
FROM FRONTIER TO MIDLANDS

A HISTORY OF THE GRAAFF-REINET DISTRICT, 1786-1910

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Maps 1-4 have been based on Stockenström,¹ Boëseken² and Walker.³ For the boundaries of the Graaff-Reinet district, where possible, the original proclamations have been checked.

In 1786 the Graaff-Reinet district was created from the eastern portions of the Stellenbosch and Swellendam districts. No boundary was established in the north, and it was only in 1798, with the dawning of a new era in relations with the Bushmen, that a line of division, similar to that established earlier in the east between the Xhosa and the whites, was fixed. In 1804 the southern portion of the Graaff-Reinet district and the eastern part of the Swellendam district were incorporated into the new district of Uitenhage. Although the jurisdiction of Graaff-Reinet was increased with the establishment of the sub-drostdies of Cradock in 1812

1. E. Stockenström, Historiese Atlas van Suid-Afrika.

2. A.J. Boëseken, et al, Geskiedenis-Atlas vir Suid-Afrika

3. E.A. Walker, Historical Atlas of South Africa.

and Beaufort (later Beaufort West) in 1818, the only occasion on which the district of Graaff-Reinet itself was enlarged was in 1824 when the northern border of the colony was extended to the Orange River.

In 1825 the district was contracted when the district of Somerset (later Somerset East) was established. This cut Graaff-Reinet off from the eastern frontier, but she remained a frontier district in the north until Colesberg was made a separate district in 1837.

After 1837 the most important boundary changes resulted from Act 12 of 1857, which constituted Middelburg and Richmond separate divisions from the beginning of 1858, and Act 25 of 1858 which provided for the establishment of the new district of Murraysburg; in 1880 Aberdeen became a separate district in terms of Act 36 of 1879.

The boundaries of the Graaff-Reinet district have changed little since 1880. Map 5 shows the number of magisterial districts that in 1966 fell within what had in 1798 been the Graaff-Reinet district. Map 6 is based on Van der Poel,¹ with various adaptations and corrections. The Chas. E. Goad town map in the South African Library forms the basis for Map 7. An indication of the wards in town during the water crisis in the 1880's has been added to the original map, which is dated October 1895.

1. J. van der Poel, Railway and Customs Policies in South Africa 1885-1910.

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NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

The word "black" is used in its modern twentieth century context as a blanket term for the non-white population groups of South Africa. Where closer definition of these groups is required, they are referred to specifically as African (or more particularly Xhosa), Coloured, Hottentot and Bushman. The terms Hottentot and Bushman have been preferred to Khoi Khoi and San, the use of which is still a matter of debate.

The term "white" is used to describe the settlers from Europe and their descendants. During the Dutch East India Company period of rule (1652-1795) these colonists, who were predominantly Dutch-speaking, became known as Boers (farmers) and are referred to as "colonists" or "Boers" in the chapters dealing with events in this period. The word "Afrikaner" appears more frequently with reference to events in the nineteenth century, and is used in its modern sense to describe a white Afrikaans-speaking South African.

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN FOOTNOTES

Unpublished Official Manuscript Records and Private Papers

British Occupation (B.O.)

B.J. Barnard Collection (BJB)

Colonial Office (C.O.)

Council of Policy (C)

Free Protestant Church, Graaff-Reinet (G 49)

Graaff-Reinet (G.R.)

Lieutenant Governor (L.G.)

Minutes of the meetings of the Graaff-Reinet College Council (College Minutes)

Minutes of the meetings of the Municipal Board of Commissioners (Municipal Minutes)

Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk, Graaff-Reinet (G 6)

Receiver of Land Revenue (R.L.R.)

Official Publications

British Parliamentary Papers (50 of 1835, 1362 of 1851, etc.)

Annexures and Appendices to the Votes and Proceedings of Parliament (A 2 - 1858, C 3 - 1888, G 27 - 1890, etc.)

The Blue Book of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope (Cape of Good Hope Blue Book, 1853, 1859, etc.)Published Collections of DocumentsMoodie, D. : The Record; or, a Series of Official Papers Relative to the Condition and Treatment of the Native Tribes of South Africa, a photostatic reprint, Cape Town, etc., 1960, Parts III and V (Moodie III, Moodie V)

Theal, G.M. : Records of the Cape Colony, 36 vols,
London, 1897-1905 (Records IV, etc.)

Theal, G.M. : Belangrijke Historische Dokumenten over
Zuid Afrika, vol. III, London, 1911 (BHD III)

Newspapers

Eastern Province Herald (EPH)

Graaff-Reinet Advertiser (GRA)

Graaff-Reinet Courant (GRC)

Graaff Reinet Herald (GRH)

Graaff Reinetter (GR)

Graham's Town Journal (GTJ)

Onze Courant (OC)

Zuid-Afrikaan (ZA)

PREFACE

The study of local history in South Africa is still in its infancy and has not been accorded the same recognition as elsewhere.¹ There is no convenient manual to guide the would-be local historian of the Cape.² There are few models that provide an insight into the main problems encountered by the local historian of a Cape community. In such local histories as exist, attention has been focussed predominantly on the foundation and physical growth of towns, the naming of streets, the establishment of schools and hospitals. Many of these accounts were written for publicity purposes or to commemorate the founding of towns.³ Although there is no history of the Dutch Reformed Church in Graaff-Reinet, the history of local congregations of the Dutch Reformed Church has generally been well

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1. For the position in England, see H.P.R. Finberg and V.H.T. Skipp, Local History: Objective and Pursuit.
 2. An example of a popular guide written particularly for the study of local history in North America, is D.D. Parker, Local History: How to Gather it, Write it, and Publish it.
 3. For example, E.Rosenthal, One Hundred Years of Victoria West 1859-1959; W.G.H. and S.Vivier, Hooyvlakte; Die Verhaal van Beaufort-Wes 1818-1968; D.Smith, ed., Cradock 1814-1964; 150th Anniversary Brochure; Graaff-Reinet: Capital of the Midlands and Gem of the Karroo (Issued by the Celebrations Committee to Commemorate the 150th Anniversary of the Foundation of the Town, 1936); C.A.Els, ed., Official Guide and Picture Book of Graaff Reinet, 1953.

covered in the form of Gedenkboeke and other studies.¹ These frequently have a particular relevance as many towns such as Burgersdorp and Colesberg were founded as a result of the initiative of the church.

A few academic studies deal with short periods in the history of particular communities, or with a particular aspect of life in that community,² but the work of P.L. Scholtz,³ is one of the few examples of an academic study embracing the history of a Cape district over a long period. A recent doctoral thesis by C.G. Henning, A Cultural History of Graaff Reinet (1786-1886), undertaken in the Department of Music of the University of Pretoria in 1971, contains a wealth of lesser detail concerning the personalities and events of Graaff-Reinet, particularly with reference to the period after 1852. Besides including interesting selections of poetry by local men and women, lists of concerts and public entertainments, and a discussion on domestic architecture, the author has been at pains to chronicle the history of individual schools, churches and other institutions.

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1. H.D. Longland, Die Geskiedenis van die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Gemeente Colesberg, 1825-1875; A.P.Smit, Gedenkboek van die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Gemeente Beaufort-Wes (1820-1945); J.A.S.Oberholster, Die Gemeente Alexandria; 'n Eufeefes-Gedenkboek 1854-1954; J.A.S.Oberholster, Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk Burgersdorp; Eufeefes-Gedenkboek 1846-1946.
 2. P.M.H.Calitz, Die Stigting en Vroeë Geskiedenis van die Distrik Uitenhage (1804-1814); P.J.Lombard, Die Stigting en Vroeë Geskiedenis van Queenstown (1853-1859); K.S.Hunt, The Development of Municipal Government in the Eastern Province of the Cape of Good Hope with Special Reference to Grahamstown, 1827-1862.
 3. P.L.Scholtz, Die Historiese Ontwikkeling van die Oude Olifantsrivier, 1660-1902 ('n Geskiedenis van die Distrik Vanrhynsdorp).
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The early history of the Graaff-Reinet district is well documented in travellers' accounts, and in many general and specific works. Special mention must be made of the works of Professor P.J. van der Merwe,¹ the starting point for any study of frontier society. In the study of unrest on the frontier, Professor J.S. Marais's book, Maynier and the First Boer Republic has been invaluable. The existence of such works as these has permitted a good deal of selectivity in dealing with the extensive collection of material in the Government Archives in Cape Town.

The period after the Great Trek has not been ploughed to the same extent, and it was consequently with regard to this later period that the bulk of the original research was undertaken. The most valuable source for this period was the local contemporary newspaper. Graaff-Reinet was fortunate in having two very good newspapers in the Graaff Reinet Herald (1852-1884) and Graaff-Reinet Advertiser (from 1860 to date). Dutch newspapers of significance appeared at the same time as the Afrikaner farming community emerged from a state of political apathy, De Graaff Reinetter commencing publication in 1881,² and Onze Courant in 1892. These papers provide an excellent opportunity to observe the Graaff-Reinet community in action, and are an indispensable

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1. Die Noordwaartse Beweging van die Boere voor die Groot Trek (1770-1842); Die Trekboer in die Geskiedenis van die Kaapkolonie (1657-1842); Trek; Studies oor die Mobiliteit van die Pioniersbevolking aan die Kaap; Die Kafferoorlog van 1793.
 2. Unfortunately it was not possible to locate any files of this paper before 1885.

source for the study of local organisations. The records of the municipal board (established 1845) and the town council (the town was incorporated in 1880) are extant, and are lodged in the municipal offices in Graaff-Reinet. A study of these voluminous records confirmed the impression that the reporting of municipal meetings in the local press was extremely accurate, and these newspaper accounts of meetings were of more value than the bare minutes of meetings contained in the official records. Newspaper reports of municipal affairs, supplemented by the B.J. Barnard Collection,¹ an important group of documents which comprises the annexures to the minutes of municipal meetings for the period 1845-1887, provided an excellent idea of conditions and relationships in the town.

No records of the proceedings of the Divisional Council in the nineteenth century have apparently been preserved, and here again the newspaper provides ample coverage of the activities of this interesting body, the history of which has still to be written. De Graaff Reinetter and Onze Courant are likewise the only sources for the activities of the local branches of the Afrikaner Bond, and their long reports of Bond meetings give a fascinating insight into the opinions of farmers on the main topics of the day. No account of the most significant primary sources consulted would be complete without mention of the Te Water Papers,² the records of one of the most prominent Graaff-Reinet families; these papers give a good picture of electioneering and election tactics, as also does the material in the Hofmeyr Papers.³

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1. Accession 609 in the Government Archives, Cape Town.
 2. Accession 467 in the Government Archives, Cape Town.
 3. In the South African Library, Cape Town.

The Graaff-Reinet district as seen in this study comprises an area which at different times in the period 1786-1910 extended as far west as the Gamka River, in the east as far as the Great Fish River, in the north to the Orange River, and to the south as far as the sea (see Maps 1 and 3). The Graaff-Reinet district of 1798 (the first occasion on which its northern border was defined) embraced an area which in 1966 comprised well over twenty magisterial districts (see Map 5). The only practicable method of dealing with such a large area was to contract the geographical extent of the research area to conform to the changing historical boundaries of the Graaff-Reinet district.

In the writing of this history I have been constantly aware of the need to relate local events to the general situation obtaining at the Cape, in order to achieve a balance and avoid giving the impression that the events in the area took place in isolation, with no reference to the wider community of which the district is but a part. On the other hand it has to be appreciated that local interests, preoccupations and crises, did not necessarily coincide with national priorities, and that the Graaff-Reinetter's view of his world was from the back of his erf in Donkin Street, rather than from Adderley Street.

Part I of this study outlines the process of white settlement in the Graaff-Reinet area, and attempts to present a general picture of the main springs of political, social and economic life in the district. Part II analyses the most significant areas of contact between different groups in the town and district. Most

of the history of the Graaff-Reinet district is concerned with the relationships between individuals, groups, peoples and governments, and the emphasis throughout this study falls on these relationships. In the period 1786-1910, there were in reality two separate societies, and 1837 is a convenient date for dividing the frontier from the midland society, as it marked the beginning of the changes that were to transform society. The year 1837 saw the creation of the Colesberg district to the north of Graaff-Reinet, which meant that Graaff-Reinet was no longer a frontier district in the sense that its borders were no longer contiguous with the boundaries of the Cape colony. The departure of a number of Graaff-Reinettters on the Great Trek, and the accession of new farming elements to replace them, also makes the late 1830's a breaking point of some significance. On the economic front these new population elements, in the impetus they gave to the development of wool farming, helped to break down the old subsistence economy of Graaff-Reinet. The growth of the wool industry brought a new breed of men to the town of Graaff-Reinet. Other changes too were soon to transform the old frontier society of Graaff-Reinet, and municipal government came to the town in 1845, to be followed by representative government in 1854, and the creation of Divisional Councils in 1855. The appearance of the first local newspaper in 1851 is indicative of Graaff-Reinet's transformation into a midland society.

The study of group relationships in the "midland" period is at the same time a study of group relationships in the "representative" period of Graaff-Reinet history.

In the frontier society the accent is on relationships between the whites on the one hand, and the Hottentots, Bushmen and Xhosa on the other. The stresses and strains of these relationships reacted upon relationships among the frontiersmen themselves, and after 1786, upon relations between the frontiersmen and those in authority. A significant aspect of this frontier period was the attempts to bring government and regularity to the frontier, and the reaction of the frontiersmen to these attempts. In the midland period the pressure came not so much from a remote government in which the colonists had no representation, but from the introduction into their midst of new population elements, and the relationships partly revolved around the question of who had the right to speak for Graaff-Reinet in a representative system of government.

For their general supervision of the research, I gratefully acknowledge a considerable debt to Professors W.A. Maxwell and T.R.H. Davenport. I should like to express my thanks to Professor D. Hobart Houghton, then Director of the Institute of Social and Economic Research of Rhodes University, for the opportunity of engaging in full-time research for this study during my tenure of a fellowship at the Institute from 1969 to 1971, and to the staff of the Institute for their assistance during this time. My thanks are due to the Human Sciences Research Council for their financial assistance which facilitated the research. Many people have added their own special contribution to this study, and among those from whose help and advice I have profited are Mr J.P. Vanstone, of John Abbott College, Quebec, Canada,

Mrs N.C. Charton of Rhodes University, Mr J.M. Berning of the Cory Library for Historical Research, Rhodes University, and Miss M.A. Eva of Jeppe High School for Boys, Johannesburg. Of the numerous Graaff-Reinnetters who have afforded me assistance, particular mention must be made of Miss J. Kingwill, Mr A.A. McNaughton, Mrs A. Luscombe and Col. W.L. Kingwill. This short tribute would be incomplete without an acknowledgement to my wife, in whose care the making of the maps was left.

PART I

A. THE FRONTIER SOCIETY

In the course of the eighteenth century Boer stock farmers moved steadily away from Cape Town and Stellenbosch, the only two centres of civilization at the Cape. The government followed its subjects but slowly, and it was only in the forties of the eighteenth century that the new district of Swellendam was created. The Dutch East India authorities in Cape Town laid down borders beyond which the Boers were forbidden to proceed, but game and fresh land across these borders lured the farmers onward. The Company lacked the means of enforcing its frontiers, and its attempts to confine the wanderings of the pastoralists failed as the Boers continued to ignore successive limits laid down by Cape Town. Until the 1770's it was only geographical factors that limited expansion, and the Hottentots with whom the Boers came into contact either withdrew before the advance of the whites, or entered into an early dependence.

In the 1770's expansion came to a halt when the Boers met the Bushmen in the north and the Xhosa in the east. War was the normal state of relations with the Bushmen, and the government appointed unpaid local military officials from among the ranks of the Boers, supplied powder and lead, but made little further attempt to either protect or control its subjects. In the east, relations with the Xhosa were more amicable, but competition for game and grazing, and fear of possible irregularities in cattle trading, caused the

government to initiate a policy of non-intercourse. It failed as both races derived advantage from contact. On occasion friction erupted into limited hostilities.

The stresses and strains of almost continuous commando duty in the north led to many personal disputes and a growing refusal to serve on commandos. Local officials became involved in party strife and failed to command respect or obedience. At the same time there was an ever-present danger that the colonists, who, although they wanted to trade with the Xhosa and employ them, objected to their presence with stock or for purposes of hunting, would take matters into their own hands in an attempt to expel them. In the face of growing disorder on the frontier and frequent petitions for a magistrate and a minister, in 1786 the drostdy of Graaff-Reinet was established.

The first twenty years of its existence were stormy ones for Graaff-Reinet. The decline of the Company followed by the first British occupation in 1795, the Batavian Republic in 1803, and then in 1806 the second British occupation made for political uncertainty everywhere in the Cape. These stresses reacted on Graaff-Reinet, but provided the framework rather than the centrepiece of action within the great frontier zone.

The appointment of a landdrost by the Company failed to secure order, and the frontiersmen, who had hitherto acted with little reference to authority, resisted the landdrost in his attempts to carry out the policy of the Company. Where the frontiersmen wanted the support of the government in driving the Xhosa out of the colony, the government failed to lend its support.

Where the frontiersmen wished to be left alone to work out relationships with their Hottentot servants, the government would not leave them alone. The Company, in the last stages of decline, had not the means of acting with firmness; Cape Town in addition faced a political agitation in the form of the Patriot movement, and could give the landdrost no support. There was not a great deal of community of interests between the Patriots of the western Cape and the frontiersmen of Graaff-Reinet, but the central idea of the movement, that an unpopular government could and should be opposed, penetrated to Graaff-Reinet, where it gave form to the dissatisfaction. The expulsion of their unpopular landdrost, Maynier, in 1795, was the first of a series of rebellious acts that was to keep the district in an almost continual state of turmoil. These rebellions were played out against the background of an insecure and tense frontier, which erupted into open hostilities in 1793, 1799 and 1801. The situation was made worse in 1799 by the Hottentots joining the Xhosa in depredations. The attitude of the Hottentots gave some force to the view that relations between them and the Boers should come under the closer scrutiny of the government. Thus while there were three different administrations at Cape Town in the period 1795-1806, there were no marked differences in their policies towards the Hottentots, and the protection which Maynier attempted to give the Hottentots in his courts was extended to the regulation of labour contracts.

The struggle against the Bushmen entered a new phase at the end of the eighteenth century as more or less friendly relations were established with them.

Although a northern boundary was defined in an attempt to separate the two races, it failed. It was only the physical impossibility of advancing in the face of the hostile Bushmen that had restricted the Boers; now that the Bushmen were no longer a menace, the advance of the Boers, checked in the 1770's, continued northwards.

The shifting of the centre of tension from the northern to the southern and eastern parts of the district highlighted the inconvenience of the situation of the drostdy, and in 1804 the creation of the new district of Uitenhage cut Graaff-Reinet off from what had become its most troublesome area. But the Graaff-Reinet district continued to be affected by developments on the eastern frontier until the establishment of the Somerset district in 1825 isolated Graaff-Reinet from the direct impact of events on the eastern frontier.

In the north, where the Bushmen no longer barred the way, the British authorities, like the Dutch East India Company, found it impossible to maintain their borders. In 1824 the boundaries were extended, but the movement of Boers continued into Transorangia. This movement was largely the result of recurring droughts and the visitations of locusts and trekbokke, as also the insatiable need of an ever-increasing population for more land. Even where land was available in the colony, it was to be had under less favourable circumstances than under the loan farm system which was replaced in 1813 by the quitrent system. Owing to administrative inefficiency, there was considerable delay in the issuing of land titles, even where applicants had complied with all the regulations. The trekboers who settled in Transorangia must be distinguished from

the Voortrekkers who left the colony with the express intention of escaping British authority.

Of interest in the period 1806-1836, and closely connected with the dissatisfaction which gave rise to the Great Trek, were the attempts of Cape Town to bring the frontier under government control, and the reactions of the Boers to such control. The conflict between the ideas of the government and the habits of thought which the frontiersmen had developed during the generations in which they had been largely isolated from the governing bodies in Cape Town was most marked with regard to labour relations. Ordinance 50 of 1828 gave greater freedom to the Hottentots, while the emancipation of slaves from December 1834 meant that the Boers had less control over their labour than at any preceding time in the history of the colony.

The establishment of Colesberg as a separate district in 1837 meant that Graaff-Reinet was no longer a frontier district. Other developments roughly coincided with this event to make 1837 a convenient breaking point between the frontier and midland societies.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION : EXPANSION OF THE COLONY AND THE
ESTABLISHMENT OF GRAAFF-REINET, 1700-1786(i) Development of Stock Farming and Dispersal into
the Interior

One of the main problems facing the settlement at the Cape when Simon van der Stel arrived there in 1679 was that it did not produce sufficient wheat for its own needs. When his son Wilhem Adriaen succeeded him as Governor in 1699, the production problem had been solved and difficulty was being experienced in finding an export market for the surplus grain production of the Cape. While the elder Van der Stel opposed the development of livestock farming as a separate activity, fearing that it would lead to the neglect of agriculture, the younger Van der Stel encouraged livestock farming. Stock farming had always been an attractive sideline for the agriculturists, and prior to 1716 almost all the official opgaaf returns testify to mixed farming. After this date the number of colonists farming purely with stock increased rapidly from 15 in 1720 to 122 by 1735.¹

This development was partly the result of the unsatisfactory conditions obtaining in the agricultural sphere. While the Company was experiencing difficulties in securing outlets for Cape wheat and wine, the

1. A.J.H. van der Walt, J.A. Wiid, A.L. Geyer, eds, Geskiedenis van Suid-Afrika, (revised by D.W.Kruger), p.89.

latter being of a very indifferent quality, the colonists felt that the low prices paid by the Company for their produce were a poor return for their efforts. By the end of the seventeenth century there were few possibilities for the further development of agriculture, but the number of colonists was increasing rapidly. The number of adult male free burghers at the end of 1706 was 513; after 1707 free passages to the Cape were no longer granted, but the natural increase of the population was large, and by 1773 there were 2 300 adult male colonists.¹ Agriculture required relatively large outlays of capital and labour which impecunious young men could not afford. Cheaper land further away from the capital, even if suitable for cultivation, was uneconomic, in view of the prices received for produce. In 1717 C. van Beaumont stated that those "farthest away can hardly transport their corn and wine hither owing to the mountains and bad roads to be traversed. They have to spend 8 days and more on the journey there and back, during which (including the wear and tear on the wagons and cattle) they spend almost as much as they can make from their produce".²

From 1713 there was a high death rate among sheep. The number of sheep decreased almost by half between 1713 and 1718, which caused the Company to pay high

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1. C. Beyers, Die Kaapse Patriotte Gedurende die Laaste Kwart van die Agtiende Eeu en die Voortlewing van hul Denkbeelde; Bylae H of this work contains opgaaf figures for the period 1701-1793.
 2. The Reports of Chavonnes and his Council, and of Van Imhoff, on the Cape, p.100.

prices for meat, and made pastoral farming even more attractive. For a young man without means to begin a small herd was fairly easy: it was customary for a father to earmark a number of animals for a baby son. One could also work for a spell for another farmer in return for half the increase of his herd. Settlement on the frontiers, where there was an abundance of game, enabled herds to be conserved, while it also provided an opportunity for indulging in the illegal cattle trade with Hottentots, and later, with Xhosa.

Land, the other prerequisite for securing an independent existence as a farmer, was plentiful and cheap. From 1703 grazing licences were issued to the Boers to graze stock beyond the borders of the colony. The actual choice of grazing site was left to the farmers themselves and the licence contained only a vague indication of the locality of the grazing land. These licences, which were first issued for a period of three months, later six months, and finally a year, developed into the loan farm system, almost the only form of tenure among the livestock farmers.¹ From 1714 these licences cost one rix-dollar per month (or twelve rix-dollars a year), raised in 1732 to twenty-four rix-dollars a year.

Under the loan farm system, a man simply chose a farm, or a number of farms, for he was not limited to

1. In 1732 a system of fifteen year quitrent leases (erfpacht) was introduced; in 1743 Van Imhoff, convinced that the failure to develop farms was due to farmers feeling insecure on their loan farms, made provision for sixty morgen of land around the homestead to be converted into freehold; few farmers, however, availed themselves of the opportunity.

one, and applied to the Company for a licence or a permit, which was seldom refused. There was no systematic alienation of land, and as the farmers dispersed into the interior, less usable ground was left unoccupied and more distant land with superior water resources occupied. It was only in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, when Boer expansion was halted to the north and east, that the irregularly occupied land began filling up. With the homestead as the focal point of the farm, it became customary to regard an hour's walk, at the rate of a 100 yards a minute, as sufficient distance between farmhouses. This circular farm of 2 945 morgen gave the Boer certainty about his grazing rights in times and places where surveyors were almost unknown, but it remained an abstraction, and the circle was not beacons off or strictly respected when it came to grazing. One of the advantages of settlement on the moving frontier was that there was an abundance of unoccupied land beyond the confines of the loan farm which could be used for grazing.

While the Company did not legally surrender its right to take back a loan farm, this was so seldom done that the Boers came to accept that the farms were their own, until they decided to leave; even the failure to pay recognition fees did not result in the revocation of a permit. In theory, a farmer could only sell the improvements on a farm if he vacated it, but in practice the amount another colonist was willing to pay him depended on the nature of the ground and its water supplies, and farms were sold even where there were no buildings. This was possible because the Company did not refuse a permit to a man who had bought the "improvements",

which as far as the buildings were concerned were primitive.¹

People such as Governor General Van Imhoff thought that the lack of improvements made by Boers was due to the insecurity of the loan farm system, but it does not appear as if the Boers themselves felt any such insecurity. The self-built houses remained poor even in areas where suitable wood for beams was available, as it was largely the frequent trekking of the Boers, including seasonal treks from the mountainous areas to the low-lying and warmer Karroo, which militated against the building of substantial homes. On the fringes of the expansion movement, the only dwellings were often straw huts. Hendrik Swellengrebel's description of a house in Camdebo in 1776, illustrates living conditions in the interior:

Though they live here at most 4 or 5 stages (schoften) from the forests, and thus could build good houses, their dwellings here consist of a wall of clay raised to a height of 3 or 4 feet, above which is a roof of reeds. There are no divisions into rooms; no chimney, so that the smoke goes out through a hole in the wall or roof; a door of reeds is tied with a rope and there is a square hole for a window; the bedsteads are separated from each other by a Hottentot's mat so that the sleeping arrangements are pretty sociable; the floor is of clay mixed with dung. On this everything stands in confusion together; butter churn, freshly slaughtered cattle, bread etc.; while amongst them a menagerie of hens, ducks and little pigs runs around; and the doves actually nest in the roof. The furniture is appropriately a small table, or lacking that, a wooden box,

1. See P.J. van der Merwe, Die Trekboer in die Geskiedenis van die Kaapkolonie (1657-1842), for an analysis of the development of the loan farm system.

and 3 or 4 campstools whose seats are of hide. These barns that are scarcely 40 ft long and 15 ft broad, held on some farms two or even three families and their children. Thus cleanliness was not considerable.¹

Life in the interior was extremely uniform: venison, lamb and milk were the chief items of diet, supplemented irregularly by bread and vegetables, where it was possible to cultivate these. Education was mainly in the hands of itinerant teachers hired for a few months, men who frequently fell short in morals and education.² The church lagged far behind, and it was only after the intervention of Van Imhoff in 1743, that churches were established at Roodezand (present day Tulbagh) and Swartland. For many years, these were the closest churches to the trekboers in the interior. Livestock was the main export of the interior, and Company butchers travelled through the outlying districts purchasing cattle and sheep, and issuing bills which could be redeemed in Cape Town. Highlights in the lives of the stock farmers were occasional treks to Cape Town, to pay their recognition fees, to marry, to baptise children, to obtain provisions, to redeem their bills. On such occasions the Boers took cattle with them to sell in Cape Town, and commodities such as butter and soap.³ These last two had a higher value for weight than grain, but the wagon

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1. Quoted by V.S. Forbes, Pioneer Travellers of South Africa, p.68.
 2. For the pattern of life in the interior, see P.J. van der Merwe, Trek; Studies oor die Mobiliteit van die Pioniersbevolking aan die Kaap.
 3. S.D. Neumark, Economic Influences on the South African Frontier 1652-1836, contains details of the various commodities traded by the Boers in the interior.

was an expensive item. In 1743 Van Imhoff said that "an ordinary farmer's wagon, ... is so badly made that it often falls to pieces under the first load from the country, and ..., if well made, is practically worn out after the second or third trip from the distant places".¹ As no more than 1 000 lbs of butter and 400 to 500 lbs of soap could be loaded on to a wagon, and as the return journey from the Camdebo or the Sneeuwberge required two months with twenty oxen, there was very little profit after the upkeep of the wagon had been taken into account.² These journeys to Cape Town were infrequent, and judging from the number of annual loan farm recognition fee payments and renewals made by friends and relatives of the holders,³ many Boers did not make an annual visit to the capital.

