JOSEPH WILLIAMS AND PIONEER MISSIONARY FRUSTRATION

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Abstract

The year 2016 is notable for several significant anniversaries. One which could well be overlooked is that it is 200 years since the arrival of the first missionary to have been resident among the Xhosa. Although he had a short ministry, dying just two years later, Joseph Williams had a remarkable impact. The article briefly recounts his story and suggests that a cause of his early demise was frustration at his being caught up in the politics of the day, but also that his death could well have proved to have been beneficial to the progress of the gospel in the Eastern Cape.

Key words:Missionary, Joseph Williams, Ngqika, Ntsikana

INTRODUCTION

Every so often, I get somebody coming to the door of my house in Fort Beaufort, and sometimes am even approached by somebody in the town; they are making a request to buy a goat, or, more frequently, for a donation of one. Those requests puzzled me, as I live in the town, and although there is an acre of land attached to the house, I do not have any goats. Eventually my wife asked somebody that she knew why we keep getting these requests; she was told that we must have some on our farm! This, we are told, is a little outside Fort Beaufort on the road to Queenstown. Then it made sense, for on the road there is a sign, "Rev J William's grave". It is quite a disappointment to the goat-wanters that despite the common surname, I do not own the farm, and indeed have no connection at all with the worthy of the past.

Although most people just drive by with hardly a second thought, many are intrigued by the sign, and not a few, including myself, have tried to find the grave, often unsuccessfully. It is actually not very far from the road, covered by a slab of marble raised about three feet off the ground. It was a common pattern of the day; another example in the area is on the hill just outside Alice to mark the grave of James Stewart, the founder of the University of Fort Hare.

2016 is the centenary of Fort Hare, and by a coincidence, two hundred years since Joseph Williams came as the first missionary to reside in the area, and the first resident with the Xhosa. That fact itself is enough to remember him. His wife was the first white woman to live there as well (Holt 1954:40); although Boer women had accompanied their men on trek, they had never resided there. It was this second anniversary that inspired me to write this article, which I do for several reasons.

Firstly I feel that it is right to keep the memory of this man as part of the Christian heritage and as particularly significant in this area, especially in this year. I am repeatedly struck by the fact that Christianity has a long tradition. I am aware of places in my native UK where Christ has been worshipped continually for over a millennium; this is not lightly put aside in a time of rapid change and innovation, especially of new religious ideas. If it was hard to find the grave, it was even harder to find out about this man who arrived even a comparatively short time ago, but who had enormous influence, particularly striking in the light of the fact that he settled in the area in July 15 1816, and died just over two years later on 23rd August 1818. Despite Legassick (2010:19), who says that Williams was ineffectual, so great was his influence that the original name of Fort Beaufort up to the 1950s was actually Williamstown (Freeman, J J 1851, A Tour in

South Africa, cited in Holt 1954:162). Laing of Burnshill, quoting from a report of 1823, recounts blessing which accompanied Williams' work, a group of about a hundred meeting regularly for worship (Opland 2008:56). Much later, William Shaw testified that there had been a decided benefit to the colony from Williams' presence, and Ntshatshu said that the Word of God had made a big impression on the people at that time (Holt 1954:160).

Secondly, hopefully without being guilty of any hagiography, I want to draw attention to some features of the life of Joseph Williams as an example of a missionary at the start of the modern missionary movement, and to some extent an ideal for the modern missionary. It was only a few years before Williams that William Carey wrote his influential 1792 pamphlet, "An Enquiry into the Obligation of Christians to use Means for the Conversion of Heathen", which is often seen as the start of the modern missionary movement. It must be said immediately here that the Catholics had been active in mission for a very long time previously, and that the Moravian church had been sending out missionaries since 1732. However they had not had much impact on England, and it was only after Carey that there was any impetus to mission, a movement that caught up Williams.

WHO WAS JOSEPH WILLIAMS?

Those interested and diligent enough to find the grave can read the still very legible inscription on the marble.

