

11 DINGISWAYO

One. Dingiswayo's early life is shrouded in mystery. He fled from the home of his father Jobe, chief of the Mthethwa, and after several years of wandering, returned with a horse and a gun which he was said to have been given by a white traveller Dr. Cowan. Legend also says that he had acquired a knowledge of white military methods. Be that as it may, he ousted his brother who had succeeded Jobe as chief. This happened say \pm 1800 AD.

Cartoon: Without doubt, Dingiswayo, the horse and the gun.

Two. He organised his young men into age-regiments, each with distinctive dress and shields. He created a confederacy of chieftains, over which he was paramount. He gained his power largely by diplomacy, but he was backed by a military power which was considerable. It was he who helped Shaka to assume the chieftainship of the small Zulu tribe.

Cartoon: Dingiswayo at a parade of one of his crack regiments.

Three. About 1817 Dingiswayo fought against his old enemy Zwide, chief of the Ndwandwe. Zwide captured him and had him killed. The Mthethwa confederacy fell apart, and its tribes attached themselves to the rising star of Shaka, chief of the Zulus. Dingiswayo in fact prepared the way for Shaka and the creation of the great Zulu nation.

Cartoon: The death of Dingiswayo