

THE COLENZO ENDEAVOUR IN ITS CONTEXT, 1887-1897

**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE
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BY

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DECLARATION

(as required by the University of Natal)

The thesis entitled 'The Colenso Endeavour and Its Context, 1887-1897' which I submit as a candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Natal is my own work. The assistance I have received from others in the course of my research is indicated in my Acknowledgments and in relevant footnotes.

SIGNED: B H Nicholls -

DATE: 20 March, 1997.

ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates episodes in the activities of the Colenso family as they strove to continue the work of John William Colenso, first Bishop of Natal. Attention is given primarily to their efforts for the Zulu people in the decade of Crown Colony rule. This was their main sphere of activity, but it was not their only concern. They wished also to ensure the survival of the Church of England in Natal, i.e. the continued independence of those Anglican congregations which refused absorption into the Church of the Province of South Africa. Whenever Zulu affairs seemed less demanding, Colenso attention to ecclesiastical matters became more emphatic. This was true of the years 1893-1895 when the appointment of Sir Marshal Clarke as Resident Commissioner heralded a lull in Zulu affairs, while the arrival of Arthur Hamilton Baynes in Natal as Bishop called attention to the ecclesiastical question.

Harriette Colenso waged her campaign in Zululand, which she visited in 1888, 1889, 1893, and again early in 1898, to return, in sorrier circumstances, in 1907; from Natal, where the Colensos retained their hold on Bishopstowe/ekuKhanyeni until 1910; and in Britain, where Harriette engaged in two spells of active and personal lobbying and lecturing. Later in her life she recalled these efforts as 'her two abortive attempts to help the Zulu'. Harriette visited St Helena twice, at the beginning and at the end of her second visit to Britain.

The Colenso endeavour was at once extraordinary in its resilience and moving in its rhythm of hope and despair. What the Colenso representations were; how they were made; and what impact they had - these are the key questions underlying this thesis, which explores the interplay of colonial, South African, and British politics. Its main theme is the resolute - and partly indigenous - opposition to dominant trends of a small, committed family group, among whom Harriette Emily Colenso was the key figure.

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*The force brought against us, humanly speaking, is great,
and at times may seem almost irresistible. Our strength is
to know that One is with us Mightier than all - and I
doubt not in due time His Will will prevail.*

J.W. Natal
24 May 1865

(Letter to an unidentified lay supporter, written from 23 Sussex Place, Kensington.
Mendelssohn Library, Parliament, Cape Town)

*The few who dare must speak and speak again
To right the wrongs of many.*

(Ella Wheeler Wilcox, quoted in an extract from an article in *Izwi* (East London) and republished in *Ilange Lase Natal*, 28 February 1908, under the heading 'Insulting Black Races')

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I am greatly indebted to the members of staff of all the institutions where I have worked on relevant material. In South Africa I mention, in particular, the staff of the Natal Archives in Pietermaritzburg, of the Killie Campbell Library in Durban, of the William Cullen Library at the University of the Witwatersrand, of the Natal Diocesan Archives in Pietermaritzburg, of the Don Library in Durban, of the Natal Society Library in Pietermaritzburg, and of the South African Library in Cape Town.

I acknowledge gratefully the help of the staff of the Rhodes University Library. They have assisted in many ways, including facilitating my use of microfilmed material. I am especially indebted to the good humour and resourcefulness of Ms Sue van der Riet of the Inter-Library department of Rhodes University Library, who has engaged in impressive detective work on my behalf, with resourcefulness, good humour, and success.

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visits. I am similarly indebted to Mrs Diane Scogings of the Natal Diocesan Archives for help and hospitality and, in particular, for making possible a recent visit to the Colenso house, as it now stands, at Bishopstowe. I made an earlier visit to the site in the company of Dr Vietzen and her father. I am also indebted to Dr Vietzen for recent hospitality and information about Natal attitudes to the Misses Colenso. Dr Nan Albinski of the University of Pennsylvania kindly sent me photocopies of material on Harriette Colenso, which she had encountered in her own work and research regarding Lady Florence Dixie. Hope Hay, the author of *The Hedge of Wild Almonds*, indicated to me that the Friends Library in London might be worth a visit and facilitated my work there.

I acknowledge the help I received in the early stages of my work from Shula Marks, Freda Harcourt, Felicity Ranger (now Strong), and my conversations with the late Mr A.A. Crovo and the late Mrs Eothen Cameron Taylor.

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NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY AND ORTHOGRAPHY

Two words require special explanation: uSuthu and Mandlakazi.

uSuthu

This was originally the characteristic cry of Cetshwayo's immediate followers, apparently adopted initially to denote the success of young men in raiding Sotho cattle. It distinguished Cetshwayo's adherents in the early civil war when they triumphed over Mbuyazi at Ndondakasuka in 1856. On Cetshwayo's accession 'uSuthu' became the national war cry. In Colenso eyes, the uSuthu were - and remained - the National Party. After the Zulu defeat in 1879 and the disintegration and civil war that followed, those hostile to cohesion and strength among the Zulu insisted that the uSuthu represented only a sectional interest. uSuthu negotiations with so-called 'Boers' for support during the civil war increased British antagonism towards them.

Mandlakazi

They were the adherents of Zibhebhu kaMaphitha, distant relative and arch-rival of Cetshwayo and Dinuzulu. Zibhebhu emerged to prominence in the civil war with the help of his own 'whitemen'. The war cry of the Mandlakazi was *washesha*.

During the Zulu civil war uSuthu and Mandlakazi each inflicted heavy defeats on the other (Ulundi - or oNdini - in July 1883, where Mandlakazi triumphed; and at Tshaneni in June 1884, where uSuthu triumphed). Antagonism was deep and bitter.

Estimates of the relative strength of each party can be only guesswork. Loyalty is not quantifiable and, in times of uncertain allegiances, which are the result of anticipations of the future course of events as well as memories of the past, may be mercurial. The present author concedes that the Colensos possibly exaggerated the numerical strength of the uSuthu party in the decade 1887-1897, but contends that they may well have been right in their firm conviction that, had Dinuzulu enjoyed the sympathetic support of the white authorities, uSuthu loyalty could have created cohesion among all the Zulu people.

For further discussion of the terms see an unsigned ms in H.E. Colenso's script, n.d. (probably 1883) in K.C.A.L., Col.Coll., File 28; H.E. Colenso, *The Present Position Among the Zulus with Some Suggestions for the Future* (London, 1893), p.18; Frances Ellen Colenso *Ruin of Zululand* (London 1884-85), vol.2, pp.384-85, cited in J. Laband, 'Dick Addison: The Role of a British Officer during the Disturbances in the Ndwandwe District of Zululand 1887-1889' (M.A thesis, University of Natal, 1980), p.12, fn.65; and C. Hamilton, 'Ideology, Oral Traditions and the Struggle for Power in the Early Zulu

Kingdom' (M.A., University of the Witwatersrand, 1985), pp.219-23. A genealogical table indicating the relationship of Dinuzulu and Zibhebhu is given in Laband, 'Dick Addison', Appendix G, p.248.

The Spelling of Zulu Words

It is accepted that the spelling of Zulu words should conform to the current standards of Zulu orthography. Examples provided by Jeff Guy, *The Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom* (London, 1979) and John Laband, *The Rope of Sand* (Johannesburg, 1995) have been used as a guide. In addition, the author has taken the best specialist advice available to her, as indicated in the acknowledgments. There may, however, be some lapses. The most highly reputed scholars appear to differ in some instances, *e.g.* Etshaneni (Guy) and Tshaneni (Laband). It appears, too, that there is genuine uncertainty in regard to some names, especially those which are encountered only in nineteenth century texts.

GLOSSARY OF ZULU WORDS

<i>abantu</i>	people; plural of <i>umuntu</i> (person)
<i>abantwana</i>	diminutive of the above, <i>i.e.</i> children, or, as <i>abaNtwana</i> , royal princes, <i>i.e.</i> in this study the party of Exiles, descendants of Mpande. The singular is <i>umntwana</i> (child) and <i>umNtwana</i> (Dinuzulu)
<i>amabutho</i>	associations of men or women of the same age, brought together as units for the service of the chief or king. In older works, often mistranslated - as the Colensos recognised - as 'regiments'. The singular is <i>ibutho</i> .
<i>bansela</i>	a gift, possibly indicating thanks
<i>bayete</i>	(or <i>bayede</i>) the royal salutation
<i>hlabisa</i>	to sacrifice, or, as an adjective, cattle paid, for example to a visiting magistrate, as a tribute or token of deference
<i>hulumente</i>	the authorities, usually used of the secular government
<i>ikhanda</i>	a military settlement
<i>ikholwa</i>	a convert to Christianity
<i>ilobolo</i>	the cattle used as a pledge in marriage customs, or the practice itself by which the husband handed cattle to the father to validate the marriage
<i>impi</i>	a military force
<i>inceku</i>	close attendant and personal servant (usually of a royal personage)
<i>incekukazi</i>	a female attendant
<i>indaba / izindaba</i>	a gathering(s) for discussion, or the matter(s) for discussion
<i>indoda</i>	a man
<i>induna</i>	an official or trusted agent
<i>inkosazana</i>	title of respect for an unmarried woman, usually a young woman
<i>inkosi</i>	great chief
<i>inkosikazi</i>	the principal wife and mother of the heir, or more generally, a title of respect given to a mature married woman of standing
<i>inyanga</i>	traditional healer
<i>isicoco</i>	headring of the mature Zulu man denoting seniority
<i>isigodhlo</i>	the private area of the royal homestead where the royal women lived
<i>isikhulu</i>	a 'great man', high-ranking associate of the ruler
<i>isivivane</i>	literally a pile of stones, but used to indicate a gathering (for example, of church leaders) to discuss the issues of the day
<i>jiya</i>	to dance defiantly or triumphantly
<i>konza</i>	to acknowledge subordination and give allegiance
<i>nongqai</i>	the Zululand police, in this period a black force under white command
<i>umfundisi</i>	teacher or preacher
<i>umkhosi</i>	the first fruits ceremony held annually at mid-summer at the <i>umuzi</i> of the chief, where his followers gather. It is a ritual celebration of the harvest and symbolises the regeneration of the people.
<i>umkhumbe</i>	gathering of men in half-moon formation, often as preliminary to conflict.

- umlungu / abelungu* white person/people
umutsha traditional loin covering of the Zulu male
umuzi the homestead i.e. the term which has now replaced the earlier 'kraal'.
usivuko has a meaning similar to *isivivane*, but is used by H.E. Colenso usually to denote the leaders of a particular black congregation, as opposed to the *isivivani* which she uses for meetings of representatives of a number of congregations.

Many of these terms have become part of South African English and the anglicised plurals, *e.g.* indabas, or inyangas *etc.*, are accepted usage.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Add.Mss	Additional Manuscripts
A.G.M.	Annual General Meeting
A.N.C.	African National Congress
A.P.S.	Aborigines Protection Society
A.S.P.	Anti-Slavery Papers
A.Y.B.	Archives Year Book
B.A.	Bachelor of Arts
B.A. (Hons)	Bachelor of Arts (Honours)
Br.	British
B.S.A.	British South Africa
<i>circa</i>	approximately
C.B.	Companion of the Order of Bath
C.B.E.	Commander of the Order of the British Empire
<i>cf</i>	<i>confer</i> : compare
C.I.E.	Comppanion of the Order of the Indian Empire
C.M.G.	Companion of the Order of St Michal and St Georg
C.O.	Colonial Office
Col.Coll	Colenso Collection
Col.Papers	Colenso Papers
col(s)	column(s)
Col.Sec.	colonial secretary
C.P.S.A.	Church of the Province of South Africa
C.S.C.Z.	Court of the Special Commissioners for Zululand
D.B.E.	Dame of the British Empire
Dbn.	Durban
D.D.	Doctor of Divinity
D.L.	Don Library
D.Phil.	Doctor of Philosophy
<i>e.g.</i>	<i>exempli gratia</i> : for example
<i>et.seq</i>	<i>et sequentia</i> : and the following
encl.(s)	enclosure(s)
f.(f)	folio(s)
<i>fl.</i>	<i>floruit</i> : approximate prime of life
F.R.S.	Fellow of the Royal Society

G.C.B.	Knight (or Dame) Grand Cross of the Order of Bath
G.C.I.E.	Knight Grand Commander of the Order of the Indian Empire
G.C.M.G.	Knight (or Dame) Grand Cross of the Order of St Michael and St George
G.C.S.I.	Knight Grand Commander of the Order of the Star of India

i.a. *inter alia*: among others

I.C.S. Col.Sem.Papers S.of S.A. Institute of Commonwealth Studies: Collected Seminar Paper Society of Southern Africa

i.e. *id est*: that is
int.ev. internal evidence

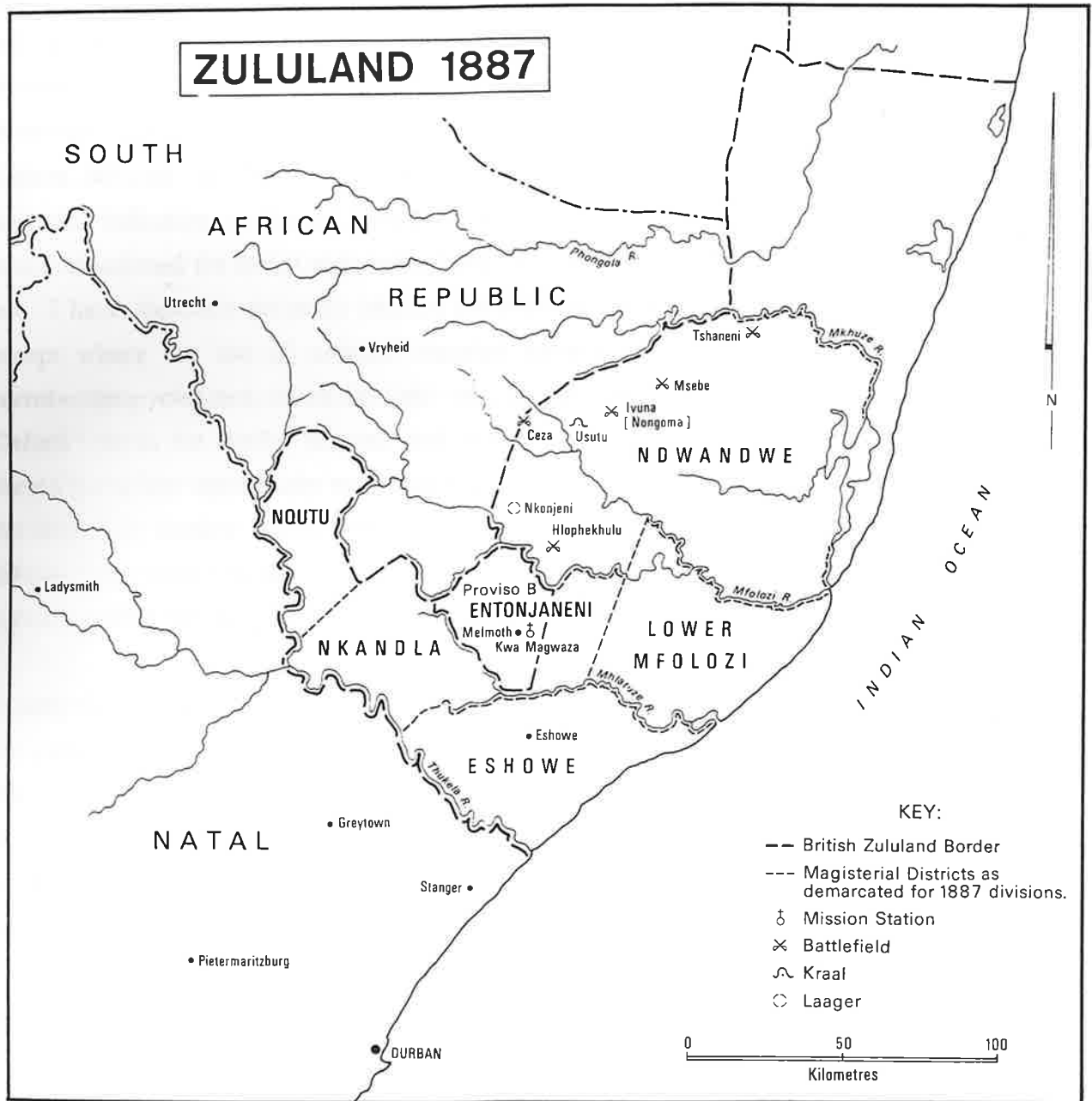
J.A.H. *Journal of African History*
Jhb. Johannesburg
J.N.Z.H. *Journal of Natal and Zulu History*

K.B.E. Knight of the British Empire
K.C.A.L. Killie Campbell Africana Library
K.C.B. Knight Commander of the Order of Bath
K.C.M.G. Knight Commander of the Order of St Michael and St George
K.G. Knight of the Garter

M.A. Master of Arts
Mag.Rec. Magisterial Records
M.L.A. Member of the Legislative Assembly
M.L.C. Member of the Legislative Council
MP(s) Member(s) of Parliament
Ms(s). Manuscript(s)

N.A. Natal Archives (Pietermaritzburg)
N.A.D. Native Affairs Department (Natal)
n.d. no date
N.D.A. Natal Diocesan Archives (Pietermaritzburg)
N.G.G. Natal Government Gazette
N.G.H. Natal Government House
N.Leg.Co. Natal Legislative Council
N.Leg.Ass. Natal Legislative Assembly
n.p. no place

O.B.E.	Order of the British Empire
P.C.	Privy Council
P.M.O.	Prime Minister's Office
Pmb.	Pietermaritzburg
p./pp.	page(s)
Ph.D.	Doctor of Philosophy
P.R.O.	Public Record Office, London
Q.C.	Queen's Counsel
<i>q.v.</i>	<i>quod vide</i> : which see
Revd	Reverend
R.H.L.	Rhodes House Library, Oxford
R.M.	Resident Magistrate
Rt Revd	Right Reverend
S.	series
S.A.	South Africa
S.A.P.	South African Pamphlets (Cory Library, Rhodes University)
S.A.R.	South African Republic
S.N.A.	Secretary of Native Affairs
S.P.G.	Society for the Propagation of the Gospel
U.C.T.	University of Cape Town
U.N.	University of Natal
W.C.L.	William Cullen Library
Wits.	University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg
W.L.A.	Women's Liberal Association
W.L.F.	Women's Liberal Federation
W.P.P.	Women's Penny Paper
V.C.	Victoria Cross
<i>viz</i>	<i>vide licet</i> : as one may see
Z.A.	Zulu Affairs
Z.G.H.	Zululand Government House



MAP OF ZULULAND

This map indicates the location of places mentioned in the text

NOTE ON SOURCES

The material on which this thesis rests is located in a number of repositories in South Africa and in Britain. My research has been undertaken over a very considerable period and has been frequently interrupted. One consequence is that I have been overtaken by the work of archivists who, after I had enjoyed an initial opportunity to consult collections of private papers, have either catalogued or re-catalogued the material. This has made citation difficult. In the case of the Colenso Collection in Pietermaritzburg, my old reference indications to 'boxes' have been rendered useless by the radical rearrangement which abandoned the initial alphabetical order of the papers in favour of a chronological one. I have therefore normally omitted the old box numbers and used only the dates, except where the use of undated material seemed to indicate the need for some corroborating reference, albeit the 'old' one. In the case of the Frank Colenso papers in Oxford I have, for similar reasons, had to rely only on the date of the letters etc. but, since I had a later opportunity to consult Oxford material, some of my citations may carry the reference number which subsequent cataloguing assigned to the material. I have followed the same practice in regard to the Colenso Collection in the Killie Campbell Library, which has also been re-catalogued.

Clearly the core material for this thesis lies in the Colenso Collections, especially that in the Natal Archives in Pietermaritzburg. This material was entrusted to the Natal Archives after the deaths of the Colenso sisters, Harriette and Agnes, in 1932 at the suggestion of K. Hathorn, their solicitor, and with the agreement of Colonel 'Jock' Colenso, a grandson of Bishop Colenso, who visited Natal shortly after the deaths of his aunts. His cousins apparently concurred. The two Colenso sisters had kept documents in their possession in their later home at Sweetwaters, Natal. Some documents were evidently saved from the Bishopstowe fire of 1884. A vast collection accumulated subsequently. Stories are told in Pietermaritzburg of how some of the documents disintegrated in containers, while some may have been dispersed or lost when their estates were wound up. It is of some interest that Harriette rejected a suggestion of Sir George Cory in 1921 that she hand papers over to the Gubbins Library. Had she done so, this particular Colenso Collection would have suffered the same fate as the papers of Dr John Philip, which were destroyed in a fire in the Gubbins Library. The Natal Archives collection contains some papers of Bishop Colenso and some of Frances Ellen Colenso, but most of this Colenso Collection consists of the papers of Harriette Colenso. The story of her activities in England is very largely based on what survives of the letters which she wrote and which were written to her by

the personalities with whom she had dealings in her campaigning. There are, regrettably, gaps where letters were either not written, or have been lost.

