

Archaeological Site Report	SiteNo	9/2/090/0005
	Site Name	Bethel Mission Church, Stutterheim
	Date	
	Project	
	CaseNID	
	Coords	-32.561509, 27.434132

Page No: 1 **SiteAutoID:** 27478

Site Category: Building

SiteComments:

Archive Import History: It was founded by Pastor J. L. Dohne of the Berlin Missionary Society on 2nd January, 1837, and is the oldest mission station of that Society in the whole of the Eastern Province. Dohne was one of six Berlin missionaries who arrived at the Cape in 1836. He was persuaded to do mission work among the Xhosa under the Chieftainship of Gazela, on the border of the Cape Colony. Gazela granted Dohne about 1 200 hectares of land and there, on the banks of the Camakale River, he established his mission station which he called Bethel. According to Dohne's diary this was a land flowing with milk and honey. But in this land which he described in such lyrical terms on his arrival, Dohne was to suffer the utmost hardships. His home and his church was a traditional hut, mealie porridge and sour milk his only food. Soon he was joined by his young wife, but she died when their baby son was burn in 1842 and six months later the baby also died. When the War of the Axe broke out in 1846 his mission station was destroyed by the Xhosa. Dohne left the Cape Colony for Natal, where he became the Minister to the Voortrekkers. Dohne was succeeded at Bethel by Pastor A. Kropf, who rebuilt the mission station, but in 1850 it was again burned down by the Xhosa. In 1852 Kropf rebuilt it for a second time although it then still consisted of huts. It was only in 1864—1865 that the present little church was built and it vas inaugurated on 8th August, 1865. Kropf remained attached to this mission until his death in 1910. He was known particularly as a chief translator of the Bible in Xhosa published in 1887—1889 and compiler of a Xhosa-English dictionary published in 1899. Visual Description: Colours: Site Features: Condition: Construction Date: Materials: Catalogue: , No: , Significance Category:

Damage Types: