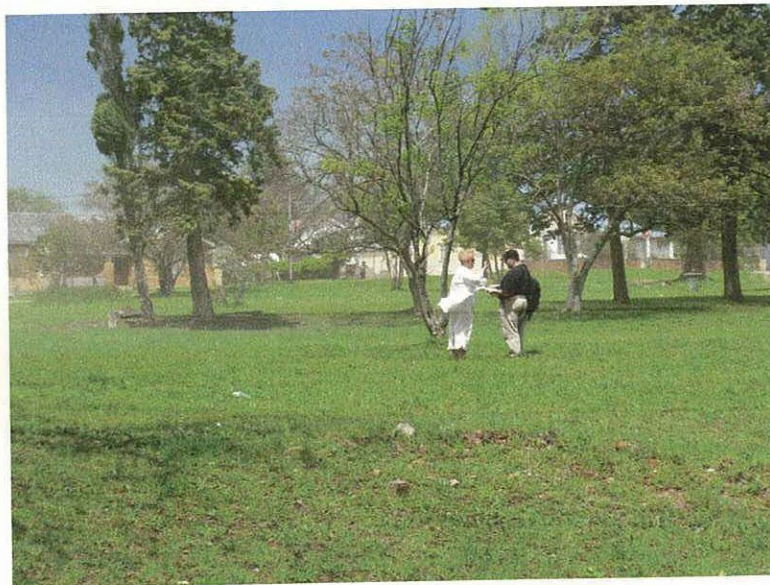


**REPORT ON HERITAGE FEATURES
OLD CARAVAN PARK
STUTTERHEIM**

For Terreco Consulting.



**G.N. Vernon
November 2010**

REPORT ON HERITAGE FEATURES STUTTERHEIM OLD CARAVAN PARK

The report was requested by Ms Nenekazi Songxaba of Terreco Consulting. The brief was to investigate the site proposed for development of a Stutterheim Central Transport Administration and Commercial node, to see if there were any structures or relics of heritage significance.

Prior Knowledge

It had been reported that Dohne Post was situated on the site and that the residence of Baron von Stutterheim, commander of the German Military settlers could also have been located there. In 1977, when the site was turned into a caravan park, Jack French, the local historian, investigated the area. He consulted Prof J. Rennie, an amateur historian of note in Grahamstown, who suggested that an extant small brick building could have been used as a 'lock-up' for military offenders and that the position and form of the ventilation slits were common to other forts in the Eastern Cape. As such the building was recognised by the National Monument Council and given an interpretive bronze plaque, now missing. There have been no reports or records of any graves, stone tools or evidence of living sites of the indigenous people found on the old caravan park.

Method

A site visit was undertaken on 4 November 2010. I was accompanied by Carl Vernon and Denver Webb, authority on the fortifications of the Eastern Cape. We took copies of the photographs, the sketch maps and the plan of the post. Our aim was to familiarize ourselves with the terrain around and including the caravan park to see how the records of land use in the 1850s could be located on the ground. We also set out to establish whether the post had been situated in the old caravan park and if there were any extant structures or remains. Visits were paid to the Amathole and East London Museums to retrieve information from their archives and libraries.

Historical background

There are no historical records of a pre-colonial settlement on the site under review, but it is likely that the wider area had probably been used for grazing livestock. In 1837 the Rev. Jacob Ludwig Döhne of the Berlin Missionary Society, established the Bethal Mission Station in the area to work among the Ngqika people who lived in the area at that time.

In 1846 the War of the Axe broke out with Chief Sandile as one of the main protagonists. Hostilities were resumed in 1850 in a war which has become known as the War of Mlanjeni, which lasted until 1853.

Dohne Post was erected as one of a series of twelve temporary fortifications erected in and around the Amathole Mountains. Dohne Post was named after the Rev. Döhne as the site was close to the mission station.

