short time. We were, however, overjoyed to learn that our visit was likely to prove agreeable to this despotic prince, as we had little reason to expect it from the contradictory reports of the other tribes.

Finding at Lorolaanie a few pits similar to those at Korea we span'd out to cook our victuals &, setting the natives to work to empty them, we had in the course of 3 hours nearly sufficient water for all our cattle, letting them go down one by one to drink. In the afternoon we again set off & at 10 at night reached a small well scarcely yielding sufficient water for ourselves to drink.

Augt. 19th. This morning our eyes were gladdened with a view of distant mountains to the N.E.E. which were as refreshing a sight as the first view of land after a long voyage, as we had scarcely seen anything in the shape of a hill since we left the Chue lake. We found our cattle devouring the wild water-melons with which this country abounds, which was a proof that they had not got a sufficient quantity of water yesterday; so we lost no time in spanning in that we might reach Sibootzaanie⁷⁶ by an early hour where we understood there was plenty of water.

On our way we started a large White Rhinoceros which our dogs chased a considerable way until, getting in between some trees, they kept the Monster at bay until we came up, when

⁷⁴ Lorolwane.

⁷⁵ Sebego was a son of Makaba II, the BaNgwaketse chief who had been killed in a raid upon his town by Sebtlwane and his warriors.

⁷⁶ Segutshane. Latitude 25° 05' in Biddulph's list. Appendix II.

I crept within 20 yds of it & gave it an excellent shot behind the shoulder blade which brought the huge brute immediately to its knees &, going up to it with much confidence, to our surprise it flew out at us &, had not Africarner⁷⁷ instinctively dropt down behind a little bush & I took the hint from [him], the infurated brute would have torn us to pieces. It missed us both & ran in the agonies of death down towards our waggons & tossed the Bechuana, who drove our loose oxen, in a hook thorn bush without doing him any injury than breaking 2 of his assagals. Our people after this adventure always called him Chilcoora, the Sichuana name for Rhinoceros. It ran about 2 miles further & then, as the natives told us, died. Shortly after we found the ruins of an extensive town⁷⁸ & a mile farther brought us to Sibootzaanie, 2 very fine little lakes abounding with wild ducks & geese. We had scarcely span'd out here when we shot a bastard Hartebeest⁷⁹ which came down to drink, whose carcase we dealt out among our Ma Bawanketzle friends who feasted gloriously upon it.

In the course of the afternoon I saw 2 large aquatic birds swimming among the wild geese on the polished surface of the Sibootzaanie. I hastened to the waggon to fetch my gun, but unfortunately they were gone before my return. I regretted this circumstance much, as they appeared by the imperfect view I had of them to be black swans,⁸⁰ which would have been a rare curiosity in South Africa. These lakes are full of deep holes round the margin within the water mark.

We sent some people at night to watch for game at the most northerly lake. In the early part of the night an enormous herd of Quaggas came to drink. Being very cautious & being unaccustomed to find persons watching their arrival they smelt our hunters &, with a most frightful clattering of hoofs on the calcareous stones, they scampered off in an instant. About 2 o'clock in the morning 2 camelleopards appeared, but thro' their precautions in advancing got scent of our hunters & made off just as they were preparing to fire at them. Shortly

⁷⁷ "My trusty and well-beloved Hottentot squire Afrikander." Extract from Bain's Journal, *The G.T. Journal*, Oct. 27th, 1855.

⁷⁸ "Bawanktse town." *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ Sassaby or Tsesebe (*Damalliscus lunatus*).

⁸⁰ "Which birds, I believe, have been hitherto only found in New Holland." *Ibid.* Probably Spur Wing Geese.

after, three Rhinoceroses came and our people brought one to the ground, but ere they could reach him he managed to scramble into the wood. They returned disappointed in not being more successful in their sport.