The Colenso Collection in the Killie Campbell Library seems to be formed from two main deposits. One was the donation by Sophie Colenso, the widow of Frank, to Killie Campbell of the papers of Bishop Colenso which had been collected by Frank Colenso for the biography of Bishop Colenso, written by G.W. Cox with the assistance of members of the family. These include, in some cases, copies of letters that had been lent or given to Frank Colenso, in other cases, the originals. It may be that the existence of Bishop Colenso's letters to F.W. Chesson the Secretary of the Aborigines Protection Society in this collection is the result in part of Chesson's death in 1888. Evidently these letters were not returned to the Aborigines Protection Society. In addition, material relating to Harriette was donated to Killie Campbell by Mary Werner, the sister of Harriette Colenso's life-long friend, the distinguished anthropologist and linguist, Dr Alice Werner. Alice Werner preserved Harriette's letters and bestirred herself to collect Colenso material. On Alice's death these were consigned to the care of Killie Campbell.

The papers of Frank Colenso were donated to the Rhodes House Library by Mr A.A. Crovo, the widower of Irma Crovo, a granddaughter of Bishop Colenso, in 1966. This is a rich store relating to the Church controversy and to Zulu affairs and could well, in addition, be utilised by the social historian interested in a family story of late Victorian and Edwardian times. Consultation of this material drew attention to the role of Frank in family concerns, especially when he was the main representative of family interests in Britain, and showed that he was, in his own right, a figure of some importance in the actuarial world of London, in which, following his move from Norwich to London in 1887, he achieved success and recognition.

Letters of Bishop Colenso in the Don Library in Durban, although valuable in themselves, are of less importance to this study as they are too early to be of direct relevance. Material collected by the Natal Diocesan Archives in Pietermaritzburg when the Centenary of Bishop Colenso was celebrated in 1983 contain one or two gems which I have been grateful to use. Material in the Tatham Collection in this repository has been used to the extent that it is relevant to the Church controversy in the decade 1887-1897.

The records of the Aborigines Protection Society, which form part of the Anti-Slavery Collection in Rhodes House Library, Oxford, are crucial; for appeal to the Secretaries of the Aborigines Protection Society was, from 1873, a much practised part of the Colenso

methods. The records attest the sturdy friendship of Secretaries of the Aborigines Protection Society to the Colensos, although, clearly, the relationship was not wholly harmonious, nor entirely free from mutual reproach.

The personal papers of prominent statesmen have been used to trace evidence of their attitudes and reactions to the Colenso campaigns and concerns. In many cases the yield was meagre. There is little, for example, in the papers of W.E. Gladstone or of Sir Charles Dilke. On the other hand, the papers of the Marquis of Ripon, especially his correspondence with Sydney Buxton, and the papers of Joseph Chamberlain were extremely useful in tracing their reactions to the issues of Zulu policy which impelled Harriette Colenso in her campaigning. As far as South African personalities are concerned, it is notorious that the available papers of Sir John Robinson, the first Prime Minister of Natal, of Harry Escombe, the second Prime Minister of Natal, and of Sir Theophilus Shepstone are relatively meagre. Something was gleaned of colonial attitudes from these and from the papers of George Sutton, a supporter of the Responsible government movement in Natal.

Official records have been of particular interest when they trace the way in which decisions were made. Some weeks in the Public Record Office were devoted primarily to tracing the minutes of the Colonial Office personnel and their response to reports from Natal and Zululand, to notices of questions in parliament, and to the representations of Harriette Colenso. They could not deny her a hearing, although they did not, or could not, heed her wishes. Use has been made of unpublished manuscript sources in the Natal Archives in relation to government policy, while magistrates' records were consulted in an attempt to make some assessment of the grass roots developments and attitudes.

Consultation of printed sources has presented problems. Copies of the Colenso pamphlets are available in a number of repositories, although the Killie Campbell Library is particularly well supplied. This is a tribute to the dedicated friendship of Dr Alice Werner. Newspapers have been a more formidable problem, both from the point of view of bulk and of geographical dispersal. The withdrawal of the actual newspapers from the reach of the historian who must, therefore, use microfilm copies, makes it difficult to 'scan' and, for the most part, my use of newspapers has been a matter of trying to follow and identify, usually successfully, the allusions to newspapers I have found in the private letters. Consultation of British newspapers has been particularly difficult, but I have made use of the photocopying services of the British Library and of very short visits to Colindale.

The parliamentary debates, in Britain and in Natal, have been consulted. Both are held in Natal repositories. I have thus been spared sole dependence on the almost totally illegible Redex Microform reprint of the British *Hansard* held by the Cory Library.

Subsidiary collections *e.g.* the Dinuzulu files in the Killie Campbell Library, some of them donated by E. Renaud, have also been useful to this study.

Some of the sources I have used are in Zulu. Here I have had to rely on the help of translators. This has been slow and expensive. Clearly there is more work to be done in regard to the surviving Zulu material. As linguists remind us, languages live, and my translators have warned me that changes in the use and the orthography of Zulu have made it difficult for them to be entirely confident in the translations they have made. In many cases Zulu documents were accompanied by translations which, although somewhat suspect - and perhaps deliberately distorted - at least indicated something of the content of the material.

As the bibliography shows, later printed material is varied and has been of varying value to this research. Among the biographical studies I call attention to Jeff Guy's biography of John William Colenso, *The Heretic*, and to Shula Marks' early article on 'Harriette Colenso and the Zulus' while W. Rees, *Colenso Letters from Natal* has, since its publication, been an indispensable source of information on the Colenso family. Biographies of people with whom Harriette had some dealings, or who were in a position to influence the outcome of her efforts, have not yielded many direct allusions to the Colensos. They have, however, been significant for other reasons: in identifying some of Harriette's correspondents and supporters; in revealing the interests, values, and dilemmas of contemporaries; and in explaining the context in which they - and Harriette and her relatives - lived and laboured. Recent work, some of it published by, *inter alia*, A.J. van Wyk, Shula Marks, Jeff Guy, John Laband and Nicholas Cope, has done much to inform scholars of the history of Zululand and of the experiences of the Zulu people. I have made use of a number of theses and mention, in particular, the M.A. thesis by the late Lionel Swart on Harriette Colenso, the more recent M.A. thesis of John Laband on Dick Addison, and the doctoral theses of Ruth Edgecombe and Charles Swaisland on the role of the Aborigines Protection Society. These are listed in the bibliography. Other works were used to enrich awareness of the controversial nature of imperialism and of the burgeoning field of studies in women's history at a time when many women were increasingly prominent as public figures.

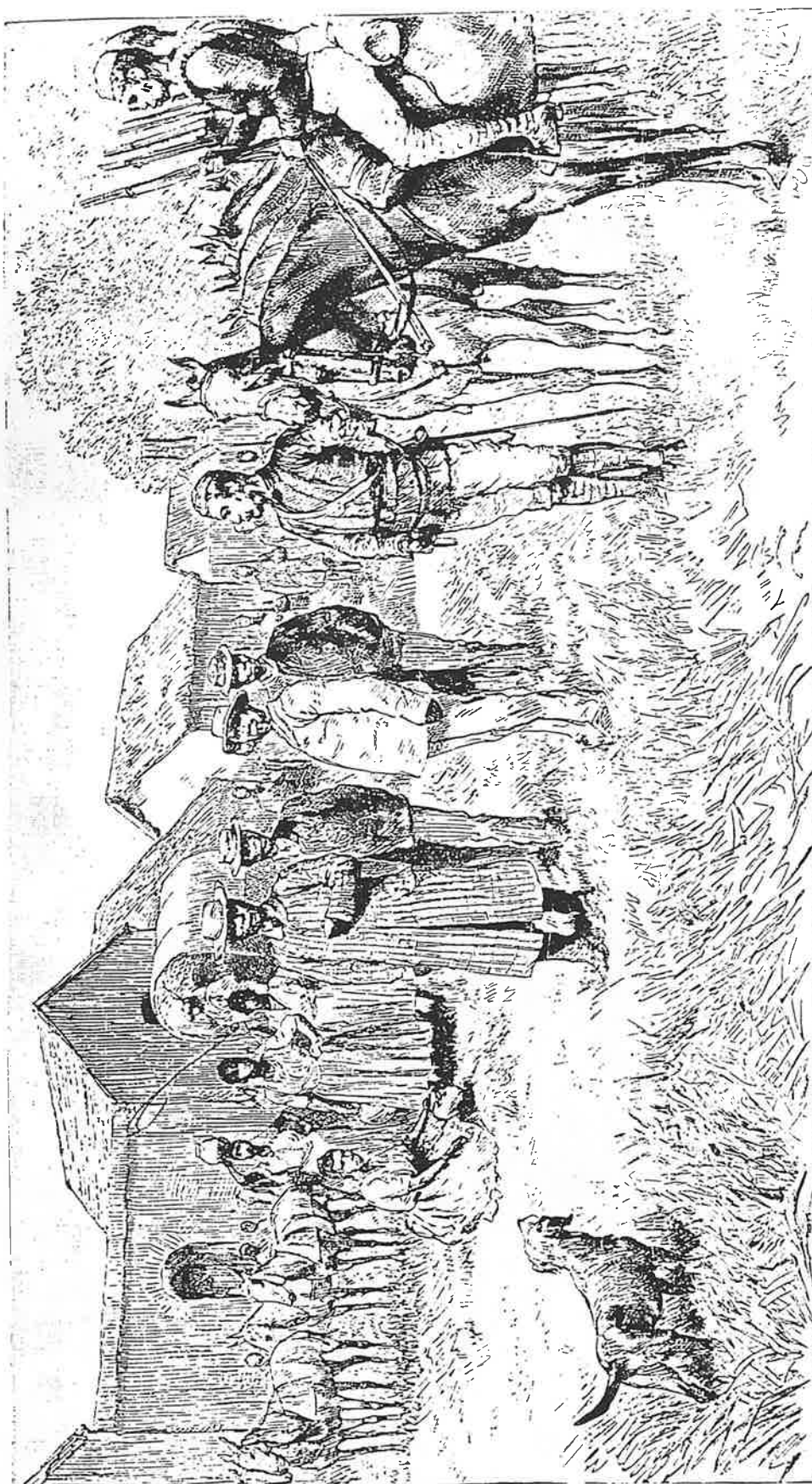


THE COLENZO FAMILY IN 1890

Harriette Colenso sent this photograph to the Exiles with the message 'We are keeping faith'.

Mrs Colenso, the Bishop's widow, is seated in the centre. Harriette stands directly behind her mother, with Agnes on her right, and Emily (Robert's wife) to her left. Frank and Robert are seated. Frank with his wife, Sophie, next to him and Robert with his son, Eric, in front of him. Frank's eldest daughter, Eothen, stands between Harriette and Emily; Irma is on her father's lap, with Sylvia on Mrs Colenso's lap. Neither Frank's son, Nigel (born 1889), nor Robert's daughter, Angela (born 1891), appears in this photograph.

[Reproduced with permission from a photograph in the Natal Diocesan Archives]

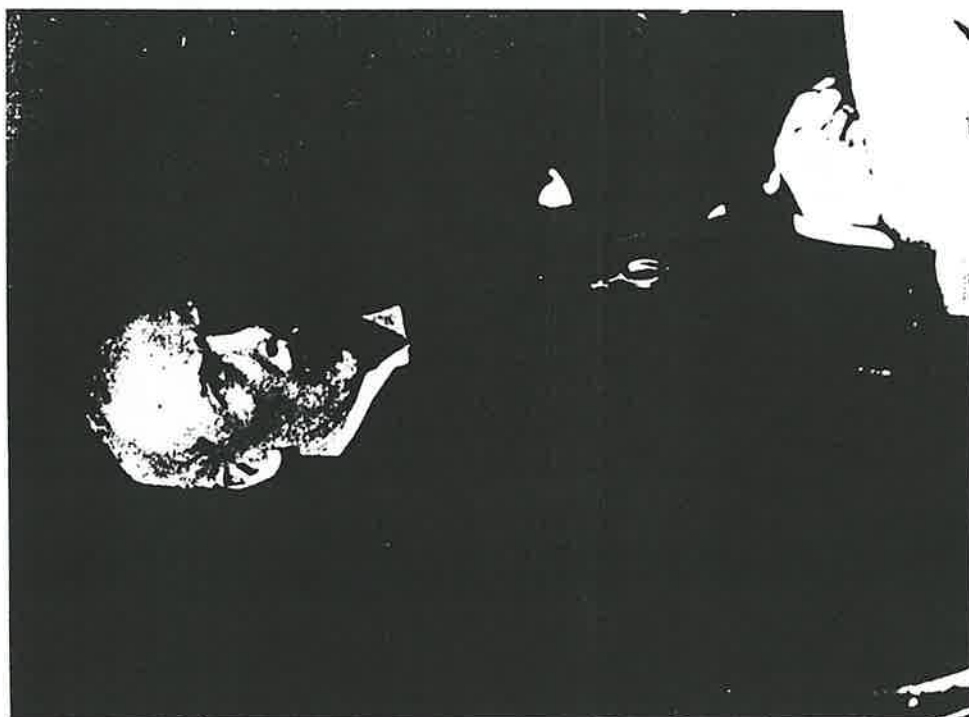


THE uSUTHU CHIEFS LEAVING ESHOWE FOR ST HELENA,
The Graphic, 29 March 1890

[Reproduced from a photocopy supplied by the Durban Municipal Library]



SIR HARRY ESCOMBE - MANZIKOFI
 [Reproduced from a photographic print supplied
 by the Killie Campbell Africana Library]



SIR MARSHAL CLARKE - KWEZI
 [Reproduced from an illustration in G. Lagden,
 The Basutos, vol.2 (London, 1909), facing p.558]

- 1 Mr. de Villamelle's maid
- 2 Mr. Knipe
- 3 Dr. White RN
- 4 Lt. Hewetson RN
- 5 Lt. Tyler East Riding
- 6 Dinuzulu
- 7 Capt. Gamble RN
- 8 Miss Morilleau
- 9 Lieut. Hon Boyle RN
- 10 Guardian of Zulul
- 11 Revd. Baker
- 12 Miss Morilleau
- 13 Mr. Hall A.P. RN
- 14 Mrs. Knipe
- 15 Mr. Byron Secretary RN.
- 16 Mr. Deason
- 17 Mr. Sercombe Eng. RN
- 18 Miss Barker
- 19 Miss Knipe
- 20
- 21 Mr. Deason
- 22 Lt. Saville RN
- 23 Mr. Wigram Mid. RN
- 24 Mr. Barker
- 25 Mr. Evans Mid. RN
- 26
- 27 Miss Morilleau
- 28 Lt. Wallis East Riding
- 29 Staff Com. Baird
- 30 Mrs. Morris
- 31 Mr. Moss
- 32
- 33 Mr. Fowler
- 34 Lt. Fitzmaurice RN
- 35 Admiral



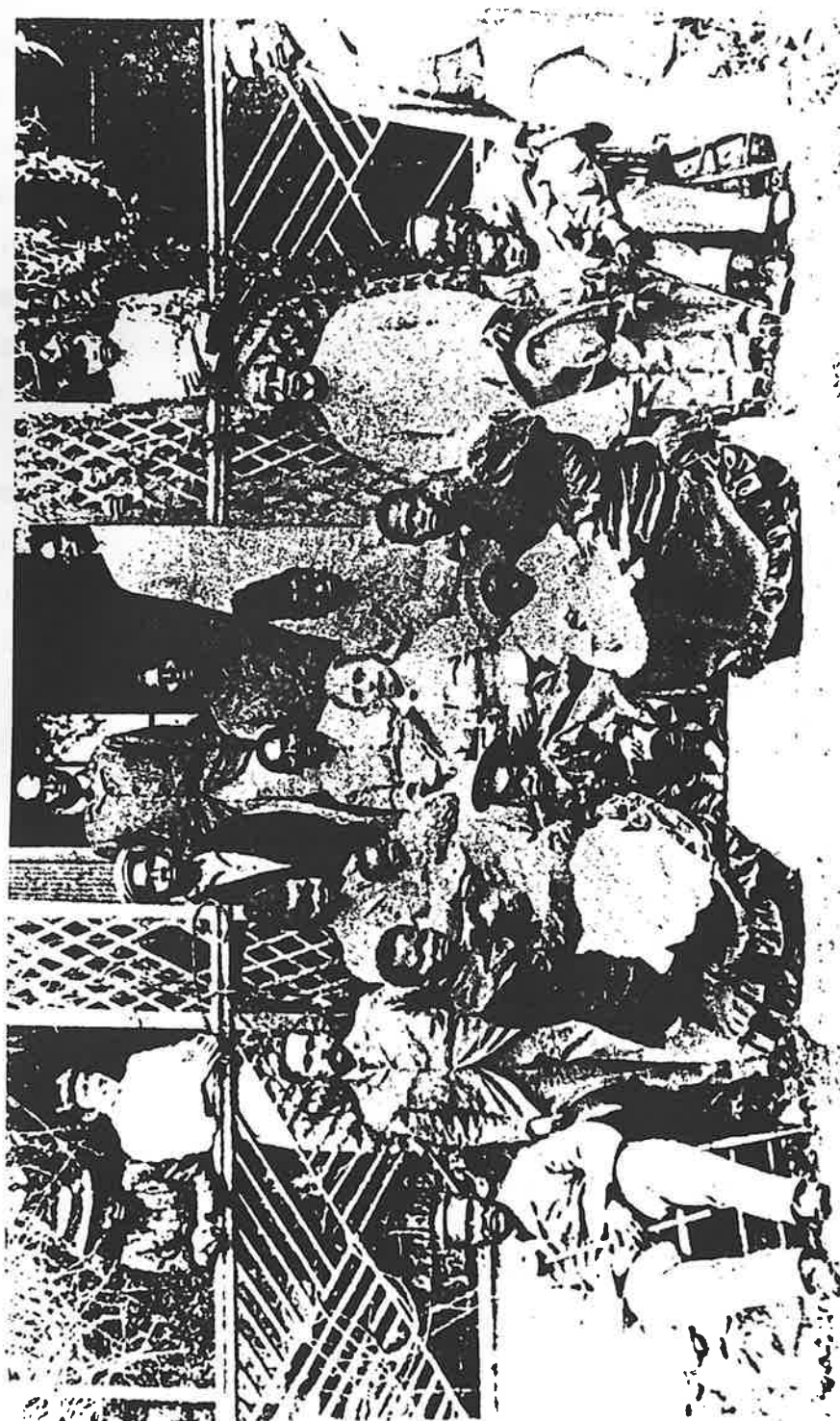
27 GROUP TAKEN AT FARM LODGE (GARRISON PICNIC) JAN Y 25th 1894.



- 36
- 37 Miss Morilleau
- 38 Mr. Bouden Surdon RN
- 39 Miss Fowler
- 40 Governor's wife, Wilson
- 41 Mr. Paton Mid. RN
- 42 Miss D. Marlean
- 43 Mr. Fowler
- 44 Bishop. Dr. Welby
- 45 Miss Marlean
- 46
- 47 Mrs. Marlean
- 48 Miss Marlean
- 49 Mr. Haggis
- 50
- 51 Mrs. Wolby
- 52 Mr. Chambers Mid. RN
- 53 Major Gundry RA
- 54 Mr. Lawson Sub. Lt. RN
- 55 Mr. Wilson Clerk RN
- 56 Mrs. Hood
- 57 Mr. Hand
- 58 Mr. Harvey Mid. RN
- 59 Lt. Col. Corbett RMLI
- 60 Mr. Deason
- 61 Mr. Rideout Mid. RN
- 62 Mr. Nicholson Mid. RN
- 63 Miss Deason
- 64 Mr. Hollowes Mid. RN
- 65 Miss Deason
- 66
- 67 Mr. Grogan Mid. RN
- 68
- 69 Mr. Deason
- 70 Mr. Wallis Clerk RN
- 71 Major de Villamille RE.

PICNIC AT ST HELENA, 1894

[Reproduced from a photograph in the Admiral Bedford collection kindly supplied by the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London]



HARRIETTE COLENZO AND THE ZULU EXILES' PARTY, ST HELENA, 1895

[Reproduced, with the author's permission, from N. Cope, *To Build a Nation* (Pmb., 1993), facing p.94.

Dinuzulu stands on the extreme right; Ndabuko is seated on the extreme left; Shingane is seated, holding his child, on the extreme right
Paul Mthimkhulu stands in the middle of the group with his wife behind him on the verandah; Mubi Nondenisa is the lean figure on the steps

An almost identical picture was published in *South Africa*, 20 Nov. 1897. It had already appeared in *The Sketch* in 1895. Frank Colenso regretted that the photograph was such a poor one of his sister.

PREFACE

To understand one another is the second step towards 'solving the problems' of how to live together in peace and comfort; even as the will to do so is the first essential step (H.E. Colenso).¹

The endeavours of the Colenso family in the years between 1887 and 1897 invite attention; for the Colensos were an unusual family who championed specific and relevant causes, and the decade chosen for close study is a crucial and interesting period. In examining so important an episode in Colenso activity this thesis takes into account the ecclesiastical issues of the day but it emphasises the humanitarian and political role of the Colensos as the champions of the Zulu royal family and the Zulu people. It deals in the main with three issues: why their efforts were made and so vigorously maintained; what form their efforts took; and why they achieved so little.