As the stock farmers moved further away from the more settled portions of the Cape, their routes into the interior were determined by geographical factors. There were two main streams of expansion, one going northwards and the other proceeding in an easterly direction. The colonists in both directions remained between the coast and the mountains which ran roughly parallel to the coast until shortly before 1730, when those in the north came up against a barren wilderness, and further progress eastwards was hampered by thick forests in the vicinity of the Great Brak River. Along the whole line of expansion farmers began crossing the moun-

1. The Reports of Chavonnes, pp.136-137.

2. Forbes, p.68 (translation of part of Swellengrebel's account).

3. R.L.R., vols 1-37, Oude Wildschutte Boeke.

tains, the northern stream entering the Cold and Warm Bokkeveld, and those in the east crossing the Langeberge and spreading out into the Little Karroo. This trek over the mountains did not become general until the 1740's, and by 1743, of some 400 loan farms in the colony, no more than twenty had been taken out over the mountains.

The stream of expansion in the east was momentarily checked in the Little Karroo, but by the fifties this trek was continuing apace, and in 1765 it was at the Gamtoos River. In the next few years Boers crossed the Gamtoos and moved into the area between the Sundays and Bushmans Rivers. In the 1740's the expansion movement in the north also turned east and, having crossed the Great Karroo, Boers established themselves along the Roggeveld and in 1760 along the Nieuweveld, both of which mountain ranges bordered the Great Karroo on the north. Further north, as far as the Sak and Klein Riet Rivers, the country was used only for periodic grazing; its barren nature and uncertain rainfall rendered it unattractive for permanent settlement, which was confined to a small area along the mountains where there was permanent water. From the Nieuweveld, expansion eastward continued until the Sneeuwberge were occupied in 1770, after a few colonists had entered the Camdebo in 1768. The only inviting route northwards lay beyond the Sneeuwberge, but for the moment Bushmen prevented expansion in this direction. From the Sneeuwberge the colonists spread out in a south-easterly direction, and when some of them entered the area between the Sundays and Bushmans Rivers, they met the vanguard of the other main stream of expansion.¹

1. Van der Walt, Wiid and Geyer, Chapter V; P.J. van der Merwe, Die Noordwaartse Beweging van die Boere voor die Groot Trek (1770-1842), pp.1-7.

The Company attempted to limit this expansion by the establishment in 1743 of what was to become the drostdy of Swellendam, with the Brak River as its eastern limit. The Boers however ignored this border and the government lacked both the will and the means of enforcing its proclamation or securing the return of those beyond the border. Cape Town paid little attention to this dispersal of the farmers, but it is doubtful whether any effective steps could have been taken to check the movement. The situation was much the same on the American frontier, and when attempts were envisaged to stop the "irregulated advance of the frontier", it was pointed out that people would occupy the land even if land grants were withheld: "You cannot station garrisons in every part of these deserts. If you drive the people from one place, they will carry on their annual tillage and remove with their flocks and herds to another".¹

The Boers paid scant attention to the Company's boundary proclamations, while the Hottentots in the interior either withdrew as the Boers advanced or entered into an early dependence, and became the main labour source of the colonists.² There were no serious obstacles to the dispersal of the trekboers until they came into contact with the Bushmen and Xhosa. The clash with the Bushmen and the Xhosa stopped Boer expansion, caused a crisis in frontier society, and had a disastrous effect upon relations among the Boers themselves.

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1. Quoted by F.J. Turner, Frontier and Section; Selected Essays of Frederick Jackson Turner, pp.58-59.
 2. Farm labour is discussed in detail in Chapter 10.

These early white-black contacts brought new problems for both the Boers and the government, and threw into sharp relief the disadvantages of a society in which the institutions of civilization had lagged far behind the dispersal of the Boers. For the Boers in the north and north-east, Roodezand was their closest church, Stellenbosch the nearest drostdy. For those in the south, Swellendam was the nearest centre of civilization. As on the Kentucky frontier, life on the Cape frontier gave a man personal freedom from the restrictions of the old way of life, an indifference to social conventions and an atmosphere in which he tended to know his rights better than his legal obligations to a remote government. The frontiersman was competent in matters which counted, and ability in hunting and fighting were the means by which a man was judged. This emphasis on physical abilities, together with the lack of educational facilities, the difficulty of access to churches and the tendency for adventurers of every description to make for the frontier, led the frontiersmen to evolve their own pattern of life and conduct.¹ MacCrone's oft-quoted analysis has provided a prototype:

In a frontier society, relatively isolated and therefore free, to a large extent, from external authority, there is a strong tendency towards the development of individualism. Where all are equal and every one as good as his neighbour, the individual becomes unwilling to defer to any kind of authority. Such authority, in fact, comes to be regarded as a² tyranny and its representatives as oppressors.

1. A.K. Moore, The Frontier Mind, particularly pp.38-39, 80-83, 238-240; I.D. MacCrone, Race Attitudes in South Africa, pp.98-101, 114-118.

2. MacCrone, p.108.

What was true of the Graaff-Reinet area in the 1780's was true of Swellendam many years earlier. P.J. Venter for instance quotes MacCrone to illustrate the difficulties of the landdrost and heemraden of Swellendam after 1745.¹

Factious and lacking respect for authority, knowing little and caring less for anything outside their own isolated community, ignorant of the world, and impressionable to the rumours and designs of the ill-disposed, the inhabitants of what was to become the Graaff-Reinet district in 1786 were typical of any frontier society. Their qualities did not make it easy to govern them, but it was here particularly that good government was required. These characteristics of frontier society came prominently to the fore as a result of Boer contact with the blacks in the interior.

(ii) The Northern Frontier

As the stock farmers moved away from the more closely settled areas of the colony, the Bushmen became more troublesome, although conflict was sporadic. Until 1715 the government, who recognised an obligation to control and protect its subjects, erected military posts and sent out punitive expeditions of Company soldiers and burghers. In 1715 the first commando composed entirely of colonists took the field,² and the government thereafter tended to lose control over the actions of the colonists on the fringes of expansion.

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1. P.J. Venter, Landdros en Heemrade (1682-1827), p.22.
 2. P.E. Roux, Die Verdedigingstelsel aan die Kaap onder die Hollands-Oostindiese Kompanjie (1652-1795), pp.139-148.

When the Boers occupied the mountain ranges to the north of the Karroo, they came into contact with large numbers of Bushmen. It did not occur to the Boers that people who had no livestock and who did not cultivate the ground could have a strong attachment to their hunting grounds. No sooner had the Boers occupied the springs and fountains of the Bushmen in the Sneeuwberge, driving away and killing the game on which the Bushmen depended for their livelihood, depriving them of the sources of their veldkos, than their livestock became prey to these small warriors. Although the entire northern frontier was unsafe, nowhere was the conflict as bitter and intense as in the Sneeuwberge and Nieuweveldsberge. Small bands lurking in the hills, suddenly emerged to pounce on animals; stock which they could not take with them, or which could not follow quickly enough, were often stabbed or hamstrung. This apparent wanton maiming of livestock infuriated the Boers, and led them to regard the Bushmen as animals, to be shot as vermin wherever they could be found. The Bushmen, for their part, had reason to be vengeful when Boer commandos carried off women and children to be distributed among the colonists as apprentices. Such captives were extremely welcome to the Boers, as servants on the northern frontier were scarce. Commandos were no longer merely punitive. As Professor P.J. van der Merwe has pointed out, a bloody guerilla

war was being waged; it was not a matter of simply pursuing stolen livestock and punishing offenders.¹

In 1774 the Company decided to act against the Bushmen along the entire northern frontier, and Godlieb Rudolph Opperman was appointed field commandant over the thirteen field corporals on the frontier. A combined force of Boers, Coloureds and Hottentots was divided into three commandos, and in the course of operations in the second half of 1774, 503 Bushmen were killed and 241 were taken prisoner.² The commando however failed in its objective, and Bushman resistance hardened. Apart from supplying powder and lead, the Company gave the frontiersmen no material support, and the appeal for outside help went unheeded. The authorities agreed that all those who resided in other areas but who owned farms or grazed cattle on the frontier should help, but no other aid could be expected for it was "too burdensome for the burgers not interested therein".³

Although the Boers needed the authority of the Company in order to call out men from other areas to their aid, smaller commandos operated without the government's knowledge. While the Company gave no protection to the colonists, it also failed to control

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1. Van der Merwe, Noordwaartse Beweging, pp.36-37. This work contains a detailed analysis of events on the Bushman frontier; see also J.S. Marais, The Cape Coloured People 1652-1937, pp.15-19; A. Sparrman, A Voyage to the Cape of Good Hope towards the Antarctic Polar Circle, and Round the World; but Chiefly into the Country of the Hottentots and Caffres from the Year 1772 to 1776, II, pp.141-143; E.C. Godée Molsbergen, Reizen in Zuid-Afrika in de Hollandse Tijd, II, pp.75-76.
 2. Moodie III, pp.22-32, 35-40.
 3. Moodie III, pp.51-52, 55-57.
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their actions. Field sergeants were required to send periodic reports to the commandant, who in turn reported to the landdrost of Stellenbosch. The latter, situated in the south-western corner of the immense district had no means of checking the veracity of the reports received, nor of obtaining a true picture of the situation on the northern frontier. The instructions of the landdrost and the militia officers of Stellenbosch in March 1776 that no further commandos should go out except with the "express authority" of the commandant illustrates their official ignorance of the realities of the situation, for as Opperman pointed out, if the field corporals had to wait three weeks before obtaining his approval for a commando, there would be no chance of retaking the livestock before they were consumed.¹ Surprise, not legality, was the essence of guerilla warfare.

The strain and tension on the frontier was considerable, and it was difficult for the colonists to retain a sense of perspective. Adriaan van Jaarsveld thus complained that commandos were hardly worthwhile when three consecutive commandos could account for only twenty-three Bushmen. The success of a commando was measured by the number of Bushmen killed, and after one such commando had killed 45 Bushmen and taken 36 prisoners after robberies totalling 97 sheep and 75 head of cattle, the Stellenbosch officials admonished the officers on the frontier to "act with somewhat greater moderation, be less vindictive, and as much as possible avoid the shedding of so much human blood". While the authorities were always willing to investigate and punish instances of inhumane treatment, they were too

1. Moodie III, pp.30, 52-53, 57.

remote from the frontier to exercise any effective supervision. The Council of Policy's injunctions that "the inhabitants do not go further than is absolutely necessary to check their {the Bushmen's} insolence", and that the wounded, prisoners, women and children should not be ill-treated,¹ was no more than the expression of a good intention.

The distance of the authorities also had an adverse effect on the number of men who obeyed the call to turn out for commando duty. There was some confusion in informing the Swellendam landdrost about boundary changes, and this official refused to give passports (attestations) to those Swellendamers in Agterbruinjieshoogte who were part of the Stellenbosch district. Most of these Swellendamers had no objection to becoming Stellenbosch subjects and serving on the commandos against the Bushmen, but a few men preferred to be under Swellendam since this enabled them to escape the annual exercise and review.² When vague rumours concerning commandant Opperman were circulated, the landdrost and the militia officers at Stellenbosch were sufficiently in touch with the situation on the frontier to appreciate that such reports "chiefly arose from such ill-disposed inhabitants, as finding themselves, by the change of boundaries, included in the general case (saak) with the Bushmen, would gladly be protected from their robberies and murders, without taking any share in the support of their fellow men".³ Hendrik Krugel was reported to be obtaining signatures for a memorial requesting that these Swellendamers be

1. Moodie III, pp.52-54, 58-59, 70-71.
 2. Moodie III, pp.48-49.
 3. Moodie III, p.59.

allowed to remain under that district, and in his capacity of field sergeant he forbade them to do commando service. When Opperman challenged Krugel's stand, the latter informed him that he would not obey his orders to go on commando unless the commandant was armed with the authority of the Swellendam landdrost.¹

In June 1777 the government decided to send out stronger commandos because it seemed as if the Bushmen were gaining the upper hand in the Sneeuwberge.² In March 1776 Adriaan van Jaarsveld mentioned five persons who had abandoned their farms in the Sneeuwberge, but who had been persuaded by the remonstrances of others not to weaken the district by leaving it altogether. However, it was impossible to stem the tide, and by May 1776 Van Jaarsveld himself had also fled. Boers were moving into Agterbruintjieshoogte, where the Bushmen had not yet made their presence felt. As the Sneeuwberge were weakened, Camdebo became more exposed to Bushman attacks. The reports reaching Stellenbosch from the frontier painted a desolate picture of colonists struggling to exist on the little livestock which had not yet been plundered. It was impossible to raise a general commando while every field corporal had his hands full resisting the Bushmen in his own area. Bushmen marauders were everywhere and no one could give any attention to supporting others while he himself needed help.³

1. Moodie III, pp.58n., 66-67, 67n., 68n., 69n.

2. Moodie III, pp.69-71.

3. For the situation on the Bushman frontier in 1776 and early 1777, see the reports contained in Moodie III, pp.51-70.

In March 1778 some thirty-three inhabitants of the Camdebo, among whom was Adriaan van Jaarsveld, petitioned the government for a clergyman and a landdrost.¹ Governor Van Plettenberg visited the frontier later in 1778, and having seen for himself some of the disadvantages of the remoteness of the frontier from Stellenbosch, decided to recommend the establishment of a drostdy and a church there.² During his visit to the northern frontier, the Governor erected a beacon near present day Colesberg. Theal states that the aim of this was "to mark the farthest point reached and the north-eastern limit of the colony",³ but it seems likely that if Van Plettenberg had intended establishing a northern boundary he would have taken care to establish a line rather than a point. One result of the Governor's visit was the decision by the Governor and Council of Policy to take stronger action "for the extirpation of the said rapacious tribes", and a plan was evolved for keeping continuous commandos in the field, so that the Bushmen could be, "if possible, entirely destroyed".⁴

The field sergeants were instructed to order out the inhabitants of Agterbruintjieshoogte, even those who had not yet been registered in the Stellenbosch district. But the government had so far lost control on the frontier that its representatives were powerless in the face of the growing refusal to serve on commandos.

1. Moodie III, pp.74-75.

2. Moodie III, pp.78-79.

3. G.M. Theal, History of South Africa, 4, p.171; see also Molsbergen II, p.78.

4. Moodie III, pp.79-80.

More excuses than men were forthcoming, while others simply "staid away without offering the slightest excuse". This had a demoralising effect on those who obeyed the call, and it was feared they would also refuse to serve in future if this disobedience continued unpunished. Many of the Boers were very mobile and, when they learnt that a commando was to take the field against the Bushmen, they simply removed themselves to the Swellendam district, returning again later, with the excuse that they had been forced to flee from the Xhosa. By the end of 1779 the authorised commandos had not gone out, and this was "chiefly attributable to disunion, dissensions, and self-willed conduct, as well on the part of the Field Sergeants as of these Corporals and Burgers".¹

Firm control on the frontier was long overdue, but the Dutch East India Company authorities in the Netherlands were slow to react to Cape Town's request for the establishment of a drostdy on the frontier. Until the 1790's the situation on the northern frontier remained the most serious of the Company's frontier problems, but in the 1770's a new problem of greater long term significance arose as a result of contact between the Boers and the Xhosa on the eastern frontier.

(iii) The Eastern Frontier

Contacts of one kind and another had been taking place between whites and Xhosa since 1702, when forty-five colonists from Stellenbosch, accompanied by a number of Hottentots, had ventured eastwards and become involved in a skirmish with Xhosa near present day

1. Moodie III, pp.79-80, 83-85, 85n., 88-89, 92, 102.

Somerset East.¹ At the same time as the Boers were expanding eastwards, the Xhosa were moving down the coast in the opposite direction. Beutler in 1752 noted a scarcity of game between the Keiskama and Kei Rivers, the result of Xhosa hunting,² and this seemed to foreshadow a further westward movement of a people who did not like to kill their cattle for food. By the 1770's small groups of Gunukwebe and other mixed Hottentot-Xhosa groups were as far west as the Gamtoos River.³

The rapid expansion of the Boers necessitated the establishment by the Company of a new eastern boundary to the colony and also a closer demarcation of the respective jurisdictions of the landdrosts of Stellenbosch and Swellendam. After receiving the report of a commission sent to investigate the boundaries, the Company in 1770 decided to establish the Swartberge as the line of division between the Stellenbosch and Swellendam districts, with Stellenbosch north of this range and Swellendam south of it. Responsibility for the maintenance of the eastern frontier of the colony would thus be shared. In fixing the eastern boundary the Company was motivated by a desire to prevent cattle bartering between the colonists and the Xhosa. In the Stellenbosch district settlement would be permitted

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1. M.Wilson and L.Thompson, eds, The Oxford History of South Africa, I, p.234.
 2. Molsbergen III, p.306.
 3. F.Masson, Mr Masson's Botanical Travels, p.296; W.Paterson, A Narrative of Four Journeys into the Country of the Hottentots, and Caffraria in the Years 1777, 1778, 1779, p.85; C.P. Thunberg, Travels in Europe, Africa, and Asia made between the Years 1770 and 1779, I, p.203; Sparrman II, pp.6-7, 27-28, 310, 315, 318.

as far east as Bruintjieshoogte, as the Company was satisfied that the colonists within these bounds would have little chance of indulging in the forbidden cattle trade.¹ In the Swellendam district the boundary commission had discovered a "beaten wagon road" leading eastwards into Xhosa territory, and also evidence that the colonists were grazing their cattle beyond the Gamtoos River. In an attempt to prevent contact between Xhosa and Boer, the Gamtoos River was proclaimed as the eastern border of the Swellendam district. Although much was made of the fact that those who wandered about with their herds beyond the borders were depriving the Company of recognition fees,² the real reason for attempting to limit expansion was a desire to limit the Company's responsibility and the expense which the assumption of new responsibilities would involve, particularly should any friction develop between the Boers and the Xhosa as a result of bartering activities.

Little notice was taken of these borders, and by 1774 a number of colonists from the Swellendam district were settled along the Sundays River. Cape Town's ignorance of the geography of the interior hampered attempts to maintain the border. Gert Scheepers, for example, whose farm was on the present site of Uitenhage, resorted to the subterfuge of reaching the Swartkops River by travelling south from Camdebo in the Stellenbosch district, so as not to violate the Swellendam boundary by going east of the Gamtoos.³

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1. See Map 1, p.40.
 2. Moodie III, pp.1-7.
 3. Sparrman II, p.310.

The government's ignorance of the geography of the colony is further illustrated by a complaint from several farmers that while they were refused farms around the Swartkops River, Stephanus Bekker apparently had loan titles for three farms there. Petrus de Buisson had a farm "situate beyond the Bushmans River"; he died and the farm was granted to another Boer on 5 June 1770,¹ when the Gamtoos had only just been proclaimed as the border.

The Company had no success in maintaining the eastern border of the Stellenbosch district. By 1774 a number of families who had settled in Agterbruintjieshoogte petitioned the government to allow them to remain there. It was a fertile area, with an abundance of game, which was always an important factor to both Boer and Xhosa, and it was relatively free of marauding Bushmen. It was also conveniently situated for indulging in the illegal cattle trade. In 1775 the boundary was moved to include Agterbruintjieshoogte; the eastern border of the Stellenbosch district would henceforth be the upper Fish River. At the same time the eastern frontier of the Swellendam district was moved to the Bushmans River.²

From the Company's point of view, the less contact there was between their subjects and the Xhosa, the less chance there would be of conflict; the widespread cattle bartering that soon took place in

1. Moodie III, pp.7, 17.

2. Moodie III, pp.39, 46-50.

Agterbruintjieshoogte¹ thus filled the Company with apprehension. It was not always necessary for the colonists to seek out the Xhosa, and early in 1776 Sparrman met about 100 Xhosa near Agterbruintjieshoogte, who had apparently come from the vicinity of the Koonap River to barter cattle.²

Governor van Plettenberg visited the frontier in 1778. His diarist on this journey stated that the Xhosa had until a few years previously always been a day's journey east of the upper Fish, but in the last few years they had been advancing westwards, until they had finally crossed the Fish with large herds of cattle, where they competed with the Boers for grazing; the Boers, fearing the "overmagt of overraad" of the Xhosa, abandoned their farms along the Fish River.³ The colonists also disregarded the border, and it appears that in April 1777 there were Boers to the east of the Fish River.⁴ When Van Plettenberg halted at Willem Prinsloo's farm in Agterbruintjieshoogte there were Xhosa kraals in the neighbourhood, and the Governor made verbal agreements with Koba and another minor chieftain, Godisa, to maintain the upper Fish River as the boundary between the colonists and themselves; they promised to return across the Fish as soon as they had

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1. Moodie III, pp.73-76, 76n.; although it is not specifically stated that those engaged in bartering came from Agterbruintjieshoogte, a comparison of the names of the barterers with those who signed a petition from Agterbruintjieshoogte (Moodie III, p.39) establishes the connection.
 2. Sparrman II, pp.253-264.
 3. Molsbergen IV, p.46.
 4. Moodie III, p.67.

gathered in their crops. Having made this arrangement, the Governor continued his journey southwards, and at New Year's Drift, on the Bushmans River, a minor chief-tain was told by Van Plettenberg "dat zy hun aan de overzyde van de Bosjesmansriviers bergen en dus buyten de districten van onse colonien zouden moeten houden".¹

It is uncertain from this vague indication whether or not the Governor regarded the lower Fish River as the boundary; in a Council of Policy resolution on 14 November 1780 it was stated that the Governor had "intimated" that during his journey he had made an agreement with the chiefs regarding the Fish River as the boundary, and the Council of Policy decided "de meermelde Visch-Rivier, als nu nader tot een Limiet-Scheijding tusschen onse Ingezeetenen en de Caffers te bepaalen".² There was however no question of the Boers maintaining themselves along the lower Fish River; they were in fact finding it difficult to hold their own along the Bushmans River, and in the latter part of 1779 nineteen Boers along that river abandoned their farms. Although they claimed that the Xhosa had stolen their stock and burnt their homes, their flight seems to have been partly the result of a fear as to what the Xhosa might do, rather than of actual depredations.³ The Zuurveld, the area between the lower Fish and Bushmans Rivers, was not made an effective boundary between black and white until the Xhosa were driven out of it in 1811-1812.

1. Molsbergen IV, pp.43-44, 46, 50.

2. K.M. Jeffreys, ed., Kaapse Archiefstukken, 1780, pp. 93-94; an English translation is to be found in Moodie III, p.99.

3. Moodie III, pp.89-92.

Although the Zuurveld was later to become the crisis area of the eastern frontier, it was in the region of Agterbruintjieshoogte that friction erupted into hostilities at the end of 1779. Eight or nine Xhosa were killed, and the Boers claimed to have lost 21 000 head of cattle. The immediate cause of this outbreak is uncertain, but the distant authorities in Stellenbösch, insofar as they could ascertain, believed that it had been "chiefly caused by the violence and annoyances committed against the Kafirs by inhabitants". Willem and Marthinus Prinsloo were named as the culprits.¹

Early in 1780 two commandos, one from Swellendam under Petrus Hendrik Ferreira, and the other from Stellenbosch, took the field without proper authorisation, and attacked the Xhosa, who were apparently east of the Fish River. They captured a large number of cattle which the Stellenbosch leaders divided among themselves, despite Ferreira's objection that "he had not gone to take cattle from the Kafirs, but solely to endeavour to recapture those which had been stolen".² Such incidents and actions pointed to the need for the establishment of some authority on the frontier, as did the difficulty of trying to ascertain the true causes of the hostilities between the Boers and the Xhosa from such a great distance. The need to punish those who would not serve on commandos and the difficulty of securing convictions on the word of the sergeants alone, pointed in the same direction, and led landdrost

1. Moodie III, pp.92-93 and 93n.; Van der Merwe, Die Trekboer, pp.273-277; Marthinus Prinsloo was the centre of much unrest on the frontier in later years (see pp.57-58).

2. Moodie III, pp.97-99.

De Wet of Stellenbosch to suggest the appointment of two field commandants, one in the east and the other in the north. Although he realised that the appointment of a commandant "whose property, family, and abode are in that country", would "give rise to party feelings and new embarrassments", it seemed the cheapest way of uniting the burghers, who were divided among the many field sergeants, under one command.¹

Adriaan van Jaarsveld was appointed commandant on the eastern frontier and was instructed to arrange "a general restoration" of cattle by both Boers and Xhosa. If the Xhosa refused to move east of the Fish River, they were to be forced to do so, but the commando was not to take any cattle from them, except such Boer cattle as were found among their herds. The commando took the field on 23 May 1781 and persuaded some chiefs to retire; others who refused were attacked, and the commando captured some 5 300 head of cattle, apparently a breach of the instructions issued to Van Jaarsveld. When the commando was disbanded on 19 July 1781 the cattle were divided among those who were "still deprived of theirs, according to the number conscientiously stated"; the number of cattle did not apparently cover Boer losses, so they claimed,² but as Professor J.S. Marais has pointed out, the number of cattle lost in early frontier wars exceeded the number shown in the opgaaf returns.³

1. Moodie III, pp.93-94.

2. Moodie III, pp.97, 100-101, 110-112.

3. J.S. Marais, Maynier and the First Boer Republic, pp.9-10, 42-43.

Van Jaarsveld reported that he had carried out his instructions and had cleared the land west of the Fish River of Khosa. As far as the upper Fish River was concerned, this claim appeared to have some foundation, and for a number of years after 1781 nothing more was heard of the Khosa west of the upper Fish.¹ But from the very limited nature of his operations between the Bushmans and lower Fish Rivers,² it seems most unlikely that Van Jaarsveld succeeded in driving the Khosa out of this area.