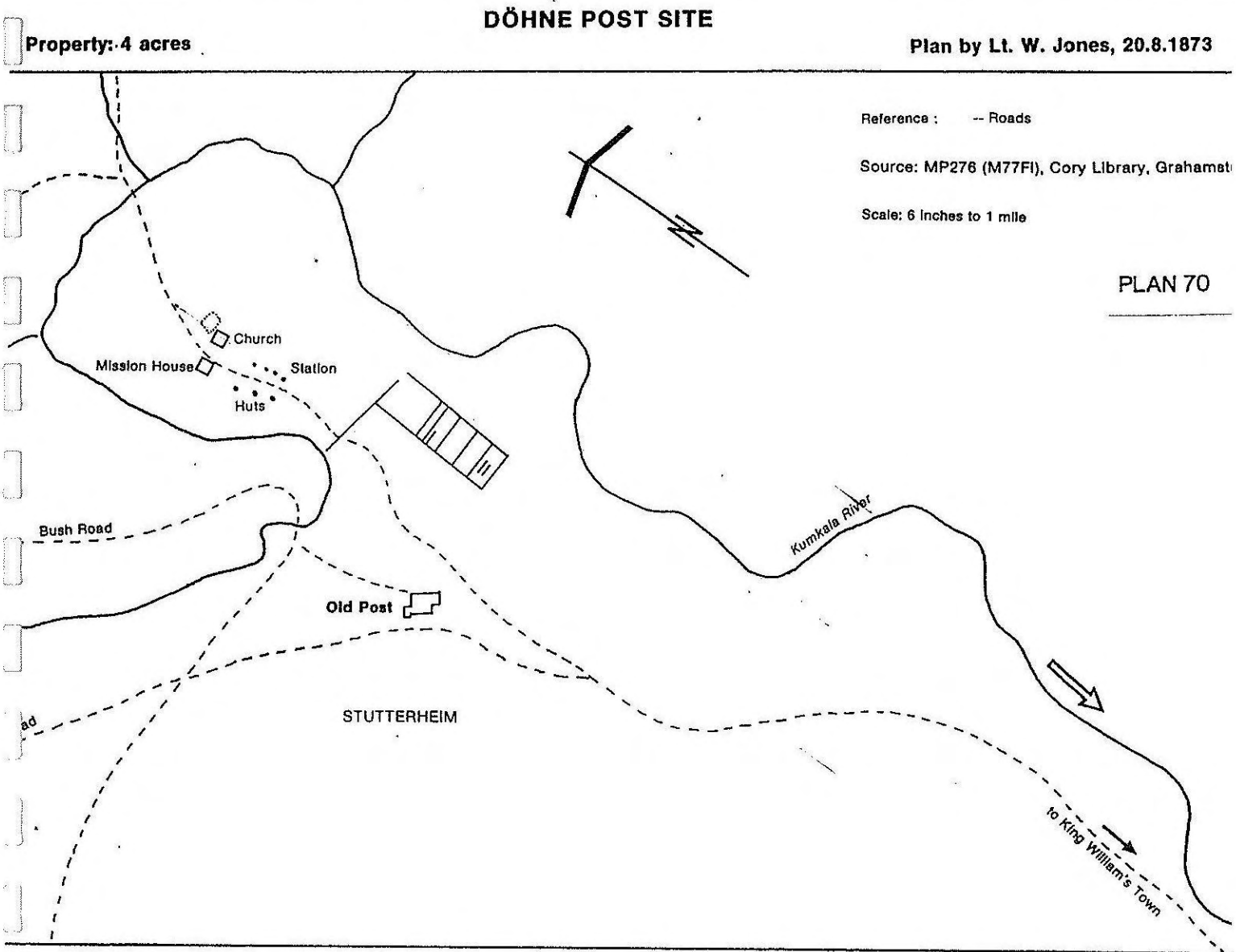


Figure 1
Sketch map of the Dohne Post site, 1873.
From *The Forts of the Eastern Cape*. (Coetzee)

At the end of the war, the Governor of the Cape, Sir George Cathcart, expelled the Ngqika from their Amathole Mountain strongholds. He banished them to the relatively open country to the east and established a Crown or Royal Reserve which incorporated the Amathole Mountains and selectively opened up parts for settlement by White and Mfengu settlers.

Dohne Post became one of the links in the chain of fortifications around the Reserve and Civil Commissioners were placed at certain posts to establish control over the different African Chiefdoms. The Ngqika Commissioner, Charles Brownlee, was located at Dohne Post, as it was closest to where Chief Sandile and his followers lived. The Cattle Killing of 1856-57 took place while Brownlee was stationed at Dohne Post.

The German Military Settlers arrived in British Kaffraria in 1857 and Dohne Post was selected as the headquarters of the British-German Legion. The land encompassing the fort, as well as part of the military rayon, was granted to Major-General Baron von Stutterheim, commander of the Legion. He built himself what became known as a 'castle'. The legionaries were granted building lots and an acre of ground behind and around Dohne Post. The village was named Stutterheim in his honour.