The memory of John William Colenso dominated his family. Bishop, biblical critic, and political campaigner, he left a legacy of controversy that was accepted as an unquestioned inheritance by his widow and their five children. Sarah Frances Colenso, his widow, died in December 1893. There were three daughters: Harriette Emily (Harrie or, sometimes, Hal) (1847-1932), Frances Ellen (Nell or Nelly/Nellie, to English friends, but Fanny to the Natal family) (1849-1887) and Agnes Mary (1855-1932). There were two sons. Robert John (Robin) (1850-1926) settled with his family in Britain in 1890 and practised as a doctor. His younger brother, Francis Ernest (Frank) (1852-1910), who married the socially well-placed Sophie Jeanette Frankland and moved from Norwich to London in 1887. Of the five, Robert John, though sympathetic and not inactive, was less involved in the controversies than his siblings.²

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1. *Colenso's Zulu-English Dictionary*, 4th edition (Pietermaritzburg, 1905), preface by H.E. Colenso, 27 Mar.1905.
 2. Members of the Colenso family were given Zulu names. The Bishop was *Sobantu*, the 'father of the people', or *Sokululeka* the 'father of light', or *Ndlondlo*, literally the 'viper of ekuKhanyeni' which denoted strength. Harriette was *Dhlewedhle* (or *Dlewedle*), the staff or walking stick i.e. guide and support for her father. Other names used for or by her were *Inkanisi*, 'light' or 'source of brightness' *Matatoba*, which Harriette equated to 'she who goes slowly', and *Mandiza* given her after her St Helena visits, meaning 'the flying one'. Robert was *Mnyaiza* which was also the name of Ndabuko's son and successor. In Volume 1 in the James Stuart Archives (pp.259 and 272, n.1) the name *Mnyaiza* is ascribed to Frank Colenso, who is identified (wrongly) as the Bishop's only son. Frank's name was *Gebuza* (*Gebhuza*) a name which was also given to H.C. Shepstone. According to *Colenso's Zulu-English Dictionary*, 4th edition (Pietermaritzburg, 1905), this denoted a brave warrior. Agnes was *Sineke*, usually translated as 'she who helps' although the *Zulu-English Dictionary* previously cited suggests that a similar term, *Nsineke* meant a person 'who showed his teeth in a remarkable way'. As a young boy Eric ('Jock') Colenso, the son of Robert, was *Nondela*.

As the Colenso family made plain their determination to continue their father's work, so Harriette Emily Colenso moved into the position of leading personality among them. By 1887, some four years after her father's death on 20 June 1883, Harriette Colenso was definitely a political personality in her own right. A woman of purpose, she was already a veteran of the political and ecclesiastical controversies during and after her father's lifetime. The death in April 1887 of her sister Frances Ellen, author of published books and articles and defender of the Zulu and the reputation of Colonel A.W. Durnford, left Harriette unchallenged as the most public figure among the Colensos. She found her main family supporters in her youngest sister, Agnes, the only Colenso to be born in South Africa, and in her brother Frank.

The championship of the Zulu royal house and its adherents, the uSuthu, was the essence of Harriette's concern for the Zulu people. At the time of the British annexation of part of Zululand as a Crown Colony in 1887 she pleaded for more consideration for them. After the 'rebellion' of 1888 she was the backbone of the judicial and journalistic defence of the uSuthu leaders and of those of their followers who were brought before the Court of Special Commissioners at Eshowe. Afterwards she campaigned unstintingly to secure the release from St Helena of Dinuzulu and his uncles and the appointment of Dinuzulu to a 'central position' in Zululand. Convinced of the inherent loyalty of the Zulu people as a whole for the Zulu royal house, she believed that to secure justice for Dinuzulu and his immediate followers would ensure justice for all Zulu people. She maintained unwaveringly that birth and innate ability fitted Dinuzulu to serve his people as the intermediary between the past and the future and as their buffer against ignorant harshness on the part of white rulers.

Together with other members of the Church of England in Natal the Colensos sought a successor to John William Colenso as Bishop of Natal. Only if such a successor were appointed, could they be sure of the continued corporate existence of the congregations that had remained loyal to Bishop Colenso in the decades of controversy. Because they believed that Sir George Cox, their father's biographer, would sympathise with Colenso aims, they worked for the selection of Sir George as Bishop-elect by the Church Council of the Church of England. Subsequently in the 1890s they were the most rigid opponents

Biographical information on the Colensos is to be found in W. Rees, *Colenso Letters from Natal*, (Pietermaritzburg, 1958) and in A. Werner, 'Harriette Colenso' (unpublished typescript, K.C.A.L.). There are innumerable references to Zulu family names in the correspondence of the family in the three main collections. The *James Stuart Archive* volumes have also been consulted.

of the attempts of Bishop Baynes to do what Archbishop Benson desired, merge the two sets of Anglican congregations in Natal. The Colensos believed, with others, that the price was too high.³

The Colensos failed both in regard to the Zulu and in regard to the Church of England. Dinuzulu returned to Zululand in 1898 but he was never in practice accorded the position of trust for which Harriette had hoped. He was to be tried again for treason and to die in exile in the Transvaal in 1913. There was ecclesiastical failure as well. Church of England congregations moved over to the Church of the Province of South Africa. By 1910 there was not complete unity, but the intense opposition to the Church Properties Act of that year was very narrowly based, and it failed. The Act transferred to the Church of the Province of South African properties which had been held in trust for the Church of England and it therefore led to the eviction of the Colenso women from Bishopstowe.⁴

In recent times leaders of the Church of the Province of South Africa have shown themselves sympathetic to the causes that mattered to the Colensos. They have condemned racism in strong terms, while a black man now holds the highest position in the Church of the Province of South Africa. Curiously, the Church of the Province of South Africa in the days of *apartheid* was much nearer to the Colenso position in regard to political matters and on questions of biblical authority than was the Church of England in South Africa.⁵ Whatever reservations about Colenso's theology some present-day members of the Church of the Province of South Africa may have, that Church celebrated Colenso's centenary in 1983 with joy and honour.

The Colensos were involved with three changing and interacting societies (the Zulu, the Natalian, and the British) and the politics of all three (the 'peripheries' as well as the 'metropolis') meshed - or clashed - with one another to determine the direction of policy or the course of events. It is not easy to explain how decisions were made. One needs to realise how wide was the range of pressures that operated, sometimes converging so that each reinforced the impact of others, sometimes strongly counteracting one another. It is, in addition, crucial to see that all those who advocated a course of action, or decided upon one, were not simply reacting to the existing circumstances but were also trying to assess

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3. H.E. Colenso, *A Reply Made on Behalf of the Church of England in Natal to Bishop Baynes' Explanation of March 17, 1894* (Pietermaritzburg, 1894); Rees, *Colenso Letters*, p.405.
 4. P. Hinchliff, *The Anglican Church in South Africa* (London, 1963), pp.109-10; B. Burnett, *Anglicans in Natal* (Durban, 1953), p.124.
 5. Personal discussion with the late Professor Edgar Brookes.

the probable consequences - in Britain, in Natal, and in Zululand - of alternative courses of action. For them this meant that they were dealing with imponderables (the assessment of probabilities) while for the historian - who cannot easily recreate the past's expectation of the future - it warns that there is always an elusive element in any explanation of decision-making. Certainly decisions about Zululand had many dimensions. They were affected by the impact of 'domestic' politics of different kinds. These included the tensions, expectations, and machinations of parliamentary life in Britain, political rivalries in Natal, and the existence in Zululand of factions and resentments. One has to reckon, too, with the effect on decisions about Zululand of the broad trends apparent in South Africa and the repercussions of problems elsewhere. It is also essential to take into account the conflicting aspirations and fears of those whose priorities varied, some stressing the overall position and predicaments of the British Empire, others thinking primarily of Natal, while some thought first of the Zulu and their future.

One of the interesting features of contemporary British society which helped Harriette was that this was a decade when the issue of the social, political, and legal standing of women was a subject of lively debate and when the status of women was improving. There were a number of women who were prominent as the champions of public causes. The right of women to education was recognised with the founding of schools and university institutions, although equality of opportunity with men still lay far in the future. The struggle for the franchise on equal terms with men was being waged, but triumph was delayed until 1930. Some leading women, like the Pankhursts, gave all their attention to the question of political rights for women, while others took up a particular issue, as Josephine Butler did when she campaigned against the state regulation of vice. Some sought to elevate the masses, as Emma Cons did, or to improve their conditions of life, like Octavia Hill. Beatrice Potter through her marriage to Sidney Webb created a remarkable socialist partnership whose steadiness and responsibility contrasted with the tragic association of Eleanor Marx and Dr Aveling. Annie Besant was a contemporary of Harriette, and some phases of her career parallel Harriette's concern and commitment; she championed Indian nationalism in much the same way as Harriette championed the Zulu, and as Gertrude Bell was later to champion the Arab cause. At the turn of the century Emily Hobhouse denounced the concentration camps and won her place in the pantheon of Afrikaner folk heroes, which she retains despite her later concern with the prospects of the black people of South Africa. There was some common ground between Harriette Colenso and Olive Schriener; for both denounced the Chartered Company and Cecil John Rhodes, but these two women were poles apart in temperament and technique. Harriette was a committed Christian who accepted the conventional Victorian social *mores*, not a

rebel like Olive. In addition, although the Colensos welcomed the publication of Olive Schreiner's *Trooper Peter Halket* in 1897, it was not by means of fiction or allegory but by the persevering repetition of fact and persistent lobbying that Harriette hoped to achieve her goals.⁶

To most contemporaries a more ostentatious feature of the period bounded by the Jubilee years of 1887 and 1897 was that it denoted a period of high imperialism. In a decade in which Kipling and Haggard were well received and Elgar celebrated the splendour of Empire in his *Pomp and Circumstance* there was a pervading sense of rejoicing in the fact of Empire. Yet there were also some contemporary qualms, for the decades of great Victorian prosperity were over, and the British no longer enjoyed an unchallengeable economic ascendancy over European rivals. Within Britain, problems of poverty and exploitation clamoured for attention. The rise of the 'new unionism', the spread of socialist groups of different persuasions, the beginnings of the Labour party, and the increase in the reading public as a result of earlier extensions of schooling were all signs of a society under strain and in transition. Somewhat paradoxically, the sense that all was not well with the British future crystallised in different views of Empire. Some doubted the value of Empire and urged attention to the problems within Britain, while others argued that Britain should compete vigorously for further territorial expansion. Some still supported the idea of drawing the parts of Empire into closer association with one another and with Britain, and there were also those who accepted the roseate view that Empire and domestic improvements were compatible and interdependent. At the time when Harriette appealed to the British public and politicians, there was a great deal of mystique about the Empire, but there were also serious misgivings about Britain's imperial future.⁷

For South Africa as a whole the decade was a crucial one. Gold on the Witwatersrand quickened economic activity, raised hopes, and heightened the intensity of competition. Broadly speaking, it exacerbated the rivalries of the white-ruled states and colonies and it accelerated the expansion of white domination over black peoples. The South African Republic feared for its survival as an independent polity, while some in Britain were concerned about the durability of British predominance in South Africa. Animosity between the two colonies, the Cape and Natal, increased as they competed for the maximum advantage from trade and traffic with the South African Republic. They also

6. Biographies of the women mentioned in this paragraph are listed in the bibliography.

7. Literature on Britain's period of imperial splendour is immense. J. Morris, *Pax Britannica, the Climax of an Empire* (London, 1968) captures the *mentalité* of the age. J.A. Hobson is the best known contemporary critic of the British Empire and was already at work.

rivalled each other and jostled with the South African Republic in their ambitions for territorial expansion and the varied advantages, direct and indirect, strategic and economic, that such expansion might bring. In the decade after 1885 white control was extended over the Tswana, the Zulu, the Mpondo, the Ndebele, the Shona, and the Swazi people as the 'scramble for Africa' manifested itself in the southern area of the continent.

One of the many repercussions of the discovery of the rich gold deposits on the Witwatersrand was the expectation that, if there was gold on the Rand, there was probably gold elsewhere: in the land of the Shona and the Ndebele, in southern Natal, or in Zululand. In 1887 after the division of land with the New Republic Britain annexed the remaining portion of Zululand, and one reason for this was the presence of gold prospectors and the difficulties that they might bring. During the next decade there was some further annexation of land while a protectorate was established over neighbouring territories. In 1897 Britain decided to allow the incorporation of Zululand with Natal. Just before the formal steps to accomplish this were taken, the Colonial Office extended the boundaries of the colony of Zululand to include territories to the north where protectorates had been established in 1895.⁸

The Colonial Office did not regard the acquisition of Zululand as a scoop but rather as an unavoidable necessity, designed to end anarchy in Zululand and restrain white ambitions. White land grabbers had already secured a great deal of territory both beyond and within the boundaries of what became British Zululand. To justify the extension of British rule the Colonial Office repeated the assurance given by local officials that annexation was favoured by the Zulus. This was a highly suspect claim, and it shows the strength of the anti-imperialist lobby in the House of Commons that it should have been made. Labouchere forced a parliamentary division on the issue.⁹ In Natal politicians were soured by the surrender of so much territory to the New Republic which merged with the South African Republic in September 1888. But they were silenced for a time by the expectation of future benefit. Their immediate and related tasks were to ensure that Natal was not squeezed out of the economic advantage to be gained from the railway race to the Rand and to address the question of Responsible government for Natal.

A vital issue in the next decade was whether or not Britain would retain direct responsibility for Zululand. In retrospect it may seem that the incorporation of Zululand

8. C.8782, p.32, no.49, W.F. Hely-Hutchinson to J. Chamberlain, 30 Dec.1897.

9. British *Hansard*, 3rd Series, vol.315, cols 325-26: Labouchere's motion of division, 19 May 1887.

with Natal was inevitable, but this was not the view of contemporaries. British politicians knew that humanitarians did not think very highly of Natal and they preferred not to provoke the philanthropic lobby. For their part the Natalians were in a dilemma over the question of enlarging the Colony's boundaries because estimated advantages had always to be weighed against risks and responsibilities. Nevertheless, when the Cape was allowed to incorporate Pondoland (which Natal had long coveted) in 1894, the smaller colony seethed with disappointment and indignation. Her politicians were determined that Zululand should not also elude them and they were not disappointed. Ripon, the Secretary of State for the Colonies (1892-1895), was reluctant to give up direct British rule, but even he promised Natal that Zululand would never be handed over to the Cape, while his successor, Joseph Chamberlain (1895-1903), accelerated its absorption into Natal. In 1897, when South African affairs were far from tractable, Chamberlain thought more of keeping white Natalians sweet than of the welfare of the Zulu people and arranged the annexation of Zululand to Natal on terms that were acceptable to the Natalians.

One of the fascinating themes in this study is the question of Harriette Colenso's attitude to the annexation of Zululand to Natal. For a short time she favoured it because she believed that it was not *who* ruled Zululand that mattered but *how* Zululand was ruled. From the perspective provided by conditions in southern Africa today, this was an error, and a crucial one. She clearly undermined British opposition to the idea of incorporating Zululand into Natal. It was not, however, for the Colensos to see that in the future the black people who were governed directly by Britain would experience a history which, in some ways at least, was much to be preferred to what the Zulu people have gone through in recent years. Botswana, Lesotho, and Swaziland have held an international position denied to *apartheid* South Africa's 'independent' areas and certainly not accorded to kwaZulu under the National Party. Equally, it is not for the historian at work in the 1990s to say that a decision which seemed deplorable from a later standpoint may not look very different to the historians of the future.

Harriette Colenso's attitude to the incorporation of Zululand with Natal, hostile in 1887, then acquiescent and sometimes positively favourable, parallels her view of Britain's imperial role. To the Colensos power was justified only if it was used for a moral end. They accepted the potential for good in British rule but they were very aware of the gap between how power *should* be used and how in fact it *was* used. While it is clear that there was often a moral dimension in imperialist writings, imperialists extolled and praised far more than they criticised. The Colensos differed, for in their attitude criticism predominated. Their natural allies were the spiritual descendants of the Manchester School,

the 'little Englanders', who distrusted assertive and expansionist politics. In an age of apparent imperial glory and jubilation the Colensos helped keep alive currents of criticism by insisting on an ethical dimension in British decision-making.

For the Colensos press and parliament should be the conscience of the nation which would strengthen the resolve of politicians and officials to 'deal righteously'. Their own role was that of educating officials, politicians, press, and parliament so that truth and righteousness would be known. It was a very simplistic attitude, but it was not one of naive optimism. The Colensos did not expect to win, and they were not discouraged by the fear of failure. They knew that they must endeavour.

There was too much controversy and too much polemic for the Colensos ever to be forgotten in Natal. Older Natalians have recalled to the author their memories of the Misses Colenso. Tales of Harriette's clashes with T.F. Carter, the last Attorney-General of the colony of Natal, were recollected by members of Natal's judicial and legal establishment.¹⁰ Perhaps it is partly because the controversies burnt so deep that dispassionate and scholarly appreciation has been delayed - and is more difficult.

In more recent decades John William Colenso has been the subject of a number of books and theses which examine his work as a missionary bishop and his theological standpoint. In the 1960s the ecclesiastical historian, Peter Hinchliff, published a biography of John William Colenso which was intended to supersede the outdated biography by Sir George Cox written in the 1880s at the behest of the Colenso family. A leading figure in the Church of the Province of South Africa at the time, Peter Hinchliff failed to empathise with the theological position of Colenso, of which he disapproved, and he deliberately refrained from tackling the role of Colenso as an unashamed and dedicated political bishop. More recently Jeff Guy has provided us with a sensitive assessment of John William Colenso both as a controversial theologian and as a committed political activist. Interestingly, Guy tackled the biography of Colenso after writing and publishing his book, *The Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom*, for which he used, *inter alia*, the Colenso Papers. Amongst the merits of Guy's earlier work is the fact that it revives, refurbishes, and reinforces many of the views about the Anglo-Zulu War which the Colensos urged in their own day. The re-publication of Colenso's Natal writings in R. Edgecombe's *Bringing Forth Light* indicates the continuing interest in the thinking and work of Natal's

10. Personal information from the late Mr P.W. Vietzen, formerly a Natal magistrate and an assessor in the Natal Supreme Court, the late Professor Edgar Brookes and Mrs Betty Mbanjwa.

controversial Bishop. He has, too, been the subject of a number of unpublished theses of which Dr Darby's 'The Soteriology of John William Colenso' is the most recent.¹¹

Harriette Colenso features indirectly in some recent publications. C.T. Binns' books on Cetshwayo and Dinuzulu deal in passing with the Colenso championship of these men, while Shula Marks' important *Reluctant Rebellion* cannot ignore Harriette's role as the champion of Dinuzulu, especially in the later crisis of his life when Natal made him the scapegoat for the 'Bambatha' rebellion. The recent publication of Magema Magwaza Fuze's *The Black People and Whence They Came* is an indirect tribute to the Colensos, since Fuze was a product of ekhuKanyeni and a life-long Bishopstowe man. It was the Colensos who secured the 1922 publication of his work. Marks' article on 'Harriette Colenso and the Zulus' is the most easily available source of information about Harriette and, while its author may wish now to revise some of her estimates of Harriette's role, it remains a remarkable feat of compression and perception. Lionel Swart's M.A. thesis on 'Harriette Colenso and the Defence of Dinuzulu' gives scholarly and sympathetic attention to Harriette's role after the 1906 upheavals and deserves to be better known. Historians of the Aborigines Protection Society, Dr C. Swaisland and Dr R. Edgecombe, have necessarily discussed Colenso activities, as these overlap with the story of the Aborigines Protection Society. The author of this thesis has contributed a chapter on 'Harriette Colenso and the Issues of Politics and Religion' in a recent work on missionary activity in South Africa.¹²

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11. G.W. Cox, *The Life of John William Colenso D.D Bishop of Natal*, 2 vols. (London, 1888); P. Hinchliff, *John William Colenso, Bishop of Natal* (London, 1964); J.J. Guy, *The Heretic: a Study of the Life of John William Colenso* (Johannesburg, 1983) and *Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom* (London, 1979); D.R. Edgecombe (ed), *Bringing Forth Light: Five Tracts on Bishop Colenso's Zulu Mission*, Killie Campbell Africana Library Reprint Series (Durban and Pietermaritzburg, 1982) I.D. Darby, 'The Soteriology of Bishop John William Colenso' (Ph.D., University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, 1982).
 12. C.T. Binns, *The Last Zulu King: the Life and Death of Cetshwayo* (London, 1963) and *Dinuzulu the Death of the House of Shaka* (London, 1968); S. Marks, *Reluctant Rebellion, the 1906-08 Disturbances in Natal* (Oxford, 1970) and 'Harriette Colenso and the Zulus', *Journal of African History* vol.4, 3 (1963); M.M. Fuze, *The Black People and Whence They Came: a Zulu View*. Translated by H.C. Lugg, edited by A.T. Cope (Pietermaritzburg, 1979); L. Swart, 'The Work of Harriette Emily Colenso in Relationship to Dinuzulu ka Cetshwayo Culminating in the Treason Trial of 1908-1909' (M.A., University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, 1967); H.C. Swaisland, 'The Aborigines Protection Society and British Southern and West Africa' (D.Phil., University of Oxford, 1968) and 'The Aborigines Protection Society', *Anti Slavery Reporter*, series VII, vol.13, no.3 (1987); D.R. Edgecombe, 'The Influence of the Aborigines Protection Society on British Policy Towards Black African and Cape Coloured Affairs in South Africa, 1886-1910' (Ph.D., Cambridge University, 1976); B.M. Nicholls, 'Harriette Colenso and the Issues of Religion and Politics in Colonial Natal' in H. Bredekamp and R. Ross *Missions and Culture in South Africa*, (Johannesburg, 1995), chapter nine.

