Letter to the Queensland Commissioner of Police from Magdalen Bahum of the Cape Bedford Mission

23 March 1899

Uncat. NL MSS 216

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A letter

to the

Commissioner of Police

from Magdalen Nelson
(of the Cape Bedford Mission)

[She is speaking Kafirini and the local
Cape Town Language (W. P.)]

for F. Rolfe, Coetleba 25 March 1879.
Our friend Mr. Parry O'Kedee.

We are now writing you a letter, by which you will certainly see that we have not forgotten you. We also know that down below (i.e., in Brisbane) you have again spoken to the men of the Queen (Government) to give us food. Therefore all of us now say "thank you." Just now a big storm came here, broke some of our houses, and throwing them down, and also broke the banana-stalks, leaving only young ones. The net which you sent us for fishing with is a good one, and therefore we also say "thanks." Our boat needs to be a good one, and we certainly need to catch a lot of fish with it. Now that our boat is old, and its back broken, and we have no money, how is a (new) boat to be obtained? Perhaps, by making a speech to the men of the Queen (Government) you could obtain a boat for us? Our friend Dr. Roth has also now come to see us; he is learning our language. We are sending this letter through him. We will forward you by boat shortly (some) butter-orchids on a tea-tree.

All the other girls have ordered me to make a speech like this to you.

Your friend Magdalen, the Quandong.
Daunngan toinanun. Mr. Parry Oxden

Ngatanan nita nanu hapan balthal, namongan munde pinal natinu ngantan nina gari milka ngandati. Ngantan gaalmba pinal munk bala bama Quinbke qurar-bto hoko balthal, ngantanun maji mutuni. Namongu ngantan Martangamu nanu nita thanku quralal.

Daunngan ngantanun Dr. Roth nita ngantanun gaalmba mani, melu hoko ngantanun man. Namunggal bodo ngantan hapan degal. Ngantel nita quralbhir nanu wanga hoko budeh dir degehu.

Dana martangamu ngani detheuren hoko njimidir nanu balthal balthane.

Daunngun nanu Magdalena Mutun