Augt. 20th. This morning our people appeared all in clean shirts which they had been enabled yesterday to wash with some degree of comfort and, having been assiduous in their enquiries respecting the Bawanketzle ladies, they had also put on the best of their "homely weeds" in hopes, no doubt, of making some conquests among the ladies at court where it was our intention to appear in the afternoon. After dining on the salt tongue of a Rhinoceros & the marrow bones of a Camelleopard we proceeded, accompanied by a vast number of natives who had joined us in the course of the day.

The country became more pleasant as we advanced, rising into gentle undulations & vegetation everywhere more luxuriant. The picturesque clumps of trees that studded the lawn over which we travelled were composed of various kinds of the Mimosas, with some of a species to us unknown. Behind one of those clumps stood a large Rhinoceros apparently asleep &, being now pretty well accustomed to shooting that animal, Mr. B. proposed trying the effect of a small ball, as we had hitherto shot them with large guns. I argued against the danger of the experiment, but agreed to give Mr. B. the first shot with a fowling piece of 22 balls to the pound while I should stand in reserve with my large gun. We ordered our people not to interfere with our sport as we wished to engross this entirely to ourselves.

We crept up close to the bush & B. deposited his ball in a very proper place which caused the brute to rebound from the earth & for a moment stunned him. He then flew full at my companion who had scarcely time to evade his long horn by falling down behind a bush, in the usual way, at which moment I pulled my trigger & missed fire. Our dogs came very opportunely to our assistance & kept the fierce monster at bay, which gave me an opportunity of setting my flint to rights &, while employed at that work, happening to look over my shoulder, I saw Poloholo a short distance behind with his gun directed to the rhinoceros, but he did not consider that the ball would have first to pass thro' the carcase of his master

ere it reached that of the Rhinoceros. It, fortunately for me, happened that his gun was at half cock when he was pulling at the trigger or there can be no doubt that I should have had its contents in my body. In the mean time, after the rhinoceros had shewn more cunning than any other we had yet to do with in chasing us round the bush, on the approach of some of the natives who shouted lustily it galloped off &, being pursued by the natives about a mile, it then fell from the effects of its wound.

We pursued our journey & in about an hour more reached the valley of Silaqualaly⁸¹ which we found literally strewn with human skulls, it having been the theatre of a bloody battle between the Bawanketzle & the Mantatees in which Makabba, the celebrated King of the former & father of the present monarch, was killed. The sight of the skulls did not impress us with a great idea of the humanity of the natives, & we were not void of apprehensions that our own might bleach in the same spot in a few days. We met a great number of natives of both sexes as we rode up the valley, but it was dark before we reached the springs.

This evening at 7 o'clock we reached Siloqually, the springs which supply the town of the same name, at present the capital of the Wanketzle Kingdom & situated a mile & a half to the eastward. We were scarcely span'd out before the King's 2 brothers waited on us to welcome us to their country & brought a large bag of thick milk, as much as 2 men could carry, part of which they poured out in their hands & tasted to shew that it contained no poison. They placed sentinels round our waggons to prevent the mob from injuring anything & told us that Sibigho, the King, would visit us as soon as the moon should rise, which would be about 9 o'clock. We gave each of them a piece of tobacco with which they appeared exceedingly well pleased.

At 9 the King made his appearance attended by 5 or 6 of his principal people. He greeted us in a very friendly manner but with very little ceremony &, taking his seat on the ground close by us, entered cordially into conversation with us. His appearance is very prepossessing & would alone point him out

⁸¹ Selókóléla, near the present Kanye, BaNgwaketse Reserve, Bechuanaland Protectorate. Latitude 24° 57'. Biddulph's list.

directions stretching to the borders of the wood, & the sound of Chackas breaking the marrow bones did not cease till next morning. The Bawanketsie as well as all the Bechuana tribes, I think, may be safely reckoned among the ossivorous animals, for they merely chop off the hard outside of the bones & the more porous parts they devour like wolves.