Shortly after this commando, landdrost De Wet's fears concerning the appointment of a commandant from the troubled area were realized when Van Jaarsveld became involved in a conflict with field sergeant Cornelis Botma, a number of the Prinsloos and Hendrik Kloppers. In September 1781 Botma and Marthinus Prinsloo interfered with a commando which took the field against rustlers in Agterbruintjieshoogte. When Van Jaarsveld dismissed Botma, the latter, supported by his friends, refused to accept the position. A new excuse for not going on commando against the Bushmen came to the fore when the Prinsloos refused to do duty until they had retrieved all the cattle they claimed had been stolen from them by the Khosa. As Opperman had earlier been the subject of vague accusations and rumours, so now was Van Jaarsveld accused of an unfair distribution of cattle.³ Whereas

1. Marais, Maynier, p.10.

2. Moodie III, pp.110-112.

3. This apparently refers to the cattle captured during the commando of 1781.

initially the colonists' refusal to go on commandos against the Bushmen had been the issue which had exacerbated personal feelings, now it was Van Jaarsveld's refusal to allow the inhabitants to go on commandos against the Xhosa, and his attempts at enforcing the government's policy of non-intercourse, which inflamed personal animosities. The commandant was convinced that the "rebellious band" intended provoking the Xhosa in order to regain the cattle which they insisted were still in the hands of the Xhosa.¹

(iv) The Founding of a Drostdy

The fact that Van Jaarsveld and his second in command, D.S. van der Merwe, themselves in 1783 repeated the request for a landdrost and a minister showed that the appointment of a commandant, as an attempt to fill the need for an authority of some stature in the outlying districts, had not been a success. In 1784 Van Jaarsveld again requested the appointment of a landdrost. Another petition was sent to the government in 1785, this time in connection with the Bushmen raids. Besides the difficulty in raising commandos and punishing those who disobeyed the call, a new cause for concern was that some Boers who had abandoned their farms on the northern frontier were crossing the Fish River into Xhosa territory. The Governor and Council of Policy in 1785 said that the Seventeen "did not so much refuse the request" made in 1779 for the establishment of a drostdy "as postpone its consideration". In the light of developments since 1779 the Council of Policy in

1. Marais, Maynier, pp.10-12.

1785 decided to repeat the request for the creation of a district on the frontier. The Council backed its recommendation with arguments to the effect that if the Boers left their farms and crossed the border the Company would be robbed of recognition fees, and the Boers would soon be engaged in hostilities with the Xhosa. But the establishment of a drostdy was necessary

above all to prevent one or other naval power sooner or later when at war with our republic and letting its eyes fall on the Bay a la Goa, from beholding the people destitute of an orderly government there, and at once establishing on that spot a thriving Colony, in that manner depriving the Company of its income and cutting off the supply of slaughter cattle from that neighbourhood.

True to form, most of these arguments concerned the need for the establishment of a drostdy in the interests of the Company, and nothing was said of the interests of the colonists.¹

In 1785 the request for the creation of a new district was granted, and on 19 July 1786 a plakkaat containing the boundaries of the new district was published. The new district, named Graaff-Reinet after Governor Cornelis Jacob van der Graaff, and Reinet, the maiden name of his wife, was composed of the eastern portions of the Stellenbosch and Swellendam districts, so that the entire eastern frontier came

1. C 78, pp.597-604: 26 August 1785; Venter, pp.24-26; the quotations are taken from copies of documents relating to the founding of Graaff-Reinet, translated and prepared by H.C.V. Leibbrandt (Public Library, Graaff-Reinet).

under its jurisdiction, a division which had been fore-shadowed in 1780 by the appointment of a commandant for the whole of the eastern border. The eastern border of the Swellendam district reverted to the Gamtoos River. The eastern frontier of the colony itself was moved to the Baviaans and Tarka Rivers in the north, while further south the lower Fish River remained the border. No northern boundary was defined, nor was this necessary as the Bushmen were an effective barrier to expansion in this direction.¹

Because of the great distance of the new magistracy from Cape Town, the government found it necessary to give it greater jurisdiction than had hitherto been enjoyed by Stellenbosch and Swellendam. On 13 December 1785 M.H.O. Woeke was appointed landdrost of the new district and two farms of Dirk Coetsee were purchased for the site of the drostdy. In October 1786 Woeke opened his court for the first time.²

1. S.D. Naude, ed., Kaapse Plakkaatboek III, pp.186-189.

2. Venter, pp.26-27.

CHAPTER 2

FRONTIERS AND FRONTIERSMEN, 1786-1806

(i) A New Era on the Northern Frontier

The commandos, which had fallen off somewhat in the years preceding 1786, were vigorously renewed after the establishment of the drostdy.¹ According to a table compiled in 1836, between 1786 and 1795 some 2 504 Bushmen were killed and 669 captured; Boer losses in the same period were reported as 276 "colonists" (probably mainly Hottentot herdsmen), 19 161 head of cattle and 84 094 sheep.² These figures are some indication of the struggle waged, but Bushmen casualties were clearly much higher, as many commandos were unreported.

When the Council of Policy in 1791 gave its attention to the high meat prices, the butchers gave the Bushmen as the cause of their difficulties, and claimed that over 100 farms in the Graaff-Reinet district lay abandoned as a result of Bushmen depredations. There were 700 households in the Graaff-Reinet district and an even greater number of loan farms, since many farmers had more than one farm; the majority of farms thus continued to be occupied, but the proportion of

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1. The main source for the account of the situation on the northern frontier is P.J. van der Merwe, Die Noordwaartse Beweging van die Boere voor die Groot Trek (1770-1842).
 2. J.S. Marais, The Cape Coloured People 1652-1937, p.17.

farms abandoned in the Sneeuwberge, which were considered the best area in the colony for sheep, must have been high. Even where farms were not abandoned, the necessity for grazing sheep close to the homestead where they could be more easily watched had a detrimental effect on their weight. The butchers complained that where they used to obtain wethers of sixty pounds, it was now difficult to obtain animals of forty pounds. The roads to Graaff-Reinet were unsafe and butchers ran the risk of having a band of Bushmen make off with stock which they had purchased and were driving to Cape Town. One of the meat contractors, J.G. van Reenen, said that he had lost 1 200 wethers in this way in 1790. The butchers were consequently forced to increase the number of slaves and servants to guard the stock, which added to their expenses. Another reason advanced by the butchers for the high meat prices was the competition between the contractors and the free butchers; the latter apparently instructed their servants to outbid the contractors, who were forced to pay the same in order to obtain stock. Landdrost Woeke was also blamed for encouraging the farmers to hold out for higher prices.¹

The British administration after 1795 was not inclined to accept Bushmen depredations as the most significant reason for the continued high price of meat during their period of rule at the Cape. The British also saw Graaff-Reinet and the Sneeuwberge in particular

1. C 93, pp.108-193: 31 August 1791; Leibbrandt's Manuscript Precipis, vol.30: Resolutions of the Council of Policy, 31 August 1791, contains a full account of the representations of the butchers.

as important meat-producing areas. The Sneeuwberge were "the best nursery for sheep in the whole colony", according to Barrow,¹ while General Craig wrote that Graaff-Reinet was "of the utmost value and importance to the Colony, as being the great Magazine, if I may so call it, of cattle and sheep, from whence we are almost entirely supplied".² In August 1796 Craig estimated that the consumption of meat was two-and-a-half times as great as it had been under the Dutch.³ Despite the greater demand for meat and continued Bushmen depredations in what was considered an important region for obtaining meat supplies, Earl Macartney felt that, as the opgaaf for 1797 showed 251 206 head of cattle and 1 448 206 sheep in the colony, there was no actual shortage of livestock, but that the price was being raised artificially. The farmers blamed the butchers "who bid so high for the cattle whilst the butchers on their part pretend that the breeders of cattle will not sell cheaper". Proclamations during the period of the British occupation leave no doubt as to the opinion of the authorities with regard to the trouble, and reference is made to butchers "illegally combining together" and instructing their buying agents "to outbid all others" in order to create a monopoly.⁴

1. J. Barrow, Travels into the Interior of Southern Africa, I, pp.203-204.

2. Records I, p.270.

3. Records I, p.450; see also Records I, p.467.

4. S.D. Naude, ed., Kaapse Plakkaatboek V, pp.151-155, 207, 245.

When the British took over the Cape in 1795, Bushmen depredations continued unabated, and the greatest part of the field cornetcies of the Nieuweveldsberge, the Sneeuwberge, Tarka and Swagershoek were denuded of inhabitants. But a new stage in the relations between Boer and Bushman was dawning, and renewed attempts at conciliation were successful in certain areas. The way for the introduction of a new policy was paved by the commandos of the eighteenth century, which weakened the Bushmen, particularly those bands most hostile to the colonists; the increased white population in the interior tended to strengthen the colonists and render the Bushmen relatively weaker;¹ many Bushmen withdrew deeper into the interior as the Boers advanced.

After representations by veldwagtmeesters Visser of Middle Roggeveld and Louw of Hantam and Onder Bokkeveld, Macartney issued a proclamation on 24 July 1798 authorising them to carry out their proposal of collecting livestock from the Boers for distribution among the Bushmen in their area. Macartney, who even before this had directed his attention to means of achieving peace, instructed that once "quiet intercourse" had been established, the Bushmen would be given land where they were "not to be molested, nor their children taken from them or made slaves or servants of, on any pretence whatsoever". Boers in other parts were also encouraged to follow the example of Visser and Louw.² At the same time the first northern boundary to the

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1. Van der Merwe, Noordwaartse Beweging, pp.66-69.
 2. Kaapse Plakkaatboek V, pp.140-143.

colony was defined, beyond which no colonist was to proceed with his stock; a pass from the Governor was required for hunting beyond the border.¹

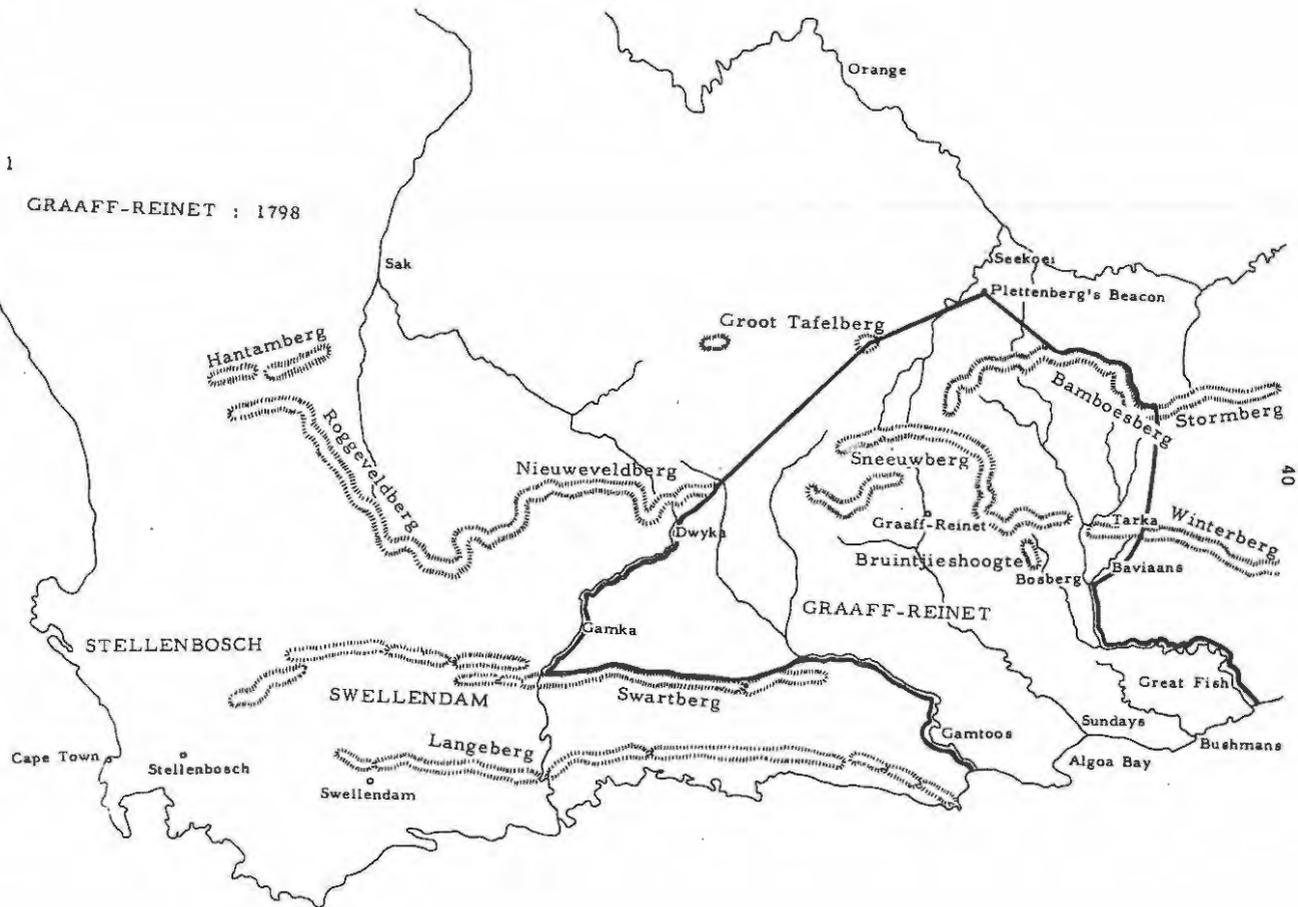
In the Tarka, the Koup and the Nieuweveld it was difficult to befriend Bushmen by giving them presents of sheep or providing them with game. Macartney's offer of six years rent-free occupation to colonists in Tarka, Swagershoek, Sneeuwberge and Nieuweveldsberge who had abandoned their farms² attracted settlement for a time, but the Bushmen soon forced the Boers in some parts to withdraw. The whole of the Tarka lay deserted during the first years of the nineteenth century, and the high hills surrounding this area provided ample cover for thieves. Because they knew the commandos were almost powerless when confronted with their mountain hideouts, the Bushmen there were not inclined to accept peace overtures.³

It was difficult too in the Koup and Nieuweveldsberge to make peace with the Bushmen, because the robbers came mostly from the Karreeberge, north of the Sak River, which areas were so far from the occupied parts of the colony that it was difficult to pursue thieves or conciliate them with presents of sheep. The colonists in the Koup suffered under a

1. Kaapse Plakkaatboek V, pp.138-139; see also Map 1, p.40.
2. Records II, p.97.
3. Moodie V, p.23; Van der Merwe, Noordwaartse Beweging, pp.86, 108-109; in the vicinity of the Stormberge, Bushmen depredations had not abated by 1824 (50 of 1835, pp.91-92: W.M. Mackay to Commissioner of Enquiry, 7 May 1824).

MAP 1

GRAAFF-REINET : 1798



further disadvantage in that horse sickness, which hindered commandos, was more prevalent there than in the higher areas. During the first decade of the nineteenth century Bushmen still drove Boers from their farms, and the area could only be safely occupied after the Nieuweveldsberge had been successfully colonised to act as a buffer. In the Nieuweveldsberge the Boers began reoccupying farms shortly after 1798, but by 1809 valuable farms still remained unoccupied.¹

While the Bushmen at the two extremes of the northern frontier of Graaff-Reinet - in the Tarka and the Nieuweveld - remained hostile, friendly overtures to the Bushmen between these two extremes were successful. Along the Seekoei River it was not difficult to befriend Bushmen, as thieves could not remain undetected on the plains, nor were there inaccessible dens to which they could retreat with their loot; there was also a plentiful supply of game in the neighbourhood of the river.² Although presents of sheep seldom encouraged the Bushmen to breed them, the Boers also helped the Bushmen to obtain food by shooting game for those who came among them, while Boer hunting parties into Bushmanland established friendly relations in the same way. The Bushmen welcomed this. No one realised however that hunting parties armed with guns would exterminate the game far more rapidly than Bushmen hunters would have done. As the Boers advanced into Bushmanland, killing more game and chasing it away, the Bushmen

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1. Van der Merwe, Noordwaartse Beweging, pp.110-112.
 2. Van der Merwe, Noordwaartse Beweging, pp.85-86, 113-114; Barrow I, pp.219-222.

found it increasingly difficult to lead an independent existence, and those who did not retreat into the more inaccessible parts of the country, entered the service of the Boers, who welcomed them as herders.¹ Frequently too, groups of Bushmen visited the farmers to beg presents and food. Although they were a nuisance and sometimes remained for weeks, it was preferable to having the same Bushmen carrying off their livestock.²

Along the Seekoei River this change for the better in relations between the Bushmen and the Boers apparently came about swiftly. When Bresler and Barrow travelled that way towards the end of 1797, they found Boer families living together for security, and when they tried to make contact with the Bushmen the little men fled before them. When Governor General Janssens travelled the same way in 1803, the Bushmen he met on the Orange River were by no means overawed by the whites. The colonists explained that they often hunted there and so met the Bushmen. They merely had to light a fire for the Bushmen to put in an appearance.³

Macartney's hope of segregating Boer and Bushman by means of a northern border was doomed to failure. The boundary was badly defined, consisting largely of

1. Van der Merwe, Noordwaartse Beweging, pp.153-154, 158-160.
2. Van der Merwe, Noordwaartse Beweging, pp.78-83; the employment of Bushmen is discussed on pp.337-340.
3. Barrow I, pp.208, 224-231; H. Lichtenstein, Travels in Southern Africa in the Years 1803, 1804, 1805 and 1806, II, pp.50, 54, 73-77; D.G. van Reenen, Die Joernaal van Dirk Gysbert van Reenen; 1803, p.233.

imaginary lines between distant points,¹ but even a more recognisable frontier would have made little difference; experience had shown that no boundary would hold back the Boers simply because it was a boundary. Before 1798 there was no defined northern border, nor was one necessary, as geographic conditions put an effective end to expansion along most of the area north of the settled regions; where further expansion was indeed possible, in the north-east corner of the district, the Bushmen prevented penetration.² It was only the hostility of the Bushmen which prevented expansion along the Seekoei River, and with the establishment of more friendly relations with the Bushmen it was in this direction that the expansion movement which had come to a halt in the east, was continued. The winter rains and snow in the Sneeuwberge were dangerous for livestock, particularly as winter was lambing time; lack of firewood in the mountains made winters even more unpleasant. Many Sneeuwbergers left the mountains as soon as it began getting cold, to spend the winter in the lower-lying and warmer Karroo. By 1803 the trek to the plains along the Seekoei River and Rhenosterberg was already common practice.³ As more farms were given out here, the Sneeuwbergers had to travel further each year. These periodic migrations were the forerunner of permanent colonisation of the trekveld. There was nothing to stop this expansion

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1. For Stockenstrom's comments on this border, see 50 of 1835, p.119: A.Stockenstrom to C.Bird, 29 September 1820.
 2. Van der Merwe, Noordwaartse Beweging, pp.98-100.
 3. Van Reenen, p.231; Van der Merwe, Noordwaartse Beweging, p.118.

except Macartney's ill-defined border. The land was quickly occupied and in 1803 Janssens found farmers everywhere along the Seekoei River, the furthest being within half a day's journey of the most northerly point of the border, Van Plettenberg's beacon. Collins in 1809 reported that the land was occupied right up to the beacon.¹

(ii) War and Rebellion on the Eastern Frontier

(a) The Last Years of Company Rule

After 1781 the Zuurveld became congested as Boer and Xhosa numbers there increased. The Xhosa refused to move east of the Fish River, claiming that they could not exist there because of lack of game, and that they had bought land in the Zuurveld from the Hottentot Ruyter; another reason for the presence of the Xhosa west of the border was the outbreak of war among them in the 1790's. The entry into the colony of Xhosa refugees who had been robbed of their stock, added petty stock theft to the other Boer complaints that the Xhosa chased away or killed the game, damaged cultivated lands with their herds and competed for grazing land. At the same time an increasing number of Xhosa entered the service of the Boers. If the Xhosa chiefs did not have sufficient power to keep their people together or prevent stock theft, neither was landdrost Woeke able to control the colonists. He was unable to force them to dismiss their Xhosa servants, or obey the injunctions against the cattle trade, which

1. Moodie V, pp.23-24; Van der Merwe, Noordwaartse Beweging, pp.114-119.

was flourishing. Neither chief nor landdrost were able to check the activities of the more unruly elements among their subjects, and while certain Xhosa were a nuisance to the Boers, men of the stamp of Coenraad Buys were undoubtedly annoying the Xhosa. Employment and trading made separation impossible, and if Xhosa penetrated deeper into the colony in search of work and game, Boers hunted east of the Fish River and sought pasturage there.¹

Landdrost Woeke was a powerless spectator; there was little he could do to make the presence of government felt as no one would obey him. The Company continued to support the policy of segregation inaugurated by Van Plettenberg in 1778, but gave their representative no aid, nor any instructions on how the ideal should be achieved, beyond stressing that friendly means should be employed.²

When Woeke was dismissed by the Council of Policy towards the end of 1792, H.C.D. Maynier, who had been secretary at Graaff-Reinet since 1789, replaced him.³ Maynier's period of rule in Graaff-Reinet has been the subject of much controversy. Following Theal's picture of Maynier as imbued with "views concerning the simplicity and honesty of barbarians enunciated by the French philosophers",⁴ others have

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1. J.S. Marais, Maynier and the First Boer Republic, pp.10, 15-24, 28-33; P.J. van der Merwe, Die Trekboer in die Geskiedenis van die Kaapkolonie (1657-1842), pp.292-295, 300-302, 309-313; P.J. van der Merwe, Die Kafferoorlog van 1793, pp.6-15, 64-67.
 2. Van der Merwe, Die Trekboer, pp.292-293, 299; Marais, Maynier, p.14.
 3. Marais, Maynier, pp.34-35.
 4. G.M. Theal, History of South Africa, 4, p.280.

also seen in the troubles which beset Graaff-Reinet a clash between the attitude of the colonists towards the blacks and the ideas concerning the "noble savage" then current in Europe.¹ On the other hand Professor Marais has made an attempt to vindicate Maynier from the charges levelled against him by Theal, that his "humanity undoubtedly owes something to the intellectual climate of his age; and he was certainly out of sympathy with the behaviour and certain attitudes of mind of many colonists ... But he was neither a sentimentalist nor a visionary".²

It was with regard to the Hottentots rather than the Xhosa, that an ideological clash between Maynier and the colonists was most apparent. But Maynier's attempts to provide the Hottentots with protection in their service with the Boers and to open his courts to their complaints, had the stamp of official approval. Where he failed was that he tried to give effect to such protection in the last days of the Company's rule, when the power and authority of the government was almost non-existent. All successive governments were to continue this policy, and to give practical effect to the protection that Maynier had sought to provide.³

Where Xhosa policy was at issue, here too, it was the policy of the Company to support the maintenance of friendly relations with the Xhosa. It was not

1. See for example, G.D. Scholtz, Die Ontwikkeling van die Politieke Denke van die Afrikaner, I.

2. Marais, Maynier, p.36.

3. This Hottentot policy is discussed at greater length on pp.366-373.

merely a humanitarian principle that was involved, for the maintenance of peace was sound policy. It may have been a fruitless exercise trying to persuade the chiefs to move east of the Fish River by giving them presents while there was employment, trading and game west of the river, and powerful enemies east of it, but the Company, and Maynier agreed with them, felt that they could not afford to risk a conflict with the Xhosa while they were engaged in a bitter struggle against the Bushmen.¹ The Xhosa were a nuisance, but they were not hostile, and there was a world of difference between petty stock theft and open warfare. In the Zuurveld stock theft was not complained of before 1790; from January 1790 to 15 May 1793, according to Boer returns, 493 head of cattle were stolen.² A comparison of these figures with the situation on the Bushman frontier, provides an indication of why the Company regarded the situation on the northern frontier as more critical than that on the eastern frontier. Another reason for the greater concern of the government with the events in the north was that they saw a close connection between the high meat prices and Bushmen depredations.³

Where the Xhosa were concerned, Maynier's attitudes and actions caused much dissatisfaction, but it was as much a disagreement about policy as principle. In practice a landdrost could do much in the way of modifying or even ignoring instructions from Cape Town,

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1. Marais, Maynier, pp.36-37.
 2. Marais, Maynier, pp.19-21.
 3. See pp. 35-36.

but the formulation of policy was not in his hands; he could, however, do much to influence the decisions of the government, who were very much dependent upon him for their information. It was here that Maynier failed. The fact that the government's instructions to promote peace "by mild and gentle means" was, said Maynier, "coincident with my own feelings"¹ helps to explain the intense dislike with which the majority of colonists regarded Maynier. He failed to identify himself with the Boers, but sided with the government. Anxious to carry out their orders to the letter, he was contemptuous of many of the Boers. The extensive treatment given to his rule by historians, has somewhat magnified his stature, but he does not appear to have had any real understanding of the manner in which a landdrost without a police force had to compromise and balance in a complex society of Xhosa, Hottentots and frontiersmen.

The frontiersmen in the Zuurveld became impatient. Frustrated by the landdrost's refusal to mobilise the district on their behalf, in 1793 they made an ill-advised alliance with Ndlambe to attack the Xhosa in the colony. The scheme misfired and the hostile Xhosa plundered and murdered, penetrating as far as the Swartkops River, as the Boers fled before them. Commandos from both Swellendam and Graaff-Reinet attacked the Xhosa, but found it impossible to drive them from the thick forests which then existed. Maynier and landdrost Faure of Swellendam decided to conclude peace without having driven the Xhosa across the Fish River "because these Kafirs have scattered themselves almost throughout the entire land, and as soon as they

1. Records IV, pp.286-287.

are chased from one corner of this district they take refuge in another". An insecure peace was made while the frontiersmen kept up an agitation for commandos to recover the cattle they claimed to have lost in the war. Abandoned farms were not reoccupied, a circumstance which encouraged Xhosa penetration, and which became one of the main difficulties of the successive administrations in this period in restoring some stability on the eastern frontier. Maynier encouraged operations against thieves, but refused to countenance a large commando.¹ Insecurity spread, and in 1794-1795 the Xhosa penetrated to the north of the Zuurveld where their presence had not been recorded since 1781; Agterbruinjieshoogte, the centre of the hotbed of disaffection, was threatened.²

On 4 February 1795, Adriaan van Jaarsveld and the two Tregard brothers; acting as spokesmen for a body of Boers who had assembled outside the village, demanded that a combined meeting of heemraden, ex-heemraden and militia officers be called to hear their grievances. Such a meeting took place two days later and a document, the Tesamenstemming, signed by forty-three Boers, was read aloud and Maynier was told to leave the district. In April 1795 O.G. de Wet, President of the Council of Justice and former landdrost of Stellenbosch, arrived in Graaff-Reinet to head a commission of inquiry into the reasons for Maynier's

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1. Marais, Maynier, pp. 39-55, 60-62; Van der Merwe, Die Kafferoorlog, pp. 21-23, 26-63.
 2. Marais, Maynier, pp. 52n., 59-60.

expulsion. When he refused to call out a commando to drive the Xhosa away, he was ordered out of the district, and the Boers declared that they would have nothing more to do with the Company.¹

This, the first of the rebellions which kept Graaff-Reinet in an almost continual state of turmoil between 1795 and 1801, owed something to the agitation of the wheat and wine farmers closer to Cape Town. The idea that a government could be resisted and that no one was more qualified than the "volk" to decide whether a government was carrying out its task efficiently was contained in an anonymous piece of writing distributed in Cape Town in 1778, where it gave form to the dissatisfaction of the agriculturists of the western Cape. This, with minor alterations, was a brochure which had been written in the Netherlands in 1754. The fact that it was compiled in another place, in a different time, for another purpose, was irrelevant to Cape Town, and even more so to far-off Graaff-Reinet. Apart from this indirect contribution, there is little evidence of a community of interests between the Patriots of Cape Town and those in Graaff-Reinet. The agriculturists referred to the interior only to paint a depressing picture of the sort of life they would be forced to lead if they had to go further inland because of the poor economic conditions closer to Cape Town.

1. G.R. 1/1, pp.295-299: Minutes extraordinary heemraad meeting, 4 February 1795 and extraordinary heemraad and combined meeting, 6 February 1795; V.C. 68, papers in connection with O.G. de Wet's report to A.J. Sluysken provide a detailed picture of the disturbances at this time; see also Marais, Maynier, pp.78-83.