IN

MEMORY OF THE

REVEREND JOSEPH WILLIAMS

WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE

ON 17TH AUGUST 1818,

AGED 38 YEARS,

AN AGENT OF THE

LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY

AND THE FIRST MISSIONARY

WHO WITH HIS FAMILY RESIDED

AMONG THE AMOXOSE TRIBES

AND PREACHED THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST TO THEM.

Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from hence-

forth: Yea saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their

labours; and their works do follow them. - Rev. xiv. 13.

Holt (1954:103) particularly points out that not only the spelling of amaXhosa is wrong, but also the date of death, which he says was actually 23rd August. Interestingly his second record of the inscription on the tomb (1954:165) is slightly different, but more accurate. He cites a book of 1860 by William Shaw, *The story of my mission in south-eastern Africa* in support of the later date (Holt 1954:163), and most importantly quotes a letter from Mrs Williams (1954:86); Levine (2004:151) and Philip (1981) also support that date, although Opland (2008:62) the earlier; as his book dealt with Isaac Wauchope, it could then well be that he is the source of the error (Holt 1954:153). It is likely that the error arose as the slab was only erected a long while later on the site identified by Wauchope (Holt 1954:151). Holt (1954:164) cites Holden's book of 1887, indicating that the LMS provided the

slab "two years ago". Moffatt in 1842 said there was no monument. The grave was restored in 1918, when the slab was put on a substantial platform. Incidentally here, Isaac Wauchope, who was a Congregational minister in Fort Beaufort around the start of the twentieth century, and died in 1916 in the Mendes sinking, had as his middle name "Williams", so also reflecting something of the importance of Joseph.

The first record of Joseph Williams was that of his birth in 1780, according to the LMS register; there is however a baptismal record in 1775, which could be him (Holt 1954:144). More clear was that on 27th January 1806 he offered himself to the LMS (London Missionary Society) for overseas service. This society had been established, among several others at that time, in 1785; its secretary was the minister of the church in Fetters Lane, London, where Joseph Williams worshipped.

He had a very limited education; this does reflect what Paul says in 1 Corinthians 1:26f, that wisdom is not essential for the gospel. Perhaps appropriate for a very humble servant of God, there is no picture or portrait available of him. Holt (1954) does include one of Mrs Robson, formerly Williams, in her old age. Peires (1981) also includes pictures of many of the early Xhosa chiefs.

Williams went to a place vastly different from his native England; it may be remarked that this is also true of Jesus who left the glories of heaven. The sacrifice that the Williams' made must be put in context of the social situation that they left in England. He was, like his Master, a carpenter, and so had a trade and income, so not just seeking an escape from the grinding poverty that was so common in the England of his day. He cannot really be accused, like so many, even

today, of offering for mission for economic reasons, to get some livelihood.

Williams went to an obscure place, just as Jesus did. I can relate to that as when I was offered the position at Fort Hare, I had to look on a map to see where it was! It was however a place that became influential; in the year that is also the centenary of Fort Hare, it should be remembered that it was Christianity that provided the motivation for the establishment of the institution. The same is true for other things in the area, perhaps notably Healdtown, where Mandela received his schooling.

The colonial government had always lamented the small amount of resources that Williams had (Holt 1954:146). It was necessary for Williams to provide much of what he needed for bare survival. He was not just dependent on gifts from England. The LMS did not provide adequately, expecting self-sufficiency (Holt 1954:71). Perhaps here there is a reminder of Paul, who although he did receive gifts, also worked as a tentmaker.

Holt (1954:5f) records that the Society took a long time to finally accept the candidate, repeatedly summoning him without making a decision. It was only in August 1814 that he went to Gosport Academy for formal training, which was a combination of the academic and also practical skills. Such persistence on the part of Williams shows that he was very determined in his ministry. He would seem to have received a clear divine call. This contrasts strongly with many missionaries since who seem to move frequently from one place and ministry to another, with consequent loss of effectiveness. It takes a long time to settle into a ministry and to win confidence, so say nothing of acquiring knowledge of customs and language. Joseph Williams' ministry was cut

short by death, but the fact that he dug furrows, and did many other things where he settled, suggests that he had had no intention of leaving in a hurry. Most likely it was for him a lifetime commitment, not just to mission, but to a particular ministry.