Independent of a large quagga that one of our Hottentots shot, Sibigho sent us half an Eland which they reckon the fattest & best of all game. All this, not even excepting the skins, paunches & bones, was swallowed by our Wanketsie attendants in the course of the night &, had there been twice as much, it would have shared the same fate, for they never slept but kept roasting, chopping & eating the whole night.

One old fellow in our train particularly signalized himself as being peculiarly adaptable for preventing meat from becoming putrid. It was the same that the Rhinoceros, or Chakooru,⁹⁸ which I had wounded the day before we reached Silloqualaly, tossed into the bush, and since that time he (from this circumstance) was known by no other name than Chakooru. I verily believe that this old gentleman managed to devour a full quarter of the quagga & 6 or 8 pounds at least of the fat eland, to which I think I may safely add 2 lbs of dung & mud which he had sucked in with the water out of the dirty quagga paunch. These people must be like the *Springhaan vogel* or locust bird which evacuates its food almost as soon as it swallows it, for it is otherwise impossible that their bellies could contain so much.

Augt. 27th. The bags being filled with water we started at sunrise in the same manner as yesterday morning, & only proceeded a short way when the usual halt & semicircle were made, only with the difference that we observed small parties of men at regular distances from the main body seated under the trees. They were now preparing for battle, not the Chase. All being assembled Sibigho rose & called out Hey!—to which a sort of suppressed grunt or hem (a sound difficult to describe) was coughed out by all the men at once as a mark of attention to the speaker. He then said "Silence, warriors!" & the grunt was repeated. Then waving his assagals over their heads

⁹⁸ Tshukudu.

pronounced "Maroomo!"⁹⁹ (which literally signifies Assagals, but is used on such occasions, according to our interpreter, metaphorically to express that nobody shall throw one away without making sure of killing an enemy). A whistle of applause thrilled thro' the ranks which was [undecipherable] succeeded by a dead silence, leaving us gazing at one another in admiration & surprise.

He commenced his harangue in words (as I imperfectly gleaned from our interpreter) something to the following effect:

"Bawanketsie warriors! The honor of your country is now at stake & you are called upon to protect it. Long, long have the scum & dread of the earth had possession of our finest fields, driven us from our once flourishing towns & are still feeding on the fattest of our flocks & herds. They have killed your late king, my father, who was the love of his subjects & the dread of his enemies. Shall we longer live in continual fear of such a scourge? No! the time is now come when we must rid ourselves of them for ever, that we may again restore peace to the world & claim its admiration as we were wont to do.

Fortune has favoured us by sending the Makooas to our country just as we were preparing to strike this decisive blow; but let not the brunt of the battle fall on them. Their thunder & lightning will strike terror on the enemy, but on your bravery alone do I trust. The Macooa are great Captains and have passed thro' our enemies to visit us; let them be witnesses of your courage that the fame of your glory may reach the most distant nations.

The Mantatees are numerous as the locusts of the field, but let not that discourage you, for the Bawanketsie have the hearts of lions." Here he was interrupted by a whistle of applause & he again proceeded: "Yes, the Bawanketsie alone have stemmed the torrent of the Makarie¹⁰⁰ (Mantatees) which swept from the face of the earth our once powerful neighbours, the Bamorootzie¹⁰¹ and Bakweenie,¹⁰² whose very names are

⁹⁹ Marumo.

¹⁰⁰ Makgare, another name for Mmantatisi.

¹⁰¹ BaHurutshe, a Tswana tribe who once owned the country round Zeerust, Transvaal. Skilled workers in iron. Kurrechane (Kad-itshwene) their capital was a very large town. Campbell, in *Travels in South Africa, London, 1822*, gives an attractive picture of the tribe before it was destroyed by the Mmantatisi and MaTebele.

¹⁰² BaKwena, Tswana tribe. Settled north of the BaNgwaketse.

now almost forgotten. Let them no more enter the territories of the sons of Meleta¹⁰³ where they butchered my renowned sire, Makkabba. Yes, his glorious name must rouse our hearts to vengeance! Revenge! Revenge! Revenge!"