The Boers of Graaff-Reinet were for the most part indifferent to the agitation of the agriculturists closer to the capital. Certain words and phrases from Cape Town, and more remotely from the Netherlands, filtered through to Graaff-Reinet. They were significant mainly for the models they provided for overthrowing an unpopular regime. It was the idea that such a government could be resisted that found an echo in Graaff-Reinet. Graaff-Reinettters had no real understanding of the overseas movements and used the revolutionary jargon without considering overmuch its meaning or content. They drew indiscriminately from current European history and from a more distant past. Their forbears had left the Netherlands when the memory of the Eighty Years War was still very much alive, and the sixteenth century struggles of the Netherlands were just as meaningful to them as recent events; in 1795 we thus find the Graaff-Reinettters referring to the "Spanish yoke" and describing Maynier as a second Duke of Alva.¹

The revolutionary democratic theories of Europe gave form to the dissatisfaction of the colonists on the eastern frontier, but the dissatisfaction itself arose mainly from the failure of the government to maintain the border in the east, and also from a clash between the colonists and the authorities concerning the position of the Hottentots in frontier society.

1. This aspect of the unrest is discussed in C. Beyers, Die Kaapse Patriotte Gedurende die Laaste Kwart van die Agtiende Eeu en die Voortlewing van hul Denkbeelde; see also Scholtz I, P.J. Idenburg, The Cape of Good Hope at the Turn of the Eighteenth Century, and Marais, Maynier, pp.88-90.



In the first instance it was the government's failure to control and in the second instance the colonists' objection to the imposition of control which was basically responsible for the dissatisfaction. But no study of frontier society can ignore the significant influence on events of personalities and personal animosities.

Authority had never been popular on the frontier. The discord began soon after the settlement of Agterbruintjieshoogte in the early 1770's. At first it was the refusal of the inhabitants there to do commando duty against the Bushmen which inflamed personal enmities, and commandant Opperman became the butt of rumours and vague accusations. After 1781, Van Jaarsveld fell foul of certain inhabitants of Agterbruintjieshoogte because of his refusal to allow them to cross the border and retrieve cattle they claimed had been stolen by the Xhosa. In the years before the establishment of a drostdy in 1786, it was thought that much of the trouble was due to the partiality of the local unpaid military functionaries, who lived among the inhabitants and were too closely associated with them to command respect. But the presence of a landdrost made no difference, and Woeke became involved in bitter disputes with a number of people, including Maynier; in July 1792 Van Jaarsveld and others mentioned the possibility of "popular disturbances" if Woeke continued to "curse" the people.¹

1. Marais, Maynier, pp.35, 38, 58n.; Theal 4, p.246.

While Maynier was not the first person in authority to clash with the turbulent Boers, he succeeded in uniting against himself such disparate characters as Van Jaarsveld, Marthinus Prinsloo, the Tregard brothers, C.F. Bezuidenhout and Coenraad Buys. These men did not all share the same views on the Xhosa. Although Van Jaarsveld had played a prominent role in Maynier's expulsion in 1795, in general he agreed with the policy followed towards the Xhosa. Soon after Maynier's expulsion, the new secretary appointed by the rebellious Boers referred to "de heilloose begeerte die kwalyk gesinde opgeseetenen voede om wederom op de Caffers uitvallen te doen"; Van Jaarsveld explained how the secretary and he had succeeded in dissuading Marthinus Prinsloo "van 't project der volkstem om in 't Cafferland in te ryden en met het swaard het van de Christenen verooverd vee uit dezelve te haalen".¹ This was a fairly consistent opinion of Van Jaarsveld and was in keeping with his own actions as commandant after 1780. In May 1794 Van Jaarsveld expressed the opinion that to secure a permanent peace with the Xhosa "het beste zoude weezen om aan dezelve het Zuureveld als voorheen hun Eigeland geweest zynde terug te geeven".² Maynier apparently made no attempt to keep alive the divisions between Van Jaarsveld and those who wished to ride into Xhosa territory, but appears to have had a talent for alienating people.

1. G.R. 1/1, p.305: Minutes, 30 March 1795.

2. G.R. 1/1, pp.248-250: Minutes, 26 May 1794.

(b) The First British Occupation

When the British captured the Cape in 1795 and sent F.R. Bresler to Graaff-Reinet as landdrost, the Boers refused to allow him to take office, and on 25 March 1796 he started back for Cape Town.¹ The volkstem of Graaff-Reinet informed General Craig that they did not want Bresler as they were "apprehensive of his not agreeing with the minds of your memorialists". What they wanted was permission to regain their cattle from the Xhosa and more land across the Fish River,² both of which requests were refused.

The northern parts of the Graaff-Reinet district were the first to submit in August 1796.³ The Sneeuwbergers on the Bushman frontier were more affected by the embargo on ammunition destined for Graaff-Reinet than other areas were. They played a minor role in the rebellion, and although one of the complaints against Maynier was that he hindered commandos against the Bushmen, this charge may well have referred to one particular commando proposed by Van Jaarsveld in September 1794, which Maynier had forbidden.⁴

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1. B.O. 26, pp.19-30 (irregularly numbered): F.R. Bresler to J.H. Craig, 2 March 1796; B.O. 26, pp.31-54: F.R. Bresler to J.H. Craig, 26 May 1796, and pp.59-64: "Propositie" to Bresler by the "Representanten des Volks", 22 March 1796.
 2. Records I, pp.478-482.
 3. B.O. 27, pp.5-7: C.D. Gerotz and eight others to J.H. Craig, 22 August 1796 (translation; the original is on pp.9-13); G.R. 1/2, p.80: Minutes, 22 August 1796.
 4. Marais, Maynier, pp.65-67.

Maynier did subject commandos to greater control, and later said that prior to his appointment as landdrost large commandos of 200 to 300 Boers operated against the Bushmen "regularly every year"; Maynier stopped this and ordered "that if depredations were committed by the Bosjesmen, immediate notice should be given to the next field cornet, who was to collect some men and follow the trace of the stolen cattle ... and to punish those who were the guilty persons".¹ It does not seem as if this policy caused serious dissatisfaction among the Boers, and in January 1794 Van Jaarsveld himself agreed that this was the best method of dealing with Bushmen depredations.² Commandos against the Bushmen were mainly localised activities, with a few neighbouring farmers getting up a commando to pursue thieves or take action against troublesome Bushmen bands. Isolated in the Sneeuwberge, Boers here were free to act without reference to the authorities, who probably remained ignorant of the activities of many such local commandos. The resistance of these men in all likelihood owed something to Van Jaarsveld's leadership, for he had close associations with them.

The situation on the eastern frontier was, however, different; here it was not so much a case of the government interfering with their activities, as of their requiring the aid of the government in organising the large commandos necessary for action against the Xhosa.

1. 50 of 1835, p.28: Examination of Maynier, 1825.

2. G.R. 1/1, pp.243-244: Minutes, 11 January 1794.

The rebels on the eastern frontier, before submitting in February 1797, tried unsuccessfully to wring some concessions from the British administration.¹ Earl Macartney added to the long list of ordinances and regulations for maintaining the border, and issued orders for the dismissal of Xhosa servants. If this showed some continuity with Company policy, it also lacked the necessary machinery for its enforcement. Bresler arrived back in Graaff-Reinet on 30 March 1797, and in order to encourage reoccupation of farms in the Zuurveld Macartney promised six years free rental for those who reoccupied their farms within four months.² But the Xhosa continued in the colony, and by the end of 1798 Bresler indicated that only one third of the 148 families of the "districts of Zuurveld, and Great Fish River" were on their farms.³

The Boers of Bruintjieshoogte and Zuurveld also played a leading role in renewed disturbances in 1799. These Boers in the southern parts of the district in December 1798 "resolved to renew the former patriotism and to carry it on in a better manner than before".⁴ Every act of resistance to the government seemed to depend in some measure upon the stimulus of news from outside the district, and the Boers were led to suppose

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1. B.O. 27, pp.107-113: C.D. Gerotz and nine others to Craig, 20 February 1797, and Marthinus Prinsloo and forty-eight others to Craig, 16 February 1797 (translation; the originals are on pp.115-120).
 2. Records II, pp.95-101; Kaapse Plakkaatboek V, p.86.
 3. Marais, Maynier, pp.96-98; see also Barrow I, pp.122-126, 131-132.
 4. Records III, p.239.

that their rebellion would be successful from reports based on the departure of a considerable number of troops from the Cape, and on a fire in the dragoon stables and naval stores in November 1798, when almost all the horses perished.¹ Led by Marthinus Prinsloo some thirty Boers from Brintjieshoogte and Zuurveld rescued Adriaan van Jaarsveld in January 1799, after he had been arrested on a charge of forging a receipt and was being escorted to Cape Town.² Initially the Sneeuwbergers supported the movement, probably owing to a misapprehension that Van Jaarsveld was being sent away as a result of the former disturbances. Once Bresler had explained matters to them, the Sneeuwbergers seem to have taken no further part in the rebellion,³ and reports refer rather to their support of Bresler.⁴ Bresler had a small force of about twelve dragoons to deter the Boers had it been their intention to expel him. The rebellious Boers presented a number of demands to the landdrost which reflected their continued dissatisfaction with the state of affairs on the eastern frontier and their mistrust of government policy.

General Vandeleur arrived in Graaff-Reinet in March 1799 with a body of troops to suppress the

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1. Records II, pp.400-401, 480; details of the fire are contained in Records II, pp.301-309.
 2. The correspondence in Records II, pp.349-408, and Records III, pp.213-300 (Criminal Claim and Conclusion made and demanded by the Fiscal versus Marthinus Prinsloo and his Accomplices) contain details of the Boer insurrection and the steps taken to quell it; see also B.O. 26, pp.107-200.
 3. Records II, pp.390-391, III, pp.219-220.
 4. Records II, pp.356, 381, 398.

rebellion. The Boers assembled at Coega to resist the troops, but retired and dispersed without offering battle. A few of the insurgents sought refuge with the Xhosa, but some 140 or 150 surrendered to Vandeleur in Bruintjieshoogte; most of these were fined, and twenty were sent to Cape Town to stand trial.¹

Many Boers were absent from their homes riding about and assembling, and there were various rumours abroad. The presence of British troops, whom it appears made an attempt to force the Xhosa across the Fish,² increased the unsettled state of the district. These conditions had their effect on both the Xhosa and the Hottentots who made common cause. After Vandeleur had been attacked and a small detachment ambushed and wiped out by the Xhosa, he withdrew with his small force to Algoa Bay. Soon they were the only whites east of the Gamtoos River as the Boers, fleeing before the plundering Xhosa and Hottentots, ignored all orders to return and join up to prevent further penetration. The Xhosa meanwhile penetrated deep into the Swellendam district and the desertion of the Hottentots from the

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1. Van Jaarsveld and Marthinus Prinsloo were sentenced to death for their part in the rebellion, but neither sentence was carried out. Van Jaarsveld died in prison, and Prinsloo was released by the Batavian government.
 2. Although there is some uncertainty as to whether the Xhosa merely believed that the troops were about to make an attempt to force them across the Fish, or whether such an attempt was in fact made, the balance of evidence suggests that Vandeleur did make an attempt to drive the Xhosa out of the colony (Marais, Maynier, pp.106-107, H.B. Giliomee, Die Kaap tydens die Eerste Britse Bewind, 1795-1803, pp.326-327).

Boers kept pace with this movement. Maynier, who arrived on the scene in the second half of August, said that there were upwards of 700 Hottentots in rebellion, a 150 of whom were armed.¹

On 6 August 1799 reinforcements left Cape Town and the acting Governor, Major General Sir Francis Dundas, himself repaired to the frontier, calling upon Maynier to join him. He entertained great fears of the spreading of the Hottentot rebellion, and it appears that even before reaching Algoa Bay he decided, if possible, to make peace without fighting. This was apparently why he summoned Maynier, who was told that Dundas knew that "the principle I had always acted upon at Graaff Reinet was to protect as much as possible the Natives, which His Excellency supposed they would not have forgot".²

Proceeding on the basis that the harsh treatment of the Hottentots had caused them to rise, Maynier concluded a peace which was designed to provide better working conditions for the Hottentots.³ This resulted in the establishment of a register of Hottentots employed, which contained their terms of service. The hated Maynier was returned to authority as Resident Commissioner of Swellendam and Graaff-Reinet. The Xhosa

1. The circumstances surrounding the Hottentot rebellion and hostilities with the Xhosa are well outlined in correspondence contained in Records II, pp.444-494, III, pp.48-67, 88-89 and IV, pp.289-293 (part of Maynier's Provisional Justification); see also B.O. 26, pp.289-300.
2. Records IV, p.290.
3. See p. 367.

were allowed to remain on the Sundays and Bushmans Rivers on condition that they did not bother the colonists, a condition which meant little in view of Dundas's opinion that the friendship of the Xhosa should be retained, "I had almost said at any price".¹

There was some reoccupation of farms,² but thieving and insecurity once again increased, and by April 1801 Boers in various parts were moving to safer areas.³ Part of the reason for the continued unsettled state of the district was that nothing concrete was done to settle, on land of their own, such Hottentots as had no desire to return to their employers, although the need to do so was stressed by Dundas, who continually encouraged Maynier to take steps to effect this.⁴ Many Hottentots remained in the Sundays River area under Klaas Stuurman,⁵ despite the fact that Maynier said he had succeeded in persuading "a considerable number" of Hottentots to resume service with the Boers.⁶ Numbers of Hottentots gravitated to the town of Graaff-Reinet, and by the middle of May 1801, the Rev Van der Kemp, who conducted services for the Hottentots in the Dutch Reformed Church, had a Hottentot congregation of 200.⁷

1. Records III, p.66; see also Records III, pp.52-57.

2. Marais, Maynier, p.117; Giliomee, Eerste Britse Bewind, p.346.

3. Marais, Maynier, p.122.

4. 50 of 1835, pp.30-32: Examination of Maynier, 1825, and Dundas to Maynier, 29 January, 27 February, 17 May 1800.

5. S.Bannister, Humane Policy; or Justice to the Aborigines of New Settlements, Appendix No.3, pp. cxxix-cxxx; Marais, Maynier, pp.117-119.

6. Records IV, pp.294-295.

7. Transactions of the Missionary Society, I, p.480.

The Boers had a deep mistrust of Maynier, and the presence of both Maynier and a growing number of Hottentots in town filled them with great apprehension.¹ Another demonstration against Maynier in the middle of 1801 was preceded by a rumour in May 1801 that when the opgaaf was taken in June, some of the "stoutest" Boers would be seized and sent to Cape Town to serve as soldiers and sailors, and their wives would be given to the heathen.² This was partly a variation of a rumour which circulated in Cape Town in September 1795 and which had reached Graaff-Reinet by November 1796, to the effect that the inhabitants would be transported to "distant places" to serve in the army and navy.³ Nor was this the first time that fears regarding their wives were the subject of a rumour.⁴

The effect on the minds of the Boers of the gathering of Hottentots around Maynier was clear from the demands made when the Boers again assembled in 1801. Besides demanding that commandos be called out and demanding that Maynier hand over to them five Hottentots accused of murder, the Boers also wanted the registration of Hottentots to be placed in the hands of the commandants and other local officials. Their objection to the equal treatment of Hottentots may be seen in the complaint against Van der Kemp, that he preached to the Hottentots in the Graaff-Reinet church, and that they

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1. Giliomee, Eerste Britse Bewind, pp.353-357.
 2. Records IV, pp.59-60, 297; Marais, Maynier, p.128.
 3. Kaapse Plakkaatboek V, pp.2-3; Records I, pp.478-482.
 4. Records IV, pp.287-288, 320; Marais, Maynier, pp.83-85.

were instructed in reading and writing and religion, and so made equal with Christians.¹

But if the Boers distrusted the Hottentots and Maynier, the Hottentots were also suspicious of the Boers, and runaway Hottentots came to Graaff-Reinet in increasing numbers as rumours spread that the rebel Boers would murder all the Hottentots after they had "subdued" the drostdy. Boers were also abandoning their farms, and Major Sherlock arrived in Graaff-Reinet on 27 November 1801 having found the country from Algoa Bay "entirely deserted". The rebellion ended with Sherlock's offer of a free pardon; the Boers dispersed quietly, saying that they had nothing against the government, but that their complaints were against Maynier.²

The other problems were not so easily settled. The Hottentots on the Sundays River were committing depredations, and a commando from Swellendam led by Tjaart van der Walt took the field towards the end of January 1802; only 88 of the 200 men expected put in an appearance, and the commando accomplished little. Another commando from Swellendam and Graaff-Reinet was raised, with permission to undertake operations against the Xhosa as well as the Hottentots, since it appeared that the two were co-operating. By 20 July the commando

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1. Records IV, pp.53-54, 59-63, 297-299, 323-324; Transactions of the Missionary Society, I, pp.481-483; A.D. Martin, Doctor Vanderkemp, pp.102-104; Marais, Maynier, pp.125-127.
 2. Records IV, pp.98-100, 298-299; Marais, Maynier, pp.129-133; B.O. 26, pp.717-756.

had 568 Boers and 132 Hottentots, and a considerable number of Xhosa and Hottentots were attacked, and a large number of cattle taken. However, after Van der Walt had been killed in an engagement on 8 August, the new leader, P.R. Botha, could not keep the commando together. It dispersed, he said, because the horses were unfit for further duty "and especially because the Officers of the District Graaff Reinet, would not ... listen to me". The operations of the commando and its dispersal before the accomplishment of its object made matters worse, and once again the way was open for depredations right into the heart of the Swellendam district.¹

In the meantime Dundas, preparatory to handing over the administration of the colony to the Batavian government, withdrew the British troops which had been stationed at Fort Frederick and a Boer force occupied the fort. There were a number of other centres of resistance where the Boers huddled together for protection.²

(c) The Batavian Government

Commissary General J.A. de Mist and Governor General Janssens arrived at the Cape on 23 December 1802. The commandants and Xhosa chiefs came to an agreement

1. B.O. 24, pp.701-704: Tjaart van der Walt to A.A.Faure and F. Dundas, 27 February 1802 and pp.761-763: P.R. Botha to F. Dundas, 10 September 1802 (translation of which the original is on pp.753-759); Marais, Maynier, pp.136-145.
2. Records IV, pp.282-283, 337-339, 441-442; Marais, Maynier, pp.145-147.

not to molest each other, and the Hottentots agreed to stop depredations. The Batavian authorities found the district in need of much attention. A large proportion of the Boers were living with friends and relatives or wandering about searching for grazing for their remaining stock. Janssens, who set off on a tour of the eastern and north-eastern parts of the colony on 3 April 1803 wrote that: "One does not ask where does so-and-so live? But, where does so-and-so lie? Where has he trekked to? Does that little group of people still lie here or there?"¹

The Xhosa were still in the colony, and bands of Hottentots were among them. Everywhere he went, Janssens, and De Mist after him, heard complaints from the Hottentots.² Nor were matters concerning the colonists themselves in a more satisfactory state. Both Janssens and De Mist found evidence of a high number of disputes among the Boers. Individuals with grievances against others supported their cases with masses of declarations. At the village of Graaff-Reinet Janssens found, besides divisions, respect for nothing, fanciful ideas of rights and the law, and lust for vengeance, so

1. This was contained in a letter to De Mist (BHD III, p.218), also reproduced in W.B.E. Paravicini di Capelli, Reize in de Binnen-landen van Zuid-Africa, p.237; for other accounts of the journeys of Janssens and De Mist, see E.C. Godée Molsbergen, ed., Reizen in Zuid-Afrika in de Hollandse Tijd, II, pp. 167-189, IV, pp.100-209, 216-250, Augusta Uitenhage de Mist, Diary of a Journey to the Cape of Good Hope and the Interior of Africa in 1802 and 1803, Lichtenstein, Van Reenen.

2. See p.368.

much so that he felt it would be difficult, if not impossible, to restore peace and order; the trampling down of law and order was a habit, although the colonists spoke of their desire for good laws and strict enforcement.¹

The Batavian authorities, like the administrations before them, failed to establish a permanent basis for peace on the eastern frontier. When Janssens met the colonial chiefs on the Sundays River towards the end of May 1803, to confirm and strengthen the armistice or peace agreed upon by the Boers and their enemies, he failed to gain their removal from the colony. Janssens found many Boer refugees anxious to reoccupy their farms once he had concluded peace with the Xhosa. But eight months later De Mist found that the refugees had not reoccupied their farms to any great extent. This tardiness was probably the result of the failure of Janssens to effect the removal of the Xhosa from the colony, or to safeguard Boer security. After the conclusion of peace by Janssens, wandering bands of Xhosa were present over the entire southern part of Graaff-Reinet and the eastern part of Swellendam. While not hostile, they penetrated deep into the colony to hunt; they appeared at farms demanding brandy and tobacco and

1. BHD III, pp.240, 242; Van Reenen, pp.205-207; Paravicini, pp.153-154; Lichtenstein I, pp.444, 464-466.

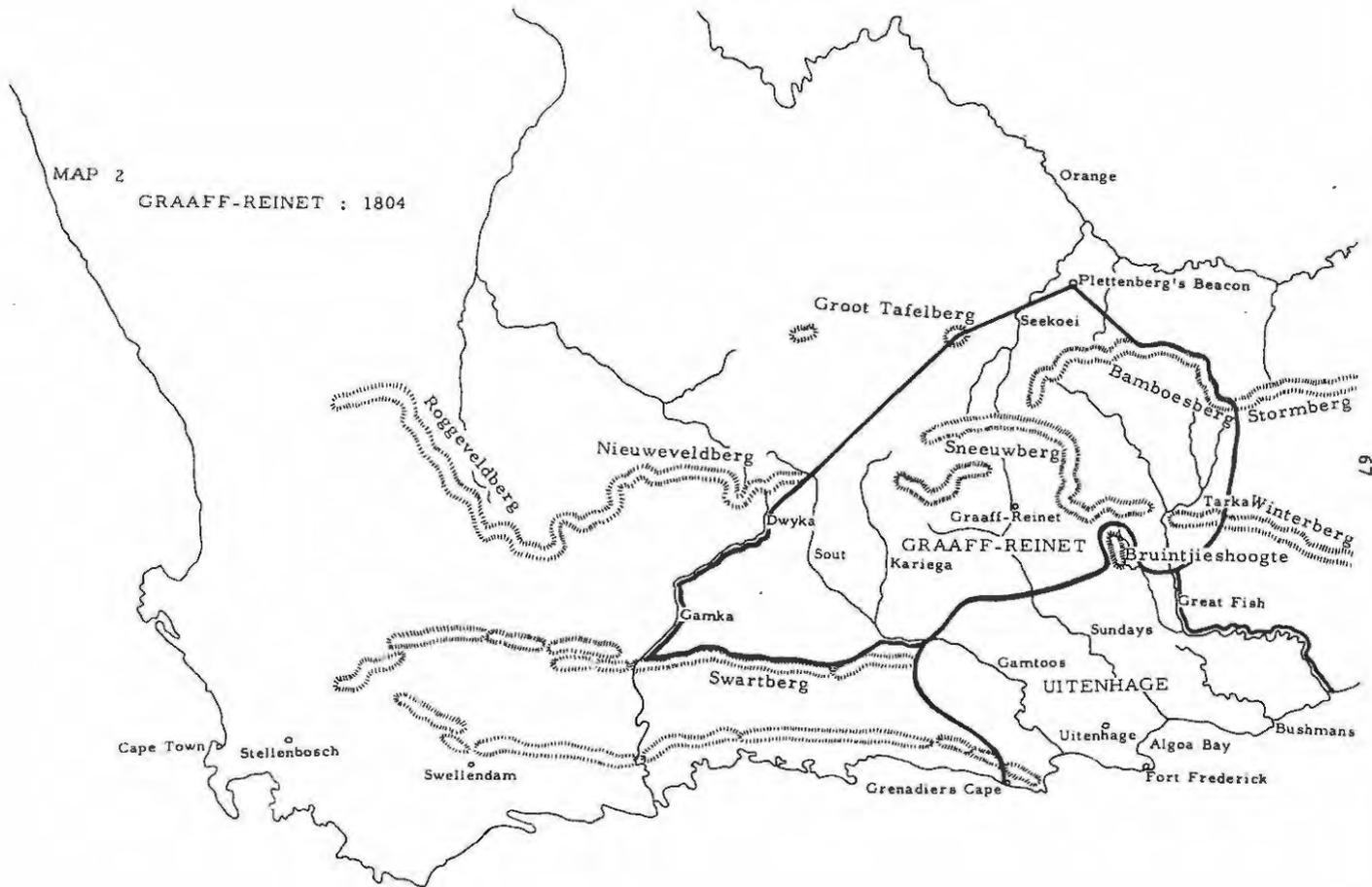
requiring to be fed at the farmer's expense. They sometimes remained for weeks.¹

The dawn of a new era in the relations with the Bushmen and the movement of the crisis area southwards highlighted the inaccessibility of the drostdy from Cape Town. In June 1797 Macartney instructed Bresler to consider the possibility of removing the drostdy to Algoa Bay.² Nothing positive was done to effect this during the first British occupation, but a step in this direction was the establishment of Fort Frederick at Algoa Bay in 1799 and the stationing of troops there. The Batavian government carried this to its logical conclusion. While he was at the village of Graaff-Reinet in February 1804, De Mist announced the division of the Graaff-Reinet district into two.³ The southern portion, to be called Uitenhage, was placed under the authority of Captain Ludwig Alberti. At the same time, Andries Stockenstrom, a Swede by birth, who was secretary at Swellendam, was appointed landdrost of Graaff-Reinet.⁴ Graaff-Reinet thus lost some of its most turbulent

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1. Van Reenen, pp.87-113, 159-163, 173-193, 201; Paravicini, pp.72-94, 114-116, 123-128, 143-144; BHD III, pp.229-230, 233-234, 248-250; Lichtenstein I, pp.268-269, 284-285, 390-420, 442; Molsbergen IV, pp.127-128; Augusta de Mist, *Diary*, pp.50-51; L.Alberti, Ludwig Alberti's Account of the Tribal Life and Customs of the Xhosa in 1807, p.108; Alberti, pp.104-105 maintains that most of these farms were reoccupied after Janssens's visit.
 2. Records II, pp.101-102; B.O. 27, pp.325-334; F.R. Bresler to Earl Macartney, 19 January 1798.
 3. See Map 2, p.67.
 4. Kaapse Plakkaatboek VI, p.128; BHD III, pp.172, 174; Lichtenstein I, pp.223-224, 466, II, p.15; Alberti, p.106; J.P. van der Merwe, Die Kaap onder die Bataafse Republiek 1803-1806, pp.127-129.

MAP 2

GRAAFF-REINET : 1804



spirits, who would henceforth be under closer supervision. The proximity of the new drostdy to Algoa Bay meant improved communications with Cape Town: disturbances could be dealt with more quickly and troops could more easily be moved into trouble spots.