Little has been published on other members of the Colenso family. Wyn Rees' *Colenso Letters from Natal* offers the correspondence of Sarah Frances Colenso, the Bishop's wife, and is invaluable to any student of Natal and of the Colensos, both for the letters and for the historical explanation and commentary that the author gives. But these letters are only a segment of the vast corpus of Colenso material, and what Wyn Rees has published does not do much to direct the reader's attention to events in Zululand in the 1880s and 1890s. Frances Ellen Colenso has been the subject of a skilful M.A. thesis by P. Merrett who considers her in relation to stereotypes of Victorian women. The present author's conference paper on 'Frances Ellen Colenso and the Anglo-Zulu War' adopts a more conventional narrative approach to illuminate Frances Ellen's contribution to the Colenso effort. Since Colonel A.W. Durnford was so closely associated with the Colensos, theses on his career necessarily give attention to this association and his relationship with Frances Ellen. Daymond's introduction in her republication of *My Chief and I* by Atherton Wylde (Frances Ellen) together with a hitherto unpublished sequel is a sympathetic and perceptive recent account of a courageous woman.¹³

The Colenso family as a whole and Harriette in particular have not yet been given due recognition. The solid and intimidating bulk of the Colenso material is daunting, while the vehement intellectual ferment in current South African historical writing can hamper dispassionate appreciation. Harriette was white; she was a British colonist and a Natal settler; and she was a missionary who appealed to the public conscience. In addition, she was the champion of the Zulu royal house. She thus belonged to a number of groups, each of which has its critics. Recent scholarly discussion of the dilemmas and temptations of the Zulu royal house later in the twentieth century and current vehement disputes about the role of Inkatha (and of Zulu royalty within it) in present day politics may arouse scepticism about the wisdom of her defence of Dinuzulu. He experienced dilemmas comparable to those of his successors, but at a different time and in a different context.¹⁴

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13. P.L. Merrett, 'Frances Ellen Colenso 1849-1887, her Life and Times in Relation to the Victorian Stereotype of the Middle Class Woman' (M.A., University of Cape Town, 1980); B.M. Nicholls, 'Frances Ellen Colenso and the Anglo-Zulu War'. Paper presented at the conference on the Centenary of the Anglo-Zulu War, University of Natal, Durban, 1979; F. Ellen Colenso, *My Chief and I; or Six Months in Natal after the Langalibalele Outbreak* (London, 1880). Originally published in 1880 under the pseudonym Atherton Wylde, this work was republished together with a previously unpublished *Five Years Later, a Sequel*, both edited and introduced by M.J. Daymond (Pietermaritzburg, 1994). R.W.F. Droogleeve, 'A Figure of Controversy, Col. Anthony Durnford in Natal and Zululand, 1873-79' (Ph.D., University of South Africa, 1983).
 14. See for example, Brewer, J.D. 'The Modern Janus: Inkatha's Role in Black Liberation'. London University, Institute of Commonwealth Studies. *Societies of Southern Africa Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, vol.12, 1981. For discussion of how during the twentieth century the Zulu

It is interesting to see how contemporary emphasis on black history tends to distort Harriette's role, diminishing what was worthwhile and exaggerating what was detrimental. Credit for teaching Dinuzulu to read is assigned only to Fuze.¹⁵ On the other hand, both J. van Wyk and Shula Marks attribute Dinuzulu's arrival at Bishopstowe in November 1888 to the persuasiveness or 'passionate appeal' of Harriette Colenso,¹⁶ a view which accepts Harriette's own subsequent assessment of her influence. It does not reckon with the way all other options were effectively closed to Dinuzulu by November 1888. Marks implies, too, that Dinuzulu paid a price for the support of Harriette Colenso in forfeiting the backing of the Church of the Province of South Africa.¹⁷ In fact, the only indication of C.P.S.A. support for Dinuzulu is the sympathy of Bishop Carter in the late 1890s, and Carter did not spurn the Zulu leader because Harriette championed him.¹⁸ As far as other members of the C.P.S.A. were/are concerned, Dinuzulu could hardly forfeit what he never had. It is quite clear that Harriette herself had a price to pay for the help she gave Dinuzulu. In writing on the Colensos one needs to be very wary of the prejudices of their time, and of ours.

Arguably the Colensos sought goals that were as unrealisable in their generation as they remain elusive in ours. Harriette sought a secured position for Dinuzulu because she hoped this would ensure a genuine co-operation between the white authorities and the Zulu leader and a just and sane society. However, she and Dinuzulu were both caught in the circle from which neither could escape. His receiving an acknowledged position of effective authority in Zululand could only result from the favourable disposition of the white authorities in Natal; it could not create that goodwill. As regards the Church issue, vehement ecclesiastical controversy was a fact of colonial life which all who took part in the quarrels helped to perpetuate. The Colensos were not the only participants responsible for the bitterness of such disputes, but it is quite clear that no-one fought harder than Harriette Colenso to thwart the absorption of the Church of England congregations into

royal house has been both manipulated and exploitive, see S. Marks, 'Natal, the Zulu Royal Family, and the Ideology of Segregation', I.C.S. Col.Sem. Papers S. of S.A., vol.9, 1978 and *The Ambiguities of Dependence in South Africa. Class, Nationalism and the State in Twentieth Century Natal* (Johannesburg, 1986).

15. C. de B. Webb & J.B. Wright (eds), *The James Stuart Archive of Recorded Oral Evidence Relating to the History of the Zulu and Neighbouring People*. 4 vols. (Pietermaritzburg, 1976-1986), vol.1, p.271, n.83.
16. A.J. van Wyk, 'Dinuzulu en die Usutu-opstand van 1888', *AYB* 1979 (Pretoria, 1983); Marks, *Reluctant Rebellion*, p.93.
17. *Ibid.* p.111.
18. William Cullen Library (henceforward W.C.L.) Carter Papers: W.H. Carter to A. Wenlock, 30 Dec.1897.

the Church of the Province of South Africa. Legislation to take over the property of the Church of England was postponed until 1910, when Harriette's resources of finance and emotional strength were exhausted. Even then, she supported and directed the black congregations who declined to enter the Church of the Province of South Africa.¹⁹

What sustained Harriette's activities were the ideals of co-operation between black and white, and of freedom and tolerance within the Christian faith. She did not succeed in these aims, but her failure does not necessarily mean failure for all time. Although she had her limitations, Harriette cannot simply be dismissed as a victim of tunnel vision. In fact, she was always aware of the widest and deepest moral dimension. She would have agreed with the hymn writer that God's glory is 'manifest in valiant fight' for the vigour and vitality of her efforts drew strength from the certainty of the moral consideration in political and religious life. Her ideals remain the hopes of many in South Africa: justice and co-operation in a multiracial - or 'rainbow' - society, and a toleration and catholicity in religious matters that flow from the awareness of the fatherhood of God. Harriette made mistakes and sometimes allowed herself to be manipulated. On occasion she herself lapsed into an attitude of expediency and of petty point-scoring against the opposition, rather than Christian love. But she never wavered in her firm conviction that the human purpose is to live righteously, and her commitment to that belief was staunch.

19. Cory Library, Ms.17049, vol.15: Cory notes, pp.105-118.

CHAPTER ONE

THE COLENSOS IN 1887

The Family, their Contexts, Causes and Prospects

The Family

John William Colenso, the first and the most controversial of Natal's bishops, was one of South Africa's most eminent *bittereinders*.¹ There were many contentions during his thirty years, 1853-1883, as Anglican Bishop of Natal and these had widespread repercussions in both Church affairs and politics.² His ideas and experience as a missionary led him into vehement controversy, first over the question of polygamy and then over his biblical criticism and the direction of his theological teaching. His ecclesiastical encounters with those opposed to him, particularly Dean Green in Pietermaritzburg and Bishop Gray in Cape Town,³ helped to initiate schism in the Anglican community in South Africa. In the wider context, the conflict led on to the redefinition of the relations between the Church of England in England and the colonial churches of the Anglican persuasion.⁴ In matters political, he left behind a record of vigorous opposition to what he regarded as official wrongdoing and an example of one who would 'go to his death for the right',⁵ confronting dishonesty, injustice, and policies which were selfish and short-sighted with intense and stalwart denunciation. Such a person could not be ignored.

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1. *Bittereinder*: In South African English, 'one who will not accept defeat', originally used of a die-hard of the South African War (J. Branford, *Dictionary of South African English*, Oxford 1978).
 2. The full-length published biographies of Colenso are G.W. Cox, *The Life of John William Colenso, D.D. Bishop of Natal*, 2 vols (London, 1888); P. Hinchliff, *John William Colenso, Bishop of Natal* (London, 1964); J.J. Guy, *The Heretic, A Study of the Life of John William Colenso* (Johannesburg, 1983). Much biographical information is contained in W. Rees, *Colenso Letters from Natal* (Pietermaritzburg, 1958).
 3. See Appendix 2, Biographical notes.
 4. The controversies that divided the Church of the Province of South Africa and the Church of England in South Africa have moved through a contorted history. These are discussed, *i.a.* in P. Hinchliff, *The Anglican Church in South Africa* (London, 1963), Chapter 4. In 1870 the Church of the Province of South Africa adopted a constitution which, in the Third Proviso, specifically excluded recognition of the authority of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. In later controversies, crucial questions were whether or not the Third Proviso should be accepted and what were its legal implications in regard to property. See M. Goedhals, 'Nathaniel James Merriman, Archdeacon and Bishop, a Study of Church Life and Government' (Ph.D., Rhodes University, 1982), pp.382-88 for discussion of the judgment of the Cape Supreme Court in *Merriman versus Williams*, 26 Aug.1880 and pp.404-09 for discussion of the Privy Council decision on the Appeal, 28 June 1882. See below, Chapter Six.
 5. E. Durnford, *A Soldier's Life and Work in South Africa, a Memoir of the Late Col A.W. Durnford 1872-1879* (London, 1882), p.11.

None felt the impact of his personality more strongly than the members of his own family. Victorian conventions emphasised the role and authority of the father.⁶ His own character and appearance,⁷ the firmness of purpose that sometimes seemed 'stern' or 'grim', his great capacity for love and caring, and the intensity of his efforts both as pastor and political prelate all evoked admiration and devotion.⁸ Criticism and vituperation tightened family bonds. There were gifted Victorian women who rebelled against paternal authority, but this was not true of the Colensos.⁹ If some members of his family sometimes chafed against such bonds, and against what they implied,¹⁰ for most of the family, most of the time, devotion to the Bishop himself and, after his death in 1883, devotion to his memory, exercised a determining influence in their lives.¹¹ As children they grew up in an

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6. M.L. Stanley, *Feminism, Marriage and the Law in Victorian England* (London, 1989), Introduction.
 7. For descriptions of Colenso's physical appearance, see *i.a.* Killie Campbell Africana Library, Durban, Colenso Collection (henceforward K.C.A.L. Col.Coll); D. Kerr 'A Visit to Bishopstowe' *New York Times*, 1 Apr.1883; Rhodes House Library, Frank Colenso Papers (henceforward R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers); Review of *Life of Bishop Colenso* in *Record*, 6 Apr.1888; H.R.H. Haggard, *The Days of My Life*, 2 vols, (London, 1926), vol.1, pp.56 and 63; D. Child, *A Merchant Family in Early Natal. Diaries and Letters of Joseph and Marianne Churchill 1850-1880. With a narrative of pioneering travels to Potchefstroom and the Soutpansberg. Contemporary sketches by M. Churchill* (Cape Town and Rotterdam, 1979), p.61; J.W. Matthews *Incwadi Yami* (Johannesburg, 1976, reprint of 1887 edition). For an example of Colenso in an authoritarian role, see Child, *A Merchant Family*, p.67. For appreciative comments by contemporaries who rejected his views, see A.W.L. Rivett, *Ten Years Church Work in Natal* (London, 1890), pp.232-33; J. Bird, *An Inquiry into the Origins of the Zulu War* (Pietermaritzburg, 1880). For contrasting estimates of Colenso as a preacher, compare Thomas Baines in 1869 who found him 'earnest and persuasive' and Evelyn Wood a decade later who found him 'ineffective and hidden from view save for his snowy white hair' *cf.* C.F. Shuter, *Englishman's Inn, an Account of the Experiences of British Settlers and Colonists of Natalia, 1824-1885* (Pietermaritzburg, 1963), p.83 and E. Wood, *From Midshipman to Field Marshal* (London, 1906), p.139. Frank claimed that his father's voice was compelling and attractive (F.E. Colenso 'John William Colenso', *Eagle* vol.13, 1884-85, p.71). For the standard adverse assessment of Colenso see *i.a.* Hinchliff, *The Anglican Church in S.A.* pp.64-65; Matthews, *Incwadi Yami* pp.55 and 325.
 8. R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers: Sarah Frances (henceforward S.F.) Colenso to Francis Ernest (henceforward F.E.) Colenso, 2 June 1885; Rees, *Colenso Letters* p.190, S.F. Colenso to Lady Lyell, 22 Aug.1868 and S.F. Colenso to C.J. Bunyon, 31 May 1874.
 9. M. Lane, *Literary Daughters* (London, 1990), p.18.
 10. R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers: Frances Ellen (henceforward Fr.El.) Colenso to Sophie Colenso, 23 Mar.1885.
 11. Admiring references to John William Colenso are frequent in family letters and in publications for which the Colensos were responsible, especially in Cox, *Life*. Rees, *Colenso Letters*, pp.390-91 and 404, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, 27 Jan.1885 and 8 Aug.1886; pp.406 and 409, S.F. Colenso to Fr.El. Colenso, 12 Sept.1886 and Sunday (1886?). Note, too, R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers: Fr.El. Colenso to F.E. and Sophie Colenso, 24 June 1883:

Harrie and Agnes have never had any interest in life apart from him, while to me my Father has been the great comfort of my life & for his sake I have cared to live.

atmosphere of controversy;¹² as adults, they participated in it.

The Bishop's widow, Sarah Frances Colenso, born Bunyon, survived until December 1893.¹³ While her own blood relatives were critical of some at least of her husband's commitments and undertakings,¹⁴ she was herself a devoted and loyal wife whose acceptance of the Bishop's authority and stature within the family was remarkable. She regarded her life as 'a mere appendix' to his. In his lifetime - and afterwards - he was a 'dear Lord and Master'.¹⁵ Intelligent and resourceful, she had in the early days in South Africa run a school for young ladies in Pietermaritzburg¹⁶ and then raised her family of five in the home built for them on the Bishopstowe/ekuKhanyeni estates. From here the Bishop conducted his missionary work, engaged in ecclesiastical controversy, supervised his diocese, and waged his political campaigns. The home was five or six miles distant from Pietermaritzburg and from a colonial society in which Mrs Colenso found a good deal to despise.¹⁷

Some found Bishopstowe secluded from the world. Distance did not, however, withdraw the family entirely from the society of the capital. There were balls at Government House, church bazaars, and band-playing in the park;¹⁸ yet the relative isolation helped to intensify a family cohesion already made strong by shared enjoyments such as a love of music and a love of animals.¹⁹ Here Sarah Frances Colenso educated her daughters, who in turn taught one another and helped with the education of the black children on the

12. For awareness of controversy at Winnington Hall where the children were at school, see V. Burd, *Winnington Letters* (Cambridge Massachusetts, 1969), pp.441-42 fn.2.

13. See Appendix 1, Colenso family biographies.

14. Rees, *Colenso Letters*, pp.249, 370 and 404, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, n.d., 2 Apr.1883 and 8 Aug.1886.

15. R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers: S.F. Colenso to F.E. Colenso, 26 Mar.1889; Rees, *Colenso Letters*, p.182, S.F. to K. Lyell, 5 Mar.1868; pp.380 and 403, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, 19 May 1884 and 8 Aug.1886; p.411, S.F. Colenso to Fr.El. Colenso, Nov.1886.

16. S. Vietzen, *A History of Education for European Girls in Natal, 1837-1902* (Pietermaritzburg, 1973), p.57, quoting Marianne to Isabella Churchill, 24 July 1855.

17. Rees, *Colenso Letters*, pp.39-41; p.107, S.F. Colenso to Lady Lyell, 21 Apr.1866; pp.202 and 236 to K. Lyell, 17 July 1869 and 30 Sept.1871.

18. *Ibid.*, p.113, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, May 1866; p.189, 8 Aug.1868; p.199 to Lady Lyell, 16 Apr.1869; p.232 (especially) to K. Lyell, 20 June 1871; p.254, 8 June 1873; p.344, 22 June 1879; p.347 to F.E. Colenso, 16 Nov.1879.

19. For the love of animals, see Rees, *Colenso Letters* p.210, S.F. Colenso to Lady Lyell, 19 Nov.1869. For the love of music, see *ibid.* p.190, S.F. Colenso to Lady Lyell, 2 Aug.1868; pp.333 and 339, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, 30 Apr.1877 and 6 Sept.1878.

estate.²⁰ Sarah Frances (although no needlewoman) also sewed clothes for her family and for converts, welcomed letters and gifts from abroad, maintained a vigorous correspondence, read widely, painted the flora of the region, admired her husband, and cherished her family. But having accepted so completely the dominance of her husband, she could not at the age of 67 become the pivot of the family after his death.²¹ She looked to her daughter Harriette to play that role. In her mother's eyes, it was Harriette who became the 'family man of business' and she accepted her eldest daughter's leadership.²² Harriette took her place at 'His study table' to continue her father's work.

The Bishop and his wife had two sons, both of whom in 1887 were married with children of their own: Robert John Colenso (1850-1926), who married Emily Cockburn Kerr, and Francis Ernest Colenso (1852-1910) who married Sophie Jeanette Frankland, daughter of the noted scientist.²³ Both sons were educated in England, where they apparently enjoyed the friendly concern of Benjamin Jowett of Balliol College.²⁴ Robert John Colenso studied at Trinity College, Oxford, and then qualified as a doctor at St Bartholomew's Hospital.²⁵ Francis Ernest Colenso became a member of St John's College, Cambridge before qualifying as a lawyer and subsequently as an actuary.²⁶ Both sons returned to South Africa after qualifying, but neither settled permanently. Francis Ernest had by far the greater role in the ecclesiastical and political concerns of the family. Robert gave some assistance. He attempted to build up a medical practice in Durban and, while there, accommodated his sister Frances Ellen during some of the last years of her life, when she was dying of consumption;²⁷ on his visits to Bishopstowe he tended the sick among the black inhabitants; he assisted his family in, for example, reporting on affairs in public meetings in Durban and entertaining the Zulu princes,

20. *Ibid.*, p.134, S.F. Colenso to Miss Bell, 17 Feb.1867; p.154, S.F. Colenso to Lady Lyell, 6 Dec.1867; p.180, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, 17 Feb.1868.

21. *Ibid.*, *passim*, S.F. Colenso's letters reveal her activities and attitudes.

22. *Ibid.*, p.421, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, 23 Apr.1888; *cf.* p.426, S.F. Colenso to H.E. Colenso ('My own dear One'), n.d. Monday [1889?]; R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers: Emily Colenso to Sophie Colenso, 8 July 1883.

23. See Appendix 1, Colenso family biographies; Rees, *Colenso Letters*, p.336 fn.2 and p.349, S.F. Colenso to K.Lyell, 8 Feb.1880 and fn.1.

24. See Appendix 2, Biographical notes.

25. Rees, *Colenso Letters*, p.202, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, 17 July 1869.

26. Natal Archives, Colenso Collection (henceforward N.A., Col.Coll): Testimonial from St Bartholomew's Hospital to R.J. Colenso from John Leighton of Harley Street, 31 May 1880; Rees, *Colenso Letters*, pp.216 and 346, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, 10 Mar.1870 and 11 Aug.1879.

27. *Ibid.*, p.273, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell ('My dear friend'), n.d.

Ndabuko and Shingana, when they visited Durban in May 1886 in the course of their representations against Boer encroachment to the Governor and Special Commissioner.²⁸ But Robert ran into business difficulties in Durban - as he was to do subsequently on the Rand, where he attempted to establish himself in the highly competitive atmosphere of early Johannesburg. Here unfortunate financial speculation and, as his relatives believed, some experimenting on himself with drugs involved him in a debacle from which he withdrew to a fresh beginning and at least a modicum of professional success in England in 1890.²⁹ In the late 1880s he was more in need of help than capable of giving it; but in the next decade, his home, like Frank's, was open to his mother and to his sisters when they visited England.³⁰ During the South African War the Colensos discussed the possibility that Robert might found a hospital for natives in South Africa, but he did not visit South Africa again until 1922.