Williams eventually arrived in Cape Town on 22nd May 1815, and proceeded to Bethelsdorp near Port Elizabeth, which had been established by Read and van der Kemp, earlier workers with the LMS. This had started as a refugee camp for Khoi, and had about 450 there by 1812 (Legassick 2010:8). It was there that he responded to a plea for a missionary among the Xhosa, a plea that had become acceptable to the colonial authorities, who had previously resisted this.

That plea had been influenced by previous work in the area by van der Kemp, who had worked for about sixteen months near the Keiskamma river, having to return to Graaff Reinet because of "the disturbed condition of the country" (Holt 1954:16). He had worked exclusively with the Khoisan (Stanley 1990:93), although had yearned "for the conversion of the Bantu" (Holt 1954:16). He was called by them *Nyhengana* (Opland 2008:100). His converts included people who lived in Xhosaland but were out of place there (Peires 1981:77). Like Williams later, he experienced problems with the political authority in the Cape Colony, and specifically with the local landrost, Colonel Cuyler (Martin [na]:188). Dissenters were viewed with extreme suspicion by the Anglicans until about 1810, suspected of being in league with French revolutionaries (Legassick 2010:6).

Adding to his unpopularity with the colonial authorities had been that he had purchased and then married a fourteen year old slave girl from Madagascar (Legassick 2010:7).

This action was commonly viewed as "immoral". Some later missionaries were also accused of concubinage (Holt 1954:72). Brownlee eventually resigned in disgust at the situation, and even Read was accused; he had also married a coloured and was charged of adultery with another woman. He was suspended for a while before his name was cleared after he confessed, and was forgiven by Bethelsdorp (Legassick 2010:18). In contrast, Williams' morals would appear to have been exemplary.

Van der Kemp had died in 1811 in Cape Town. Although his ministry had been short, it had produced the desire for another missionary. On April 1st 1816, accompanied by Rev Read, who had succeeded van der Kemp at Bethelsdorp, Williams left on an exploratory journey into the Xhosa area. After a lot of visiting and discussion with local chiefs, they found the location at the mouth of the Baddaford kloof north of the present Fort Beaufort, arriving back at Bethelsdorp on May 16th.

Accompanying Read and Williams on that journey, among others, had been Jan Tshatshu, often referred to as Tzatzoe. He is the subject of Levine (2004). He was the son of a Xhosa chief near where King William's Town now is, but had been left at Bethelsdorp by his father. It was there that he accepted Christianity and was baptised (Holt 1954:17). During the trip to locate a site for Williams' ministry, he was very active in preaching, once to a thousand people at his father's kraal. It was no doubt because he used Xhosa that he was very effective and influential; Read also said that he was the first to pray publically in Xhosa, it previously having been done only in Dutch (Holt 1954:32).

Shortly afterwards, on June 15th, Mr and Mrs Williams left for their new location, arriving just a month later on July 15th

1816. They found nobody at the actual site, although there were a lot of Xhosa and Hottentots quite near, living on the banks of the river. Before three days had passed, they had been joined by ten Xhosa families. Significantly, the kraal of Ngqika, the local Xhosa chief, was only about fifteen miles away.

The first need was somewhere to live, and Williams quickly built a small house of rushes. The work for which they had come quickly followed; on the sixth day after their arrival he opened a school, initially with about fifty adults and children, which soon grew to a hundred and twenty. Mrs Williams taught Xhosa girls the technique of sewing, and they made bonnets from rushes.

Just as quickly, problems emerged. Not only were his efforts at producing a garden frustrated by the ever-present twin difficulties of heat and drought, but he was increasingly affected by the political situation. Stanley (1990) aptly titles his book on mission *The Bible and the flag*, for mission was always embroiled in the politics of the area.