Janssens apparently intended driving the Xhosa across the Fish River, but with the renewal of war in Europe no troops could be spared for action on the eastern frontier. Although the Xhosa remained west of the Fish River, Captain Alberti, who was somewhat of a politician, used the quarrel between Gaika and the Xhosa in the colony to some advantage. The fear of an alliance between the colonists and Gaika plagued the colonial Xhosa; Alberti exploited this, at the same time carefully concealing from them the fact that the government was unable to expel them, so that "they were disposed to consider any reasonable demands".¹

The desire to regain the cattle they had lost was still present among the Boers, and Janssens found it necessary to write to the commandants, pointing out that losses in war and from theft were two different things. Many people seemed to think that when peace was concluded most of the cattle would be restored, but this was wishful thinking. One could not say "'One must have it back', because, in the event of refusal, there is no alternative to the recommencement of war".² In reply the commandants said they had faith that the government would support their intention of recovering the land up to the Fish River, and they insisted on the return of their horses, guns and slaves, if not their

1. Alberti, p.107.

2. Van Reenen, pp.113-117; Paravicini, pp.85-86; BHD III, p.211.

cattle. They were sufficiently strong, they maintained, to recover their property "at the point of the sword and to provide a peace that would give quiet and security to your Government for years to come". This, however, they could only achieve if the government called out the commandos. Their attitude is reflected in Van Reenen's statement that although the government tried to maintain peace by giving presents, "it is not a civilised nation with which we have to deal; the only principle they recognise is that of might is right".¹ If the colonists remained steadfast in their mistrust of the policy of appeasement, and continued in their desire for commandos to recover their cattle and to drive the Xhosa out of the colony, the period of Batavian rule gave them little consolation.

(iii) A Tightening Control

It was by no means an accepted policy of the British government during the first occupation to assume more control over the remote interior, and the War Office expressed the view that the best policy to follow with regard to Graaff-Reinet would be to "interfere as little as possible in their domestic Concerns and interior oeconomy, and to consider them rather as distant Tribes dependent upon His Majesty's Government than as Subjects necessarily amenable to all the laws and Regulations established within the immediate Precincts of that Government".² In practice, however, there was considerable continuity between the first British and

1. Van Reenen, pp.117-121, 157-159.

2. Records III, pp.199-200.

Batavian administrations as regards the desirability of bringing the forces of law and order to the frontier. Dundas saw the solution to the various disorders in "a more strict administration of public Justice". Of those who wanted the government to exercise greater control in the interior, Sir George Yonge envisaged the subdivision of the districts. In one of the few spheres in which he agreed with Yonge, Dundas also saw the size of the districts and lack of efficient communications as a barrier, particularly to the collection of recognition fees.¹ The first British administration gave thought to the removal of the drostdy to the coast, which was effected by the Batavian government with the subdivision of the Graaff-Reinet district in 1804.

The British and Batavian administrations were both to consider the institution of some form of commission to the outlying areas to enable the central government to maintain closer contact with the interior.² This idea was, however, left to the second British administration to implement in 1811. The Batavian government did make an important contribution to administration by codifying the regulations and instructions to local government officials with the "Ordonnantie raakende het bestier der buiten-districten" of 23 October 1805; this stressed the role of local officials who, as leaders of the community, were expected to take an active interest in the economic and moral state of their districts.³

1. Records III, pp.15-16, 90-91, IV, pp.119-120.

2. Records III, p.90; BHD III, p.222.

3. J.P. van der Merwe, Bataafse Republiek, pp.145-156.

Another sphere in which there was a measure of continuity in the period 1795-1806 and which was aimed at a greater control over the frontiersmen was with regard to the Hottentots. The British had instituted a register of Hottentots; the Batavian government built on this foundation and introduced labour contracts to protect Hottentots in their conditions of service.¹ From the point of view of the frontiersmen, who objected to what they considered was interference in relations between them and their servants, the Batavian period of rule saw little improvement.

Although little was done in this period to effect any major changes, a pointer to the eventual replacement of the loan farm system by quitrent tenure in 1813 was the attention given by the first British and Batavian governments to the system of land alienation. There was a great need for some reform in the manner in which recognition fee payments were recorded in the Wildschutte books. These were originally permits issued for people to hunt game, and as this system of permits in time developed into the loan farm system, payments were noted at the foot of the permit. This was the only record of payment, and in December 1791 the Council of Policy said that it was extremely difficult to ascertain who was in arrears or what moneys were owing as these Wildschutte books had expanded to some thirty volumes, each of over 300 pages.²

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1. The steps taken by the Batavian government are detailed on pp. 368-370.
 2. Leibbrandt's Manuscript Precipis, vol. 30: Resolutions of the Council of Policy, 20 December 1791.

The British administration appeared uncertain of the number of loan farms in the colony, and Sir George Yonge in January 1801 thought that there were about 3 500 loan farms.¹ Barrow's figures, that the number of loan farms registered in 1798 was 1 832, of which 492 were in the Graaff-Reinet district, appear more correct. The opgaaf for 1798 showed 940 men and 689 women in the Graaff-Reinet district,² so it would appear that many colonists did not have registered loan farms. This was borne out by the statement of the meat contractors in 1791, that there were some 700 households in Graaff-Reinet, and somewhat more farms.³ It was probably only the best farms, with good supplies of water, that were registered in order to prevent others from registering them. The frequency of sales and prices obtained for farms are not known. Although a duty of two-and-a-half percent had to be paid on the purchase price of the opstal, judging from the repeated proclamations issued by the British authorities on the subject,⁴ it would appear that many farms changed hands without transfer being effected through the official channels.

The position regarding the collection of recognition fees was also chaotic. In a letter to Craig in October 1795 the rebel Boers said that they did not see why they should pay "Taxes for Lands and Places which we have always been obliged to defend at our own

1. Records III, p.385.

2. Barrow II, pp.81-82, 85.

3. See p.35.

4. Kaapse Plakkaatboek V, pp.139-140, 148-149, 247.

expences".¹ Even before this, Craig had decided to suspend the collection of arrears to "quiet the minds of the several persons concerned", as he had been informed that the collection of money "has of late been the subject of much trouble and disquietude". The remission of arrears, first estimated at 200,000 rix-dollars, was confirmed by proclamation: it was only later ascertained that the arrears had actually amounted to 399,896 rix-dollars. Arrears soon accumulated again, and by 1802 they stood at 78,000 rix-dollars.² This was clearly a field in which some action by the government was indicated.

The Batavian government also tried to bring some order into land alienation. When Janssens met the heemraad of Graaff-Reinet in July 1803, they could not tell him how many farms there were in the Graaff-Reinet district, nor what the position was with regard to the payment of recognition fees.³ Neither could full details be obtained in Cape Town, and there was no way of knowing if the persons under whose names farms were registered were still occupying them. They did make an attempt to remedy the situation by calling for new applications for all loan farms,⁴ but little could be

1. Records I, pp.208-211.

2. Kaapse Plakkaatboek V, pp.10-11, 90; L.C. Duly, British Land Policy at the Cape 1795-1844: A Study of Administrative Procedures in the Empire, pp. 24-25 and 24n.

3. Van Reenen, p.217; Paravicini, pp.183-184.

4. Kaapsche Stads Courant, 31 March 1804.

achieved in a couple of years to remedy a century of confusion.¹ Sir George Yonge, but not Dundas, had seen the need to revise the system of land alienation, and De Mist also gave his attention to this. He planned to convert the loan farms into freehold, to secure their more intense development, but had to abandon his schemes as a result of objections to the government's surrendering its rights to the land.²

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1. Kaapse Plakkaatboek VI, pp.123-124; J.P. van der Merwe, Bataafse Republiek, pp.142-145.
 2. J.P. van der Merwe, Bataafse Republiek, pp.140-145; Duly, p.37.
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CHAPTER 3

FROM FRONTIER TO MIDLANDS, 1806-1837

(i) The Eastern Frontier of Graaff-Reinet

The inclusion of the troubled Zuurveld in the new district of Uitenhage in 1804, relieved Graaff-Reinet of a large share of its eastern frontier problems, which now became the responsibility of the Uitenhage authorities. But the creation of Uitenhage did not put an end to all of Graaff-Reinet's eastern frontier problems; wandering Xhosa were present in the eastern field cornetcies until operations were undertaken towards the end of 1811 to drive them beyond the colony's borders. Orders for ending all intercourse and prohibiting employment were renewed. The Boers were exhorted to keep a closer watch on their livestock,¹ a step which would minimise the loss of stock whether because of theft, the preying of wild animals or straying. This was important since farmers ascribed all losses to theft and demanded reprisals. Patrols and guards were organised, farmers from all over the district being called upon to assist in rotation, as the Boers could not afford to be away from their homes for long periods.²

1. Moodie V, pp.56-60; Records VII, p.171.

2. C.R. Kotzé, Owerheidsbeleid teenoor die Afrikaners 1806-1820, p.78.

The security of the eastern frontier of Graaff-Reinet was very much dependent on events in Uitenhage. As Boers retired from their farms, so the Xhosa advanced, and as those closest to them were troubled most, no one wished to have the distinction of being the most exposed. Besides this, as the Boers of the Zuurveld moved up to Bruintjieshoogte and the upper Fish River in search of grazing, the pasturage suffered which caused further trekking.¹

By May 1811 the Xhosa had "by degrees got possession of a large portion of the frontier of Uitenhage".² Many of the refugees were in the vicinity of Bruintjieshoogte, where the Xhosa were also described as "very troublesome".³ In the Graaff-Reinet district itself, between April and June 1811, some 560 head of cattle were stolen in Agter Sneeuwberg, Tarka, Buffelshoek and Baviaans River: 340 were recaptured.⁴ Towards the end of July, Stockenstrom wrote that reports from Agter Sneeuwberg and Tarka had been received to the effect that "vast numbers of Caffres had forced their way thither under the pretext of merely visiting"; they had eventually been persuaded to retire and had "committed no robberies worth mentioning, but were extremely troublesome with constantly begging".⁵ Xhosa were also

1. Moodie V, p.58.

2. Records VIII, p.49; see also list of farms abandoned in the Uitenhage district (Records VIII, pp.50-55).

3. Records VIII, pp.56, 88-89.

4. Records VIII, pp.109-110.

5. Records VIII, pp.116-117, 131.

active in other parts and Stockenstrom strengthened defence posts and patrols.¹

At the end of September 1811 Colonel John Graham was appointed His Majesty's Commissioner for all civil and military affairs in Graaff-Reinet, Uitenhage and George.² From this date the landdrost of Graaff-Reinet ceased his responsibility for the military situation on the frontier.³ In October 1811 the government decided to drive the Xhosa out of the colony, by the joint effort of the commandos and the military.⁴ In the course of these operations Stockenstrom, at the end of 1811, en route to join Colonel Graham, was treacherously murdered by a group of Xhosa with whom he was holding parley.⁵ The military operations were a success, and for the first time since Boer and Xhosa had clashed, the separation of the two races was achieved. It was hoped to maintain this with a line of frontier posts along the eastern frontier with two border towns being established at either end of the frontier. Grahamstown, as the headquarters of the Hottentot Cape Regiment, which corps was to be extensively used in garrisoning the posts, was established on the southern end of the frontier, and Cradock was founded on the northern end of the frontier, as a sub-drostdy of Graaff-Reinet. In

1. Records VIII, pp.116-119, 130-132.

2. Records VIII, p.156.

3. A. Stockenstrom, (ed. C.W. Hutton), The Autobiography of the Late Sir Andries Stockenstrom, Bart., I, pp.117, 338-339.

4. Records VIII, pp.159-164.

5. Records VIII, p.236; Stockenstrom I, pp.57-61, 67.

July 1812 Andries Stockenstrom, son of the late landdrost of Graaff-Reinet, was appointed deputy landdrost at Cradock and in May 1815 he was appointed landdrost of the Graaff-Reinet district.¹ Although the operations to drive the Xhosa out of the colony were successful, the Boers had to remain on duty to guard the frontier, and "a considerable proportion" of the Boers of Graaff-Reinet were so engaged;² it was only in April 1815 that Lord Charles Somerset could inform Lord Bathurst that he had authorised the disbandment of the last commandos as the frontier was peaceful.³

Depredations continued along the Graaff-Reinet border;⁴ part of the trouble was trading. Boers in the Tarka and Baviaans River areas welcomed the Xhosa. By the end of 1818, when very little ivory had been traded at the Grahamstown fair instituted by Somerset in 1817, the illicit trade at Baviaans River was of "a considerable quantity".⁵ By the middle of 1816 both Bushmen and Xhosa were active in Tarka and Agter Sneeuwberg. Stockenstrom gave his support to commandos, but exercised careful control over their activities, ordering them not "to offer the least offence to any kraal of any description, of whose guilt they do not find the most indubitable proof, but on the contrary, to show

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1. Records VIII, p.445, XIX, p.64; Stockenstrom I, pp. 63-65, 74-75, 82-86.
 2. Records IX, p.326.
 3. Records X, p.293.
 4. Records IX, pp.276-279, 284-287, 324-327.
 5. H.C.V. Leibbrandt, ed., The rebellion of 1815, generally known as Slachters Nek, pp.866-867; Records XII, p.121.

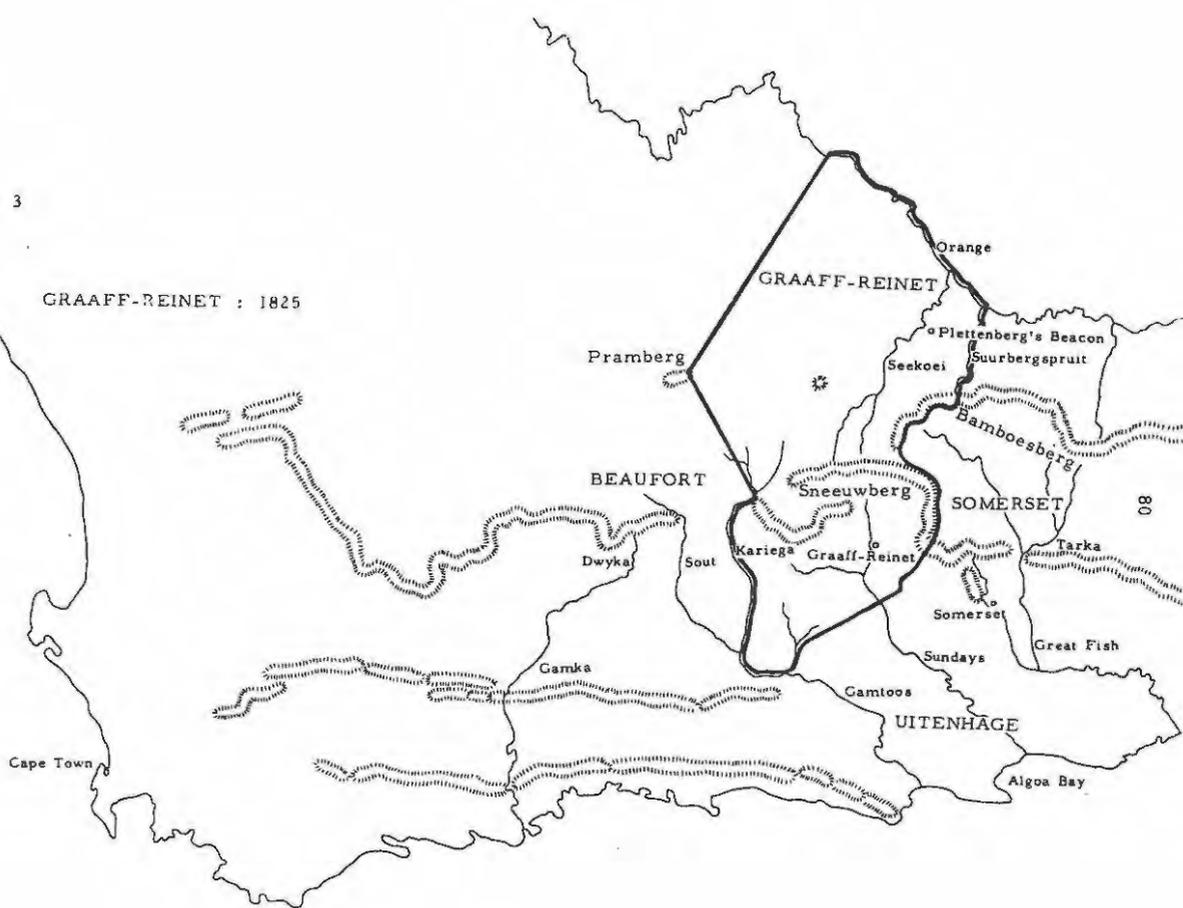
these, all symptoms of good will". But, as in the time of Maynier, what the frontiersmen wanted was a large commando, and they were dissatisfied when support for this was not forthcoming. At the end of 1816 field cornet Van Wyk went above Stockenstrom's head to the annual circuit in order to try and get some satisfaction beyond the normal pursuit commandos sanctioned by the landdrost against the Bushmen.¹

Although the Graaff-Reinet Boers took part in the war of 1819, the Graaff-Reinet district itself was protected by the presence of Gaika and his followers in the Winterberge and Kagaberge on the borders of the colony. This well-disposed chief had retreated thither after his defeat at the hands of Ndlambe at the battle of Amalinde towards the end of 1818. He remained there until after the war, when he had to move to the Tyumie valley as a result of the establishment of the ceded territory by Somerset at the end of the war.² The eastern field cornetcies continued to be troubled after 1819, and tension generated by the reprisal system introduced by Somerset in 1817, "at times threatened a renewal of the ancient hostilities" at Baviaans River.³ The Bushmen were particularly troublesome. The small party of Scots Settlers under the leadership of Thomas Pringle, established in the Baviaans

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1. H.A. Reyburn, "Studies in Cape Frontier History": V, Reprisals, pp.49-51; see also C.O.84: Report of the commission of circuit, (dated 1817).
 2. Reyburn VI, From Amalinde to Somerset Mount, pp.106-108, 114-115; Records XII, pp.152, 155.
 3. Records XXIII, p.197.

MAP 3

GRAAFF-REINET : 1825



River valley, provided evidence of how a guard and a proper watch over cattle was an important factor in reducing losses.¹

The establishment of a new drostdy at the Somerset farm was announced in March 1825, and W.M. Mackay was appointed landdrost.² Instead of making Cradock the centre of the new district, Somerset informed Bathurst that he had decided to remove "the Establishment of the Deputy Drostdy of Cradock (a miserable place which never could advance)".³ The creation of the Somerset district, mainly from the eastern parts of Graaff-Reinet, meant that the eastern borders of Graaff-Reinet were no longer contiguous with the eastern borders of the colony. The district of Graaff-Reinet was henceforth excluded from the direct impact of eastern frontier crises. She was, however, to remain a frontier district by virtue of her northern border.

(ii) The Northern Frontier of Graaff-Reinet

The Bushmen had ceased to be the major problem that they had been in the last thirty years of the eighteenth century. In areas such as the Tarka, the Nieuweveld and the Koup, they were still troublesome but, in general, robberies were less frequent, although periods of drought, when it was difficult for the Bushmen to obtain food, saw an increase in the incidence of theft. The circuit of 1812 summed up the situation by saying that it was "extremely difficult to say

1. Records XIII, p.472, XIV, pp.128-129, 136-137, 155, XVI, p.321, XIX, p.444, XXI, p.321, XXIII, pp.201-202.
 2. Records XXIV, p.228, XXV, pp.230-231; see Map 3, p.80.
 3. Records XX, p.403.

whether one lives in peace or war with the Bosjesmen; they are sometimes quiet for a long while, so that nothing is heard of them, but all of a sudden they appear, without being able even to guess the reason or the cause, plundering and destroying everything within their reach".¹

Of more significance in the north was the problem raised by the collection of a large number of Coloureds at the mission station at Klaarwater, later Griquatown. The beginning of missionary activity among these Coloureds who had withdrawn from the colony over a period of years² dates from 1801. The headquarters of the missionary institution became Klaarwater, and the name "Griqua" was decided upon for its inhabitants.³ The most immediate significance⁴ of their presence was that they came to the Nieuweveld and the Koup to trade, and when they returned, slaves and Hottentots from the colony accompanied them. The missionary Anderson was powerless to effect the return of such slaves or Coloureds to the colony, and was uneasy at the increasingly disorderly conduct of the inhabitants, of whom

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1. Records IX, p.81; see also Records VIII, pp.305-307.
 2. G.Thompson, Travels and Adventures in Southern Africa, I, p.76; H. Lichtenstein, Travels in Southern Africa in the Years 1803, 1804, 1805 and 1806, II, pp.303-304.
 3. J. Campbell, Travels in South Africa, undertaken at the request of the Missionary Society, p.252; J.S. Marais, The Cape Coloured People 1652-1937, pp.32-36.
 4. Their significance as a bulwark against Bergenaars and others, and the special relationship in which the government considered these people, lies beyond the scope of this work.

there were soon 1 500 men, with upwards of 300 guns. Stockenstrom did not want to prevent Griqua trade with the colony, but tried to regulate it in such a manner as to exclude the trading of guns and horses. He attempted to do this and at the same time bolster the authority of Anderson by introducing passes signed by the missionary authorizing Griquas to trade with the colony. The plan failed to achieve its object, for although the Boers of Graaff-Reinet appear to have co-operated and refused to trade with Griquas who were not possessed of passes, the Boers in that part of the Nieuweveld which fell under the Tulbagh district ignored the absence of passes, saying that the oxen of the Griquas were "the best passes they could bring".¹

In order to gain control over the unhealthy situation developing beyond the borders, in 1818 the government, following the recommendation of the circuit court,² announced the creation of the new sub-drostdy of Beaufort (later Beaufort West), composed of the Koup and the Nieuweveld of Tulbagh and Graaff-Reinet, and attached to the latter. As the new town would be on the "high road to all the Northern Field Cornetcies", it was expected that it would attract people who would be able to make a living from the traffic. A "principal object" in establishing Beaufort was to "counteract

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1. Records XI, pp.224-226, 228-230, 254-256, XII, pp. 34-36, 111-113, 246-248; Leibbrandt, Slachters Nek, pp.847-848; 50 of 1835, particularly pp.211-225; G.R. 8/7: C.Bird to A.Stockenstrom, 8 April 1818 and to landdrost of Tulbagh of the same date.
 2. C.O.95: Report of the commission of circuit, 17 June 1818.

further emigration" of the Coloureds, and it was intended to establish a mission station there. A market was also to be established to regulate trade.¹

The report of the Commissioners of Enquiry noted that sub-drostdies differed "in no respect from the constitution of the larger divisions, except in that of responsibility to the landdrosts and heemraden for the collection and appropriation of the local taxes, and the obligation of corresponding with the government through the same channel".² The position of Beaufort on the postal route to Cape Town made it even more independent of Graaff-Reinet, for J. Baird, the first deputy landdrost would "upon every extraordinary occurrence within the new subdivision correspond direct" with Cape Town to obviate the delay of corresponding with Graaff-Reinet further inland.³

The expansion of the colony, which had come to a halt in the seventies of the eighteenth century, was now continued northwards along the line of the Seekoei River, where the Bushmen were no longer a serious hindrance. Farms in the colony were no longer to be had. Unoccupied land there was, but there was no water to enable it to be used.⁴ In 1809 Colonel Collins found

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1. Records XII, pp.62-64, 80-87, 111-113, 246-248; G.R. 8/7: C.Bird to A. Stockenstrom, 2 October 1818; for the early success of the market, see Marais, Cape Coloured People, p.47; the missionary institution under Erasmus Smit had a less auspicious start (Reyburn IV, Tooverberg, pp.207-209).
 2. Records XXVII, p.357.
 3. Records XII, p.80; G.R.8/7: C.Bird to J.Baird, 4 December 1818.
 4. P.J. van der Merwe, Die Noordwaartse Beweging van die Boere voor die Groot Trek (1770-1842), pp.105-107, 113-115.

the land occupied to the northernmost point of the border. Almost everywhere in the colony he found people wanting farms, and people without farms, some living with relatives, others wandering from place to place.¹ Stockenstrom, who knew his district, in 1826 maintained that "there is not even a stagnant pool that keeps rain water for any length of time which is not regularly occupied, so that of course no spring remains vacant; and for many of them there are three or four applicants, the whole population consisting (with solitary exceptions) of persons who have not another place in the world".²

The Commissioners of Enquiry saw the

approach of that period in which the increase of population and the operation of the law that is creating a perpetual subdivision in the property of Families will at last compel them to contract the ranges of their cattle, and to provide for them by raising artificial food and affording them effectual protection against the changes of season and other casualties to which they are now so much exposed.³

But the failure of the government to maintain its border was to delay the approach of that period; the abundance of land beyond the colony's borders meant that little attempt was made to increase the carrying capacity of farms, or to limit the size of herds and flocks to the carrying capacity of the land.

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1. Moodie V, pp.2, 23-24; see also Stockenstrom I, pp.130-131.
 2. 50 of 1835, p.118; A.Stockenstrom to Commissioners of Enquiry, 9 August 1826; Stockenstrom I, pp.226-227.
 3. Records XXIII, p.196.

The Boers advanced along the line of the Seekoei River.¹ As more farms were given out in the Sneeuwbergers' trekveld, they had to travel further each year. Periodic migrations across the border led to permanent colonisation, as Boers who had no other farms remained there. With Boers coming and going, and some staying longer than others, it was easy to remain behind without attracting the attention of the government.² Droughts, springbok (trekbokke) and locusts played an important role in this trekking across the borders. While these were by no means unknown in the older parts of the colony, the area north of the Sneeuwberge was particularly susceptible to them. In times of severe drought the government was forced to give the Boers permission to cross the border, in the knowledge that the Boers would trek without that permission rather than see their stock die.³

Stockenstrom realised that he could not keep the Boers south of the border; he wrote that if he were

1. Records XXVII, p.384.

2. Van der Merwe, Noordwaartse Beweging, pp.118-119.

3. Van der Merwe, Noordwaartse Beweging, pp.176-180; in an article written by Stockenstrom and reproduced in Stockenstrom I, pp.34-39, he explains that on the plains west of the Seekoei River there were no permanent springs, and consequently, few people. There were, however, stagnant pools of water which were adequate for the huge numbers of springbok that lived there. Every few years in time of drought these pools dried up and the springbok migrated to the Orange River or to the colony. These huge herds destroyed all grazing during their sojourn in the colony. The moment good rains fell, they disappeared as suddenly as they had come.

"to force the people back to the south of the latitude of that Baken, deprive them of the refuge for their cattle, which they have enjoyed so long before my administration, and confine them to the higher parts, the first severe winter would destroy all their flocks, and the responsibility would be too great".¹ He felt that there was no alternative but to expand the colony's borders to include the Boers who had settled there, and thereafter carefully maintain the border. His proposals were approved, and in 1822 Lieutenant Bonamy and he began work on the new border which was completed in 1824. The boundary of the colony was moved to the Orange River, but the extension did not ease the land situation as it included in the colony only land which had already been occupied. The new boundary had hardly been fixed when it was evident that the government was not in a position to maintain it.²

The droughts and other natural calamities to which this area was so prone made it impossible for the Boers to maintain their livestock throughout the year on the land south of the Orange River. By the winter of 1825 drought conditions between the Sneeuwberge and the Orange were so bad that the government was forced to give the Boers permission to cross the border. As droughts, locusts and trekbokke continued to plague the Boers so the government was forced time and again to grant permission to the farmers to search for grazing beyond the borders. These factors continued to operate in the thirties as one natural calamity followed another in quick succession.

1. 50 of 1835, p.119: A.Stockenstrom to C.Bird, 29 September 1820.

2. Van der Merwe, Noordwaartse Beweging, pp.130-131, 135.

As it was possible for the Boers to change their pasture frequently north of the Orange, flocks increased there at a much faster rate than in the colony. These migrations, which kept alive sheep which would have perished in the colony, meant that farms in the colony could not support these large flocks, particularly in times of drought, as farmers normally stocked their farms to the limit of the good years. After good rains there was usually enough grazing in the colony for Boers without farms to use the land of relatives and friends, but as flocks increased this became more difficult, and a growing number of Boers without land remained behind permanently in Transorangia.