Clearly Francis Ernest Colenso, the younger of the Bishop's two sons, would have liked to have settled in Natal. In 1878 he was living in a house in Church Street, Pietermaritzburg, cherishing hopes of a flourishing legal practice, aspiring to become, with his associate Dr Smith, the accredited and acknowledged representative of Cetshwayo, and expecting, too, that he would be able to bring Sophie Frankland with him to Natal after

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28. See Appendix 2, Biographical notes, and Appendix 1, Colenso family biographies. References in Rees, *Colenso Letters*, give more information about the Colenso sons. For Robert, see *i.a.* pp.349, 358, 382, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, 9 Apr.1880 (his return to Natal), 16 Oct.1881 and 13 Sept.1883. For Frank, see *i.a.* p.341 n.1; pp.331 and 345, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, Easter Day 1877 and 22 June 1879. For Robert's return to England, see *i.a.* N.A., Col.Coll: M. Turner to H.E. Colenso, 5 June 1890. For the success Frank later achieved as an actuary, see *i.a.* R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers: 'The Memorial Book' of various newspaper cuttings and obituaries.
29. N.A., Col.Coll: R.J. Colenso to H.E. Colenso, 14 May 1886, 23 June and 2 July 1888. A.M. Colenso to H.E. Colenso, 28 June (1889, int.ev.).
30. References to Robert's financial difficulties occur in the surviving family correspondence, for example, N.A., Col.Coll: R.J. Colenso to H.E. Colenso, 12 Aug.1887 (asking for loan), 9 Aug.1888 and 20 Sept.1888; H.E. Colenso to A.M. Colenso, 4 May 1888; Emily Colenso to H.E. Colenso, 21 July and 28 Oct.1889; S.F. Colenso to R.J. Colenso (copy) 28 Apr.1889; A.M. Colenso to H.E. Colenso, 26 Apr.1889 (Robert's panic-stricken telegram for financial help); H.E. Colenso to S.F. Colenso, 6 May 1889 (Robert's affairs had worried Harriette almost as much as saying goodbye to the uSuthu); A.M. Colenso to H.E. Colenso, August 1889 (telegrams indicating that A.M. Colenso was expecting arrival of Robert on departure of Emily and Eric); Emily Colenso to H.E. Colenso (1888? re Robert's taking morphia); K. Giles to H.E. Colenso (1889?); M. Turner to H.E. Colenso, 5 June 1890 (his arrival in Britain). In the 1890s the Robert Colensos lived at 91 Cromwell Road, Kensington. Frank Colenso's residential address was 21 Cavendish Rd. W., St John's Wood. Uncle Charles' home was at 37 Phillimore Gardens. All were highly 'respectable' addresses.

his next visit to Britain.³¹ But Sophie refused to come to Natal, and after their marriage in November 1880 the Frank Colensos settled in Norwich. They were living there when Frances Ellen visited Britain in the 1880s.³² At the beginning of 1887 Frank, his wife, and their three infant daughters moved to London where he worked first for the English and Scottish Assurance Company. Later there was a post as auditor to The Positive Life Office.³³ From 1894 he was employed by the Eagle Insurance Company and was clearly a successful actuary.³⁴ He was helped in his early career both by his father's friend, William Shaen,³⁵ and his mother's brother, Charles Bunyon.³⁶ After he left Natal in 1879 Frank did his best to represent Colenso causes in Britain, and his early publications show his dedication. When the family moved from Norwich to London, it was easier for Frank to keep in touch with secretaries of the Aborigines Protection Society and members of parliament.³⁷ His early professional years were not entirely easy. Family letters allude to a business fracas, an obligatory resignation, and re-employment at reduced income.³⁸ Frank was not a wealthy man. It was only after 1899, when Sophie inherited from her father, Sir Edward Frankland, that the Frank Colensos enjoyed comfortable financial means that were carefully superintended by Sophie.³⁹ But Frank was always the son of a bishop whose intellectual questioning won the respect of many of the intellectual elite

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31. N.A., Col.Coll: F.E. Colenso to H.E. Colenso, c.1900; R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers: F.E. Colenso to Sophie Colenso, April/May 1900, letters from South Africa, Fr.El. Colenso to Sophie Frankland, 7 July 1878 and 1 Sept.1878; Rees, *Colenso Letters*, p.336 Ins.1 and 2; pp.331 and 336, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell Easter Day 1877 and 5 June 1878. Fr.El. Colenso, *The Ruin of Zululand, an Account of British Doings in Zululand since the Invasion of 1879*, 2 vols (London, 1884), vol.1 p.21, vol.2 p.5. For hostile contemporary comment, see A. Preston, *Sir Garnet Wolseley's South African Journal 1879-1880* (Cape Town, 1973) pp.86-87, entry for Wednesday 13 Aug.1879.
 32. K.C.A.L., Col.Coll. F.35 KCM.1841/22: E. Bunyon to F.E. Colenso, 4 Nov.1878; 1841/23: F.E. Colenso to Sophie Frankland, 11 Nov.1879; and 1841/24: F.E. Colenso to Maggie (relative of Sophie), 27 Aug.1880. N.A., Col.Coll: K. Lyell to S.F. Colenso, 12 Aug.1886; R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers: Fr.El. Colenso to F.E. and Sophie Colenso, 1 Jan.1882.
 33. Natal Diocesan Archives, Colenso Collection (henceforward N.D.A., Col.Coll): Fr.El. Colenso to A. Hathorn, 7 Dec.1886; N.A., Col.Coll: F.E. Colenso to Fr.El. Colenso, 3 Mar.1887.
 34. N.A., Col.Coll: Sophie Colenso to S.F. Colenso, 12 Jan.1893 (sic - 1894); F.E. Colenso to H.E. Colenso, 19 Jan.1894; R.J. Colenso to H.E. Colenso, 10 Jan.1894.
 35. See Appendix 2, Biographical notes. N.A., Col.Coll: W. Shaen to F.E. Colenso, 23 Nov.1886; K. Lyell to S.F. Colenso, 16 Dec.1886.
 36. See Appendix 2, Biographical notes.
 37. The Aborigines Protection Society (hereafter A.P.S.) was a London-based society with offices in Broadway Chambers. As the Anti-Slavery Papers in the Rhodes House Library attest, Frank was in frequent communication with F.W. Chesson the Secretary of the A.P.S. until 1888.
 38. N.A., Col.Coll: Sophie Colenso to S.F. Colenso, 6 Dec.1888; A.M. Colenso to H.E. Colenso, 26 Dec.1888; R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers: F.E. Colenso to C. Bunyon, 26 Nov.1885.
 39. Personal information: A.A. Crovo to author; R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers: Mss Afr.S 1285 (8) f.2447: F.E. Colenso to Sophie Colenso, 27 Apr.1899.

among his contemporaries. In addition, one of Frank's uncles, Frank McDougall, was a bishop,⁴⁰ while another, Charles Bunyon, was a notable insurance personality. Father and uncles were 'Oxbridge men'. His father and his uncle Charles were Cambridge men, while Tom Colenso, who died in 1849, had a brilliant, if short, Oxford career.⁴¹ Frank was himself a Cambridge graduate. He often wrote his letters from the *Oxford and Cambridge Club*. Even in the decade 1887-1897 he won praise as an actuary and subsequently achieved high recognition before his relatively early death in 1910.⁴² Some relatives might mock that 'Frank was such an ass'⁴³ in his political ideas; but no-one could deny his social standing or, in later years, his professional merit. He was a 'gentlemanly' critic of imperialism who could address those he challenged from a level of equality.⁴⁴

In spite of his own plans Frank gave his sisters and the Colenso causes all the support he could during the 1880s. He continued the auxiliary role he had played in the last decade of his father's lifetime in promoting all the Colenso interests, domestic, ecclesiastical, and political. He had a key part in the publication of Frances Ellen's book *The Ruin of Zululand*. The manuscript was written by Frances Ellen in Natal and, after scrutiny by Harriette, sent to Frank. He revised her manuscript and saw it through the press.⁴⁵ His role in the preparation and publication of Sir George Cox's *Life of Bishop Colenso* was considerable. He collected the Bishop's letters, buying where necessary, and both he and Frances Ellen, advised by Harriette, consulted with Sir George Cox on the writing of the *Life*.⁴⁶ He was concerned with ecclesiastical issues, especially the question of finding a bishop to succeed Colenso.⁴⁷ He helped Frances Ellen in the efforts which she was still making to rehabilitate the reputation of Colonel A.W. Durnford, the Royal Engineer loved

40. Rees, *Colenso Letters*, p.18.

41. R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers: C. Bunyon to F.E. Colenso, 13 Feb.1885; Rees, *Colenso Letters*, p.19, fn.3.

42. R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers: 'The Memorial Book' of various newspaper cuttings and obituaries, *i.a.* *Eastern Daily Press*, Norwich, 9 July 1910.

43. N.A., Col.Coll: F.E. Colenso to H.E. and A.M. Colenso, 19 Oct.1900.

44. The phrase 'gentlemanly capitalism' has been given currency by the fairly recent publications of P.J. Cain and A.G. Hopkins, *i.a.* 'Gentlemanly Capitalism and British Expansion Overseas, Part 2: The New Imperialism', *Economic History Journal*, 2nd Series, vol.40, 1 (1987).

45. R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers: Fr.El. Colenso to F.E. Colenso, 9 Sept.1884, 6 Oct.1884 and 2 Nov.1884.

46. Rees, *Colenso Letters*, p.412, S.F. Colenso to Fr.El. Colenso ('My own dear Child'), Sunday [Nov.1886 ?].

47. Frank wrote copiously and frequently on church affairs. See, for example, N.A., Col.Coll: F.E. Colenso to H.E. Colenso, 2 Mar., 5 and 13 Apr., 21 June and 5 July 1901. There is a thick correspondence in the R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers on the ecclesiastical disputes.

by Frances Ellen and blamed by Chelmsford for the disaster at Isandlwana. In the late 1880s Frank was a crucial standby. When Harriette was in Natal and Zululand, defending the Zulu leaders with energetic devotion, she relied upon him to arouse parliamentary interest and to publicise information. He did not always escape the criticism of his sisters; but no one could have taken more seriously his responsibilities to his womenfolk, whether mother, wife, or sister, than did Frank Colenso.⁴⁸ Until his death in 1910 he was the staunch and active ally of the Bishopstowe women.

Of the three daughters of Bishop Colenso, the second, Frances Ellen, was the most strongly drawn to England. Indeed, she died in England in April 1887, in lodgings near a hospital for consumptives at Ventnor.⁴⁹ Physically beautiful and emotionally intense, Frances Ellen, the friend of Georgiana Burne-Jones, aspired to success as an artist.⁵⁰ But it is not for her paintings, most of which were destroyed in the Bishopstowe fire, that she is remembered.⁵¹ Her strenuous attempts to vindicate the reputation of Colonel Durnford gave her a contemporary notoriety and a posthumous pathos.⁵² Though she lacked the serene purposefulness of her sister Harriette, her devotion to her father was intense.

48. R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers: Fr.El. Colenso to F.E. Colenso, 30 May 1885; H.E. Colenso to F.E. Colenso, 17 Apr.1887. N.A., Col.Coll (Old Ref: Box 149); A.M. Colenso to H.E. Colenso, Tuesday n.d. (1889, int.ev.).

49. R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers: Fr.El. Colenso to Frank and Sophie Colenso, Aug.1886 to Apr.1887, including the letters from Ventnor, reflect the pathos of her position. For newspaper discussion of Frances Ellen's determination to vindicate Durnford and some of its consequences, see *Times of Natal*, 2 Oct.1887 and 16 Sept.1887, including letter of H.E. Colenso to editor. For comments on Frances Ellen Colenso and Durnford, see D. Morris *The Washing of the Spears* (London, 1966) pp.216, 226, 438-91, 508-9, and J.K.C. Man, 'Colonel A.W. Durnford' (unpublished Honours thesis, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, 1970), p.7. For specific discussions of Frances Ellen, see P. Merrett, 'Frances Ellen Colenso, 1849-1887, her Life and Times in Relation to the Victorian Stereotype of the Middle Class Women' (M.A., University of Cape Town, 1980); B.M. Nicholls, 'Frances Ellen Colenso and the Anglo-Zulu War', unpublished conference paper, University of Natal, Durban, Anglo-Zulu War Centenary Conference, 1979; and M. Daymond, editorial introduction to F.E. Colenso *My Chief and I with Five Years Later, a Sequel* (reprint, with addition, Pietermaritzburg, 1994). For her wish that all the Colenso women should return to England after the fire, see R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers: S.F. Colenso to F.E. Colenso, an undated slip (Sept.1884, int.ev.) and 30 Oct.1885.

50. *Ibid.*, Fr.El. Colenso to F.E. and Sophie Colenso, 9 July 1883; N.A., Col.Coll: G. Burne-Jones to H.E. Colenso, 6 Jan.1887, to F.E. Colenso, 6 Apr.1887, to Fr.El. Colenso, 27 Apr.1887. There are numerous letters from G. Burne-Jones to Fr.El. Colenso (Old Ref: Box 159); Rees, *Colenso Letters*, pp.416-17, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, 2 June 1887.

51. Rees, *Colenso Letters*, p.387, S.F. Colenso to Fr.El. Colenso, Monday (1884, int.ev.).

52. Nicholls, 'Frances Ellen Colenso and the Anglo-Zulu War'; Daymond, Introduction to reprint of *My Chief and I*. The Colenso Collections in both Oxford and Pietermaritzburg contain material relevant to the dispute over Durnford's responsibility for Isandlwana.

Apart from her early novels,⁵³ it was for Durnford's sake, or her father's causes, that she wrote her articles and books.⁵⁴ She collaborated with and, it seems, transferred her affection to Durnford's bother, Edward, in the writing of *The History of the Zulu War*, which they co-authored, and of *A Soldier's Life and Work*, which appeared under Edward's name.⁵⁵ With the subsequent and indispensable help of her sister Harriette and her brother Frank, she wrote the two volumes *Ruin of Zululand*, which she regarded as a task entrusted to her by her father.⁵⁶ In Britain in 1886, she consulted with Sir George Cox and with Frank about the *Life of Bishop Colenso*.⁵⁷ During the last weeks of her life, she was busy with letters on Zulu affairs to the Secretary of the A.P.S., F.W. Chesson, to the press, and to the Secretary of State, Stanhope.⁵⁸

What mattered more was her literary legacy. The books published in her name were part of the Colenso armament during this decade, as they have become subsequently works of historiographical significance. When Frances Ellen sent copies of these books to later officials, she assumed that awareness of past wrongdoings would not disqualify an official from the performance of his present duty in regard to the Zulu.⁵⁹ Her books did not sell.⁶⁰ Even Rider Haggard had to make his name as a fiction writer and then wait for

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53. Her early novels include 'Too Late Fortunately' which was published in the *Natal Colonist*, and 'Two Heroes' which may have been published in the *English Church Magazine* and which was later printed privately.
 54. F. Ellen Colenso, 'The Question of the Transvaal', *Gentleman's Magazine*, January 1881 and 'A Royal Zulu Progress over Bishopstowe', *Macmillan's Magazine*, January 1881. She contributed leading articles to the *Diamond Field News* and published letters in the press.
 55. F.E. Colenso (assisted by E. Durnford) *History of the Zulu War and its Origin* (London, 1880 and 1881). Frances Ellen dated the preface 22 Jan.1880, the first anniversary of Isandlwana. Two editions were issued (see R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers: Fr.El. Colenso to F.E. Colenso, 16 Feb.1881), E.A. Durnford, *A Soldier's Life and Work in South Africa, a Memoir of the Late Colonel A.W. Durnford, Royal Engineer* (London, 1882). Frances Ellen contributed extensively to the *Memoir*, regarding this as a 'sacred duty'. R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers: Fr.El. Colenso to F.E. and Sophie Colenso, 1 Jan.1882, 17 Jan.1882; Fr.El. to Sophie, 14 Apr.1883, to F.E. Colenso, 6 Oct.1883. In some letters she expresses her resentment towards Edward's wife.
 56. R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers: Fr.El. Colenso to F.E. Colenso, 9 July 1883; H.E. Colenso to F.E. Colenso, 13 June 1886. Frances Ellen explained that her father had suggested (in his last conversations with her), that she write a sequel to *The History of the Zulu War*.
 57. Rees, *Colenso Letters*, pp.409-10, S.F. Colenso to Fr.El. Colenso ('My own dear Frances'), c.Nov.1886.
 58. R.H.L., Br.Empire Series S.18 Anti-Slavery Papers (henceforward A.S.P.) C.130/52-C.130/84: Fr.El. Colenso to Chesson, letters from 29 July 1886 (the day after her arrival in Britain) to 18 Mar.1887 (about six weeks before her death).
 59. R.H.L., Fr.Col. Coll: Fr.El. Colenso to F.E. Colenso, 11 Sept.1885 and 7 Apr.1886 (quoting Havelock's acknowledgment of her book).
 60. *Ibid.*, F.E. Colenso to K. Lyell, 4 Sept. and 23 Nov.1884, and 28 May 1885; N.A., Col.Coll: F.W. Chesson to H.E. Colenso, 2 Feb.1888.

a revival of interest in Anglo-Boer relations before his book *Cetshwayo and his White Neighbours* attracted attention.⁶¹ Frances Ellen found that the Colenso name was not enough to create or convert an avid reading public. Nevertheless, in writing her books and in coining a lasting phrase, 'the Ruin of Zululand', she made more than an ephemeral contribution. Her death was not unexpected. Her mother, brothers, and sisters drew even closer together in their anxiety and sadness for her.⁶² After her death they honoured her courage and were the more resolved to continue the tasks she had shared.⁶³

Agnes Mary Colenso (1855-1932) was the only Colenso child born in Natal. A tall woman with angular features, she was, it seems, less pleasing in appearance than her sisters.⁶⁴ Frances Ellen criticised Agnes for liking plain clothes rather than attractive ones.⁶⁵ The black people on the estate called 'Miss Agonies' *uSineke*, meaning 'she who helps' or 'she who has taken care of us'.⁶⁶ Her chosen place was in the background, running the home, assisting in the mission, supervising the school, tending the sick, visiting the neighbouring kraals, and encouraging the singing, which she loved, among the school children and at church services.⁶⁷ Agnes was a devoted, even a possessive, sister, utterly committed to Bishopstowe and Colenso causes.⁶⁸ When, during Harriette's absence (1895-1898), Agnes was in charge of all the activities of the estate and mission, she was thus relieved rather than sorry when Alice Werner's temporary sojourn at Bishopstowe ended,⁶⁹ and Alice returned to Britain to use some of what she had learned

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61. Haggard, *Days of My Life*, vol.1, pp.205-7.
 62. N.A., Col.Coll: F.E. Colenso to S.F. Colenso, 7 Apr.1887; R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers: S.F. Colenso to F.E. Colenso, 4 May 1887, to Sophie Colenso, Oct.1887; Rees, *Colenso Letters*, pp.416-17 and 417-18, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, 2 June and 18 Oct.1887.
 63. See inscription on tombstone at Ventnor: photocopy supplied by Charles Swaisland. cf. R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers: H.E. Colenso to F.E. Colenso, 15 June 1887.
 64. Rees, *Colenso Letters*, p.36. Probably the best known portrait of Agnes is that published in Rees, *Colenso Letters*, facing p.321. She appears in the regrettably indistinct family portrait at the beginning of this thesis (p.xxi). Photographs of Frances Ellen and Harriette appear in J.J. Guy, *The Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom* (London, 1979), between pp.88-89.
 65. R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers: Fr.El. Colenso to Sophie Colenso, 13 Mar.1883.
 66. For Agnes' Zulu name and a possible explanation see A. Werner, obituary of Agnes Colenso in *The Times*, July 1932 (copy in K.C.A.L.). Werner thought the name might date from the years 1895-1897 when Agnes was in charge at Bishopstowe while Harriette was overseas. Rees, *Colenso Letters* pp.393 and 426, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, 14 Feb.1885 and 23 Dec.1888, evidently a postscript.
 67. Rees, *Colenso Letters*, pp.247 and 253 S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, 19 July 1872 and 8 June 1873.
 68. Agnes often signed her letters to Harriette Colenso 'Your child'.
 69. N.A., Col.Coll: A.M. Colenso to H.E. Colenso, Apr.1896 (Agnes made it clear that she could not stand another white companion). See Appendix 2, Biographical notes.

from Agnes and the Colenso friend, Katie Giles,⁷⁰ in stories and sketches she published.⁷¹ Agnes was devoted to her sister Harriette, and indispensable to her. Agnes ran the home, cared for their mother, and probably carried the major responsibility for the day-to-day running of the school and the mission. This was certainly true of the years 1895-1897 when Harriette was away. Riding her horse, Zephyr, Agnes supervised the mission and estate. She led the Bishopstowe men in locust-beating - the 'balls' at Bishopstowe, she called them - and had also to cope with the ravages of rinderpest.⁷² Self-effacing and, perhaps socially awkward, she preferred a background role, but Agnes was always ready to act with or for her sister in court cases, disputes, and in the major controversy in which they were involved. Agnes was at Bishopstowe in November 1888 when the harried Zulu chief, Dinuzulu, arrived. It was she who drove in to Pietermaritzburg to inform the authorities, and who then fought, unavailingly, to prevent Dinuzulu's removal for trial in Zululand.⁷³ When Harriette was in England, Agnes played a public role in resisting the absorption of these congregations of the Church of England which did not accept the authority of the metropolitan at Cape Town into the Church of the Province of South Africa, which did. She published her correspondence with Bishop Baynes.⁷⁴ Paradoxically, it is easy to lose sight of Agnes' role, but difficult to exaggerate it. Eight years younger than Harriette, Agnes accepted completely the obligation to continue the Bishop's work. No one, in her view, had a stronger obligation to do this than 'his unmarried girls': they 'were one'.⁷⁵

When Bishop Colenso died, his eldest daughter, Harriette Emily Colenso, became the leader and the driving force in all the Colenso endeavours.⁷⁶ Intellect, character, close association with her father in a long apprenticeship to him, and her own dedication

70. *Ibid.*

71. *Ibid.*, N.A., Col.Coll: A. Werner to H.E. Colenso, miscellaneous letters, most of them undated. For a more detailed discussion of the Werner-Colenso friendship see B.M. Nicholls, 'Friends and Sisters: the Colenso and Werner Sisters', unpublished paper presented at a seminar at the Centre for Cross Cultural Research in the History of Women, Queen Elizabeth House, Oxford, February 1994.

