

1. In 1828 Dingane, then in his thirties, assassinated his half-brother Shaka outside his cattle kraal in broad daylight. He then arranged the killing of his brother Mhlangana, who had helped in the assassination, and took control of the Zulu kingdom. But Dingane although cruel was <sup>no</sup> a leader, and the Zulu power began to decline. What was more, he was consumed by fear and suspicion of the white interlopers, the British from the sea and the Boers from over the Drakensberg.

Cartoon: Dingane receiving news that the Boers had crossed the Drakensberg .

2. When Piet Retief came over the Drakensberg, the sight of Natal below was the sight of Paradise itself. He knew that the trekkers would need a treaty with Dingane. He rode to Mgungundlovu, and was told by Dingane that if he recovered stolen cattle from Sekonyela, he would be given a grant of land. On 3 February 1838 Retief returned with the cattle.

Cartoon: Retief returning with the cattle

or The Trekkers see the sight of Natal below

3. On 4 February Dingane put his mark to a document giving the Boers a vast territory, from the Tsekela to the Umzimvubu, from Port Natal to the Drakensberg. Did Dingane really intend to "give" this enormous piece of land? Or had he already decided to destroy all the white interlopers in Natal and Zululand? It seems certain that he intended the second. *He hoped to save his kingdom.*

Cartoon: The signing of the deed

or A map showing the vast territory ceded.

4. On 6 February 1828 Dingane summoned Retief and his hundred companions into his presence for a farewell beerdrink. Out of respect for etiquette Retief had left all weapons outside. The story is told that while the warriors were dancing, Dingane cried out "kill the wizards", and the whole party was dragged off to the hill of execution and killed.

Cartoon: The killing may be thought unsuitable today. In that case I will suggest an alternative - very difficult I think - and that would be of Retief (and others) trying to conceal their anxiety as the warriors dancing around them appear to become more and more menacing.

a DINGANE (cont)

5. Dingane lost no time. He dispatched impi to the Voortrekker encampments around what later became known as Weenen, The Place of Weeping. He killed over four hundred people before the trekkers rallied. Morale was low, but in November 1838 Andries Pretorius arrived to take command, determined to crush Dingane. On 9 December the commando made the Vow - if God gave them the victory they would keep the day holy for ever.

Cartoon: The making of the Vow

6. On 16 December 1838 the Zulus attacked the laager on the Ncome River. Three thousand of them were killed but not one defender. The stream is today called the Blood River. Dingane fled north and was killed by the Swazi. Pretorius proclaimed Mpande the King of the Zulus. So Dingane died, not having saved his kingdom, but having seen it disintegrate further. Should the annual celebration of the trekker victory over the Zulus be continued any longer? This is much questioned today.

Cartoon: The battle of Blood River