The thirties were bad drought years, and from 1834 to 1838 there were almost continual complaints. Sometimes conditions were not much better in Transorangia, but there was generally more rain here, particularly to the east. Even for many Boers with farms in the colony, permanent settlement in Transorangia was a worthwhile proposition, since it avoided heavy losses suffered when sheep had to be driven on a three day journey over parched country in order to reach the Orange; on returning to their farms in the colony after good rains, sheep frequently drowned in the flooded Orange.

Boers did not even ask for permission, but merely notified the authorities and departed. The government for the most part looked on silently. These trekboers who settled in Transorangia must be distinguished from the Voortrekkers who left the colony in large numbers from 1836 onwards. There was a willingness on the part of the trekboers to obey the government. The

uneasiness of the government over the presence of the trekboers in Transorangia with their slaves, which was also holding up the collection of data for working out compensation, resulted in orders in September 1834 for the trekboers to return. Good rains had only partially broken the drought, but most Boers moved in the direction of the colony. Many who had no farms in the colony, went as far as the Orange, where they were within easy access of the government.¹ The great majority of trekboers continued to regard themselves as part of the colony, and hoped that the boundaries would be extended to include them; many of them went to Colesberg to pay taxes and as such they must be distinguished from the Voortrekkers who left the colony with the express intention of breaking their connection with the colony. There were, however, also Voortrekkers who wished to retain some connection with the colony, and who objected to the removal of their names from the list of church members.²

It is clear that the great majority of trekboers wished to remain under the colonial government, where they could benefit from the limited educational and religious facilities it afforded. To a great extent the difference between the trekboers and the Voortrekkers was part of a continuing tradition; where the southern parts of the old Graaff-Reinet district of 1786 had been

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1. The expansion movement in the north in the period 1825-1838 is fully discussed in Van der Merwe, Noordwaartse Beweging, Chapters VII, IX, XI.
 2. Van der Merwe, Noordwaartse Beweging, pp.348-350, 365, 370-372; J.C.Chase, The Natal Papers, II, p.30.

in almost continual rebellion against the government, the Boers in the northernmost parts, then the Sneeuwberge, had remained aloof. They were more isolated in the north, and contact with the authorities was less frequent. This isolation was to have other effects on their view of life, as was to be seen later in the religious sphere.¹

In February 1837 the district of Colesberg was created to the north of Graaff-Reinet, for the first time since 1786 cutting Graaff-Reinet off from the frontier. Graaff-Reinet was henceforth firmly ensconced in the Midlands.²

(iii) Growth of a Town and the Growing Trade

In the period under discussion, the village of Graaff-Reinet appeared to blossom forth, as did the orange and lemon trees that lined its streets. The growth of the town in the first decade of its existence was not spectacular, judging from John Barrow's description of it in 1797 as

an assemblage of mud huts placed at some distance from each other, in two lines, forming a kind of street. At the upper end stands the house of the landdrost, built also of mud, and a few miserable hovels that were intended as offices for the transaction of public business: most of these had tumbled in; and the rest were in so ruinous a condition as not to be habitable.

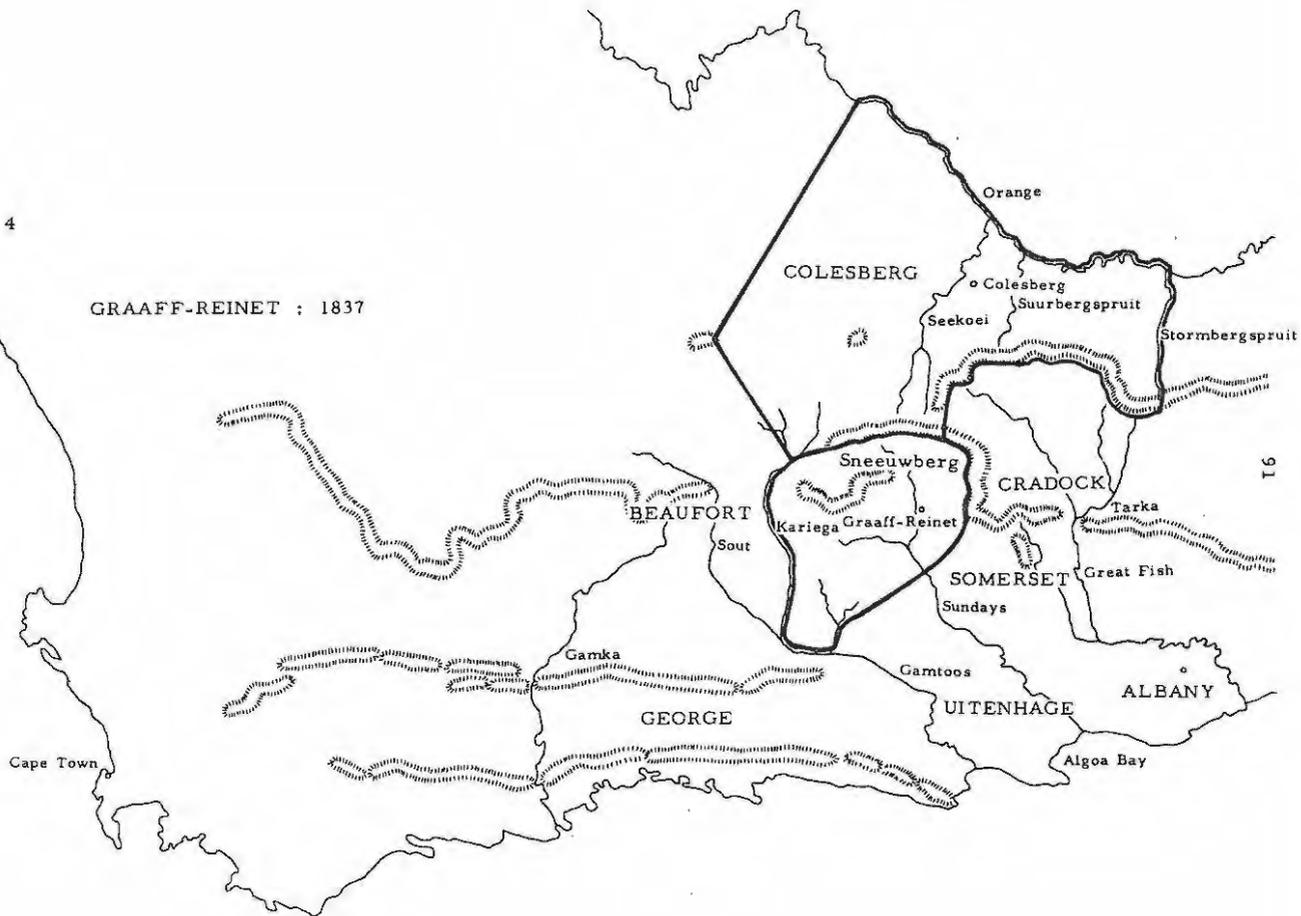
Henry Lichtenstein, who visited Graaff-Reinet in 1804, placed the number of houses at about twenty, and con-

1. B.Spoelstra, Die 'Doppers' in Suid-Afrika 1760-1899.

2. See Map 4, p.91.

MAP 4

GRAAFF-REINET : 1837



firmed that the drostdy "was the oldest and worst house in the village". In the years immediately following his visit the town appears to have grown at a fairly rapid pace. The first circuit of 1811 noted the beginnings of trade in the town, and found twenty-two tradesmen. Of forty-eight private houses, thirty-seven had been built since 1806. Somerset, who was there in 1817 found the village "already very populous and three new streets are there in considerable progress". In 1820 Campbell said that it had almost doubled since he had been there seven years previously. Thompson, who was there in 1823, estimated that there were 300 houses in Graaff-Reinet. Expressions of opinion were naturally subjective, and it seems improbable that Graaff-Reinet should have developed in the space of six years from John Montgomery's description in 1821 that it was "not thickly inhabited nor much improved", to a description in 1827 that it was "of considerable magnitude ... and from the rapid improvements made it already enjoys all the comforts, and many of the refinements, of an advanced state of Society".¹

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1. J.Campbell, Travels in South Africa ... being a Narrative of a Second Journey in the Interior of that Country, II, p.326; T.Pringle, Narrative of a Residence in South Africa, p.170; W.J.Burchell, Travels in the Interior of Southern Africa, II, pp.102-104; Thompson I, pp.41-44; The Friend of the Free State and Bloemfontein Gazette, Supplement, 30 December 1869 (John Montgomery: "Forty-Eight Years Ago"); Records VIII, p.299, XI, p.304, XXVIII, p.366.

For most of this period the only church in the district was located there.¹ After the arrival of the Rev Von Manger in 1792, the church appears to have suffered somewhat from unsuitable incumbents, while the frequent disturbances also interrupted its steady progress. By the time the Rev H.W. Ballot assumed duty in 1798 the first church was in a poor state of repair and he supervised the completion of a second church building.² The Rev J.J. Kicherer (1806-1815) did much to stimulate the life of the church, and it was during his time that the well-known parsonage, later Reinet House, was built. The circuit of 1813 reported that every year he visited his entire congregation, and that since he had been at Graaff-Reinet he had confirmed 2 000 people.³ His successors maintained the vigorous pace.⁴ The Rev A. Faure (1818-1822) appeared to be zealous, possibly too much so for the youth of the town whom he used to collect on Sunday afternoons and examine "relative to the subject of his sermon in the forenoon".⁵ The most famous of the Graaff-Reinet clerics,

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1. The Rev Taylor was appointed to Beaufort in 1818, and the Rev J. Spyker to Somerset in 1823; in 1825 the new congregation of Torenberg (later Colesberg) was established (D.H. Longland, Die Geskiedenis van die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Gemeente Colesberg, 1825-1875).
 2. Graaff-Reinet 1792; Herdenking by geleentheid van die Vyf-en-Sewentigjarige bestaan van die Kerkgebou (1887-1962); C.A. Els, compiled and ed, Official Guide and Picture Book of Graaff Reinet, pp.17-23.
 3. Records X, pp.80-81; Burchell II, p.109.
 4. This did not however apply to the Rev Schutz, who was removed from Graaff-Reinet in 1818 "in consequence of his continued misconduct" (G.R. 8/7: C.Bird to A.Stockenstrom, 9 July 1818).
 5. Campbell, Second Journey, II, pp.326-327.

Andrew Murray, was appointed to his post in July 1822.¹

The only school in the district was in the town, and in 1822 W. Robertson was appointed by the government as teacher. When he left Graaff-Reinet in 1827, there were 168 children at the government school at Graaff-Reinet. At the prize-giving ceremony on the occasion of Robertson's departure, one of the prizes was obtained by a ten year old "Mantatee" boy.²

In the early thirties the government free school was on the decline, and by April 1835 its enrolment had dropped to twenty-three, although it was estimated that there were at least 130 white children living within easy access of the school. This situation was blamed on the teacher, Mr Blair, of whom it was said that there was "a total want of confidence in him on the part of the parents, and on his part of a kind and conciliatory temper". At the same time seven private schools were attended by 123 pupils, who paid an average of 3/9d per month in school fees; four of these schools gave instruction in Dutch, two in English, and one in both Dutch and English, which may possibly be indicative of a measure of opposition to the English instruction in the government school, although the School Commission of Graaff-Reinet discounted this as a reason for the decline of the school. Those who were too far from schools to attend (it was estimated that there were some 1 500 children whose parents could afford school fees if there were conveniently situated schools) had to make use of tutors, who in this period received about fifteen rix-

1. Records XIX, p.60.

2. Records XXXII, pp.247-249; for details concerning the "Mantatees" in Graaff-Reinet, see pp.341-342 and n.

dollars per month, in addition to board and lodging.¹ Even where distance from school was not a critical factor, attendance was irregular as children could not be spared from the farm. M.J. Herholdt, who was born in 1819 in the field cornetcy of Voor Sneeuwberg, explained how "Het oppassen der schapen werd tusschen de broeders verdeelt, and wel zoo dat ik de eene week ter school ging en het ander week het herders ambt moest verrigten".²

There was some social intercourse between the races in Graaff-Reinet, and John Montgomery has left a description of such an occasion at the end of 1821:

One evening my fiddler and myself were invited to the wedding of one of the first merchants of the place, and I was much surprised to see that the company consisted of brunettes, who were beautiful as houris, and well and fashionably dressed - their hair covering their dusky shoulders. In fact, all the arrangements seemed to me unexceptionable, barring that the ladies had not been selected for the whiteness of their skins. However, they were splendid dancers, and possessed fine figures, small feet, and well-turned ankles.

Montgomery enjoyed himself, but had to pay the price of a scolding from a Dutch matron on the following day:

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1. L.G. 219, No. 19, pp.92-107: The School Commission of Graaff-Reinet to the Lieutenant Governor, 7 December 1836 and copies of letters: A.Berrangé to the Board of the Bible and School Commission, 29 April 1835, and (School Commission) to (Lieutenant Governor), 29 December 1836.
 2. South African Library Manuscript Collection: Herholdt Family (Lewensgeschiedenis van M.J. Herholdt, p.2).

"I did not understand much what she said", he wrote, "but still enough to comprehend that I had done wrong in going to the wedding and dancing with the brunettes although the scolding old lady was herself far browner than any of the brunettes at the marriage festival".¹

The influence of a vigorous church life was undoubtedly a contributory cause of the flourishing life of Graaff-Reinet, as also were the exertions of the Stockenstroms, which was the reason given by Pringle for the "prosperity and beauty" of the town.² Both the circuits of 1811 and 1822 attributed the development partly to the large number of wealthy people in the surrounding areas.³ It is true that there were wealthy people in the district,⁴ but their number is difficult to ascertain. The typical farmhouse in the Sneeuwberge, described by Thompson in 1823, was not greatly different from Swellengrebel's description of a farmhouse in Camdebo in 1776,⁵ but in the absence of timber for building houses, this hardly reflects a lack of prosperity.

One of the main reasons for the growth of the town may well have been that the town provided the best opportunity for practising agriculture as water for

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1. The Friend of the Free State and Bloemfontein Gazette, Supplement, 30 December 1869.
 2. Pringle, Narrative, p.170.
 3. Records VIII, p.299; S.W.J.Fryer, Die Instelling van die Rondgaande Hof (Kommissie van Regspleging) (1795-1820), p.180.
 4. See Thompson II, pp.97-100, and Pringle, Narrative, pp.171-173.
 5. Thompson I, p.46; see also Swellengrebel's account on pp.10-11.
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irrigation was available from furrows from the Sundays River. Until 1910 a large proportion of the inhabitants of the town made a living from the produce of their vineyards and orchards.¹ In 1820 Campbell was of the opinion that the further growth of Graaff-Reinet would be checked by "the great increase of hawkers travelling over the country with goods from the Cape".² It seems likely, however, that it was this very increase which may have been responsible for some of the growth of Graaff-Reinet. In 1821 John Montgomery named three country traders who apparently used Graaff-Reinet as a base, and for whom it was customary "to form trains, and go down once a year, taking about three months to go and return, and make their purchases. The traders took down spare oxen, bought new wagons, brought up loads of merchandize, and sold the wagons at a good profit".³

The development of the eastern districts of the Cape colony as a result of the arrival of the 1820 Settlers meant a new outlet at Port Elizabeth for the products of the farmers, particularly skins. The presence of the Settlers and the military in Albany betokened a new market closer to Graaff-Reinet than Cape Town; besides this, the Settlers who drifted away from their uneconomic farms in Albany gave a great stimulus to trade in the eastern Cape. During the

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1. This is an important aspect of the history of Graaff-Reinet, particularly the municipal history, and is discussed in Chapters 7-9.
 2. Campbell, Second Journey, II, p.326.
 3. The Friend of the Free State and Bloemfontein Gazette, Supplement, 30 December 1869.

twenties many of these men gravitated towards the various towns of the eastern Cape, where they not only found an opportunity to practise their skills but made a greater variety of services available in these towns. Steedman, writing of Graaff-Reinet towards the end of 1830 said that:

A considerable trade is carried on with the farmers residing in the interior districts, who bring down their produce, consisting of ostrich-feathers, ox-hides, soap, tallow, and c., for barter with the inhabitants, these supplying them in return with British manufactured goods, purchased at Graham's Town, and conveyed across the country in waggons; thus avoiding a tedious journey of a month across the arid karroo to Cape Town, whither they formerly resorted for their annual supplies - a practice now altogether discontinued.¹

The Settlers provided the impetus for wool farming, and the average annual value of this export was to increase from £8,184 in the period 1831-1835 to £30,229 in the next five year period, rising to £201,932 in 1846-1850.² By 1833 the Graaff-Reinet district had delivered very little wool, but the movement of Settler farmers to Graaff-Reinet brought a new farming element into the district, and the example of their success with wool was to break down the reserves and doubts of conservative Boers.³ The Great Trek to a certain extent aided this process for it made available many farms at low prices.

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1. A. Steedman, Wanderings and Adventures in the Interior of Southern Africa, I, p.124.
 2. G.M. Theal, History of South Africa, 6, pp.43, 207.
 3. For a history of sheep farming, see H.B. Thom, Die Geskiedenis van die Skaapboerdery in Suid-Afrika.

(iv) Labour

Apart from the conflict with the Xhosa, the southern portions of the Graaff-Reinet district were subjected to severe pressures in the period 1806-1837. The British government after 1806 continued the policy of earlier administrations by protecting the Hottentots in their conditions of service with the Boers. The law of 1809, which forced Hottentots to have a fixed place of abode, had the effect of channelling much of the available Hottentot labour resources on to the farms, and as such the Boers approved of the legislation, while the fact that the field cornets, themselves farmers, administered the law, ensured the Boers of a favourable interpretation of the clauses restricting the movement of the Hottentots. But the Boers were less pleased with the steps taken by the government to give effect to the clauses in the law which afforded the Hottentots protection. The institution of a circuit court in 1811 was a major step along the road towards bringing the forces of government closer to the frontier. In 1812 the circuit court came into the limelight when a large number of cases of ill-use of servants came before the court. Besides the fact that the Boers had serious objections to their Hottentot servants bringing charges against them, the situation was aggravated by the fact that the missionaries, whom the Boers accused of encouraging potential labourers to live in idleness at the mission station, should have appeared to play such a major role in the cases that came before the court. The belief grew that the government preferred the Hottentots to the whites, and further evidence of this was sought in the events that led to the Slagtersnek rebellion in 1815.

The trend of events made many frontiersmen uneasy, and the situation took a turn for the worse in 1828, when the landdrost and heemraden were replaced by civil commissioners and resident magistrates, while Ordinance 50 of 1828 freed the Hottentots from the legal obligation of working, so that vagrancy was no longer a punishable offence. Vagrancy increased and the enhanced legal status of the Hottentots after 1828 was a source of much dissatisfaction among the Boers. A further sign of the times was the emancipation of slaves from 1 December 1834. For a number of Boers financial loss was added to the distaste with which they regarded the idea of blacks being placed upon an equal legal footing with whites. These were among the factors which gave rise to the dissatisfaction and despair that were the roots from which the Great Trek was to grow.¹

(v) The Land

(a) Voortrekkers

While the Voortrekkers did on occasion sell property at a profit before they left the colony,² the evidence points to ridiculously low prices, which no doubt was natural where many farms came on to the market

1. Master-servant relations are fully discussed in Chapters 10-11.

2. H.B. Thom, Die Lewe van Gert Maritz, pp. 30, 81-82, gives details of Maritz's property transactions; for the sale of Pretorius's farms, see C.F.J. Muller, Andries Pretorius se Grondverkoop in Graaff-Reinet, 1837 tot 1838; 'n Hersiening van dr G.S. Preller se Gevolgtrekkings.

at the same time. Farms were sold for anything from £7.10.0 to £300 and £400 or exchanged for trading goods, guns, ammunition and wagons, depending on what the intending Voortrekker needed most.¹ In August 1837 Richard Southey wrote that:

My Brother George returned last Saturday from Graaff Reiniet ... every farm he went to, was for sale; and generally at prices below the cost of the buildings thereon. He bought for his Father-in-law, Mr. Rubidge, two farms near the Village of Graaff Reiniet, comprising fifteen thousand acres, with Buildings, Stone kraals, Gardens, etc. etc. for three hundred and Seventy five Pounds. These farms a short time ago would not have been sold for twenty thousand Rix dollars.²

The low prices for farms brought to Graaff-Reiniet men who were to make an important contribution to the economic development of the district, and who, through their lead, were to be responsible for making Graaff-Reiniet a major producer of wool.

It is not known how many of the Voortrekkers came from the Graaff-Reiniet district, and the secrecy with which preparations for the Great Trek were made renders any satisfactory answer impossible. Sarel

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1. Reminiscences of F.P. van Gass and J.H. Hatting, reproduced in G.S. Preller, ed., Voortrekkermense, I, pp.10, 116.
 2. Quoted by C.F.J. Muller, Die Britse Owerheid en die Groot Trek, pp.63-64; at the end of the eighteenth century the value of the Cape rix-dollar was 4/-. It depreciated rapidly in the early years of the nineteenth century, and in 1825 its value was fixed at 1/6d. At this rate of exchange the 20,000 rix-dollars mentioned by Southey would have been worth £1,500. For a comparative table of monetary systems, see C.F.J.Muller, ed., Five Hundred Years; A History of South Africa, Appendix II.

Cilliers's party which came from Nu Hantam included about twenty-five fighting men.¹ Apparently the largest party to leave from Graaff-Reinet, that led by Gert Maritz, numbered 700 souls, excluding Coloured servants, and had 200 men bearing arms.² Another well-known Voortrekker from Graaff-Reinet was Andries Pretorius of Voor Sneeuwberg. A return compiled early in 1837, which excludes the field cornetries of the newly created district of Colesberg, shows some of the difficulties in the way of field cornets assessing the number of people who intended joining the Trek. The field cornets of Agter Sneeuwberg, Op Sneeuwberg, Uitvlugt and Buffelshoek reported that no persons had left their areas with the intention of not returning, but that, of those who intended emigrating, some "seem not to have come to a final resolution yet, and others appear very reserved and unwilling to state their intentions". Of those who had already left the colony by early 1837, the presence of the trekboer complicated the calculations of the cornets. The field cornet of Voor Sneeuwberg reported that besides two men with their wives and five children who had left his cornetcy, "forty three other persons who are liable to pay taxes have left his ward during the last year but that he has not been informed by them or in any other way whether they were going out of the Colony or merely to some other District in the Colony". By early 1837, 31 men, 20 women, 65 children and 16 servants, had emigrated from the colony. Among these was Gert Maritz. As only 116 whites had left the district at this stage, it would seem as if the majority

1. E.A. Walker, The Great Trek, p.113.

2. Thom, Gert Maritz, pp.93-96.

of Maritz's party of 700 comprised people from other districts.¹

(b) Quitrent

Earlier administrations had given consideration to the replacement of the loan farm system, and in 1813 it was announced that henceforth all grants would be in perpetual quitrent. The administration in general had little knowledge of the needs or land practices of the colonists in the interior. The Governor himself had no knowledge of conditions in the outlying districts, nor was competent advice sought. Cradock's advisers were townsmen, and the only ones who could read Dutch were the fiscal and the President of the Court. Cradock failed to appreciate that colonists, such as those in Graaff-Reinet, lacked the necessary capital and labour to develop their farms, and that the availability of unoccupied land beyond the borders made such development unnecessary.

Nor was adequate thought given to the administration of the new system in practice. Duly's analysis makes this clear.² There were no standard units of measurement, and the untrained surveyors had chains of different lengths so that the diagrams of land were unreliable and most had to be redone at a later date. The survey costs were high, and a Boer who lived but a

1. L.G. 220, pp.85-86.

2. The discussion on land alienation in this section is based on L.C. Duly, British Land Policy at the Cape 1795-1844: A Study of Administrative Procedures in the Empire, pp.38-79, 89-94.

day's journey from the drostdy, who before 1813 had paid 24 rix-dollars for his loan farm, had now to pay over 413 rix-dollars in survey and related fees in order to have the same converted into perpetual quitrent.¹ Twenty-nine inhabitants of the Sneeuwberge informed the Governor that it would be impossible for them to raise such large sums of money.² Rents would not be uniform under the new system, but would depend on the nature and locality of the ground, with a maximum rental of 250 rix-dollars a year. In Graaff-Reinet in the period 1816-1824 most rentals fell between 30 and 100 rix-dollars.³ Charles D'Escury, who, as Inspector of Government Lands and Buildings with one clerk, was responsible for the administration of the system from 1814 to 1827 received no supervision in his task and he seldom asked for advice. He remained for the most part in Cape Town, and his policy of granting land shows that he was completely out of touch with the realities of the situation in the interior. Duly writes of his philosophy, that: "He assumed that by restricting the amount of land put into the hands of the colonists, the government could elevate the worth of the land and foster its development. Thus, he was suspicious of the land claims of the pastoralists; he preferred to make grants to the small, industrious cultivator of the soil". He believed in keeping rents high as this would prevent people from applying for more land than they could use, and would encourage a more intense development of it.

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1. For the cost of surveys, see also G.R.8/5: Memorandum of J.H. Fischer to Sir John Cradock, 21 December 1813.
 2. G.R.8/6: Twenty-nine inhabitants of Sneeuwberg to Sir John Cradock, 13 October 1813.
 3. R.L.R. 142.

Land titles were granted only after lengthy delays. The method of applying for a title was complicated. Applications were sent to the Governor who referred them to the landdrost. The landdrost, together with one heemraad and a sworn surveyor, formed a local land commission to inspect the land, suggest a rent, survey the land and make a diagram. The report and diagram were then sent to the Colonial Secretary's office, and passed on to D'Escury who prepared a memorandum which was transmitted to the Governor through the Colonial Secretary's office. If the Governor gave his approval, the Colonial Secretary's office prepared a title deed, which the Governor then signed; the applicant then received his deed via the landdrost. Further delays occurred when D'Escury could not agree with the rent suggested by the local land commission, or when he dragged his heels because he disagreed with Somerset's decision to reconsider quitrents already fixed. The recognition by the government of D'Escury's principle that only "qualified applicants" should receive land meant further delays. Local land commissions had to report on the property held by applicants and assess their ability to develop the land; more often than not, D'Escury returned applications to the commission for more information, which it was sometimes impossible for them to provide.

Further confusion was caused by the interpretation given by the Cape administration to Lord Bathurst's dispatch of 20 May 1820. This directed that in "future grants of land to be made in the District of Uitenhage, or any other settlements either to the northward of that district or more immediately on the frontiers of

Caffreland, it should be made a special condition of the grants, that the lands should be cultivated by free labourers alone". Bathurst intended this to apply to all land granted in the frontier districts, whereas Donkin thought it was intended only for the 1820 Settlers. When, in August 1825 this matter was brought to the attention of Somerset, he stopped issuing titles in the newly created Somerset district until he could obtain clarification from Bathurst. The Secretary of State affirmed that the prohibition applied to the "frontier districts", and Somerset's successor, Sir Richard Bourke, suspended grants in all the frontier districts, including Graaff-Reinet. In his dispatch of 30 October 1826, Bathurst agreed to Bourke's suggestion of a thirty mile belt inside the frontier, in which no slave labour would be allowed. The granting of titles was resumed in the frontier districts from February 1827, but as the thirty mile zone was not definitely fixed, applications for land which it was thought might conceivably lie within thirty miles of the border were set aside. The situation remained unchanged until 1835 when the idea of a zone fell away as a result of the emancipation of the slaves.

The above circumstances help to explain why land grants were made at such a slow rate. Little land had been granted since 1807 while the government was giving its consideration to a new system of tenure, and in 1813 Cradock said he had at least 3 000 petitions for land. D'Escury, up to the time of his dismissal in 1827, issued a total of 2 061 titles, which included town plots and loan farm conversions, but only 1 337 grants were for pieces of land larger than 250 morgen.