72. N.A., Col.Coll: A.M. Colenso to H.E. Colenso, letters 1895-97 especially April 1896.

73. See Appendix 2, Biographical notes. See below, pp.114, 131-32; N.A., Col.Coll: A.M. Colenso, account of Dinuzulu's surrender, Nov.1888.

74. A.M. Colenso, *Correspondence between Miss A.M. Colenso and Bishop Baynes, 7 December 1896 to 20 February 1897* (Pietermaritzburg, 1897).

75. N.A., Col.Coll. (Old Ref: Box 149): A.M. Colenso to H.E. Colenso, n.d. (May 1889? int.ev.).

76. R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers: Fr.El. Colenso to F.E. Colenso, 13 Mar.1883, 'Harrie is entirely absorbed in Papa's work'; K.C.A.L., Col.Coll: A. Werner, 'Harriette Colenso', unpublished typescript.

equipped her for this role. She had been Colenso's assistant - his staff or *Dhlwedhle* (or *Dlewedle*) (a Zulu name for her) - in the controversies over Langalibalele and over Zulu affairs, both before and after the war of 1879.⁷⁷ She had incurred her own measure of vehement attack. Like her brothers and sisters, she knew the Zulu language well, possibly better than her father for she had learnt it younger.⁷⁸ She accompanied the Bishop on his visit in 1880 to Grahamstown, where he confirmed candidates, and to Cape Town where he visited the exiled Langalibalele and Cetshwayo.⁷⁹ However much she might deprecate her own efforts, she was determined that her father's work on behalf of these unfortunate African leaders should continue.

To the family, she was the point of reference in times of confusion. She exhorted and encouraged Frank as their father had done.⁸⁰ She helped Robert in his business affairs, although she did not always grant him promptly the loans he desperately needed.⁸¹ She advised, perhaps even carried, Frances Ellen through her literary work.⁸² She managed the estate, which after the Bishop's death came under the supervision of the Board of Curators set up by the Natal Supreme Court in 1884.⁸³ For the first ten months after the Bishop's death she continued to collect rents and supervised the burning of fire breaks.⁸⁴ The latter, though adequate in ordinary circumstances, were regrettably not proof against the appalling conflagration of September 1884 which destroyed the old Colenso home.⁸⁵ She was also concerned for the interests of the Colenso *kholwa*, those on the

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77. See, for example, Rees, *Colenso Letters*, pp.274-78; H.E. Colenso to her grandmother (Bunyon), 4 Jan.1874. For Harriette's most frequently used Zulu name, I have used the spelling that appears in contemporary documents, viz. *Dhlwedhlwe*.
78. The comment of Mrs Betty Mbanjwa, who was a member of the Colenso household at Sweetwaters, in Oct.1980 was that Harriette spoke Zulu like a Zulu: only her appearance, not her language, indicated that she was a white woman. Rees, *Colenso Letters*, p.359, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, 1 Jan.1882.
79. See Appendix 2, Biographical notes. Goedhals, 'N.J. Merriman', pp.391-95; Rees, *Colenso Letters*, pp.351-54, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, 31 Oct.1880; Cox, *Life*, vol.2, pp.552-59.
80. R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers: H.E. Colenso to F.E. Colenso, *passim*, and K.C.A.L., Col.Coll: H.E. Colenso to F.E. Colenso, *passim*.
81. N.A., Col.Coll: H.E. Colenso to R.J. Colenso, 4 May 1888; R.J. Colenso to H.E. Colenso, 12 Aug.1887; H.E. Colenso to R.J. Colenso, 4 May 1888 and 26 Feb.1889; R.J. Colenso to K. Giles, Apr.1889.
82. R.H.L., Col.Coll: Fr.El. Colenso to F.E. Colenso, 16 Aug.1884 and 8 Mar.1885.
83. The minute books of the Board of Curators are available in the Natal Diocesan Archives, Pietermaritzburg.
84. Rees, *Colenso Letters*, pp.381, 382, 407, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, 19 May 1884; p.382, 13 Sept.1884, 18 Sept.1886; p.395 to C.J. Bunyon, Feb.1885.
85. R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers: Fr.El. Colenso to Frank and Sophie Colenso, 9 Sept.1884. For published accounts of the fire, see Rees, *Colenso Letters*, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, 13 Sept.1884; B.M. Nicholls, 'Colenso letters', *Natalia*, Dec.1991.

Bishopstowe/ekuKhanyeni estates,⁸⁶ and those who worshipped at St Mary's, the native church which was re-located from Longmarket to Burger Street shortly after Bishop Colenso's death.⁸⁷ She helped ensure that the native school was kept in being after the fire and that the black people could continue to look to the Colensos for help. She corresponded with Dr Ikin, the Church of England clergyman at Addington, who was secretary to the Curators and for a time Superintendent of Native Missions.⁸⁸ By 1887 she had already shown that she was a controversialist of intimidating determination and with a persistence that neither rebuff nor insult would deflect.⁸⁹ She continued for a time the publication of her father's *Digest of Zulu Affairs*, which were his commentaries on Blue Books.⁹⁰ She wrote long and frequent letters to F.W. Chesson, the Secretary of the A.P.S.⁹¹ She saw to the re-publication of her father's works.⁹² She backed with intellect and money the writing and publication of the *Life* of her father and the *Ruin of Zululand*.⁹³ She demonstrated both the intensity of her efforts and the immensity of her task. She had already fought with all the means at her disposal to save the adherents of Cetshwayo from the four dangers which she believed threatened them: the indifference of British governments, the hostility of local officials, the territorial land-grab of white men of diverse origin and, at this point, but not later, from annexation to Natal.

In Church affairs her concern was that a bishop should follow Colenso and that he, as her father's successor, should be a man who sympathised with the causes Colenso held dear.⁹⁴ She resisted those who sought to bring about the unification of the two Anglican churches in Natal and those who later followed the lead of Sir Theophilus Shepstone in

86. For Esibaneni, the native village at ekuKhanyeni, see Cox, *Life*, vol.1, p.76, note.

87. B.J. Leverton, *St Mary's Church*, leaflet (Pietermaritzburg, n.d.).

88. See Appendix 2, Biographical notes.

89. Rees, *Colenso Letters*, p.395, S.F. Colenso to C.J. Bunyon, Feb.1885.

90. For the full *Zulu Digest* see photocopy of Series 1 to 9 in K.C.A.L. Harriette suspended the publication of the *Zulu Digest* because, as she explained, the Bishopstowe press passed into the control of the Curators. The printing press was destroyed in the Bishopstowe fire. Harriette then bought a small second-hand press which she used to produce the printed sheets of the later *Zulu Digest*. See H.E. Colenso 'Etshowe Trials' in *Women's Penny Paper* (1889).

91. R.H.L., Br.Empire Series S.18 A.S.P. C.131 and C.150: H.E. Colenso's letters to successive secretaries of the A.P.S.

92. Rees, *Colenso Letters*, p.389, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, Jan.1885.

93. Her mother attributed to Harriette the main role in the revision of the Memoir, i.e. the *Life of Bishop Colenso*, R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers: S.F. Colenso to F.E. Colenso, Apr. and 4 June 1887. See also *ibid.*, H.E. Colenso to F.E. Colenso 13 June 1886, and Fr.El. Colenso to Sophie Colenso, 24 Dec.1884.

94. Rees, *Colenso Letters*, p.380, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, 19 May 1884.

delegating to others (for example, the Archbishop of Canterbury) the choice of a bishop for Natal.⁹⁵ In August 1886 the Church Council, which claimed control over the Church of England after Colenso's death, chose 'Sir' George Cox as Bishop-Elect in succession to Colenso.⁹⁶ 'Sir' George (as he described himself) was an old friend and associate of the Colensos, and the Colenso family, despite some hesitation from Frances Ellen, decided to entrust to him the task of writing the biography of Bishop Colenso.⁹⁷ The Colensos were, therefore, gratified by the Church Council's decision. But the Church Council needed the active support of the Colonial Office and/or the Archbishop of Canterbury or other episcopates to secure Cox's consecration, and this was denied them.⁹⁸ For Harriette, persuading the Church of England supporters to work through the Church Council and the Church Council to choose 'Sir' George as bishop-elect were only an early example of the continual skirmishes in which she was involved. In ecclesiastical matters Harriette often found that those with whom she had to associate, because they were key members of the Church of England, included men who differed very vigorously from her Zulu views and that some wanted also to distance themselves from Colenso's theological tenets. Sir Theophilus Shepstone⁹⁹ and J.R. Saunders, the pioneer sugar planter of Tongaat and father of Sir Charles Saunders, the later Resident Commissioner for Zululand, are examples of such men. The Colensos condemned the most characteristic features of Shepstonism. J.R. Saunders deplored both the politics and the theology of Colenso, but staunchly supported the position of the Church of England on issues of authority.¹⁰⁰

One question on which Harriette's involvement in Zulu affairs and her concern for the continuation of her father's church converged was the mission station at kwaMagwaza.

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95. See below, Chapter Six. R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers: S.F. Colenso to Sophie Colenso, 26 May 1884; H.E. Colenso (ed.), *Correspondence with the Archbishop of Canterbury on behalf of ... the Church of England in Natal, 1892-4* (Pietermaritzburg, 1894).
96. See Appendix 2, Biographical notes. R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers: Fr.El. Colenso to Sophie Colenso, 9 July 1883.
97. *Ibid.*, S.F. Colenso to F.E. Colenso, 4 July 1887; Fr.El. Colenso to F.E. Colenso, 18 Aug. and 14 Oct.1885.
98. See below, Chapter Six.
99. See Appendix 2, Biographical notes. N.A., Col.Coll: H.E. Colenso to Mr Pollock, 26 Sept.1908. In protesting against the appointment of H.C. Shepstone as judge of the Special Court to try Dinuzulu, Harriette wrote a long indictment of Shepstonism which spanned the generations. Rees, *Colenso Letters*, p.393, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, 14 Feb.1885.
100. See Appendix 2, Biographical notes. J.W. Colenso, *Zulu Digest*, 2nd series, part 1, (K.C.A.L. pagination) pp.513-17: discussion in *Colonies and India*, 3 Feb.1882 which included an attack on Colenso by J.R. Saunders.

This was the site of the mission station in Zululand granted by Mpande to Bishop Colenso.¹⁰¹ It had passed into the control of the Church of the Province of South Africa when Robert Robertson, the missionary whom Colenso had appointed there, adhered to the opponents of Colenso. Robertson fled from kwaMagwaza on the eve of the Zulu War and showed himself hostile to Cetshwayo.¹⁰² The mission buildings were destroyed during the Anglo-Zulu War and the later civil war in Zululand.¹⁰³ Harriette subsequently moved very strenuously to assert the Colenso claim to the mission station. She argued that she and her mother, as the family heirs of Bishop Colenso, were entitled to succeed to the grant made by Mpande in territory that was not then British. Like the Bishop, they would hold it in trust for the Zulu people. Her representations to Sir Henry Bulwer, not surprisingly, failed to win the recognition that she sought.¹⁰⁴ After the British annexation of Zululand, she tried again and conducted a vigorous correspondence about the claim with Sir Arthur Havelock which Sir Arthur ended when he used his power to legislate by issuing a proclamation which dealt with the question and denied the Colenso contention.¹⁰⁵ There are some parallels between the way the Colensos failed to make good their kwaMagwaza claim in 1888-89 and the way they lost ekuKhanyeni in 1910: pre-emptory legislation after they had championed an unpopular cause occurred in both cases.¹⁰⁶

The Contexts

By 1887 the Colensos were a Natal family of several decades standing. They had come to Natal in 1855 as a missionary and an episcopal family. They claimed and, for a time despite the ecclesiastical contention, enjoyed high social standing in the small community. In the 1860s the eminence in ecclesiastical controversy that Colenso attained seems to have

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101. J.W. Colenso, *First Steps in the Zulu Mission*, p.1, J.W. Colenso to Secretary of the S.P.G., 20 Oct.1859, republished in D.R. Edgecombe (ed), *Bringing Forth Light, Five Tracts on Bishop Colenso's Zulu Mission*, (Pietermaritzburg and Durban, 1982).
 102. See Appendix 2, Biographical notes. Hinchliff, *Anglican Church*, pp.96, 133, 166.
 103. C. Lewis & G.E. Edwards, *Historical Records of the Church of the Province of South Africa* (London, 1934), pp.680 and 689.
 104. K.C.A.L., Col.Coll: H.E. Colenso, *Zulu Digest*, series 4, 9 Feb. to 23 Oct.1885 and 12 to 15 Feb.1887, 'Case of the Mission Station of the Church of England at Kwamagwaza in Zululand with Extracts from Imperial Blue Books'.
 105. Lewis and Edwards, *Historical Records*, pp.689-90. *Zululand. Land Delimitation Commission (1902-1904). Reports of the Joint Imperial and Colonial Commissioners, Zululand* (hereafter *Zululand. Land Delimitation Commission*) (Pietermaritzburg, 1905), pp.113-15, Proclamation of 5 June 1889.
 106. B.M. Nicholls, 'The Smashing of Bishopstowe, 1910', unpublished conference paper, South African Historical Society, Pretoria, January 1991.

given some Natalians a vicarious sense of importance. This was the more gratifying because a bishop of Natal had defied the authority of the bishop of Cape Town.¹⁰⁷ After 1873, when the Bishop championed Langalibalele,¹⁰⁸ he was less enthusiastically regarded by white Natalians.¹⁰⁹

Some long lasting friendships and associations were formed in the earlier period, with for example A.W. Durnford,¹¹⁰ Harry Escombe¹¹¹ (in the 1870s lawyer and aspirant politician) and with Warwick Brookes,¹¹² Natal's superintendent of education. The latter's sister-in-law, Katie Giles, also became a lifelong friend of the Colenso women. Though it did not survive the Langalibalele affair, even the friendship with the Shepstons meant that later, in conflict as before in amity, the Colensos were dealing with people personally known to them. This applied as well to much less eminent men. The Windham brothers,¹¹³ for example, who later held posts in the Zululand civil service, once lived on the Bishopstowe estate. George Mansel who commanded the *Nongqai*, i.e. the Zululand Police, had stayed at Bishopstowe.¹¹⁴

Despite their contention with some of the leading colonial personalities, both Harriette and Agnes and their mother maintained a great love for Natal as a place.¹¹⁵ They were deaf to the discontent of Frances Ellen at the poor living conditions they had to endure after the Bishopstowe fire.¹¹⁶ To them certainly, the land of their father's adoption was very much their home. Indeed, Natal was *the* Colenso base. When they criticised the attitudes and actions of Natalians they did so from within. Despite the contentions, they retained a remarkable reluctance to condemn all their fellow colonists. This is shown in Harriette's

107. Rees, *Colenso Letters*, p.98, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, Sunday Dec.1865.

108. See Appendix 2, Biographical notes.

109. Rees, *Colenso Letters*, p.274, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell (My dear Friend), n.d. (1873, int.ev.), p.282 to C. Bunyon (My dear Brother, 16 Apr.1874), p.285 fn.

110. See Appendix 2, Biographical note.

111. *Ibid.* There is evidence that the Colensos had some misgivings about Escombe. See N.A., Col.Coll: A.M. Colenso to H.E. Colenso, 7 May (1889, int.ev.), his comment about 'letting the Zulu' think they have a friend had jarred.

112. See Appendix 2, Biographical notes.

113. Rees, *Colenso Letters*, pp.130 and 140, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, 7 Jan.1867 and 7 May 1867.

114. See Appendix 2, Biographical notes. N.A., Col.Coll (Old Ref: Box 149): A.M. Colenso to H.E. Colenso, Friday night (Mar.1889? int.ev.).

115. *Ibid.*, A.M. Colenso to K. Giles, 26 Feb.1892, 'London is so disgusting'; Rees, *Colenso Letters*, p.96, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, Sunday Dec.1865.

116. *Ibid.*, p.385, S.F. Colenso to Fr.El. Colenso, 'My own dear F', Thurs. (Sept.1884, int.ev.). See above, fn.49.

use of the phrase 'We colonists', a self-description as characteristic, if less startling, than the other she employed, 'We Zulu' or 'We uSuthu'. Moreover, particularly when they were disillusioned with the results of imperial intervention, the Colensos did not wholly abandon belief in the existence among some of their fellow colonists of the will and capacity to deal justly with the black people of Natal and Zululand. Bishop Colenso was very disappointed at how little was achieved for the benefit of Langalibalele and the Hlubi people by his own appeals, by letter and in person, to the Secretary of State for Colonies in London and the subsequent imperial remonstrance directed at Natal. He was never an enthusiast for Responsible government but came to believe that they 'would not be worse off' under Responsible government than they had been under more direct imperial control. Even when he criticised the attitudes of the Responsible government party, he recognised that there were colonists whose views were reasonable and acceptable.¹¹⁷ Later, Harriette's deep dismay at imperial policy in Zululand made her the more willing to be associated with Harry Escombe and the cause of Responsible government he had come to espouse.¹¹⁸ Later still, she was willing to believe, at least for a time, that the annexation of Zululand to Natal would benefit the Zulu people.¹¹⁹

For some of the Colenso children clearly Natal was 'home', but certainly Britain was not remote from their experience. Harriette, like her sister Frances, may have preserved some childhood memories of Forncett in Norfolk.¹²⁰ More important was the fact that all the Colensos visited Britain,¹²¹ while eminent visitors called at Bishopstowe.¹²² Britain

117. Guy, *The Heretic*, p.204, citing J.W. Colenso to W. Shaen, 14 Dec.1873, in which he attacked the 'scheming politicians' who favoured Responsible government; Cox, *Life*, vol.2 p.584, J.W. Colenso to F.W. Chesson, 18 June 1882. He recognised that there was a 'better voice' in the colony.

118. Harriette did not share Frances Ellen's deep pessimism about how the aborigines would fare if the whites in South Africa gained control of affairs unfettered by interference from Europe (R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers: Fr.El. Colenso to Frank Colenso, n.d., probably Sept.1884). For Harriette's view note that in her pamphlet of 1892, co-authored with A. Werner, she opposed 'despotic rule of our black people whether that power lay with the Colonial Office or the local colonial legislature'. See also N.A., Col.Coll: G.D. Collett to H.E. Colenso, 22 and 24 Mar.1893.

119. In January 1895 Harriette sent a cable to the A.P.S. advocating the annexation of Zululand to Natal prior to the return of the Zulu chiefs exiled to St Helena. Over-eagerness, over-optimism, misunderstanding and skilful manipulation of Harriette by those in local power explain an action Harriette later regretted. See below, Chapter Seven.

120. R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers: Fr.El.Colenso to F.E. Colenso, 16 Oct.1884.

121. All the Colensos were in Britain from 1861 to 1864. Robert and Frank left Natal to study in England in 1869. Their sister, Frances Ellen, travelled with them. She returned in 1870. Agnes accompanied her father when he went to England in 1874. She evidently returned with him. In 1876, after a brief visit to Natal, Robert escorted a sister, evidently Agnes again, to England. She returned to Natal with Frank in 1877. When Frank went to Britain in 1879, Frances Ellen

was the home of close relatives and friends, while correspondence with Britain, personal, ecclesiastical, and political, was a major Bishopstowe activity.¹²³

After the Zulu invasion scare had disrupted his mission school in 1861, Bishop Colenso visited Britain and took all his family with him. Here he was to continue the theological controversies begun in Natal. This was a long and a crucial visit. It gave Colenso stature in ecclesiastical controversy he would not otherwise have gained and his children a degree of familiarity with English society. Colenso's name became something of a household world in Victorian England. He was in touch with liberal churchmen, with sympathisers among non-conformists, and with eminent men of letters and science.¹²⁴ He associated with the contributors to the *Essays and Reviews* of February 1860 which stirred so much contention.¹²⁵ Among them were Professor Baden-Powell, father of George, the MP, and of Robert, the soldier; and Professor Jowett of Balliol College, who was subsequently consulted on Colenso affairs. Sir Charles Lyell, geologist and archaeologist, and his brother, together with their wives, became friends of the Colensos. Mrs Lyell, Sir Charles' sister-in-law, was a lifelong correspondent and special friend to Mrs Colenso and showed 'motherly kindness' to the Colenso sons when they were in England.¹²⁶ One of the most prominent supporters of the Colenso Defence Fund of the 1860s was John Westlake, the jurist, who thereafter became Colenso's legal adviser, co-worker in the cause of Langalibalele, and a friend to Colenso's family, even though his advice was not

sailed with him. She returned in 1881. She was in Natal until 1886, when she left to spend what proved to be the last months of her life in Britain. In 1880 Robert brought his young wife to Natal. They lived in Durban until Robert attempted to make his fortune in Johannesburg. His wife and son visited Britain in c.1888/89 but returned briefly. In 1890 Robert and his family left South Africa to settle in London. Both brothers paid a later visit to Natal: Frank in 1900, Robert in c.1920. The visits of Harriette to Britain in the 1890s with her mother and Agnes as companions for the first visit are discussed in main body of the thesis. See Rees, *Colenso Letters*, pp.197, 223, 345, 358, 401 and fn.1, 403, 412 and 416; Burd, *Winnington Letters*, p.691; K.C.A.L., Col.Coll. F.20: J.W. Colenso to Mr Marquard, 21 Aug.1876, F.48: J.W. Colenso to G. Cox, 12 Mar.1880; N.A., Col.Coll. A.M. Colenso to H.E. Colenso, 22 Mar. (1889?) and *i.a.* 12 and 23 June (1889?), M. Turner to H.E. Colenso, 5 June 1890; R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers: P. Frankland to F.E. Colenso, 1 Mar.1877, F.E. Colenso to 'Fifi' *i.e.* S.J. Colenso, 1900 *passim*. Personal information from Mr. A.A. Crovo.