In 1858-59, groups of the later German agricultural settlers arrived in British Kaffraria and one group was located at Stutterheim. Ten-acre agricultural plots were laid the east of the Cumakala River for them to start farming activities. These were where the present township of Mlungisi is situated.

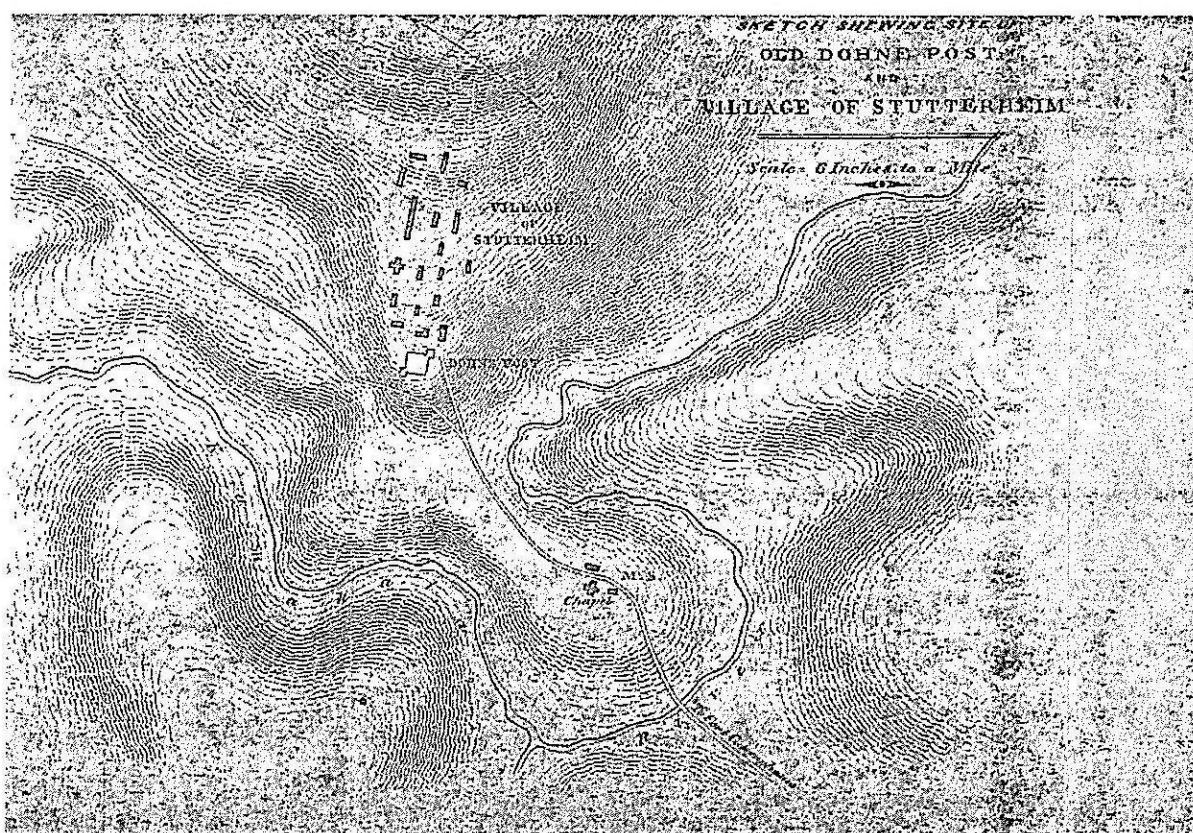
According to the records, Dohne Post was abandoned as a fortification for one year in 1859 and then reoccupied in 1866.

In 1880 the land was handed over to the Municipal Council for use as a park and garden. In 1977 it became a caravan park.