So saying, with his eyes gleaming fire & in a fine theatrical attitude, he twirled his battleaxe in the air amidst the shrill plaudits of his host.

Our march was now more regular and compact than during our hunting expeditions as we were far advanced into the country of the Bakweens, then in possession of the Mantatees. If we might guess from the number of tracks of elephants, rhinoceroses & camelleopards, which covered our route, there must be vast numbers of them inhabiting this part but, it being so very woody, our view was consequently circumscribed for we had not yet met any of them.

Mr. B. & myself had dismounted (as we frequently did in the course of our march) to stretch our legs & had given our war ox & Rosinante to two of our train to lead, & to two others our guns to carry, not expecting to meet the enemy in the thick wood. A sudden rustle among the ranks in advance followed by a loud cry shewed that some skirmish had commenced, & every man had his shield on his arm in a moment with an assagal in his right & battleaxe in his left hand. The *Mackooa*, who were to do such wonders in the face of the enemy, did not shew by their conduct on this occasion much foresight in being unarmed at such a crisis, for neither our cattle, in the midst of the bustle, nor our squires who carried our guns were to be found. The former were fortunately not far off but hid behind a bush, & I had scarcely got myself safely seated on the outside of old Dapper & drawn my solitary pistol from the saddle bow, when a furious rhinoceros followed by a large calf, both stuck full of assagals, dashed past me at a tremendous rate. This was the enemy that had caused the alarm & I followed him at full speed along with a great number of the natives. But Dapper, poor as he was, soon showed his superiority over his biped rivals by leaving them far behind, & I found myself alone alongside of those two fierce animals with my pistol in my hand ready to shoot the old one, when I suddenly recollected the King's orders—by

¹⁰³ Moleta, father of Makabba II and grandfather of Sebege.

no means to make use of our fire arms in case of alarming the enemy. The creatures either did not see me or were so sickened with the reception they had received from the ranks that they did not offer to molest me. The calf seemed very faint from the loss of blood & certainly would not run much farther.

I retraced my steps as well as I could & soon found some of the stragglers who had given up the chase & with them returned to the main body whom we found resting at the ruins of a Bakween town, near which was a copious spring of water. We had passed in the course of our march today several of those colossal ant hills, the astonishing workmanship of a species of termites. They are from 9 to 10 feet high & are of a conical shape, exactly resembling glass houses, but without the numerous small spiral points that distinguish those of Guinea coast.

When the people went to replenish their bags at the fountain a Mantatee woman had just left it, which as soon as the King learnt he sent a party in pursuit of her, that he might not only gain some information respecting the enemy but also prevent her giving the alarm. They did not, however, overtake her & we dreaded the effects of her escape, altho' she could not have seen more of the natives than the small party that went to the spring. But being now within 7 or 8 miles of Letubaruba,¹⁰⁴ the town we were going to storm, required a little more circumspection than we had hitherto shewn. So, as we had an open lawn to cross in our path, we lay concealed here in the wood till late in the afternoon, when we resumed our march with every precaution of having scouts out in all directions who sent in regular reports of all they saw.

At sunset we bivouaced in a thick wood at a short distance from the enemy's town & no fires were allowed to be lit until the King returned about midnight from reconnoitring the position. Few of the people, however, availed themselves of this privilege, as they had no game to grill & were doubtless fatigued with their day's march & the gastronomical exercises of the preceding night.