122. R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers: Fr.El. Colenso to Sophie Colenso, 14 Apr.1883; Rees, *Colenso Letters*, pp.129, 337 and 359, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, 7 Jan.1867, 15 July 1878 and 1 Jan.1882.

123. The sheer volume of the surviving Colenso Collections is testimony to the frequency and size of their correspondence.

124. Rees, *Colenso Letters*, pp.70, 86-87 and 195, S.F. Colenso to Lady Lyell, 14 Dec.1868 and p.421, to K.Lyell, 23 Apr.1888.

125. *Ibid.*, p.64; Hinchliff, *John William Colenso*, p.89.

126. See Appendix 2, Biographical notes. Rees, *Colenso Letters*, p.216, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, 10 Mar.1870.

always very welcome to them.¹²⁷ The Bishop's children would naturally look for support and friendship in their own undertakings to those who had sympathised with their father. Equally, it was likely, but not automatic, that those who found his theological views unacceptable inclined to indifference toward the family's political causes.

Just as important to the Colenso endeavour was the fact that the children of this family spent part of their early years in Britain. The boys attended a grammar school in Kensington.¹²⁸ The elder daughters went to the school at Winnington Hall in Cheshire, where the headmistress was an old friend of Mrs Colenso.¹²⁹ Friendships made there, with Dora Livesey (later Lees) and probably with Georgiana Burne-Jones who took an interest in the school, were certainly important to Frances Ellen.¹³⁰ The art teacher there was John Ruskin, and all the Colensos admired him. They maintained this respect despite his support for Governor Eyre whose proceedings in Jamaica outraged humanitarian opinion in Britain.¹³¹ When Harriette visited Britain in the 1890s she returned to a country where her father's name was recognized and which was familiar to her through her own schooling. She did not come as a second generation colonist visiting a country known only through the distorting recollections of parents.

The Bishop's visit of 1874 was important in a different way. His championship of Langalibalele brought him into touch with men like F.W. Chesson, the secretary of the A.P.S., and with critics of imperialism like L.H. Courtney, then a man of radical sympathies who subsequently became a Liberal Unionist.¹³² Colenso's family were the heirs to the contacts he then made. The vigour of his own submissions invited attention to the representations of his children.

127. See Appendix 2, Biographical notes. John Westlake published an article supporting Colenso in 'The Kafir revolt of 1873' in *The Fortnightly Review*, Dec.1874.

128. N.A., Col.Coll: A.G. Symonds to H.E. Colenso, 14 Dec.1897; R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers: Obituary of F.E. Colenso.

129. Rees, *Colenso Letters*, pp.70-72.

130. Burd, *Winnington Letters*, p.220; Rees, *Colenso Letters*, S.F. Colenso to Lady Lyell, 16 May 1870 and p.416 to K. Lyell (My dear kind friend), 2 June 1887. The letters exchanged between Frances Ellen Colenso and Georgiana Burne-Jones are in the Colenso Collection, Natal Archives. They were returned to the Colenso family at Bishopstowe after her death. See *i.a.* G. Burne-Jones to Fr.El. Colenso, 27 Apr.1887.

131. R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers: Fr.El. Colenso to F.E. Colenso, 16 Aug.1884; N.A., Col.Coll: G. Burne-Jones to Mrs Colenso, presumably S.F. Colenso, 22 June 1888. Ruskin informed Mrs Burne-Jones that he had given a diamond to the British Museum in honour of Colenso. The diamond was stolen in 1967 (personal recollection of news reports).

132. See Appendix 2, Biographical notes.

The only brother of Mrs Colenso, Charles Bunyon, has some role in the Colenso story.¹³³ A Cambridge man, it was he who introduced his sister to John William Colenso.¹³⁴ Bunyon had a very strong family sense. He wrote the biography of one sister, Harriette, and her missionary bishop husband.¹³⁵ He dealt with at least some of John William Colenso's business affairs in Britain.¹³⁶ He received the Colensos hospitably when they visited Britain.¹³⁷ He was not ungenerous.¹³⁸ Letters show that he helped Frank in the early years of his actuarial career.¹³⁹ Frank published a fourth edition of Bunyon's book on Fire Insurance.¹⁴⁰ Bunyon made an allowance to Robert John Colenso - the 'dole' as Robert ungraciously called it.¹⁴¹ He sent money to his sister in Natal after the Bishopstowe fire.¹⁴² His goodwill to his Colenso nephews may have been the greater because it appears that he had no sons. There were at least two Bunyon daughters,¹⁴³ one of whom later recalled that her father had paid off the money which the Colensos owed on their publications that did not sell.¹⁴⁴ Charles Bunyon's own career was one of success and affluence, though shadowed in the 1880s by prolonged litigation which eventually ended favourably for him following a decision in the House of Lords.¹⁴⁵ Evangelical in religious convictions and

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133. Rees, *Colenso Letters*, pp.18-23, 25, 28, 33, 78, 224, 241, 281, 286, 313-34, 320, 364, 376, 381, 387, 395, 399, 411-12, 415-16, 424-26.
 134. *Ibid.*, pp.19, 137 and 412, S.F. Colenso to Fr.El. Colenso, Sunday (28 Nov.1886, int.ev.).
 135. C.J. Bunyon, *Memoirs of T.F. McDougall, sometime Bishop of Labuan, and of Harriette his Wife* (1889); Rees, *Colenso Letters*, pp.18 and 21 fn.1.
 136. K.C.A.L., Col.Coll. F.19, KCM.49452: J. Westlake to C. Bunyon, 8 Feb.1866.
 137. *Ibid.*, A.152: J.W. Colenso to Dr Bleck, 29 July 1861; Rees, *Colenso Letters*, p.241, S.F. Colenso to Lady Lyell, 8 Feb. 1871.
 138. *Ibid.*, p.415, S.F. Colenso to K.M. Lyell, 23 Dec.1888.
 139. R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers: F.E. Colenso to C.J. Bunyon, 26 Nov.1885, to Sophie Colenso, 1 Aug.1890; K.C.A.L., Col.Coll. F.20 S.23: C.J. Bunyon to F.E. Colenso, 2 Dec.1886.
 140. C.J. Bunyon and F.E. Colenso, *Law of Fire Insurance*, Fourth Edition, edited by F.E. Colenso (London, 1893).
 141. N.A., Col.Coll: R.J. Colenso to H.E. Colenso, 30 June 1896; H.E. Colenso to Lady Cox, 24 Jan.1891.
 142. R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers: S.F. Colenso to F.E. Colenso, 7 Nov.1886.
 143. His daughters were Constance ('Connie') and Frances who married a Russell. N.A., Col.Coll: F. Russell to A.M. Colenso, 7 June 1932; Rees, *Colenso Letters*, p.288, S.F. Colenso to C.J. Bunyon, 7 July 1874.
 144. K.C.A.L., Col.Coll. Dd.55: Constance Bunyon (from 37 Phillimore Gardens) to A. Werner, 5 June 1933.
 145. R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers: Fr.El. Colenso to F.E. Colenso, 16 Oct.1881 and 14 Apr.1882; to K. Lyell, 4 Sept.1884; S.F. Colenso to F.E. Colenso, 15 Apr.1883 and 10 Mar.1886; R.H.L. Br.Empire Series S.18 A.S.P. C.130/154: F.E. Colenso to F.W. Chesson, 16 Sept.1884; N.A., Col.Coll: F.E. Colenso to S.F. Colenso, 31 Aug.1884 and 10 Mar.1886; F.W. Chesson to S.F. Colenso, 25 Feb.1886.

Conservative in his politics,¹⁴⁶ he did not find the Colensos easy relatives. He subscribed to the Colenso Sympathy Fund set up to assist Colenso in the 1860s but he did not agree with his brother-in-law's theology.¹⁴⁷ He disapproved of the Colenso attempts to secure a civil pension for Mrs Colenso.¹⁴⁸ He backed humanitarian moves in regard to Bechuanaland and Zululand.¹⁴⁹ He supported Colenso's agitation on behalf of Langalibalele¹⁵⁰ but he did not approve of Colenso's actions over Cetshwayo.¹⁵¹ His sister thought him 'stilted'.¹⁵² He thought the Colensos much too polemical.¹⁵³ Clearly he would have preferred his relatives to be less impecunious and less controversial. Colenso comments about the Bunyons, especially Aunt Eliza,¹⁵⁴ are often sharp and tinged with resentment. To Frances Ellen the welcome she received at 37 Phillimore Gardens, her uncle's home, seemed cold in contrast to the warmth of 'Mimosa', the Cape Town home of Charles Fairbridge, a prominent lawyer and friend of her father.¹⁵⁵ Harriette once commented that Britain was 'a bitter little island [with] frozen uncles and aunts'.¹⁵⁶ Charles Bunyon did not relish the responsibility thrust upon him, as he thought, by the arrival in England of Frances Ellen in 1886 as a 'dear frantic little thing',¹⁵⁷ still intent on her crusade for Durnford and for the Zulu, and in the advanced stages of consumption.¹⁵⁸ Frances Ellen was always sensitive to Bunyon criticism, but Mrs Colenso was grateful to her brother for the 'tender' if 'tardy' affection he showed to Frances Ellen in the last weeks of her life.¹⁵⁹ Nevertheless, she was apprehensive of his probable disapproval of the course of public campaigning which

146. K.C.A.L., Col.Coll. U.19 KCM.49731: C.J. Bunyon to F.E. Colenso, 4 Feb.1882; Rees, *Colenso Letters*, p.18.

147. R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers: S.F. Colenso to F.E. Colenso, 2 June 1885; C.J. Bunyon to F.E. Colenso, 13 Feb.1888. Bishop of Natal, List of Subscribers, 1865.

148. N.A., Col.Coll: R.J. Colenso to H.E. Colenso, 2 Oct.1885; Rees, *Colenso Letters*, p.381, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, 19 Aug.1884, and p.411 to F.E. Colenso, Nov.1886.

149. N.A., Col.Coll: F.W. Chesson to H.E. Colenso, 4 Nov.1886 (re deputation to Stanhope); *The Bechuanas, the Cape and the Transvaal* published by the South Africa Committee, 1883 (re Mansion House Meeting, Nov.1883).

150. Rees, *Colenso Letters*, p.286, S.F. Colenso to C.J. Bunyon (My dear Brother), 7 July 1874.

151. *Ibid.*, p.362, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, 14 Mar.1882.

152. *Ibid.*, p.154, S.F. Colenso to 'My dear Children', 24 June 1882.

153. R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers, Mss.1293(4) ff.40-41: C.J. Bunyon to F.E. Colenso, 20 Feb.1888.

154. *Ibid.*, A.M. Colenso to Sophie Colenso, 23 Oct.1886; S.F. Colenso to F.E. Colenso, 1 Dec.1886.

155. See Appendix 2, Biographical notes. R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers: Fr.El. Colenso to F.E. Colenso, 2 Mar. and 30 June 1886; to Sophie, 2 July 1886 and Monday morning, Sept.1886.

156. *Ibid.*, H.E. Colenso to F.E. Colenso, 13 Mar.1881.

157. *Ibid.*, S.F. Colenso to C.J. Bunyon, n.d. (1887, int.ev.); H.E. Colenso to F.E. Colenso, 14 Dec.1887.

158. See above, pp.8-9. Rees, *Colenso Letters*, pp.406-17.

159. R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers: S.F. Colenso to Sophie Colenso, Oct.1887; Rees, *Colenso Letters*, p.417, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, 'My dear Friend', 18 Oct.1887.

Harriette proposed to undertake in Britain in 1890.¹⁶⁰ His disapproval was, however, muted. He helped where he could by, for example, becoming a member of the Zulu Defence Committee formed in 1889.¹⁶¹ As brother and sister aged and became more aware of their own mortality,¹⁶² there seems to have been golden goodwill between Bunyons and Colensos in the last two years of his life. He died in June 1892.¹⁶³ Regrettably, the goodwill did not last. Aunt Eliza, for example, reacted indignantly in 1909 when John Westlake approached her about the Fund to assist Harriette Colenso.¹⁶⁴ But such instances of later strain are not relevant to the 1887-1897 decade of endeavour.

Apart from Charles and Elizabeth Bunyon, aunts and uncles do not feature in the activities and concerns of the Colenso family in the decade 1887-1897. They benefited from legacies; they inherited from both a Colenso aunt, Emily,¹⁶⁵ and a Bunyon aunt, Ellen.¹⁶⁶ Uncle Charles himself left each Colenso nephew and niece £100 with £500 to his sister.¹⁶⁷ Charles' widow continued to subsidise Robert for at least a time.¹⁶⁸

Family concerns and the letters of friends kept the Bishopstowe Colensos aware of England. In addition, Bishopstowe was an inland port of call for eminent visitors from Britain. Authors like Trollope¹⁶⁹ and Froude,¹⁷⁰ botanists and painters like Lady North (whose opinion of the Colensos was not favourable),¹⁷¹ members of parliament like R.N. Fowler,¹⁷² George Baden-Powell¹⁷³ and 'Sir David Wedderburne'

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160. Rees, *Colenso Letters*, p.162, S.F. Colenso to H.E. Colenso, 'My own H', n.d. (Dec.1889, int.ev.); N.A., Col.Coll: A.M. Colenso to H.E. Colenso, 4 Oct. (1890, int.ev.).
161. H.R. Fox Bourne, *Zulu Defence Fund* (London, 1889). This gives the list of members of the committee.
162. Rees, *Colenso Letters*, pp.415 and 417, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, 1887 (probably before May, int.ev.), and 18 Oct.1887.
163. N.A., Col.Coll: K. Lyell to H.E. Colenso, 27 June 1892.
164. R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers: F.E. Colenso to Sophie Colenso, 'Fifi', 12 Mar.1909.
165. K.C.A.L., Col.Coll. BB.21: H.E. Colenso to F.R. Statham, 16 Feb.1884.
166. N.A., Col.Coll: F.E. Colenso to H.E. Colenso, 2 Mar.1894; (Old Ref: Box 145): n.d., draft of letter.
167. R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers, Mss.Afrs. 1285(6), ff.1284 *et seq*: F.E. Colenso to Sophie Colenso, 2 July 1892.
168. N.A., Col.Coll: R.J. Colenso to H.E. Colenso, 14 May 1894.
169. Rees, *Colenso Letters*, p.337, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, 15 July 1878 and *ibid.* fn.2.
170. *Ibid.*, pp.310 and 319, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, 14 Sept.1875.
171. N.A., Col.Coll: H.E. Colenso to K. Giles, 21 Apr.1892. M. North, *Recollections of a Happy Life*, 2 vols. (London and New York, 1892), vol.2, pp.278-79.
172. F.R. Statham, *South Africa as it is* (London, 1897), pp.134 and 135 fn.
173. Rees, *Colenso Letters*, p.400, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, July 1885.

(sic)¹⁷⁴ all called at the estate.¹⁷⁵ So, too, did high ranking officials despite, or even because, they were at variance with the Bishop and the family over the policies.¹⁷⁶ If the Colensos were a colonial family, they were a family that was well known and possessed of peculiar distinction.

The Causes: Ecclesiastical and Political

Having responded to Bishop Gray's call for missionary bishops, Colenso brought to his work a sharp mathematical mind, a hard commitment to the truth and great courage.¹⁷⁷ He became a public fighter very early.¹⁷⁸ What was distinctive about his book *Ten Weeks in Natal* and his later writings on missionary work was his attempt to win support for controversial views.¹⁷⁹ Tutored by Theophilus Shepstone, he showed towards the *mores* of those whom he wished to convert a tolerance for which Gregory the Great might have been the model.¹⁸⁰ It was not, however, his theoretical approach to missionary work, but the views that grew from his concern for the mission field that, for a time, placed him at the centre of the religious and theological storms.

Even before he arrived in Natal the *Commentary on the Epistle of St Paul to the Romans* attracted his attention. The *Commentary* which he wrote and circulated in Natal aroused an already truculent Dean Green to further defiance.¹⁸¹ But Colenso continued to express and circulate his views. As he translated the books of the Pentateuch, so he studied them. His helper's questionings, his own instincts as an arithmetician, his knowledge of recent scientific work, and his study of contemporary critical writings all contributed to the *Commentaries on the Pentateuch*. An eager public quickly bought up his early works as they were published, but the excitement was not sustained.¹⁸² What alarmed Dean

174. *Ibid.*, p.359, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, 1 Jan.1882.

175. See Appendix 2, Biographical notes.

176. Rees, *Colenso Letters*, p.350, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, 9 Apr.1880.

177. Guy, *The Heretic*, chapters 1 and 2; Hinchliff, *John William Colenso*, chapter 2; Rees, *Colenso Letters*, pp.29-36.

178. *Ibid.*, pp.33-34; Hinchliff, *John William Colenso*, p.51.

179. J.W. Colenso, *Ten Weeks in Natal. A Journal of a First Tour of Visitation among Colonists and Zulu Kafirs of Natal* (Cambridge, 1855).

180. See, for example, *A Letter to His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury upon the Question of the Proper Treatment of Cases of Polygamy, as found already existing in Converts from Heathenism* (Ekukhanyeni, Pietermaritzburg, 1861).

181. Guy, *The Heretic*, p.70.

182. *Ibid.*, pp.95, 126, 135, 189. Seven volumes of criticism of the Pentateuch and Book of Joshua appeared 1862-1879. A People's Edition was published in 1864.

Green and Bishop Gray was not simply his attack on the infallibility of the Bible, but their view that he had moved into heresy in rejecting the doctrine of eternal punishment, belief in the efficacy of the sacraments, and - the most telling of their criticisms - belief in the divinity of Christ.¹⁸³ Given their genuine belief in Colenso's guilt, they could not but condemn him. For offences such as these Dean Green reported Colenso to Bishop Gray who, after due deliberation and taking counsel, summoned Bishop Colenso to appear before an ecclesiastical court at Cape Town, where he was condemned. Colenso's excommunication and deposition followed.¹⁸⁴

Bishop Colenso did not accept the authority of Bishop Gray, the validity of the court Gray had created at Cape Town, or the justice of its findings. Colenso fought now both for the right to continue to teach the truth as he saw it, and for the right to retain his position as Bishop of Natal. He was involved in prolonged litigation in Britain and Natal.¹⁸⁵ In the course of the law suits animosities reached a vehemence it is now difficult to condone. But they rested on convictions which were so genuine, on both sides, that to present the Colenso controversy as comedy belies its significance. For John William Colenso, what was at stake was not simply his own survival as bishop, but survival of freedom and truth within the Anglican Church. His fight, in his eyes, was a fight against obscurantism and arbitrary authority. He believed the Church should be both generous and wise: generous in allowing individuals scope to follow the dictates of intellect, and wise in freeing itself from error and allowing for growth and change.¹⁸⁶

In an age of confident, even brash, scientific certitude there were many who supported him. The most important support came from the courts of law. He appealed, successfully, to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council which found that Bishop Gray lacked coercive authority over him. The Letters Patent under which Gray claimed authority had been issued by the Crown just after the grant of parliamentary institutions to the Cape and were therefore invalid. Since it was only to the Cape that parliamentary institutions were then granted, Colenso's Letters Patent, though questioned, were not as much impugned

183. *Ibid.*, pp.104, 112, 140; Hinchliff, *John William Colenso*, pp.136-37, summary of the indictment against Colenso.

184. Guy, *The Heretic*, pp.142-43, 156-57.

185. Rees, *Colenso Letters*, pp.91, 205 fn. and S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, 18 Sept.1869; Hinchliff, *The Anglican Church*, pp.98-99.

186. Guy, *The Heretic*, pp.127 and 137.

as Gray's. The latter could neither act on the strength of his Letters Patent, nor could he claim that Colenso had entered into a contract to accept his authority.¹⁸⁷

Thus encouraged, Colenso took legal issue with the trustees of the Colonial Bishoprics Fund, who had stopped his stipend. By the *Romilly Judgment*¹⁸⁸ he won his case. Henceforward the Colonial Bishoprics Fund, created in 1841 to finance colonial bishoprics,¹⁸⁹ continued to pay his stipend, first to Colenso, and then after his death to the curators of the Church of England appointed in September 1884.¹⁹⁰ What hampered Colenso was the withdrawal of grants from the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.¹⁹¹ Since he remained legally Bishop of Natal, even after the appearance of Bishop Macrorie with the curious title of Bishop of 'Maritzburg',¹⁹² Colenso continued to maintain control of land and property which had been granted to the Church of England in Natal. This included even those which had been placed in Bishop Gray's control before the arrival of Colenso. In Natal Colenso obtained the support of local courts of law in making good his control over such property, although his power was not absolute.¹⁹³ What mattered far more in the long run was that the Cape dispute over the Grahamstown Cathedral resulted in judicial decisions that denied to the *Church of South Africa* (Gray's supporters) property granted to the original *Church of England*¹⁹⁴ in South Africa. Although Colenso's attempts to secure Natal legislation that would remove limitations on his control of property failed,¹⁹⁵ the legal rights he did possess, when combined with the effects of the Cape judicial decisions, thwarted the Church of the Province of South Africa in its desire to gain control of Anglican Church property until 1910, when the Natal parliament enacted the Church Properties Act.¹⁹⁶ The tragedy was that Colenso, because he lacked money and was involved in litigation, could not develop to the full the missionary work to which he was committed.