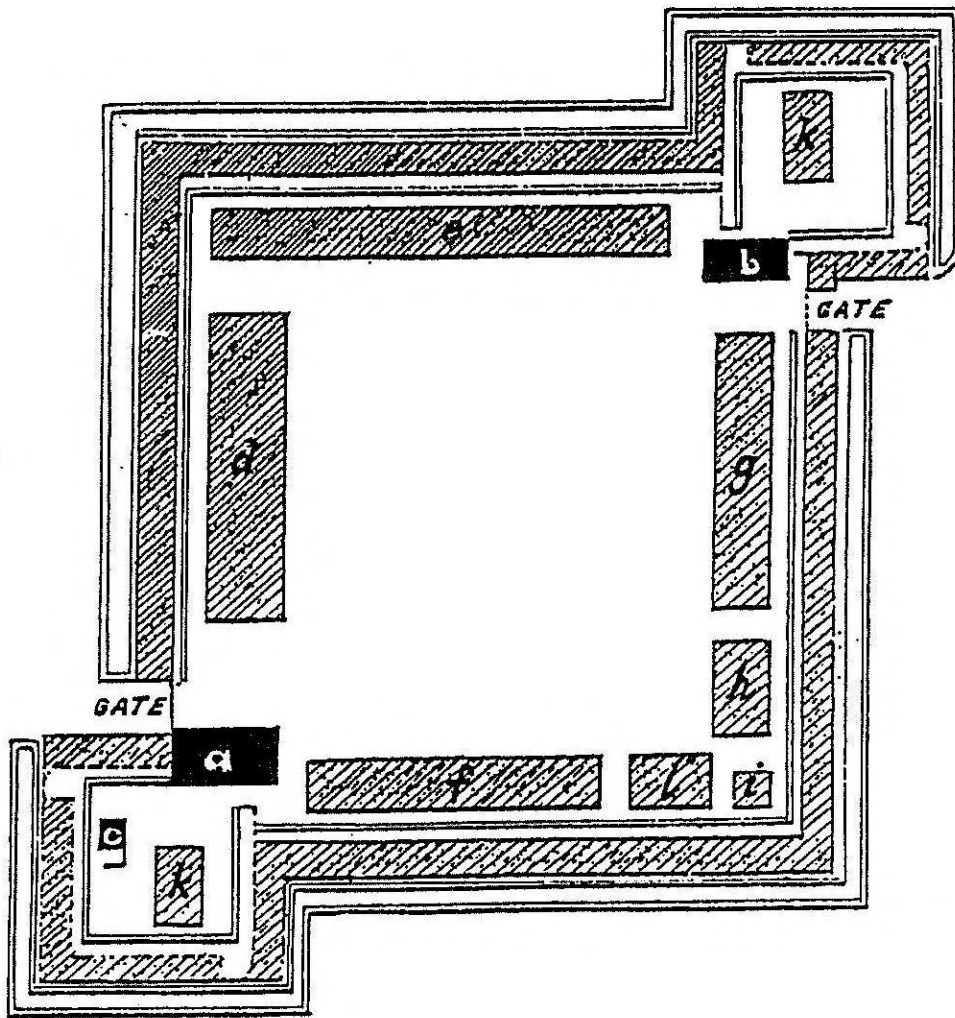
Structures

Dohne Post was built to the same basic pattern as the other temporary posts constructed during the War of Mlanjeni. This was a square redoubt, enclosed by an eight foot high earthen parapet and bounded by a ditch four to five feet deep. There were two square bastions at opposite corners, each containing a stone guard house with a flat roof and a parapet. In one bastion there was a brick powder magazine and in the other a brick cookhouse. The bastions were surrounded by wooden palisades. Within the quadrangle, there were officers' quarters, soldiers, barracks, stables, a commissariat store and a hospital. These buildings were constructed of wattle-and-daub with thatched roofs.

Figure 2



Part of a large map of 'Old Dohne Post and the village of Stutterheim'
Courtesy Amathole Museum.



REFERENCES

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| a. Stone Guard-house. | f. Cavalry do. and Troop Stables. |
| b. Do. Cook-house. | g. Do. Commissariat and Hospital. |
| c. Do. Powder Magazine. | h. Wattle and daub officers' Stables. |
| d. Wattle and daub Huts, Officers' Quarters. | i. Hospital Privy do. |
| e. Do. Infantry Soldiers'. | k. Do. Picket-house. |
| | l. Do. Forage Store. |

(Source: GH 39/1, p. 882: Memorandum, Bisset, 30 June 1855.)

Figure 3

Plan of the temporary posts constructed during the War of Mlanjeni, 1850-53. The small black structure marked 'C' is the powder magazine contained within the lower bastion.

From *The Fortifications of British Kaffraria* (Webb).

Figure 4
Interior view of Dohne Post with the cookhouse on the left and Dohne Peak in the background –
c.1860.
Courtesy Amathole Museum.