It was because of a change in attitude of the British authorities that the work was even possible. Until that time it had been forbidden, Government policy being to prevent any contact with the Xhosa (Holt 1954:18), van der Kemp therefore not having been allowed to work with the Xhosa. Bosch (1991:306) says that while commerce remained the primary purpose of Britain, missionaries were not welcomed. The increasing frustration of Joseph Williams can probably be attributed to a shift in the attitude of government. There had become a growing consciousness among colonial officials of the value and significance of mission for empire (Bosch 1991:304). On the whole, this was recognised by the mis-

sionaries; Philip, of the London Missionary Society wrote in 1828 that

Missionary stations are the most efficient agents which can be employed to promote the internal strength of our colonies, and the cheapest and best military posts that a wise government can employ to defend its frontiers (in Bosch 1991:305).

In the second decade of the nineteenth century there was a change, and the colonial power consciously took responsibility for the welfare of the inhabitants of the colonies. "It was hoped that a missionary among the Xhosa might be useful to the Government as a means of contact with and a quieting influence upon that restless people" (Holt 1954:19). Interestingly Legassick (2010:17) suggests three factors in this change. Firstly a Boer rebellion had sought alliance with the local Xhosa chief, Ngqika, and secondly the British garrison was being reduced, both indicating the need for a viable alliance. Thirdly the Anglican church in Britain was becoming more favourably disposed to evangelicalism, with whom the LMS would identify.

The timing of Williams' arrival could then hardly have been better. It was on February 14th 1816 that the government suddenly changed its policy (Holt 1954:19). However, this came with a severe problem; while they became more respected, missions became increasingly compromised. Holt (1954:41) writes, "so Williams was to pay for his permission to be a missionary in Xhosaland by serving, at the same time, as an unpaid agent of the Government." He had authority to issue passes to enter the colony through an otherwise rigidly closed border, and to keep government informed. "He was to find this an embarrassing connection for

a missionary, as John Brownlee, his successor, did after him" (Holt 1954:41).

That situation was because there had been unrest between Boer and Xhosa for the past forty years, with a succession of wars in the area, repeated cattle thefts, recoveries, retaliations, and a generally volatile situation. There was a feeling among the Dutch farmers that the Xhosa were merely animals with no souls, so could not be evangelised (Levine 2004:56). Williams' period of activity, 1816-8, was a short interlude between the fourth and fifth border wars.

Thus although Williams' desire was a spiritual ministry, he got, frustratingly for him, embroiled in other matters. He "only reluctantly accepted this role as a mediator and spy" (Legassick 2010:18). However, he realised that his mission was dependent on the political situation. He was then instrumental in facilitating a meeting between Ngqika and Lord Charles Somerset, as he was acceptable to both parties. This was of course with reservations, firstly to Somerset as Williams was a dissenter, and naturally to Ngqika. This latter was overcome through Tshatshu, Williams' assistant and interpreter. Somerset, the duke of Beaufort, from whom Fort Beaufort became named, was the governor of the Cape. Williams had been required by the governor to invite Ngqika to a consultation at the Kat river mission. Tshatshu helped Williams to get a list of chiefs loyal to Ngqika.

This meeting was most significant as the chief of the Gcaleka was always regarded as the paramount chief of the Xhosa nation. At the same time, however, there was intense rivalry between him and his uncle, Ndlambe, the other major chief in the area. Ndlambe had been regent for Ngqika from about 1782; in 1795 Ngqika rebelled (Legassick 2010:13). There was a spiritual dimension to this struggle in the per-

son of Makanda, also known as Nxele. This man had been impressed by van der Kemp and other missionaries (Holt 1954:22), and became a powerful advocate for Christianity, fiercely condemning practices such as polygamy and not keeping the Sabbath. Initially, his teachings were fairly orthodox (Peires 2008:69), but later his doctrine became rather an "extravagant religious medley" (Pringle, in Levine 2004:70), combining Christianity with traditional Xhosa beliefs. Most seriously he claimed to be a son of God, and that he had been raised up specifically to the Xhosa. He started to feel that the world was a battleground between *Thixo*, God of the whites, and *Mdalidiphu*, god of the blacks. As such, Read said that he was "deficient in a real knowledge of himself and of the gospel" (Holt 1954:25). This assessment was repeated by Ntsikana, who said that he was false, and was misleading the people (Holt 1954:107). He claimed to have had a vision that Christ, who he called Tayi, had sent him to the Xhosa (Holt 1954:27). Ngqika rejected his claims, and Makanda then supported Ndlambe, using his considerable influence to form a confederacy of chiefs against Ngqika. He was also upset when Williams did not want to settle with him, but close to Ngqika.