Although in 1824 there were over 1 000 petitions for land in the Graaff-Reinet district, by the end of that year only 140 352 morgen of land had been granted in the district.

Initially loan farms were to be converted within a year, but most Boers were satisfied with the loan farm system and had no hankering after more security of tenure; conversion was expensive and unnecessary, and applications for conversion were slow in coming, so that the government was forced to extend indefinitely the period of conversion. However, the clause which forbade the taking of new land before the conversion of the old forced most Boers to take steps to have their farms converted. In Graaff-Reinet, of 392 convertible loan farms 56 had been converted by the end of 1822, and a further 301 applications were on file.¹

As their petitions for new land were not dealt with until the titles of converted loan farms had been issued, and as few Boers had titles for their converted loan farms, they were unable legally to occupy new land. Under these circumstances the Boers simply occupied the land illegally. These became known as "request" places, i.e. land for which petitions had been submitted to the government, with the approval of the landdrost, who often registered the claim in his books, although the government condemned the practice.² When

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1. Sixty loan farms had been converted by November 1824 (R.L.R.142).
 2. Some Boers, notably those in the vicinity of Baviaans River did not apparently even bother to submit such petitions (Leibbrandt, Slachters Nek, p.882).

Somerset sharply reminded Stockenstrom that he had no right to allow occupation, the landdrost pointed out that the colonists had in many cases done all that was required of them to obtain titles.¹

The quitrent system failed both to put an end to the haphazard occupation of land by the Boers and to subject the alienation of land to the government's control. In fact the government had less control than it had even under the loan farm system. In the Graaff-Reinet district in 1824 there were at least 1 000 request places. Not only did squatting increase, but the Boers became unwilling to petition for land when they could have that land for nothing. It is interesting to note that of the nineteen men from the rural areas of the district who were reported to have joined the Great Trek by early 1837, fifteen were described as having no fixed place of residence.²

1. Stockenstrom I, pp.131-132.

2. L.G.220, pp.85-86.

B. THE MIDLAND SOCIETY

The development of wool farming brought a good deal of prosperity to Graaff-Reinet. It also brought a new farming element and saw the introduction of a large business community to the town. The rise of the wool industry led to competition between towns for the increased trade, and this rivalry had an important effect in determining political alliances in the Eastern Province. At the same time roads assumed a new importance, and much dissatisfaction was expressed at their neglected state. The advent of the merino was not the only significant development; the introduction of representative institutions transformed the political life of the district. A municipal board was established in 1845, to be followed by representative government in 1854, and the creation of Divisional Councils in 1855. The farming population of the district and the agriculturists of the town took no interest in political affairs, and the new comers tended to dominate the political life of Graaff-Reinet. The majority of Graaff-Reinettters were apathetic towards the separation movement, while the politically conscious section of the population were divided mainly along racial lines. Economic rivalry between Grahamstown and Graaff-Reinet, however, soon united Graaff-Reinettters in opposition to schemes emanating from Grahamstown. While there was some division of opinion among the politically conscious over the wider political issues of the day, there was no such division when it came to municipal affairs, where the business community of the town was generally ranged against the more conservative erfholders.

After 1828 there was less control over labour and many potential labourers squatted on crown land. Pockets of such squatters gave rise to complaints of insecurity and petty stock theft. The proportion of African labourers increased, particularly after 1857. The black population of the town grew rapidly. For many years the municipal authorities resisted the attempt to form a location on the town lands, but the overcrowding of hire-rooms in town and fear of disease led the municipal board in 1858 to sanction the establishment of a location.

The golden age of Graaff-Reinet was shortlived. The sixties began badly as a serious depression overtook the colony, and the rapid progress in the district in the fifties came to an abrupt end. The discovery of diamonds led to spectacular developments at the Cape, and the traffic to the diamond fields restored a measure of prosperity to Graaff-Reinet, while the opening of a rail link between Graaff-Reinet and Port Elizabeth in 1879 appeared to assure Graaff-Reinet of a share of the markets developing in the north. Although the wool industry began a relative and actual decline from about 1872, good money was made from angoras, and the ostrich industry brought a temporary prosperity to numbers of farmers. However, many farmers who had speculated in ostriches were ruined during the depression of the first half of the eighties. Not only did Graaff-Reinet suffer severely with the rest of the colony, but her railway line was not extended northwards, and she was forced to witness the northern extension go via Cradock. It was only in 1898, after a long struggle, that the Graaff-Reinet line was linked to the north via Rosmead Junction.

From the late sixties there was a change in the pattern of living of many squatters, as much of the

crown land in the district was leased. Numbers of white squatters found a precarious existence as bywoners, or swelled the ranks of the poor whites in town. Many black squatters found refuge on private farms, or gravitated to town, where the municipal authorities remained uncertain whether or not they preferred the blacks to live in hire-rooms in the town, or in the location on the town commonage.

In the town the English and other population elements were somewhat of a liberalising force, as witnessed in the English services which were held in the Dutch Reformed Church, and also in the growing number of Afrikaners who no longer felt at home in that church. Their dissatisfaction found expression in the formation in Graaff-Reinet of a Free Protestant Church. These same elements also dominated representation on the municipal board, where the clash between them and the erf-holders made municipal government virtually unworkable. The clash in fact led to a complete disruption of the municipal board in 1864, and to a more serious breakdown of municipal government at the end of 1886.

From 1854 to 1873 Ziervogel dominated the representation of Graaff-Reinet in the House of Assembly, but it was generally difficult to secure the services of other men willing and able to represent Graaff-Reinet in parliament. Grahamstown and the separatists dominated the Legislative Council until the mid sixties, which was a source of much dissatisfaction among many Englishmen in Graaff-Reinet, who united with their Afrikaner compatriots to limit the representation of Grahamstown. Until the establishment of a branch of the Afrikaner Bond in Graaff-Reinet in 1881, political consciousness was limited to a small group of English-speaking farmers

and to the mercantile community of the town. The advent of the Bond changed this, and did much to make the farming population at large conscious of their identity as a special group with special interests. The Bond gained the immediate and wholehearted support of the Afrikaner farmers of the district and the erfholders of town, and soon dominated parliamentary representation. Its concentration on the Afrikaner and his interests made English farmers wary of joining the Bond, and they formed their own farmers' associations. The Afrikaner Bond took up the cudgels to prevent the intrusion of English into the Dutch Reformed Church, and to gain a greater share for Dutch in the schools.

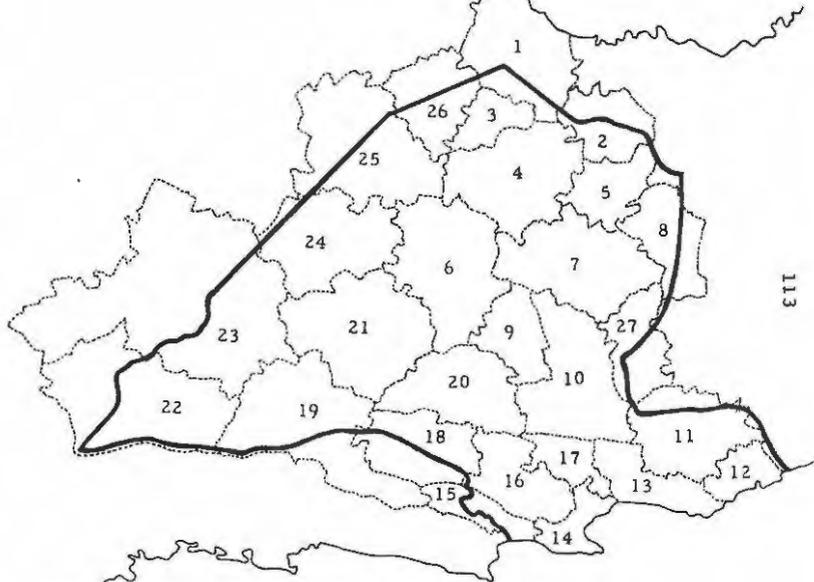
From about 1886 until the Jameson Raid of 1896 there was a turn for the better in relations between the two white language groups in the Cape, and measures for co-operation found some support on both sides. After the Jameson Raid racial divisions came to the fore, and the growing estrangement between Englishman and Afrikaner in Graaff-Reinet was nourished by the growing clash between the British government and the Afrikaner republics. The gulf between the two language groups widened as South Africa drifted towards war.

As far as Graaff-Reinet was concerned, there were two distinct phases to the Anglo-Boer War. Until the beginning of 1901 the Afrikaners could openly indicate their support for the republics, and on occasion, when counter demonstrations were made in favour of the British, feelings ran high. Although few rebels came from Graaff-Reinet in this period, the district was closely associated with the debate on the treatment of rebels by virtue of having two parliamentarians from the electoral division in Schreiner's cabinet. From the begin-

MAP 5

GRAAFF-REINET : 1798-1966

1. Colesberg
2. Steynsburg
3. Noupoort
4. Middelburg
5. Maraisburg
6. Graaff-Reinet
7. Cradock
8. Tarka
9. Pearston
10. Somerset East
11. Albany
12. Bathurst
13. Alexandria
14. Port Elizabeth
15. Hankey
16. Uitenhage
17. Kirkwood
18. Steytlerville
19. Willowmore
20. Jansenville
21. Aberdeen
22. Prince Albert
23. Beaufort West
24. Murraysburg
25. Richmond
26. Hanover
27. Adelaide



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ning of 1901 the situation changed. The proclamation of martial law and the arbitrary actions carried out in its name caused much bitterness among supporters of the republics, a number of whom were imprisoned or sent to Port Alfred as "undesirables". This had its effect on representation on the town council, which soon became dominated by loyalists, as sympathisers of the Boer cause found it awkward to carry out their duties under the watchful and suspicious eyes of the military. The presence of Boer commandos in the district caused more young men to join them. The mobile commandos also had a detrimental effect on farming operations in the district, as many farmers and their servants sought refuge in town. The influx of blacks into the municipal location was the beginning of a major problem for the town council, which had hitherto directed little attention to the organisation of the location.

The bitterness of the war years was carried through into the post-war period, but considering the strong passions which the war had aroused, friction did not assume serious proportions. In the town council, while the Bond was insistent that candidates supported by it should form the majority of the council, there was a willingness to allow their opponents fair representation in the council. There was also more fluidity in parliamentary representation. The espousal by the Progressives of the movement for the suspension of the constitution caused G.H. Maasdorp who had been elected by the Progressives in 1898, to throw in his lot with the South African Party. In 1904 Graaff-Reinet was to witness the unlikely spectacle of a man who had supported the British war effort and who had lost a son fighting against the republics being elected to the House of Assembly by Bond votes.

CHAPTER 4.

THE GOLDEN AGE OF GRAAFF-REINET, 1837-1861

(i) Wool, the Land, and Labour

The period 1837-1861 witnessed a remarkable growth in the production of wool in the Eastern Province. In 1836, 116 574 lbs of wool were exported from Port Elizabeth; by 1844 this figure had risen to 1 297 677 lbs, which exceeded the quantity of wool exported from Cape Town by 361 408 lbs. Port Elizabeth's share of the wool exported continued thereafter to outstrip that of Cape Town by an increasing margin, and in 1859, 15 465 632 lbs left Port Elizabeth, as opposed to 4 024 562 lbs shipped from the mother city. It should, however, be noted that not all the wool shipped from Port Elizabeth was produced in the Eastern Province; many farmers from Beaufort West in the Western Province sent their wool to Algoa Bay, as did farmers from across the Orange River. Of 6 160 916 lbs sent from Algoa Bay in 1853, 744 826 lbs came from the Orange River Sovereignty.¹

The contribution of Graaff-Reinet to this thriving wool industry was considerable. Whereas by 1833 farmers had hardly made a beginning with the breeding of merinos,² by 1850 there were in the Graaff-Reinet

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1. B.J. van de Sandt, compiled by, The Cape of Good Hope Almanac and Annual Register for 1861, pp.158-159; The Graaff Reinet Railway: A Letter Addressed to Scott Tucker Esq., C.E. by the Road Committee of Graaff Reinet, 1857, p.7.
 2. H.B.Thom, Die Geskiedenis van die Skaapboerdery in Suid-Afrika, p.168.

division 384 921 woolled sheep and 215 013 Cape or African sheep. By 1857 the number of indigenous sheep had declined still further, and the number of woolled sheep was in the vicinity of 1 250 000. The wool production of the division was to increase from 150 000 lbs in the mid forties, to 600 000 lbs in 1849, rising to 914 407 lbs in 1853, and 1 282 168 lbs in 1855. By 1850 only Somerset East had more woolled sheep than Graaff-Reinet, but Graaff-Reinet exceeded all divisions both in the quantity of wool produced and in the prices obtained for her clip. Her share of this industry may be gauged from figures in respect of nearly 12 000 000 lbs of wool, representing 42 000 bales, exported from Port Elizabeth in 1856; 7 000 of these bales came from the Orange Free State; Graaff-Reinet was estimated to have contributed 9 000 bales.¹

The value of the land was determined largely by the value of the products produced thereon, and the market possibilities for such products. The availability of capital and the example set by progressive farmers, among whom the newly arrived English-speaking farmers were prominent, led to greater activity in the building of dams and in experimentation with American ploughs and reaping machines. Pumps were also introduced, but the cultivation of grain was still severely limited by lack of accessible markets. Even where irrigation was possible, land was not always cultivated as scarcity of labour played a role in limiting agricul-

1. Road Committee Letter, pp.8-9, 19; C.O.5993: Cape of Good Hope Blue Book, 1851, pp.450-451; C.O.5998: Cape of Good Hope Blue Book, 1856, p.404; Almanac for 1845, p.317, and for 1851, p.240.

tural activities.¹ The move towards mechanisation was in part an attempt to overcome labour problems. The prices realised for wool led to a rapid increase in land prices. In 1857 a survey of forty-nine farms in the Graaff-Reinet division, drawn from all field cornetcies, showed a value of £192,250; the valuation for these same properties in 1843 had been £30,071.²

Land prices were high, but the difficulties in the way of obtaining titles were considerable. By 1836 only 706 conversions of loan farms in the colony had been made, which meant that there were still 1 500 loan farms, dating back to before 1813. The holders of these could not legally obtain new land until their loan farms had been converted. However, in 1839 it was agreed that new land could be applied for if application had been made for the conversion of the loan farm. In the meantime, in 1832, the government, acting on instructions from the Colonial Office, announced that all land applied for after 9 January 1832 would be sold only by public auction. But the Land Board ignored these instructions as it continued to process applications of quitrent claims made before 1832. After the reorganisation of the Land Board in 1834, the issuing of titles was speeded up, and in the period 1835-1844, 722 titles for land over 500 acres were issued in the Graaff-Reinet and Colesberg divisions. Surveyor General Michell tried to convince the Colonial Office of the difficul-

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1. C.O.5998 and 5999: Cape of Good Hope Blue Book, 1856 and 1857, Reports of civil commissioner; C.O.6002: Cape of Good Hope Blue Book, 1860, p.JJ 33.
 2. GRH, 25 July 1857; see also GRH, 1 August 1857 (S. Probart).

ties in the way of selling land by public auction. He pointed out that surveying errors had left bits and pieces of unalienated land, and that if these were auctioned they might find no buyers, or the farmer best able to use the ground might not be the purchaser. The British government remained adamant that land was to be alienated only by public auction at a minimum price of two shillings per acre. Its wishes were given effect in the Government Gazette of 8 September 1843, and the new freehold tenure came into being.

Land holding in the colony was certainly complicated, with unconverted loan farms, quitrent farms, land held on no more secure a basis than that application had been made for a title, and now, freehold. If a person wished to buy land he had to apply to the government giving details of its location. If the Surveyor General had no objections to the sale of the land, the applicant was required to deposit the estimated survey fees, which were refunded to him if he were not the eventual purchaser. The poor surveys made over the years meant that whenever land was to be sold, the surrounding land had to be examined to determine the extent of the government land. In the Graaff-Reinet and Colesberg divisions, between 1844 and 1846, only five plots larger than 500 acres were sold by auction.¹

The Government Gazette of 4 November 1856 announced new conditions for the disposal of crown land.

1. L.C. Duly, British Land Policy at the Cape 1795-1844: A Study of Administrative Procedures in the Empire, pp.114-118, 123, 129-138, 159, 163, 169-174; Almanac for 1851, pp.137-141.

The quitrent system was restored; land would still be disposed of by public auction, at a price sufficient to cover the costs of inspection, survey and title deed. The land would be surveyed by the newly created Divisional Councils, which would prepare a report on it. The Graaff-Reinet Divisional Council had considerable difficulty in persuading their surveyor to complete surveys, and it was only in July 1860 that the first public sale of crown land took place, with the sale of eight lots, seven of them without water, on the far side of Aberdeen.¹

The presence of large tracts of crown land to which titles could not be obtained encouraged squatting by both blacks and whites, and there were frequent complaints about the alleged thieving of black squatters.² The availability of crown land also gave an opportunity for blacks who did not wish to take service to live an independent existence, which was an additional reason for the complaints of the white farmers, at a time when the development of wool farming had placed a further strain on labour resources.³ The Cattle Killing episode of 1857 caused a great influx of Xhosa into the colony. This did much to ease the labour shortage, but it also added to the problem of squatting on crown land, and to overcrowding in the town.⁴

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1. GRH, 15 November 1856, 2 April, 17 September (D.C. meeting 9 September), 1 October 1859 (D.C. meeting 23 September), 1 August 1860.
 2. Squatting on crown land is discussed on pp.359-363.
 3. Thom, Skaapboerdery, p.384; see also Almanac for 1845, p.317.
 4. The influx of Xhosa after 1857 is discussed on pp. 343-344.

(ii) Transport

The development of wool farming did much to focus attention on the state of the roads. Graaff-Reinet's trading partners were in Port Elizabeth and to the north, and she had very little trade with the east, a factor which was to play a role in her attitude to the question of separation. The competition for the trade of the interior caused all Eastern Province traders and competitors to direct their attention to the neglect of the roads in the east. The Central Board of Commissioners of Public Roads which had been created in 1843 had the power to impose a rate on all fixed property for the purpose of improving and repairing the main roads of the colony. At the same time Divisional Road Boards were created to maintain branch roads in the division. From 1844 the Eastern Province began to complain that it was being neglected.

The Central Road Board gave priority to the improvement of roads between Cape Town and the eastern frontier. In April 1847 the Lieutenant Governor complained that convicts (all labour on the roads was done by them) were being taken from the east and used to construct roads in the Western Province. The Executive Council's statement of May 1847, that while no convicts "have been actually employed within the Eastern Division ... they have been employed for that division, by opening the Cradock Pass", made little impression on the Eastern Province.¹

1. For a detailed analysis of the situation with regard to roads, see J.J. Breitenbach, The Development of the Secretaryship to the Government at the Cape of Good Hope under John Montagu, 1843-1852; the quotation is taken from p.243.

By the end of 1846 Graaff-Reinet had paid £1,101 in road rates, and in 1847 it was stated that "not one farthing has been expended on its roads, which are becoming in some places impassable".¹ Matters came to a head in 1853 when the state of the Oudeberg road, the main highway to the north and west, resulted in a public meeting and the appointment of a committee to raise subscriptions for its repair. Almost £200 was raised, and temporary repairs to the road were effected.² Disgust with the Central Road Board was universal, and when the board which had not demanded a levy from Graaff-Reinet during 1847-1853, again levied a rate, there was a determination not to pay it. J.J. Meintjes, M.L.A. for Albert, was sued for £6.16.6. Meintjes won the case, when the Chief Justice ruled that it was clear from the Ordinance "that the entire proceeds of any rate assessed and levied in any particular division of the Colony shall be applied wholly and exclusively to the construction and improvement of the main roads lying and being in that division".³

This judgement gave Graaff-Reinet some satisfaction, but it did not improve the state of the roads. The road to Middelburg was highly unsatisfactory, and Graaff-Reinettters believed that they were losing the trade of both Middelburg and Colesberg, which showed a

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1. Eastern Province of the Cape of Good Hope; Documents Relative to the Question of a Separate Government for the Eastern Districts of the Cape Colony, Grahamstown, 1847, p.128; see also Breitenbach, Appendix XII, pp. 284-285 and Appendix XVI, p.290.
 2. GRH, 19 January, 9, 23 February, 20 April 1853.
 3. M.W. Searle, ed., Cases decided in the Supreme Court of the Cape of Good Hope during the years 1850-1867, II, pp.165-176; GRH, 13 July 1853, 8 August 1855.

tendency to go via Cradock.¹ This gave particular cause for concern, as the Bloemfontein traffic went to Colesberg. By 1857 it appeared that produce from Smithfield in the Orange Free State was no longer passing through Graaff-Reinet, but went mainly through Aliwal North and Burgersdorp, and from there to Port Elizabeth either by way of the Stormberge and Queenstown, or through Cradock.²

In its efforts to attract as much of the northward trade as possible through the town, Graaff-Reinet was particularly concerned about the road to Port Elizabeth. In 1848 work began on the road over the Zuurberg,³ but Graaff-Reinet regarded this as somewhat of a white elephant, and in 1857 there was considerable opposition to having this declared as the main road. Graaff-Reineters of all shades of political opinion were agreed that the road should go through Paarde Poort, a route proposed by Andrew Geddes Bain as the main road in 1856.⁴ They won their point, but the £1,000 initially voted by parliament for the construction of this road was a great disappointment.⁵

In 1857 a local Road Committee examined Graaff-Reinet's transport and communication routes and came to the conclusion that the salvation of Graaff-Reinet lay in obtaining a railway line.⁶ Although many years were

1. GRH, 21 March 1857.

2. Report of the Select Committee on Railroads, 1857.

3. For progress on this road see Almanac for 1851, p.120, 1852, p.84, 1853, p.80, 1855, p.80, and Breitenbach, pp.244-248.

4. GRH, 11, 18 April, 16 May 1857.

5. GRH, 20 June 1857.

6. See also pp.470-472.

to pass before the rail link between Port Elizabeth and Graaff-Reinet was completed in 1879, after 1857 all Graaff-Reinet thinking on the subject of transport was dominated by enthusiasm for a railway line.

(iii) Progress

The relative prosperity of Graaff-Reinet since it had become a wool producing centre, and its immunity from invasion even during the frontier war of 1850-1853, made it a place of enterprise and refuge. The internal migratory drift of people began to break down the homogeneous nature of the Graaff-Reinet population. In 1851 the Graaff-Reinet Courant stated that in the Graaff-Reinet district

we continually see whole tracts of country changing hands, young farmers grow up, and wishing to commence business on their own account, have only the choice of buying out others already established, whom they thus cause to emigrate, or emigrating themselves; the constant accession of new comers from the West to this neighbourhood proves that the same thing is going on in those parts.¹

As Graaff-Reinet was no longer a frontier district it was somewhat of a place of refuge and seems to have attracted people from the troubled frontier.² The editor of the Graaff Reinet Herald in its first issue on 25 August 1852 wrote that:

1. GRC, 6 June 1851.

2. Even Godlonton appears to have considered moving there (B.A. le Cordeur, Robert Godlonton as Architect of Frontier Opinion, 1850-1857, p.27).

It may perhaps be a matter of surprise that an English paper should spring up in a district hitherto considered almost exclusively Dutch. It will appear perfectly natural however, when it is known that many frontier English have been compelled by Kafir wars to settle in this district, and that many educated Dutchmen are so well versed in English as to prefer it to their own language.

The last part of this statement was undoubtedly an exaggeration, but it highlights the existence of another new element in the Graaff-Reinet community, the Afrikaner from the western Cape, who was frequently trained in the civil service and was consequently at home in English, and who in many respects had more in common with English townsmen than with rural Afrikaners. The pull of English culture was also obvious in the English services conducted in the Dutch Reformed Church.¹ When Bishop Gray visited Graaff-Reinet in 1848, he said that he had "both confirmed here, and administered the Holy Communion to some who were brought up in the Dutch Church". He went on to say that he believed "that there are many of the more educated of that communion, who, where they have an opportunity of judging of our Church, prefer it much to their own".²

The population of the town almost doubled between 1836 and 1860. The white population increased steadily from 1 261 in 1836, to 1 494 in 1847, rising to 2 193

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1. See Cape of Good Hope Blue Book, 1861, pp. X 56-57.
 2. Diocese of Cape Town; Journals of Two Visitations in 1848 and 1850 by the Right Rev. Robert Gray, 1848 visitation, p.79.

in 1860. The Coloured population increased from 1 068 in 1836 to 1 451 in 1860. In 1836 there were only 51 Africans in the town, which number had risen to 377 by 1855. After the Cattle Killing episode in 1857, the number of Africans increased rapidly to 1 036 in 1860.¹

The development of Graaff-Reinet as a leading producer of wool, and the position of the town on the route between Port Elizabeth and the north, drew not only Englishmen and Afrikaners thither, but also a sizable German element. Most of these were introduced to the midlands through the agency of Mosenthal Brothers, a branch of which was established in Graaff-Reinet in 1849.² Not only did Mosenthal Brothers buy or barter wool and "all description of Produce",³ but they were also responsible for the extension of credit to farmers, often through the financing of local storekeepers. They had their own freely negotiable banknotes and they continued acting as bankers until commercial banks became more widespread. Mosenthal Brothers also made an important contribution to the development of farming by the importation of breeding stock. They were not the first to import angoras, but they did much to establish the mohair industry; the first angoras which they imported were sold at Graaff-Reinet.⁴ The Mosenthals

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1. G.R. 14/112; G.R. 14/106; GRH, 16 February 1853, 5 April 1856, 1 February 1860.
 2. G. Saron and L. Hotz, The Jews in South Africa; A History, p.313.
 3. See advertisement, GRC, 6 June 1851.
 4. See GRH, 17 September 1852 and 3 August 1853 for sales of Tibetan and Merino rams; the first sale of angoras took place in 1857 {L. Herrman, History of the Jews in South Africa (from the Earliest Times to 1895), facing p. 214}.

were not the first Jewish settlers in Graaff-Reinet; Isaac Bauman was trading in Graaff-Reinet in 1837. But the Mosenthals were responsible for the immigration of "some scores" of Jewish families from the Duchy of Hesse-Cassel to South Africa; in fact, "the Mosenthals and their industrial and commercial activities were the means of introducing into South Africa nearly half the Jewish families who came to this land between 1845 and 1870".¹ Many of these either took up employment with the Mosenthals or were set up in business by them. Not all of them, however, entered business, and many of the medical men in the midlands came from their ranks. A Jewish congregation was established in Graaff-Reinet in 1856.²

Other religious denominations were active in Graaff-Reinet at this time. In 1845 the Rev William Long of the Church of England was stationed at Graaff-Reinet. The membership of this church rose from 300 at the beginning of the fifties to 500 a decade later.³ Bishop Gray visited Graaff-Reinet in 1848 and again in 1850. On his first visit he confirmed forty-eight candidates, and plans were made for the erection of a church building. Some £900 had already been collected or promised, and during Gray's visit contributions to the fund were made by members of the Jewish community. When Gray visited Graaff-Reinet in October 1850, he consecrated the church which he described as "the best

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1. Herrman, pp.209-212, 216; Saron and Hotz, p.313.
 2. Herrman, pp.203, 208-216; Saron and Hotz, pp.303, 306, 313, 349-351; E.H. Burrows, A History of Medicine in South Africa up to the end of the Nineteenth Century, pp.187-188.
 3. C.O. 5993: Cape of Good Hope Blue Book, 1851, pp. 352-353, and 1861, pp. X 56-57.

church in the diocese"; it could seat some 250 people, and although it was not quite finished, had cost almost £1,600.¹ The Rev Long left Graaff-Reinet in 1854 and was succeeded by the Rev W.A. Steabler, who continued to serve the parish until 1894, during which time he played a prominent role in the welfare and charitable activities of the town.²

The Roman Catholic Church was also active in Graaff-Reinet about this time. In October 1850 Gray recorded that a Roman Catholic priest and three nuns had arrived "within the last few months", and were applying themselves in the field of education.³ In the decade between 1850 and 1860 this denomination had between eighty and one hundred members, and an average attendance of between thirty and forty persons.⁴

Progress in town was impressive. The period 1836-1863, which witnessed the establishment of thirty-one private banks in South Africa, saw two such institutions established in Graaff-Reinet. A branch of the Union Bank of Cape Town, founded in 1847, was established in Graaff-Reinet in 1848. A difference of opinion between the local directors and the headquarters of the bank resulted in the resignation of the former, who were responsible for the formation in December 1848 of the

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1. Journals of Two Visitations, 1848 visitation, pp. 77-80, 1850 visitation, pp.8-11, 168-169.
 2. C.G. Henning, A Cultural History of Graaff Reinet (1786-1886), pp.357-358, 371-372.
 3. Journals of Two Visitations, 1850 visitation, pp. 10-11.
 4. C.O. 5993: Cape of Good Hope Blue Book, 1851, pp. 352-353, 1861, pp. X 56-57.