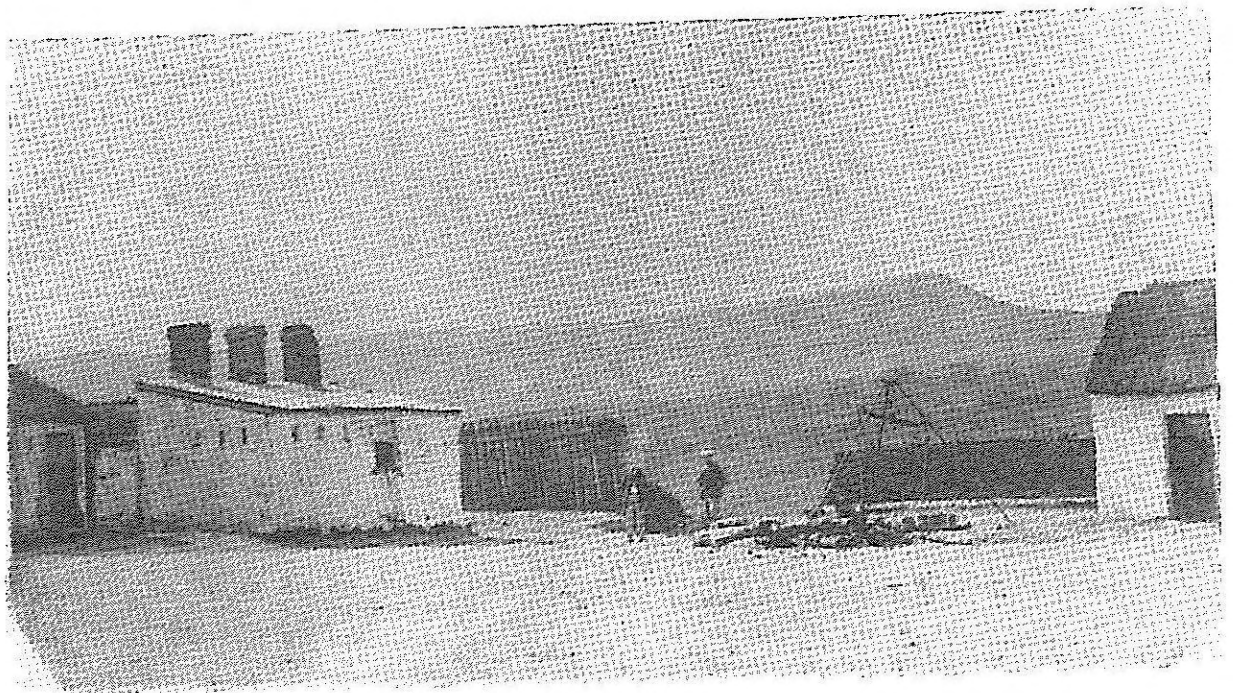
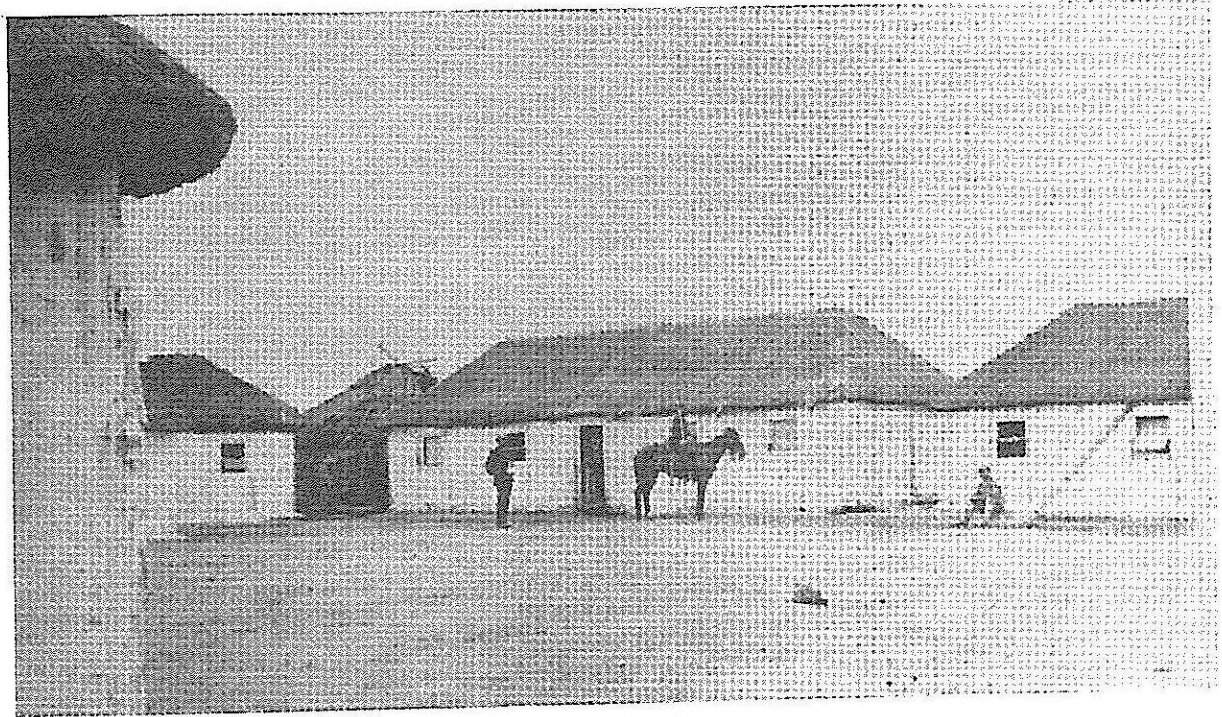
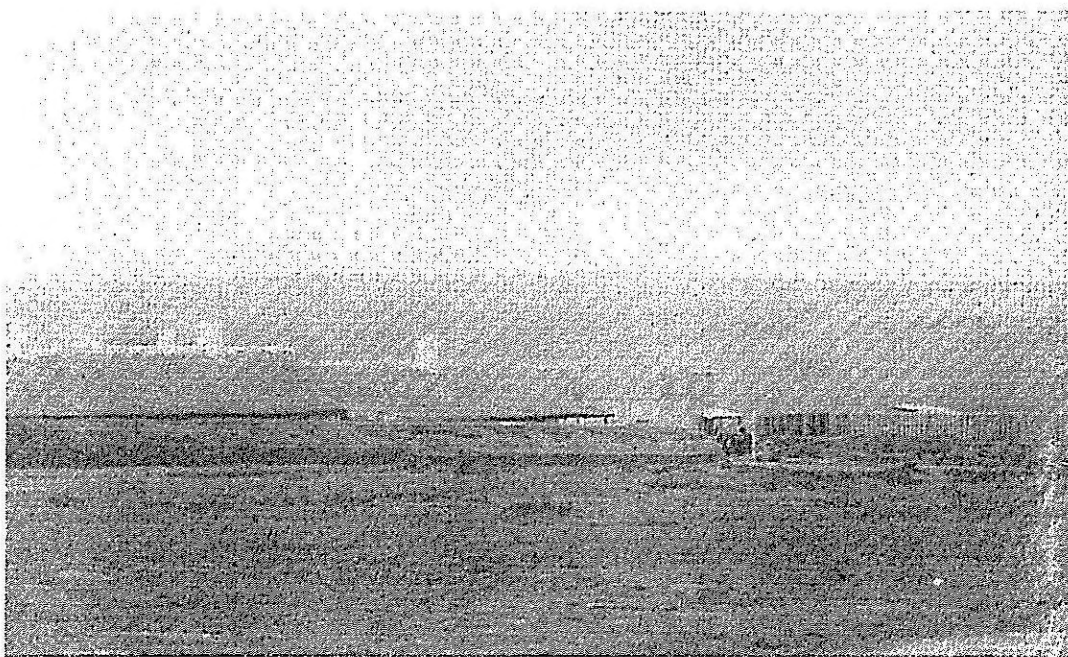


Figure 5
The barracks and officers' quarters of Dohne Post – c. 1860.
Courtesy of the Amathole Museum.

Figure 6



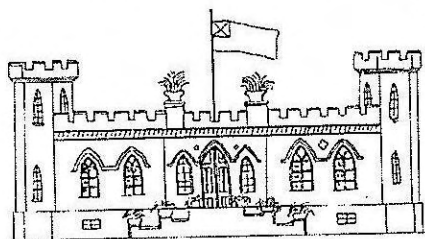
External view of Dohne Post showing the earthworks and thatched roofs of the interior wattle-and-daub buildings – c. 1860.

. The sloping white roof of a small square structure enclosed in a palisaded bastion can be seen on the right.

Figure 7

CASTLE BUILT AT STUTTERHEIM
BY
BARON RICHARD VON STUTTERHEIM
Commander of the Anglo-German Legion

*Said to have never
been properly
completed and
finally destroyed by
a cyclone in 1860*



*Traced from photostat of Original Sketch
Kindly supplied by Herr Eckart von Stutterheim
Munich, West Germany.*

Capt. P. von

Copy of a sketch of Baron von Stutterheim's 'castle'.
It must have been poorly constructed as it was damaged by a cyclone in 1860 and there is no evidence that it was rebuilt.