In the war of 1819, which he had been accused of fomenting, Makana was defeated and sent to Robben Island. An escape attempt was made in which some tried to get away by boat, but he was drowned in the surf (Legassick 2010:19). The result of the defeat of Ndlambe in that war was the supremacy of Ngqika west of the Kei.

Somerset arrived for the meeting on 1st May 1817, and Ngqika, after some postponing, finally arrived, having previously sent a message to Williams, requesting a visit as he was ill. He was no doubt intimidated by the show of force that the governor put on, including a hundred dragoons, a

detachment of three regiments, a detachment of artillery with two field pieces, and 350 armed and mounted burghers (Holt 1954:60). Levine (2004:131) writes that Ngqika had had to be cajoled into attending the conference, but was feeling much happier when he saw Williams. He was intimidated by the Govemor's overwhelming martial escort and by rumours that the colonists have come to revenge the death of a leading colonial official. The meeting did give a chance to Lord Somerset to address Ngqika directly. He said that wished to renew the friendship between the Colony and the "Kaffre nations that had formerly existed" on the frontier before the current round of murders and depredations. He asserted his desire to appoint Ngqika as the first Chief among the Xhosa. He would then be the chief with whom the Colony would deal and who would be responsible for the actions of all the members of his nation. Somerset held out the promise of a renewed bartering intercourse between the two nations, and the possibility that Xhosa traders might come to Grahamstown twice a year to dispose of their goods. But the Govemor asked for several concessions in return. He said that Ngqika would henceforth be held responsible for any stolen cattle, horses, or runaway slaves that remain in the country under his control, and he will need to punish the thieves. He would be accountable for the actions of the people to whom he gives his permission to enter the Colony. Most crucially, Ngqika would have to allow the implementation of a new colonial regime whereby military and commando patrols who follow the tracks of stolen cattle or horses out of the Colony and into Xhosaland will be able to remove the requisite number of beasts from the first Xhosa kraal to which the tracks lead them, even if the animals have been moved deeper into Xhosaland and regardless of whether or not the inhabitants played a role in the original raid. Somerset's central goal in travelling so far was to appoint Ngqika

as the highest Chief among the Xhosa west of the Kei River. The creation of a distinct hierarchy from among the scattered and ever shifting political allegiances of the Xhosa had been a long-term goal of the colonial administrators (Levine 2004:133). Ngqika retained this until1825, when he lost sole recognition (Legassick 2010:27).

It was the constant tension between the chiefs Ngqika and his uncle Ndlambe that underpinned much of the unrest, and prompted Somerset to intervene to get stability. Legassick (2010:13f) and Peires (1981:51f) document the interaction between the Xhosa chiefs. Apart from the political issues, Ngqika had abducted Thuthula, one of his uncle's wives, an action provoking open conflict, which however proved indecisive (Peires 1981:57). It had only been a few years previously, in 1806, that Britain had taken control of the Cape Colony back from Holland in a military operation, and they wanted to consolidate the eastern frontier by reinforcing Ngqika, so that they had to deal with only one authority and avoid the unrest due to their rivalry. Ndlambe had tried, but failed, to make a separate agreement with the colony (Legassick 2010:18). It was this that not only gave Williams the opening into the area, but then undermined what he was trying to do. Levine (2004:126) wrote, "Williams is actively involved in tasks that are more political than ecclesiastical, more diplomatic than spiritual. The threats to his mission derive not from the resistance of faceless hordes to the disconcerting power of his teachings, but from the ongoing strife between Xhosa chiefdoms that precedes his arrival in their midst." It may then be suggested that a major factor in Williams' early death was the tension in the situation and the frustration at not being able to do what he felt that he had been sent to do. The LMS was, however, far from ignoring political and social issues, which would seem to have been