¹⁰⁴ Dithubaruba in the Dithcbywane hills a few miles south of Molepolole, BaKwena Reserve, British Bechuanaland Protectorate. Latitude 24° 21' in Biddulph's list.

the country around it abounding in game of all sorts, with an abundance of fine grass and the plains and hills covered with beautiful clumps of Camel-thorn and other trees of the Mimosa family. Here we found several kraals of Corannas, who appeared to have a good stock of cattle and plenty of milk. The kaross among them appeared to have given place to leather jackets and trousers and some even enjoyed the luxury of a shirt, but which is never washed from the time it is put on till worn out. Most of them possess fire arms and horses, which they not only use in the chase, but, like their Griqua neighbours, occasionally in their predatory excursions against the Bechuanas and other unprotected tribes. One day's journey from Poccanna is a place called Towne,²⁴ situated on the Hart River, at present the residence of a once powerful Baharutsee chief, called Makhatla, with a few of his tribe. This man was once, I am told, very rich and resided in the capital of his kingdom, called by Campbell²⁵ Kurrechane, but was driven thence some time ago by the all-conquering Zoola chief, Masillkatsie,²⁶ who has now made that place his headquarters.

Leaving the Hart River, we passed the ruins of a very extensive Bechuana town, its numerous stone kraals being still in a good state of repair, though it was forsaken by its inhabitants on the irruption of the Mantatees about twelve years ago. Near to this place we found two other kraals of Corannas, under a chief called Tatema, who, being, as the Grikwas informed me, an excellent marksman and shot, I hired, along with three of his people, to accompany me in that capacity. Two days afterwards I was surprised to find that we had been joined by upwards of twenty more Corannas, with a number of horses, pack-oxen etc., all followers of Captain Tatema; and as they had so much the appearance of banditti, I dreaded that, if their object was not to rob me, they might at least cause

²⁴ Taungs.

²⁵ Rev. John Campbell, London Missionary Society, Author of *Travels in South Africa, Second Journey*, London, 1822. Kurrechane or Kaditshwene, Marico District, Transvaal.

²⁶ Moselekate or Mzilikazi, chief of the MaTabele, an off-shoot of the Zulus, fled from Zululand with his tribe during Tshaka's reign and settled in the western Transvaal. He retained the Zulu military system. In 1837, after an attack by Boer Commandos, he removed to what is now Rhodesia. Eventually settled at Bulawayo. Died in 1868.

suspicion of hostile intentions to the tribes through whose country we had to pass. However, they behaved themselves very well and I never had the least cause of complaint against my Coranna auxiliaries.

After travelling from Towne nine days in a north-easterly direction through a country only remarkable for its great sameness of appearance, consisting generally of immense flats studded with Camel-thorn trees, a sandy soil with a substratum of lime, plenty of grass, but no streams or fountains, only a few miserable pools scarcely sufficient to supply the few straggling wild beasts and quaggas which we occasionally saw, we reached what is dignified with the name of the Seechaghollie River,²⁷ where I may say our operations of hunting only commenced. Our first day's hunt was very successful, having bagged amongst us fourteen cameleopards and two elands and caught one cameleopard calf, so that I had a great choice of skins and skeletons for preservation, for I never preserved any but the finest specimens. Our second day's sport was varied by accession of some white and black rhinoceroses and the capture of a half-grown giraffe. This beautiful creature had two large sores on its shoulder, evidently caused by the paws of a lion, which latter brute, from their situation, must have been on the back of this gigantic but harmless creature. It unfortunately stumbled as we were pulling it to the waggons and its fall broke its neck. But I must not trouble you with all the particulars of our "jagt"; suffice it to say, that shortly after leaving the Seechaghollie the two Griqua waggons, with all the Corannas, returned homewards, being afraid of approaching nearer to the country of Masillkatsie. Taking a westerly course from Seechaghollie, we hunted some time at a dry river called the Malybana, down which we travelled two days till where it empties itself into the before-mentioned river. Our course was again north-easterly, after re-crossing the Seechaghollie near its junction with the Meritzan,²⁸ all of which rivers empty themselves a few days' journey lower down into the Molopo.

I have hitherto said nothing about the inhabitants of the country through which we passed since leaving the Hart; for

²⁷ Setlagoli.