187. *Ibid.*, pp.149-50.

188. Hinchliff, *The Anglican Church*, p.98.

189. Rees, *Colenso Letters*, p.53.

190. *Ibid.*, p.393, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, 14 Feb.1885.

191. *Ibid.*, pp.188 and 204, S.F. Colenso to Lady Lyell, 7 May 1868 and to K. Lyell, 18 Sept.1869; Guy, *The Heretic*, p.131.

192. See Appendix 2, Biographical notes.

193. Rees, *Colenso Letters*, pp.157 and 179, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, 7 Feb.1868; p.155, S.F. Colenso to C.J. Bunyon, 9 Dec.1867.

194. The italics are mine, and intended to distinguish the two churches. For the dispute see immediately below, and especially Chapter Six.

195. Rees, *Colenso Letters*, p.286, S.F. Colenso to C.J. Bunyon, 7 July 1874.

196. Nicholls, 'Smashing of Bishopstowe'.

In 1870 Bishop Gray sought to solve the problem of authority within the Church by summoning the clergy who accepted him to a synod where the Church of the Province of South Africa was constituted.¹⁹⁷ It became a society in terms of the law and possessed its own constitution. A crucial part of that constitution was the Third Proviso which limited the scope and applicability of the decisions of the courts of law in regard to the affairs of the Church. It was intended to preclude the kind of appeal to the law courts that Colenso had made.¹⁹⁸ From the standpoint of the Church of the Province of South Africa, the Third Proviso thus had the merit of dealing with the problem of authority. But it aggravated the question of property. The more tenaciously the Church of the Province of South Africa clung to the Third Proviso, the less was the likelihood that it would gain control of such property.¹⁹⁹

Colenso died in 1883, but the disputes about property persisted. As a result of the judicial decisions in the case *Merriman versus Williams*, first in the Cape Supreme Court and then in the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council to which an appeal was directed, the Church of England, as distinct from the Church of the Province of South Africa constituted in 1870, maintained its control of the property of the 'Church of England'. The judges were called upon to decide between the rival claims to property of two Anglican communities, one of which had a constitution that contained the Third Proviso, while the other did not. They ruled that the community without a Third Proviso had the better claim. This was the verdict initially in a Cape case; but since the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council upheld the decision, it had a wider application.²⁰⁰

Here was a stalemate situation. It could be resolved only by the triumphant absorption of one Anglican community by the other or by legislation that would at least deal with the question of property. On the death of Colenso the control of the churches which had accepted him as bishop passed to the Church Council of the Church of England in Natal.²⁰¹ The 'constitution' of the Church of England in Natal was the body of regulations which Colenso had drafted and which were accepted by the Church Council

197. Hinchliff, *The Anglican Church*, pp.113-17.

198. *Ibid.*, p.115.

199. See below, Chapter Six.

200. Goedhals, 'N.J. Merriman', pp.382-88 and 405-10; A.T. Wirgman, *Life of Dean Green* (London, 1909), pp.130-31 and 137.

201. Hinchliff, *The Anglican Church*, pp.106-07.

in 1882.²⁰² Executive authority lay with the Standing Committee.²⁰³ This body was responsible for the continued running of the Church of England, subject to the decisions and control of the Church Council. The laity were strongly represented on both Council and Committee. Clergy were in short supply in the Church of England, for Colenso, denied resources, had not been able to provide as many clergy as the diocese of Natal needed.²⁰⁴ It was the duty of the Church Council to guide the Church of England in Natal and, in particular, to secure a successor to Bishop Colenso.²⁰⁵ There was also a Board of Curators. Perhaps to the annoyance of Harriette Colenso, it was set up by the Natal Supreme Court in September 1884.²⁰⁶ Its function was to control the property of the Church of England.

The Church of England in South Africa, even the Church of England in Natal, was, of course, not identical to the Colenso family. But none cared about it more than they. What they wanted was to guarantee the continuance of that Church of England through the selection and the consecration of a bishop who would maintain, as nearly as might be, the attitudes and work of Bishop John William Colenso.²⁰⁷ This committed them to strengthening the resolve of Church of England men in Natal and sometimes to working against prominent men of their congregations, such as Archdeacon Thomas Colley and Theophilus Shepstone.

Although he had been eagerly welcomed by Colenso in 1879, Colley was not well liked in Natal. He was thinking of leaving when Bishop Colenso died, but the consequent vacancy placed Colley, as archdeacon, in a leading position, especially in a church which had few clergy.²⁰⁸ He stayed on; he preached the sermon at Bishop Colenso's

202. *Regulations of the Church Council, 1882*; Wirgman, *Dean Green*, p.144.

203. *Regulations of the Church Council, 1882*.

204. Hinchliff, *The Anglican Church*, p.104. Hinchliff does not, on this page, mention the question of resources, cf. p.97.

205. *Ibid.*, pp.106-07; Wirgman, *Dean Green*, pp.144-58.

206. N.A., Col.Coll: F.E. Colenso to H.E. Colenso, 3 Dec.1884. The minute books of the Board of Curators are part of the F.S. Tatham Collection in the Natal Diocesan Archives, Pietermaritzburg. Rees, *Colenso Letters*, p.393, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, 14 Feb.1885.

207. Rees, *Colenso Letters*, p.404, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, 8 Aug.1886.

208. K.C.A.L., Col.Coll. F.26 Y9: J.W. Colenso to F.E. Colenso, 21 Sept.1879; F.22 S104: J.W. Colenso to Dean Williams, 29 May 1881; F.26 Y27: J.W. Colenso to F.E. Colenso, 24 Apr.1883. See Appendix 2, Biographical notes. See titles of sermons preached in 1881 and 1882, listed in *Mendelssohn's South African Bibliography*.

funeral;²⁰⁹ he presided at the meeting of the Church Council in 1884 which, following an unsuccessful plea to the Queen, decided to appeal to the Archbishop of Canterbury and other bishops of the Church of England for the consecration of a successor to Colenso.²¹⁰ When that approach was rebuffed, Colley caused hurt and indignation through his eagerness to reach an accommodation with Bishop Macrorie, Colenso's rival in Natal.²¹¹ Colley tried to block and undermine later initiatives from other members of the Church Council.²¹² That in itself branded him as treacherous and self-seeking in the eyes of the Colensos. Harriette referred to him as 'that villain' and as a 'man who thought himself Pope'.²¹³ She was very angry when Colley suggested that the proceeds from the sale of St Mary's, built with money pledged to 'native purposes', should be drawn in to the general account of the diocese.²¹⁴ Colley was certainly quarrelsome and persistent. He was at issue with the Curators, with the vestry of St Peter's and with the Revd A. Ikin of Christ Church, Addington, whom he forbade to officiate at St Mary's.²¹⁵ Tempers flared, fists flew, and there was at least one court wrangle before Colley left Natal.²¹⁶ In England he approached first the Secretary of State for the Colonies and then a former prime minister for, initially, confirmation of his appointment as archdeacon and, subsequently, for appointment as vicar-general of Natal. These requests were refused.²¹⁷ A more modest approach for 'a post of usefulness elsewhere' seems to have fared better. Since he had reneged on his earlier adherence to Colenso, Colley received ecclesiastical posts e.g. at Rugby.²¹⁸ He continued to anger the Colensos

209. T. Colley, *The Late Right Revd John William Colenso D.D. Late Bishop of Natal. Sermon preached in the Cathedral*, Sunday 24 June 1883.

210. Wirgman, *Dean Green*, pp.144, 154-57.

211. K.C.A.L., Col.Coll. F.31 Bb.23: Extract from *Natal Mercury*, 6 June 1885 (in the handwriting of Frances Ellen Colenso); *ibid.*, Bb.28, H.E. Colenso to F.E. Colenso, 13 July 1885; Wirgman, *Dean Green*, pp.154-57 and 170.

212. R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers Mss.Afr.S 1786(2) f.548 *et seq.*: J. Reynolds to T. Shepstone, 23 Mar.1887.

213. *Ibid.*, H.E. Colenso to F.E. Colenso, 1 June 1887; K.C.A.L., Col.Coll. F.20 S29: H.E. Colenso to F.E. Colenso, 28 Apr.1885.

214. K.C.A.L., Col.Coll. F.31 Bb.21: H.E. Colenso to F.E. Colenso, 10 Feb.1884.

215. R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers: H.E. Colenso to F.E. Colenso, 14 Mar.1888; to F.E. Colenso, 14 Mar.1888 and Mss. Afr.S 1293 (4) ff.8-9: A. Ikin to G. Cox, 8 Mar.1887.

216. *Ibid.*, H.E. Colenso to editor, *Natal Witness*, 15 Apr.1887; to F.E. Colenso, 14 Mar.1888; S.F. Colenso to F.E. Colenso, 7 Mar.1888; N.A., Col.Coll. F.E. Colenso to H.E. Colenso, 12 May 1887 and F.E. Colenso to editor, *Guardian*, 4 Oct.1888; *The Times*, 10 May 1887: report of proceedings being taken against Colley for assault following fracas at St Peter's.

217. Gladstone Papers, Add.Mss.44504 ff.164 *et seq.*: T. Colley to W.E. Gladstone, 31 July 1888, with enclosures.

218. Public Record Office, Colonial Office Files (henceforward C.O.) 179/173: T. Colley to Secretary of State, 16 July 1888, and minute by H.W. Just, 21 July 1888.

intermittently, not least by his continued claim to be archdeacon.²¹⁹ As late as 1912 Harriette warned Sophie, her sister-in-law, then widow of Frank, to have nothing to do with Colley.²²⁰

In political affairs the Colensos came to regard Shepstonism as a synonym for what was arbitrary, secretive, and incapable of fair dealing in regard to the black people of Natal and Zululand.²²¹ For Shepstone, 'the perfect crystal' of his friendship with Colenso broke irrevocably.²²² Bishop Colenso's disillusionment with Theophilus Shepstone dated from the Langalibalele affair and its aftermath. 'Alas', Colenso wrote at the time, 'my idol has gone to the ground'.²²³ But the Shepstons were influential, and despite the vehemence of Colenso's post-1873 disapproval, Shepstone remained a member of the Church of England, although he may have ceased to attend the congregation of St Peter's.²²⁴ The Colensos were always profoundly mistrustful of Shepstone. Harriette shared the views of her father, that Shepstone was 'one of the most *cunning* (Colenso's emphasis) men I ever met with' and of her mother who described Shepstone as 'the old serpent'.²²⁵ Nevertheless, she had to work with him about Church of England affairs. She asked his help about kwaMagwaza the mission station in Zululand which she wished to claim for the Colensos and thus for the Church of England, and the Zulu people.²²⁶ Shepstone seconded the resolution of the Church Council of 14 December 1886, when its members selected 'Sir' George Cox to be their next bishop.²²⁷ But his ideas do not seem to have moved parallel to the Colensos. He made representations directly to the Archbishop of Canterbury.²²⁸ Harriette was to deplore the results of his correspondence with Archbishop Benson in the 1890s. After Shepstone's death in 1893 she sought to explain what she claimed had been the real thrust of his correspondence with the

219. N.A., Col.Coll: Editor, *Westminster Gazette* to F.E. Colenso, 5 Oct.1905 and F.E. Colenso to Editor, *Westminster Gazette*, 6 Oct.1905; R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers, Mss.Afr.S 1286(2) ff.542 *et seq*; H.E. Colenso to F.E. Colenso, 2 June 1907.

220. R.H.L., Fr.Col. Papers, Mss.Afr.S. 1286(2) f.827; H.E. Colenso to S.J. Colenso, 31 Mar.1912.

221. N.A., Col.Coll: H.E. Colenso to Mr Pollock, 26 Sept.1908 for a long indictment of Shepstone activity.

222. R.H.L., Br.Empire Series S.18 A.S.P. C.130/62; Fr.El. Colenso to F.W. Chesson, 13 Oct.1886.

223. Rees, *Colenso Letters*, pp.263 and 285, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, 7 July 1874; A. Wilmot, *The Life and Times of Sir Richard Southey* (London, 1904), pp.308-09.

224. Rees, *Colenso Letters*, pp.286 and 289, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, 7 July 1874 and 2 Aug.1874.

225. R.H.L. Br.Empire Series S.18 A.S.P. C.131/86; J.W. Colenso to F.W. Chesson, 3 Aug.1875; Rees, *Colenso Letters*, p.412, S.F. Colenso to Fr.El. Colenso, Sunday (28 Nov.1886, int.ev.).

226. See below, pp.89-90.

227. Rees, *Colenso Letters*, p.404, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, 8 Aug.1886.

228. Wirgman, *Dean Green*, p.144.

Archbishop of Canterbury.²²⁹

But the legacy of Bishop Colenso was not simply ecclesiastical. From 1873 he had proved himself an unrepentant political prelate in championing first Langalibalele and the Hlubi and then Cetshwayo and the Zulu.²³⁰ He had been critical too of the British annexation of the Transvaal.²³¹ In his championing of Nguni people he defined the issues that were to absorb so much of the attention of at least four of his children and demonstrated the methods which they should use. Once convinced that false dealing was involved in an issue, Colenso was tenacious and unremitting in his efforts to expose what was wrong as he appealed for redress and remedy. He infused into his criticism of newspaper reports and official accounts the kind of urgency he had used in regard to the Bible. His efforts were unavailing. The Hlubi and the Ngwe were broken up.²³² The ascendancy of the Shepstones in the affairs of Natal was not shaken.²³³ Langalibalele, banished first to Robben Island and then, to resolve legal difficulties, to the mainland of the Cape, remained in exile.²³⁴ Some of the Hlubi people found a home and work on the Bishopstowe/ekuKhanyeni estates.²³⁵ The Colensos did not forget Langalibalele. Harriette and her father visited him at the Cape in 1880.²³⁶ The Colensos continued to plead for him, but it was only in 1887 that he was allowed to return, an old and broken man.²³⁷ Robert Colenso and his young son, Eric,²³⁸ greeted the returning chief on his arrival in Durban, while Agnes succoured him and entertained him when he was allowed to visit Bishopstowe.²³⁹ Placed in the Swartkop location, Langalibalele died

229. H.E. Colenso (ed.), *Correspondence with the Archbishop of Canterbury* (1894). This was an extended version of the earlier published correspondence of Shepstone with the Archbishop of Canterbury.

230. Guy, *The Heretic*, pp.197-220; Rees, *Colenso Letters*, pp.259-311. For a more detailed discussion see W.R. Guest, *Langalibalele the Crisis in Natal 1873-1875* (Durban, 1976).

231. Rees, *Colenso Letters*, pp.332, 333 and 354, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, Easter Day 1877, 30 Apr.1877 and 26 Mar.1881.

232. C.1141 (1875): *Remarks by the Bishop of Natal* presented Colenso's criticism of the proceedings against the Hlubi and Ngwe people and the judicial showmanship and machinations that followed the capture of the chief and some of his people.

233. See Appendix 2, Biographical notes.

234. C.1141: p.166; P. Lewsen, *John X Merriman* (Johannesburg, 1982), pp.44-45.

235. C.1141: pp.125-26; Rees, *Colenso Letters*, p.275, H.E. Colenso to Grandmother, 4 Jan.1874; pp.294 and 405, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, 30 Aug.1886.

236. Rees, *Colenso Letters*, p.352, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, 31 Oct.1880.

237. See, for example, F.E. Colenso, 'John William Colenso', *The Eagle*, 1885, p.79 fn.

238. N.A., Col.Coll: R.J. Colenso to [Fr.El. Colenso ?], 28 Apr.1887.

239. *Ibid.*, A.M. Colenso to H.E. Colenso, 15 Dec.1888, n.d. (Dec.1888, in.cv.), n.d. Friday (Dec.1888, int.cv.).

in January 1889.²⁴⁰

Colenso achieved very little for Langalibalele or his people. His hopes of effecting a thorough revision of Natal 'native policy' failed conspicuously.²⁴¹ What he did do, however, was to expose the inadequacies of Natal's treatment of its black people and the willingness of officials and colonists to accept a hybrid standard of justice in the case of the trial of a prominent chief. This arrangement was one which sought to mix together what was believed to be the African concept of the power of the Supreme Chief and some of the outward forms of the British concept of the rule of law. It is possible that Colenso's criticisms of Natal 'native policy' strengthened Carnarvon's resolve to effect confederation in South Africa.²⁴² Certainly a common 'native policy' was one of the results that he envisaged. If so, the result was paradoxical, for, as Colenso saw, the determination to effect confederation led to the annexation of the Transvaal - and to its sequel, the Anglo-Zulu War.²⁴³

Though a Colenso failure, the Langalibalele affair is clearly a turning-point in the story of the Colenso endeavour. It brought Colenso and Magera Magwaza, his printer, into the political arena, assisted by Harriette his daughter.²⁴⁴ As the Colensos themselves recognised, the crisis was a turning-point too, in that it shattered the Colenso-Shepstone friendship²⁴⁵ and led the Colensos into an attitude of profound suspicion of all things Shepstonian. It had repercussions on the ecclesiastical controversy. Although Macrorie and Green did not sign the public petition, clergymen in Natal, except for Colenso's personal adherents, backed the colonial authorities. To Macrorie's satisfaction, Colenso ceased to be Natal's indigenous celebrity and became a much hated man in the colony.²⁴⁶ Some who remained adherents of the Church of England were to find it necessary to explain that

240. *Dictionary of South African Biography (DSAB)*, vol.2.

241. Rees, *Colenso Letters*, p.307.

242. Guy, *The Heretic*, p.225; Guest, *Langalibalele*, p.98.

243. K.C.A.L., Col.Coll: J.W. Colenso, *Zulu Digest*, 1st Series, part 2, p.244 (K.C.A.L. pagination) and 'What Doth the Lord Require of Us' sermon preached on Day of Humiliation and Prayer, 1879. Reprinted in *Natalia* (1976).

244. C.1141: pp.83, 106, 109-117, 129-31; for reference to H.E. Colenso see p.130; Guy, *The Heretic*, p.242; Rees, *Colenso Letters*, pp.319 and 323, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, 14 Sept. and 10 Nov.1875. See Appendix 2, Biographical notes.

245. Guy, *The Heretic*, p.219; Guest, *Langalibalele*, pp.87-89. See above, fns.222 and 223.

246. C.1119: pp.52-54, Memorial of Clergy on Atrocities in Natal, 26 Jan.1874; Guest, *Langalibalele*, pp.88-89; Cox, *Life*, vol.2, pp.333-34 and 355-56; Guy, *The Heretic*, pp.216-17.

their membership of the church did not imply their acceptance of Colenso's views on matters either of church doctrine or of politics.²⁴⁷ In addition, the Colenso championship of Langalibalele was the prelude to the Colenso championship of Cetshwayo.²⁴⁸

The Colenso concern for Zululand was of long standing. One of Bishop Colenso's first actions was to learn the Zulu language and to help give it a literary form.²⁴⁹ Shortly after the battle of Ndongakasuka (1856), Colenso visited Mpande to secure from him permission to establish a mission at kwaMagwaza.²⁵⁰ To it the Reverend Robert Robertson was appointed and here he remained even after his defection from Colenso, until the alarm that preceded the Zulu War caused him to abandon the post.²⁵¹ Colenso would have liked Zululand to come under his episcopal authority; indeed he contemplated going there himself as bishop.²⁵² For a time, until this became too dangerous, the royal sibling Mkhungo kaMpande, who was a potential rival of Cetshwayo, was educated at Bishopstowe/ekuKhanyeni.²⁵³ Here the possibility existed that he might one day be the family's protégé ruler of Zululand. But this proved to be an unfulfilled dream. Zululand became a diocese of the Church of the Province of South Africa over which Bishops Wilkinson, Mackenzie, and Carter presided in turn. For the Colensos, in their later role as the champions of Cetshwayo, the brief association with Mkhungo was an irrelevant experience.²⁵⁴

By 1887 the broad Colenso aims as mirrored in all their representations on behalf of the Zulu people were already quite clear. They had demonstrated them on behalf of both

247. K.C.A.L., Col.Coll: J.W. Colenso, *Zulu Digest*, 2nd Series, part 1, pp.518-29 (K.C.A.L. pagination).

248. See, for example, F.E. Colenso, *History of the Zulu War and Its Origins* (London, 1880). She begins with a discussion of the Langalibalele affair; Rees, *Colenso Letters*, p.315, S.F. Colenso to K. Lyell, 23 June 1875.

249. F.E. Colenso, 'John William Colenso', *The Eagle*, vol.13, pp.72-73.

250. Guy, *The Heretic*, p.88; 'Three Native Accounts of the Visit of the Bishop of Natal in September and October, 1859 to Umpande King of the Zulus' reprinted in D.R. Edgecombe (ed), *Bringing Forth Light: Five Tracts on Bishop Colenso's Zulu Mission* (Durban and Pietermaritzburg, 1982).

251. Guy, *The Heretic*, pp.86 and 256.

252. Rees, *Colenso Letters*, p.61.

253. N. Etherington, *Preachers, Peasants and Politics in South East Africa 1835-1880* (London, 1978), p.76; Guy, *The Heretic*, p.64.

254. See Appendix 2, Biographical notes.