

Letter to William C. Oswell, 20 September 1852

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Kuruman 20th September
1852

My Dear M^r Oswel

You will see by the date of this that I am slower in my movements than I anticipated when we parted. I met many obstacles in my way. One of them for instance the breaking down of one of the wheels of M^r Conibrick caused delay of more than a fortnight. All the spokes parted company with the nave at what a poetical person would call "one fell swoop" different causes of detention vexed me rather But now I find were the means in the good Providence of God of preventing from falling into the hands of the Boers and being stripped of . the proclamation of their independence by the Gov^t - to the recommendation of Major Hogg (who by the way is dead) and public dinners given to Pretorius at Bloemfontein &

Natal, seem to have been given a fresh impulse to their policy & spirit on the 28th ult. they appeared in the Bakwain country. They were

600 strong and had about 700 of the Eastern tribes with them. they a party with four waggons to my house before the body went out to Sechele's town at Limane. these broke open house - tore all my books and scattered all the boxes in the hollow . They took out the medicines and smashed the bottles against rocks. Broke the wooden chairs, carried away sofa, bedstead , dishes &c &c. and a good quantity of coffee & tea & sugar &c &c to Webb Coddington, Green, Macabe &c. Also the smiths anvil - [3 corn mills] and all our tools both smith' & carpenter's. On 29th went in a body to near Limane drew up their waggons in - filling up the spaces with bushes. [A party in the meantime] went to Church in the Khotla public place of meeting. Mebalwe conducting the service - and after afternoon service they informed Sechele that they had come to fight he had refused to prevent Englishmen going North, that the country had been given to them by the Gov^t and they had resolved put down chieftainship. and he must send away his wives and . He replied that he was a man of peace - that he would molest Englishmen seeing they always treated him well &c Monday they began their attack on the town by firing with swivels communicated fire to the houses. this made many of the flee and the heat became so great the men huddled on the little hill in the middle of the town - the smoke them from seeing the Boers though the latter saw huddled in groups. they killed 60 Bakwains and 35 boers - and a great number of horses. Sechele shot 4 boers with

[0002] his two double barrelled guns. when they made a dash at the , one bullet passing through two men, and a bullet went through sleeve of his coat. these 60 are those whom they counted near town Sechele thinks others may have fallen among the women ran away - these are not yet counted. they maintained their one whole day on the hill, cutting off the boers every time came near. the Boers continued their firing with swivels the evening and then retired. the Bakwains having no fled from Limase during the night, and the Boers did feel inclined to follow them - [Some of] the women and children were captured ran away & reported that two of the boers who wounded died after leaving. The town being burned of course the corn it contained was consumed. Parties on horseback out either during the battle or afterwards and took all the of the Bakwains to be found near. The chief cattle posts are in Kalihari. All Paul's Mebaloe's and my cattle are taken. I had but however. The whole of Sentuhe's cattle were taken too. His did not fire a shot. the Boers killed three Wanketse - burned the town and all their corn of

course. they met as if by accident

Mosielele's cattle & swept them off. they were fleeing Kahihari wards did not fire a shot either. Mosielele had fled from Mabotsa M^r Edwards fled to M^r Inglis place. M^r E attempted to expostulate them and they took out an achter or sambok to him. seem very anxious to get a hold of me. Frequently expressed wish to that effect. I am not conscious of ever having done offensive. Nor can I see anything in Sechele's conduct them which I can call bad. The oxen of the English, Webb &c those of Motsahona and Api are gone too. Webb Codrington &c gone to Sebituane's. I shall write you again as soon as hear from them how matters stand in that country. Api to an outpost of Mosilikatse and the people gave him tusks and pressed him strongly to go to the old gentlemen Api was afraid and got off by promising to go next . Viljoen & Pert[5 or 6 in all] Jacobs went in again to the Lake a party is sent off by Sechele to cut them off. Viljoen's entreated the Commando of Boers not to go till her husband return - but in vain. And it will be a miracle if escapes. Another party of Boers about thirty in number went in and they are to be cut off too. Then a sort of warfare is to be commenced. They would have listened Viljeon's wife but expected their cannon would make Sechele instantly to the desert. Considering that it is the first

[0003] the Bakwains have fought with guns they did well. I feel for them. All improvement is at an end in the country around boers may find Magahesberg soon as insecure as the frontier is. cattle is more agreeable to their natures than labour. and the are to blame for beginning the war. All the corn being or carried off. The people must either steal or starve. This will say is far from orthodoxy. but I am not saying ought to be but what is likely to be - I have lost a deal but will now move so much more lightly than would have done had they let me alone. I cannot concieve pleasure it could give them to tear my books and waste medicines. I had a very fine selection of medical books, and medicines I kept with great care because very pure and sent from England by a friend of mine in consumption. Being medical man he selected them with great care and knowing his lungs were gone he told me to be sure and write & let him know of their arrival for if I did not would not be there to recieve it. Webb's party has been to keep apart from Viljoens's party so I think are quite safe. Sechele lost his waggon too. also a belonging to Macabe.

George is with me on a trading speculation. M^r Rutherford £100 to enable him to make a trial and I lent [him] second waggon in order to enable him to spend most his money in goods. and in consideration for the use of waggon he is to assist me in building. I am not sure I mentioned to you in my last that finding M^r had not left the copy of your map in the colonial I gave a copy to be kept in the colonial office and note taken of the discovery as an authority as to it having effected by Englishmen viz you & myself. I found out above when I had to go to Lieut. Gov^r Darling for powder knew nothing about M^r Montagu's copy. Indeed had never any till he saw my copy. - I also gave a rough of my letter to the Geog. Society to the Advertizer. this was time after you left and I may have told you already. made some enquiries after the map which you lost and all could learn about it was that M^r Arnot sent it to Algoa . He did not send it by post. I shall settle with the at Motito who kept your oxen and also with Sechele

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Sechele sent the property he took from Moyle out to M^r Moffat my 10 guns and 21 oxen. they are now at Kuruman Moyle tried to to Lehututung I do not know whether he has succeeded. Shelley and Richard Orpeu went trying to go through the desert too. lost oxen and his servant Adam came here a short time for fresh oxen. Shelley is lying somewhere West of Sequagua Pomores& Skete & others reached Lehututuñ - found no elephants are waiting for rain to get back again. Sechele's are here for instruction. they live with M^r Moffat would go away now but am suspicious of the second of Boers. they are thirty in number and would probably our waggons. And supposing I should meet some of fleeing they

might look on me as the instigator of the . I expect to be blamed now more than ever
It is not improbable I shall be represented as fighting among the . I feel very anxious to get
away. As soon as the hunters out I shall know how to stir. At present I dont know the Boers
have retired for good. Upwards of 300 boers were cut off by the fever. Old Austin and all his
family fell . All the friends here are as usual. M^r & M^{rs} Moffat their kind regards. I heard of
your arrival at Sierra Leone not yet heard of M^{rs} L. in England.that God may bless reward you
for all your kindness to me and mine is the prayer of yours affectionately D Livingston

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