²⁸ Maritsane.

until we first reached the Seechagolle we had scarcely ever seen any, except a straggling Bushman or Bechuana, but after we had shot such abundance of game we got plenty of company. The natives scattered about this part of the country are the remains of various Bechuana tribes, such as the Baharutsie, Wanketze and Baralongs, all of whose countries Masilikatsie had conquered. These poor people live in very small communities scattered over the face of the country, but have not a single head of cattle to live by, their whole dependence and only food being locusts or such game as chance may direct into their pitfalls. I met among them some Wanketze people who recognized me as having visited their country about eight years ago. They told me that the once-powerful king, Sibgho, was now nearly reduced to beggary by Masilikatsie and had taken refuge beyond the Kalliharry desert.

My party now consisted of Jan Sauer,²⁹ a colonial youth, myself, three colonial Hottentots and two Griquas, with my two waggons and three horses, besides the three which I had hired from B. Barends. There was also Hendrick Klaas's waggon and party, which consisted of himself and Piet Barends, an adult Griqua, with several lads, three boys and two women.

As we were travelling along the south bank of the Meritzan, we observed the fresh spoor of some cattle, which must have crossed our route that very morning. This being such an unusual circumstance, as I have before mentioned that the people inhabiting that country possessed no cattle, it caused as much surprise and conjecture among us as the print of a man's foot in the sand did to Robinson Crusoe; and as we were still debating on the subject, some of the natives came up and told us that a small commando from Makhatla, the Baharutsie chief, had that very morning returned from Masilikatsie and having killed the herdsman, succeeded in carrying away seventeen head of cattle with which they were now on their way home. This was bad news for us as we guessed that Masilikatsie's people,

²⁹ The name Sauer was mistakenly printed Saver in the publication of this letter in *The Cape of Good Hope Literary Gazette* and in the appendix to *Steedman's Wanderings and Adventures in Southern Africa*. Jan Sauer (1814—1870). Born at Graaff-Reinet. Farmed in the Orange Free State "after the nomadic system" for a few years. For some time in business in Burghersdorp and Aliwal North. Returned to the O.F.S. Acted as Landdrost, Smithfield. Returned to Aliwal North. *Aliwal Observer*, April 30th, 1870.

in following the spoor of the stolen cattle, would come upon our waggons and naturally suppose that we were connected with the thieves. When we reached the outspan place, we immediately began to make a sort of fortification of bushes around our waggons in which we could keep our cattle and horses in case of an attack during the night. We put our arms in order and I gave to each man about thirty rounds of powder and ball and took every other precaution that our circumstances would admit of.

We were attacked by nothing during the night but a tremendous thunder-storm with plenty of rain, which was much more acceptable to us than Masilikatsie's soldiers would have been. The Griqua, Piet Barends, who very coolly told me that he had been frequently into Masilikatsie's country to steal cattle, said he thought we had nothing to fear now, as that chief would think it below his dignity to send in pursuit of such a trifling number as seventeen head of cattle.

We continued our journey still in a north-easterly direction till we reached the Maloppo which was only six hours on horseback from the residence of Masilikatsie,³⁰ but I could not induce the Griquas to advance one step farther. I tried everything in my power to get one to accompany me on horseback as interpreter, but to no purpose, as I guessed that that powerful chief would not be pleased if he heard of our being so close to him without paying him a visit. After remaining at the Maloppo three days, in which time we had bagged a good number of rhinoceroses, etc., and caught six beautifully striped quaggas, we made preparations for returning, on which I missed my Griqua leader, Hans Barends. On making inquiry about him, nobody knew where he was and, as he was a lazy, sleepy fellow at the best, I paid little attention to the circumstances at the time, but spanned in and started, thinking that he might be asleep behind some bush and would follow as he had frequently done before. However, after we had travelled about an hour, Jan Sauer came and informed me, to my utter astonishment, that Hans had absconded along with Piet Barends and two Griqua lads to steal cattle from Masilikatsie. I immediately ran to Hendrik Klaas and upbraided