the stand of the only other mission agency, the Moravians, active in the area at the time (Legassick 2010:7). Van der Kemp in particular had definitely sought to change society. He had taken up the cause of the Khoi, which was consolidated at Bethelsdorp, which he established with Read, who had also come with the LMS just a bit later. From there they repeatedly clashed with the local colonial authority in the person of Colonel Cuyler, landrost of Uitenhage, over the colonial treatment of the Khoi. It also ministered to some Xhosa, and was instrumental in the conversion of Tshatshu, Williams' interpreter. However Williams would seem to have wanted to concentrate on the spiritual, as the name that he was given, *Dyob'igazi* "washed in the blood", would indicate. He was also called *Veledyama*, a corruption of Williams (Opland 2008:56). Legassick (2010:38) says that the Xhosa are good at giving characteristic nicknames. Williams' spirituality was seen in that he was a man of prayer, prudent and industrious, but at the same time seeking to improve the material side of life (Holt 1954:111).

Williams was not happy about his involvement in this political activity, and was even less so when Colonel Cuyler, who was present, accused him of having stolen horses at the mission. He wrote, "at this unexpected and undeserved abuse, I was seized with astonishment, and cut to the heart to think that I had been a slave of the colonial authorities for the sake of peace, and that such was my reward" (Holt 1954:65). He was even less happy when Somerset then accused him of aiding desertion from the colony, and that he expected him to inform about all he knew. Williams had already refuted these accusations, but "was a man of peace and meekly consented to do as he was asked" (Holt 1954:67). The man was noted for his humility, which may be

noted as a reflection of the *kenōsis*, self-limitation, of his Lord (Phil 2:7).

The meeting was really a failure, and problems continued. Within a month the Xhosa made an intrusion into the colony and stole Hottentot cattle, an incident that provoked immediate retaliation (Holt 1954:74). The situation rapidly became critical, exacerbated by the removal of troops to India and Ceylon, and their replacement by a new Cape Corps, comprised mainly of deserters and criminals (Holt 1954:77). Pillaging and murder followed, and the colonial authorities found it impossible to protect the border with such troops. Opland (2008:60) then reports a battle between Ndlambe and Gaika (Ngqika) in April 1818. The former pursued the latter beyond Bedford, at which point they appealed to the colony, who dispersed the Ndlambes and disarmed Gaika's followers. This had a most significant result for the mission and particularly for its agent, "it must have pained him (Williams) to see his work ruined". Williams wrote in April 1818 of "fightings within and fears without" at the mission (Holt 1954:79). "The missionary's heart sank and his health gave way" (Opland 2008:57). Williams died shortly after, in August 1818. John Philip, secretary of the LMS, died in 1831, his death "undoubtedly hastened" by the Kat River rebellion, and James Read senior in 1852 "broken-hearted also" (Legassick 2010:99).

As well as the actual date of his death, what actually happened is not clear. The body obviously had to be buried, and Mrs Williams had to deal with it. Opland (2008:60) says that "The men were consulted about it, but they replied that according to Kafir [sic] custom a stranger could not be buried unless some friend of his was present. They arranged therefore to send a messenger to Somerset East to call Mr. Hart. On the third day Mr. Hart arrived on horseback to find Mrs.

Williams digging the grave herself, which she had nearly completed!" Again it could well be that Wauchope was the source of this story. According to the journal kept by Mrs. Williams, there were no problems with the burial. Mrs Williams says that she guided some men in building a coffin and the burial was almost immediate. Mr Hart arrived some days later and left the next day with Mrs Williams. Holt (1954:90) therefore discounts a tradition that lingers in the Fort Beaufort area that the Xhosa were unhelpful, and that Mrs Williams made the coffin and buried her husband herself.

It was only shortly afterwards that the government expelled all inhabitants between the Great Kei and Keiskamma rivers to form a buffer zone, after the fifth border war of 1819. It was because of that expulsion that Williams' widow could not stay on the station after his death, as it fell in the buffer zone.