³⁰ Kurrechane, from which place Moselekatsie had driven the BaHurutshe.

him with the knowledge of the fact, blaming him for concealing it from me. He excused himself by saying that he had done everything in his power to dissuade him from going, but he would not listen to his advice, nor did he think that I should have been able to have dissuaded him. He also denied strenuously any pre-knowledge of Hans Barends's intended elopement, or of his taking his brother Barends's horse with him, which was the fact. I was now, to use a homely expression, completely put to my shifts, for here were four people who had actually left my waggons for the purpose of plundering one of the most formidable chiefs in Southern Africa and, should they succeed and return on my waggon tracks, there could be little doubt as to what the consequences would be.

Hendrik Klaas in some measure comforted me by saying that Piet Barends would never be so foolish as to return on our track, as he had left his son, a boy of eight years old, with the waggon. His opinion was that Barends would take quite a different route and consequently the waggons would be in no danger of being overtaken by his pursuers. I felt myself, however, in a very unpleasant situation and that my safest plan was to hasten homeward with as little delay as possible.

After three days' good riding on this side of the Maloppo, thinking ourselves out of reach of Masilikatsie, we rested at a beautiful vley, where there was abundance of fine grass and water, for the purpose of commencing fresh hostilities against the cameleopards and rhinoceroses; and having heard nothing of Piet Barends and his band in all that time, we concluded that they must have been all murdered by Masilikatsie, which would have been their just deserts. As I now draw near to the catastrophe which was the result of this marauding expedition, I must be particular in stating every circumstance as it happened.

Jan Sauer and my Griqua huntsman, Barend Barends, along with Hendrik Klaas, went out a-hunting on the 17th November; the two latter returned in the afternoon without success, having lost Sauer, who galloped off after a herd of quaggas which they did not think it worth while to pursue. A little before sunset I sent a Hottentot out on horseback in quest of him, as I was uneasy at his long stay; but the Hottentot returned without

any tidings of him. We kept firing signals all the evening, but still no sign of Sauer. Next morning, the 18th, I dispatched Hendrik Klaas and Barend Barends in quest of him, with orders to follow his horse's spoor from the place where they had last seen him, as I dreaded that he might have fallen into one of the numerous pitfalls which the natives make for catching game. Sauer, however, returned about nine o'clock and told me that he had lost his way last night and, finding a pool of water and good grazing for his horse, he tied the latter to a tree under which he himself slept, and this morning had much difficulty in finding the waggons, on account of there being no hills or other conspicuous objects to guide the bewildered traveller to any fixed point.

About an hour after Sauer's arrival, the weather being extremely hot, I was sitting without my jacket reading in my waggon, when looking up the valley I perceived Hendrik Klaas coming down at full gallop, all the way making signs to us which I could not comprehend; but, thinking probably that he had caught some giraffes and wanted assistance, I ordered the horses, which were fortunately close at hand, to be caught and saddled. The next moment he was with us vociferating as loud as he could, "Get your guns and horses ready, for here is Masilikatsie close upon us!" I looked up the valley and saw a dense black body of men moving furiously down upon us. No time was to be lost. I snatched my double-barrel from the side of the waggon and girt on my bandolier, cast a hurried glance into my front chest in search of my money and papers, in case of the worst, but did not find them in the hurry.

Barend Barends followed close at the heels of Hendrik Klaas and quickly shipped the two Griqua women on his spare horse. My Hottentot, Piet, took to his heels along with the women and Griqua boys and escaped into the adjoining wood. Klaas, a cowardly fellow, also one of my Hottentots, got on horseback and fled, so that we had left to protect the waggons and fight against about two hundred of the most formidable savages in South Africa, Jan Sauer, Hendrik Klaas, Barend Barends and myself. Old Prins, a little dwarfish Hottentot, was the only one of my people that did not run away and, being on foot, had a very narrow escape from being taken by the savages.

We were now all mounted and, at that critical moment when