That proved to be the end of the work as the station fell in the buffer zone. The work had declined after the meeting between Somerset and Ngqika, with declining numbers at the mission (Levine 2004:145). Perhaps this was also partly because at the meeting between Somerset and Ngqika, Jan Tshatshu had allied himself with the Xhosa royalty and not with Williams and the colony. While Jan had chosen the mission as the location of his Christian work and had not attempted to assume the mantle of a Xhosa prophet, the pull of his father’s people was strong (Levine 2004:135). He then asked Williams for permission to return to the colony, citing his wife’s unhappiness and her complaints about the food. Holt (1954:83) indicates that the absence of

his interpreter, who had then gone to the Theopolis mission at the mouth of the Kareiga, to assist Rev Barker, added to his stress. "Bereft of his interpreter, Williams struggled on for four months" (Holt 1954:83, who says that his handwriting betrays the fact that he was already very sick).

When Brownlee, who had been sent to help Williams (Legassick 2010:20), arrived, having been redesignated from Bechuanaland to help, it was too late. He then settled at Gwali, a tributary of the Tyumi, and founded "Chumie" mission, having been joined by Tshatshu. Many who had been at the Kat station also joined him. Brownlee had a long ministry in the area; he was the first white resident of King Williams Town.

Williams had died without seeing any converts, which must have been a sore disappointment, but in fact it later emerged that there had been three (Holt 1954:105), the first of whom was particularly significant as he carried on Williams' work after his death. It is usually said that Ntsikana first heard the gospel from van der Kemp, and then eagerly met with Williams on his exploratory trip to seek a site for the mission. Once this was established, he used to visit regularly, taking up residence not very far away. While there, he had a dramatic vision, and immediately washed off the red ochre, signifying a break with the past (Peires 1981:72, Holt 1954:106f). Interestingly, Makanda had also had a vision; Peires (1981:67) says that all diviners were called to their office by a mystical experience. He also notes that van der Kemp's Christianity was based on a spiritual experience (Peires 1981:77).

After Williams' death, Ntsikana became the leader of the congregation. He is perhaps best known for his great hymn. Holt (1954:122f) notes the enormous influence that he had. He died in 1821, being only the second to have a Christian grave in Xhosaland (Holt 1954:127). Interestingly, Holt (1954:127n) says that Makanda introduced the custom of burial, which quickly became general. Whiteside here comments on two results of missionary effort, seen in Makanda and Ntsikana (Otland 2008:56). Peires (1981:73) says that Ntsikana's theology developed in reaction to Makanda, but that he was far from being simply political. "Nxele was a wardoctor and his cosmology was one of a battle between good and evil. Ntsikana was a man of peace and submission, and his cosmology was one of peace and submission" (Peires 1981:73).

It may well then be suggested that Williams' death had then proved beneficial to his actual goal, as it was then through Ntsikana that there was permanent effect. Naturally, as a Xhosa, he could better relate to his own people than Williams, as a foreigner, could ever do. It was through him that Ngqika was influenced to Christianity (Holt 1954:114), being called "Ngqika's prophet" (Holt 1954:36), naturally contrasting with Makanda, the prophet of Ndlambe. The conversion of Noyi was facilitated by him with Tshatshu (Holt 1954:109). Peires (1981:74) says that it was through the efforts of Tiyo Soga, son of one of Ntsikana's converts, that Christianity became well and truly planted among the Xhosa. Of course this must be seen in the context that Ntsikana only received the opportunities through Williams.

In this case, perhaps it was also a good thing for the mission that Mrs Williams had been unable to stay at the mission as she had wanted to do. After the burial, she had gone to the mission at Theopolis, and from there to Cape Town. It was

there that in 1824 she married Rev Adam Robson, who had arrived with the London Missionary Society in the previous year. After the marriage, they went to Bethelsdorp, from which she had gone with Williams to establish the Kat river mission. Some eight years later they moved to the growing centre of Port Elizabeth, where they had a fruitful ministry in a Union church. She died in 1879 at the age of 91, eight years after her second husband. There is no record of her ever having gone back to the site of the Kat river mission (Holt 1954:128f).

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