Graaff-Reinet Bank. The prospectus of the second local bank, the South African Central Bank, was issued in February 1854.¹

Besides wool, "immense quantities" of hides and skins passed through Graaff-Reinet. Warehouses sprang up in the town, which also boasted a large number of transport riders.² Many professional carriers avoided the route between Graaff-Reinet and Port Elizabeth in times of drought because of the difficulty in obtaining water, and much of the transport was in the hands of farmers. Those from Zwart Ruggens were particularly active in this sphere and erfholders in the town also found transport riding a lucrative sideline.³ The civil commissioner's report in the Blue Book for 1857 stated that: "The wagon-maker's trade is still carried on here to a great extent, and gives employment to a large number of tradesmen. Several thousands of pounds are annually realized by the sale of wagons constructed here, and disposed of at other places".⁴ As late as 1887, when the wagon was going into a slow decline because of

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1. E.H.D. Arndt, Banking and Currency Development in South Africa (1652-1927), pp.240-244, 253-254; C.G.W.Schumann, Structural Changes and Business Cycles in South Africa 1806-1936, p.56.
 2. Road Committee Letter, p.10; Almanac for 1854, pp. 218-219.
 3. For the difficulties on this road, see GRH, 11, 18 April, 16 May 1857, 27 August, 8 October 1859.
 4. C.O.5999: Cape of Good Hope Blue Book, 1857, pp.486-487 (FF 5-6).

the advent of the railway, fifteen persons on the voters list of the town were described as wagon makers.¹

As with farming properties, the value of land in town increased. The value of fixed property in the town, put at about £100,000 in 1843, was valued by the municipal commissioners in 1857 at £271,160.² The Road Committee in 1857 boasted that: "Already one steam engine is at work, and another of 20-horse power will soon be erected. The value of the annual produce of the Town alone, in Wine, Brandy, Fruits, and c. is more than £10,000, and the revenue from its public market will this year be very nearly equal to that of Graham's Town".³ The fifties witnessed much building activity and the subdivision of many erven into small plots for building.⁴ By the middle of 1859 the building fever seems to have abated somewhat, and many artisans were reported to be seeking work in the villages which had sprung up in the midlands.⁵

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1. Cape of Good Hope; List of Persons Residing in the Electoral Division of Graaff-Reinet, whose Names have been Registered in the year 1887, as Qualified to Vote in the Election of Members for the Parliament of this Colony.
 2. The exact figure for 1843 is uncertain (Almanac for 1851, p.141, 1852, pp.92-99, 1855, p.83); GRH, 1 August 1857 (S. Probart).
 3. Road Committee Letter, p.4.
 4. GRH, 5 January, 12 July 1856, 10 April, 8 May, 26 June, 17 July 1858 (Advertisement columns).
 5. GRH, 16 July 1859.

The establishment of new villages reduced the extensive nagmaal trade of Graaff-Reinet,¹ but at the same time the town became the centre from which business men could expand their activities. Thus, when erven were sold for the establishment of Middelburg in 1852, Graaff-Reinet business men were among the chief purchasers of sites.² These villages stimulated trade in Graaff-Reinet, and the civil commissioner towards the end of the sixties said that the brisk trade was "owing mainly to the principal storekeepers having branch establishments northward, from which large quantities of wool are sent here en route for Port Elizabeth".³ Richmond was founded in the early forties, and became a separate division in 1858. The establishment of most of these new centres was the result of the extension of church facilities. A local church committee obtained permission for the establishment of a church, purchased a farm, which was then subdivided and sold as erven for the site of a town; the money raised was used to erect a church and parsonage. Murraysburg, so named after Graaff-Reinet's long serving minister, which was established at the end of 1855 as part of the Graaff-Reinet division, became a separate division in 1858. Aberdeen was also established in 1855,⁴ and remained part of the Graaff-Reinet division until 1880. Murraysburg was

1. GRH, 18 October 1856, 16 July 1859.

2. GRH, 8 September 1852.

3. Cape of Good Hope Blue Book, 1869, Report of civil commissioner, p. JJ 35.

4. Almanac for 1856, p.233, 1859, p.313, 1861, p.127; Road Committee Letter, pp. 4-5.

able to develop more quickly than Aberdeen in the early years of its existence, as the sale of erven at Aberdeen had not realised much more than the purchase price of the farm, while in Murraysburg, after provision had been made for a church and parsonage, there was a surplus of £3,000 which could be earmarked for the erection of public buildings.¹

For most of the forties no retail liquor licences were granted in Graaff-Reinet, and liquor could only be purchased wholesale.² The campaign against the granting of retail licences had as its aim the "proper preservation of order in this Town", according to a 1848 resolution of the municipal board. The commissioners believed that a ban on retail licences would benefit "the lower classes who are the victims under retail Licences".³ The "lower classes" here referred to were the blacks of the town, for the ban certainly did not affect the erfholders who produced their own wine and brandy. Representations to the magistrate were successful and no retail licences were granted until 1852.

In 1852 drunkards were very much in evidence in the streets of the town, and this provided much support for the campaigners against the granting of licences. The increased evidence of drunkenness was partially caused by the issuing of licences on condition that no

1. C.O. 5998: Cape of Good Hope Blue Book, 1856, pp.404-405.

2. Almanac for 1845, p.317.

3. Minutes of Special municipal meeting, 10 June 1848.

liquor was consumed on the premises. As the Herald clearly saw, by this arrangement the seller was

relieved from all the anxiety and annoyance caused by drunkards, who are thrust at once upon the neighbours and the public. Under this system (apparently framed for the express convenience of the canteen keeper) the public are not even admitted over the threshold, but a window of the house is opened, from whence the spirits are retailed. Whatever brawls may occur, the publican takes no heed; the street is the canteen, and he makes the most of the convenience.¹

In 1853 all seventeen applications for licences were refused. In taking this action the Licensing Court was supported by memorials from the municipal board, missionary groups and neighbouring farmers.² The farmers were always to a certain extent opposed to country canteens because they believed that these tended to create disorder among their labourers and that, by exchanging livestock, skins and wool for liquor, canteen keepers encouraged thieving. The canteen keepers for their part attributed the opposition of the farmers to their fear of losing the good trade they did in selling their own brandy.³ In 1854, all but one of the twenty-seven applications for retail licences were refused.⁴

Feelings ran high in the district, and John Fincham, who kept Fincham's Royal under the Old Berg

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1. GRH, 24 August 1853, 1 February, 12 April 1854.
 2. GRH, 23 March 1853.
 3. See for example, GRH, 21 March 1868 (Licensing Board), 20 August 1870.
 4. GRH, 15 February, 22 March 1854.

(Oudeberg) was forced to advertise that he had no hotel or tap licence. At the same time he notified "those 24 parties who signed a Memorial to the Resident Magistrate and Justices of the Peace, against granting him an Hotel Licence at this place, that they are respectfully warned to keep their distance; and at the same time they are requested to pay their debts due to him".¹

The blacks whom the ban was supposed to protect, (and there can be little doubt that they were to be protected not so much in their own interests as in the interests of their white employers, and of those who had been forced to witness their debauchery in the streets) easily obtained their liquor from smuggler shops, of which it was estimated there were between forty and sixty.² Apart from buying from these "sly grog shops", would-be tipplers could club together and legally purchase large quantities of liquor from wholesale merchants, and "it was a common occurrence to see two Kafirs bearing suspended on a pole between them a half aum of brandy, which they were conveying to an eager company, assembled in some hut or den, where all who had subscribed to its purchase might swig till the contents were exhausted".³ There were few people in town opposed to a ban that aimed at raising the moral tone of the town. However, it seemed that drunkenness was not declining, but only that drunkards were less in evidence as the owners of illicit canteens tried to keep their inebriated customers out of sight. A suspicion also

1. GRH, 26 April 1854 (Advertisement columns).
 2. GRH, 24 August 1853, 5 January, 1 March 1856.
 3. GRH, 28 February 1857.

arose that many who memorialised the Licensing Court against granting licences were not disinterested parties, and that the erfholders were doing well out of selling their newly-bottled wine.¹

Retail licences were again granted from 1856, and hotel keeping became a worthwhile undertaking. John Humphries announced the forthcoming opening of the Royal Oak in Market Square and promised that: "During the winter evenings frequenters of the Hotel can obtain Welsh Rabbits and hot Whiskey punch after the old English style". There can be little doubt that the granting of retail licences made life in the harsh Karroo somewhat more comfortable.²

There was in general very little difference of opinion in the ranks of the white community about relationships between black and white. White Graaff-Reinettters fought against establishing a location for blacks, but the problem of overcrowding in hire-rooms after the influx of Xhosa from 1857 forced the city fathers to establish a location out of a fear of disease spreading through the town. No sooner had the location come into being than it became the target of complaints concerning theft.³

There were no serious disagreements among the whites concerning the location, but in other respects the introduction of new population elements from Albany,

1. GRH, 29 March, 5 April 1854, 21 March 1855 (Editorial and correspondent "John Bull").
2. Extra to the GRH, 12 April 1856 (Advertisement columns).
3. The establishment of the location is discussed at length in Chapter 11.



The Drostdy Hotel, a well-known landmark, as it appeared in 1879

the western Cape and Europe, soon saw the town divided into two separate and distinct communities, the erfholders of the west end of town, and the mercantile community of the east end of town. Much of the conflict between these two groups was concerned with clashing cultural objectives, and was to make municipal government in Graaff-Reinet after 1845 virtually unworkable. The business and professional community took the lead in trying to improve the facilities in the town, and the erfholders attempted to thwart their efforts by denying them the money to effect improvements.¹

If the erfholders of the town showed little enthusiasm for the benefits of municipal government, the Afrikaner farmers of the district did not evince any eagerness at the extension of the elective principle to the district as a whole with the establishment of the Divisional Council system in 1855. In the early years of its existence, the farmers paid little attention to Divisional Council affairs.² Only a small group of English-speaking farmers in the district showed any interest in the wider political questions of the day. In the town it was the business sector who took an interest in politics. They were not united to the same extent as they were where municipal questions were concerned; the division was along racial lines and was reflected in the different backgrounds of men who had their roots either in Albany or Cape Town. The greatest

1. This clash between the two groups is analysed in some detail in Chapters 7-8.

2. See also p.479.

divergence of opinion revolved around the personality of Stockenstrom who was popular among the old population elements of Graaff-Reinet, while many of the new comers from Albany shared Grahamstown's dislike of him.

The differences between Graaff-Reinet and Grahamstown were reflected in the Eighth Frontier War, when the majority of Graaff-Reinnetters refused to serve in the war. The anti-convict crisis was the occasion of another sharp difference of opinion, with some Englishmen in Graaff-Reinet supporting the stand taken by Godlonton in the Graham's Town Journal. This same division of opinion was evident in the introduction of representative government in 1854. The interests of Graaff-Reinet and Grahamstown were too divergent for them to be in accord over the question of separation. Until about 1857 Graaff-Reinnetters were divided on the question, but economic rivalry between Grahamstown and Graaff-Reinet was to bring Graaff-Reinnetters together in their fight against any plan emanating from Grahamstown. As the separation movement progressed, Graaff-Reinet became more convinced that it was a plot to secure the dominance of Grahamstown over the whole Eastern Province. At various times in the course of the separation agitation, a majority could probably have been obtained for the removal of the seat of government to the east, but with the seat at Uitenhage, not at Grahamstown. From 1857 onwards Graaff-Reinet's interest in a rail link became an additional reason for her suspicion of separation.¹

1. The subject of separation, friction between Graaff-Reinet and Grahamstown, and political alliances in general, is fully discussed in Chapter 12.

(iv) Education

Although Blair had resigned by the end of 1836,¹ there was no real improvement in the fortunes of the government school, and private schools continued to do well. Two of the best known private institutions in the fifties were the Grammar School conducted by the Rev George Brown, and the school of P.A. Luckhoff, mainly patronised by Afrikaners. In 1854 these two schools had 112 children.²

In 1853 the Graaff-Reinet Courant blamed the teacher, George Bremner, for the failure of the government school, and claimed that he had succeeded in alienating most of the townsmen. The newspaper also laid part of the blame on the Superintendent General of Education, Rose Innes, who it said did little to supervise the activities of the school, "having his time so completely taken up with extra-official business, that he has habitually neglected to exercise any supervision over his establishments, except a quintennial tour for the benefit of his health".³ Bremner wrote that "The

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1. L.G. 219, No.19, pp.92-107: The School Commission of Graaff-Reinet to Lieutenant Governor, 7 December 1836, and copies of letters: A.Berrangé to the Board of the Bible and School Commission, 29 April 1835, and (School Commission) to (Lieutenant Governor), 29 December 1836.
 2. GRH, 27 December 1854.
 3. GRC, 20 August 1853; see also GRC, 6,27 August, 17 September 1853 ("N.N."); the GRH, however, put much of the blame for the failure of the school on the parents (GRH, 10, 17 August 1853).

late School Committee and the present Divisional Council¹ have taken no interest, and declined to take any part, in the superintendence of the school, leaving thus the teacher without either encouragement or supervision". The Colonial Secretary said that the "tone and language" of Bremner's report on the school "was calculated to deprive him both of influence and support in the community in which he is stationed".²

There were however other circumstances, such as inadequate buildings and poor facilities, which were responsible for the state of the government school. By 1858, while there were about twelve private schools in Graaff-Reinet with 350 pupils, only some thirty pupils attended the free government school.³ The school declined still further, and by September 1859 it had only three pupils, one Coloured lad and Bremner's own two sons.⁴ Bremner had his own views on the failure of the school, and wrote that: "Like all inland colonial towns where the Bible and Zuid-Afrikaan form the staple literature, Graaff Reinet but imperfectly understands and reluctantly recognises the claims of education". He maintained that the end of education in Graaff-Reinet was "the acquisition of a smattering of English, a very partial acquaintance with figures, and a ready faculty in handling the pen. We are a practical people, and

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1. The Divisional Council, created in 1855, took over the functions of the school committee, and held the first public examination of pupils of the government school in August 1856.
 2. GRH, 24 April 1858 (Cape Argus parliamentary debates).
 3. Report of the Select Committee on the First Class School at Graaff-Reinet, 1858; A19-1865: Report of the Select Committee on the petition of George Bremner.
 4. GRH, 21 May 1859 (D.C. meeting, 13 May), 17 September 1859.
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set no value on education beyond its practicability".¹ The arrival of a new teacher for the government school in March 1860 gave it temporarily a new lease of life, and by August 1860 there were eighty children on the roll;² this increase was partly due to the closing of Brown's school in February 1860.³

In the meantime steps were taken to establish a college at Graaff-Reinet along the lines of the South African College. In order to give the government the necessary proof of their enthusiasm for the project, the inhabitants agreed to raise £5,000, and by March 1859 had in fact raised £3,205. Parliament voted £400 per annum for the Graaff-Reinet College, the council of which was to consist of seven members, one each to be nominated by the government, the Divisional Council and the municipal board, the other four to be elected by subscribers who had contributed at least £25 towards the College funds.⁴ The first council meeting was held on 23 August 1860,⁵ and although there were eleven local applicants for the two professors' posts, the council, "considering the necessity of appointing gentlemen ...

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1. GRH, 27 February 1858.
 2. GRH, 28 March, 4 July, 11, 29 August 1860.
 3. GRH, 4 February, 14, 28 March 1860.
 4. GRH, 1 May, 12 June, 9 October 1858, 5 March, 25 June 1859, 9 June, 15 August 1860.
 5. Minutes of the meetings of the Graaff-Reinet College Council; I am indebted to Professor M. Boucher of the Department of History of the University of South Africa for drawing my attention to the existence of these minutes in the Cape Archives (Accession 552).

of high literary standing and of admitted experience in training youths for the higher walks of life", rejected all these applications,¹ and eventually appointed two men from abroad, James Gill and Francis Guthrie. The inauguration ceremony took place in September 1861 with the aged Sir Andries Stockenstrom delivering the inaugural address.²

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1. College Minutes, 4 October 1860.
 2. GRH, 21, 25 September 1861; the proceedings aroused so much interest that the GRH reprinted them in Dutch.
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CHAPTER 5

POLITICAL RISE AND ECONOMIC DECLINE, 1861-1899

(i) The Economic Climate

The sixties were lean years for the colony as a whole. A combination of internal and external factors caused a serious depression for most of the sixties. A protracted drought from the winter of 1859 resulted in bad harvests and widespread stock losses. At the same time the disease, oidium tuckari, attacked local vines. Until 1863 there was a falling off in the English demand for wool, which was followed by the upset of the Lancashire cotton industry and the collapse of wool prices at the end of the American Civil War. Trade with the Orange Free State was disrupted after the outbreak of war with the Basuto in June 1865. Another contributory cause of the depression was the advent of the imperial banks in South Africa in 1861. The Standard Bank opened in South Africa in 1862, and by June 1864 the London and South African Bank had numerous branches, including one at Graaff-Reinet. The introduction into the country by these banks of large amounts of foreign capital led to over speculation and easy credit extensions, which, combined with the unfavourable conditions then obtaining, followed by sudden credit restrictions, led to a crisis in 1865 in which the banks suffered heavily. The London and South African Bank closed most of its country branches, including the one at Graaff-Reinet. Both of the local Graaff-Reinet banks

weathered the crisis, although not without loss.¹

Graaff-Reinet suffered with the rest of the country. Except for a little rain at the end of 1863 and 1864, the period up to 1866 was one of unrelieved drought; wool prices had fallen by 1861 and were to decline still further. The lower wool price, and the decreased wool yield as farmers experienced stock losses in the drought, caused much hardship, and in 1862 there were insolvencies amounting to almost £400,000. Such failures continued into 1863; money remained scarce, the value of property low, and business slack. Good rains in the period 1866-1868 helped to restore the condition of herds and flocks, but floods, damage resulting from heavy snowfalls and locusts set them back again in 1869 and 1870. The agriculturists in the division had to contend with the ravages of hail storms and wheat rust, while in the town, where many people obtained a livelihood from the produce of their vines, serious losses were occasioned by the oidium and late frosts.²

The erfholders of Graaff-Reinet generally complained of their poverty as a matter of course, but the sixties were particularly bad years for them. The

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1. J.A. Henry, The First Hundred Years of the Standard Bank; G.T. Amphlett, History of the Standard Bank of South Africa, Ltd. 1862-1913; C.G.W. Schumann, Structural Changes and Business Cycles in South Africa 1806-1936, pp.79-81; E.H.D. Arndt, Banking and Currency Development in South Africa (1652-1927), pp. 269, 271; M.H. de Kock, Selected Subjects in the Economic History of South Africa, p.103; N.H. Taylor, The Separation Movement during the Period of Representative Government at the Cape 1854-1872, pp.92-93, 118-119.
 2. The reports of the civil commissioner contained in the annual Cape of Good Hope Blue Book during 1856-1883 give a good picture of the state of the district.

oidium, which first made its appearance in a mild form in Graaff-Reinet in 1858 and 1859, was in the next few years responsible for much impoverishment in the town. Some erfholders pulled up diseased vines and planted new ones, others looked upon the catastrophe as a visitation to be borne with fortitude; yet others applied flowers of sulphur to their vines, and the success that attended their efforts encouraged their more conservative neighbours to follow suit. By the late sixties the position had improved,¹ but little could be done to alleviate another cause of impoverishment, viz, the subdivision of erven. The fifties had been years of prosperity, and the same movement which had seen the establishment of so many villages in the district, witnessed a growth in the population of the town and a remarkable rise in the value of erven. Many erven were subdivided, but only in the good years was it possible to make a living from these subdivided erven.²

Profits from the vineyards were normally good, as wine, brandy, raisins and vinegar could be made in proportion to the demand.³ Thus while Graaff-Reinet's wine was of inferior quality "and decidedly unwholesome",⁴ so that more brandy than wine was usually produced, when the price of brandy was low, it was on occasion more profitable to produce wine.⁵ It was esti-

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1. GRH, 22 December 1860, 28 September 1861, 8, 18 January 1862, 9 January 1864, 4 March 1865, 24 February 1866, 18 April 1868.
 2. Some of the problems resulting from this subdivision are discussed in GRH, 4 March 1865.
 3. GRH, 4 March 1865.
 4. GRH, 4 April 1855.
 5. GRH, 24 February 1866, 25 April 1868.

ated that two acres of vineyards would give an owner between £150 and £200 per annum.¹ The following table of the production of the town for 1855 gives some idea of the extent and nature of the economic activities of the erfholders:

<u>Production</u>		<u>Value</u> (£)
Wine (half aums)	2 916 at £1	2,916
Brandy (half aums)	1 200 at £3	3,600
Dried Fruit (lbs)	50 480	863
Wheat (muids)	90	72
Barley (muids)	21	8
Oathay (lbs)	217 378	815
Potatoes (muids)	69	41
Wool (lbs)	17 500	437
Tallow (lbs)	12 600	157
Soap (lbs)	9 600	240
Hides (no.)	675	202
Skins (no.)	8 910	<u>111</u>
		<u>9,462</u> ²

The sixties were even worse years for the mercantile community of Graaff-Reinet. The numerous insolvencies of 1862 and 1863 attracted attention beyond the confines of Graaff-Reinet. One of these was the failure of Meintjes and Dixon,³ of whom J.J. Meintjes, one of Graaff-Reinet's members in the Assembly until 1861, was the surviving partner as Dixon had died before the crash. The most shocking of these insolvencies was that of

1. GRH, 4 March 1865, 18 April 1868.
2. GRH, 5 April 1856; as far as wine and brandy were concerned, this does not appear to have been an exceptional year (see for example, GRH, 16 February 1853).
3. GRH, 29 March, 30 April 1862.

S.J. Meintjes, who gave away large sums of money which were adjudged to be undue preferences; a warrant was apparently issued for his arrest, but he escaped to the Transvaal.¹ This insolvency did much harm to the business reputation of Graaff-Reinet as it exposed a number of questionable business transactions. This case was not an exception, and other disclosures received much publicity in Port Elizabeth, which had extensive dealings with Graaff-Reinet. The Graaff Reinet Herald summed up the situation by saying that:

The crisis Graaff Reinet is passing through with so much suffering is not merely a commercial one; it is also a moral one. That commercial mismanagement has brought commercial distress, and that this has been heightened by an exhausting drought by which this district, in common with others, is visited, is doubtless bad enough ... All those things might have occurred, and yet the district might have retained its fair fame. But it is far otherwise. Persons who have occupied high and influential positions in our midst have fallen from them; their influence and their prestige is gone, while some have lost what is of more importance than influence or prestige, namely, personal honour, and the respect of their fellow-citizens.²

But the insolvencies continued, and in July 1863 the Herald wrote that many people

1. He later gave his name to Meintjeskop, the site of the Union Buildings (E. Rosenthal, South African Surnames, p.102); details of his insolvency are contained in GRH, 6 September, 6, 13 December 1862, 10 January, 15 August 1863.
2. GRH, 20 December 1862.

supposed that after the first crash of our trading and speculative rottenness, there would be a new order of things, and general confidence would be restored. They were not prepared for lists of insolvencies daily increasing in number, and to find their most respectable and trustworthy friends hovering, as it were, upon the brink of ruin without being able to help themselves ... The mischief which began in disreputable speculation, or reckless trading on a large scale, has spread its baneful influence through the whole community.¹

This situation was not without effect on the municipal life of Graaff-Reinet, and in 1863 virtually all the municipal commissioners who came from the mercantile community resigned, and for the first time the erf-holders gained control of the municipal board. Their victory was however shortlived, as friction between the two groups led to the breakdown of municipal government in 1864. Much of the ill-feeling prior to 1864 was due to the municipal board's being dependent on public meetings of the ratepayers for its financial requirements. After 1864 the board obtained the right to levy a rate without recourse to the public meeting, and municipal affairs ran smoothly until after the Incorporation of the town in 1880.²

The sixties witnessed an exodus from Graaff-Reinet, and in 1867 the Herald said that the district had seen

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1. GRH, 18 July 1863.
 2. The conflict that dominated municipal affairs in the period before 1880 is discussed in Chapter 7.

a large emigration of persons, whose declining circumstances, or perhaps insolvency, had rendered it difficult for them to live here as before. Amongst these, there have been a large number of young men, whose chief excuse for quitting the colony, was the difficulty of getting land, either to buy or to hire, on which they could settle down and commence farming ... there is hardly a family which cannot number some of its members amongst the emigrants; and some entire families have vanished from our midst since 1862.¹

The discovery of diamonds caused a further exodus from Graaff-Reinet, and from July 1870 the papers were full of the names of parties going to the diamond fields.² The large wagon-making industry of Graaff-Reinet quickly turned its attention to the manufacture of Scotch carts in anticipation of the demand for transporting passengers to the fields.³ The route to the north suddenly assumed a new significance, and there was great competition between the various towns for the traffic bound for the diamond fields.⁴ This traffic placed a premium on draught oxen. Graaff-Reinet merchants also profited from this traffic; property increased in value, particularly in the town, as the pace of trade quickened after the depressed conditions of the

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1. GRH, 28 September 1867.
 2. GRH, 2, 6, 16 July, 3 August, 14 September 1870.
 3. GRH, 18 May, 18 June 1870.
 4. GRH, 9, 20 July, 27 August, 23, 26 November, 21 December 1870, and also the attempts to organise a Midland Conveyance Company {GRH, 31 August, 3 September (Advertisement columns), 14 September, 29 October 1870, 14 September 1872}.

sixties.¹ In 1873 the Oriental Bank which amalgamated with the South African Central Bank opened in Graaff-Reinet; the other local bank, the Graaff-Reinet Bank, amalgamated with the Cape of Good Hope Bank in December 1878.²

The seventies were years of progress in Graaff-Reinet. The number of books circulated by the library increased to 8 091 in 1878;³ in 1872 a start was made in laying out the botanic gardens;⁴ and the Midland Hospital opened its doors in 1876.⁵ It initially had twelve beds, which number increased to forty by 1880. According to the report on the hospital for 1877, "from a very prevalent feeling of honourable independence, none but absolute pauper patients have hitherto availed themselves of its advantages".⁶

This new era of prosperity was shortlived, and the eighties once again witnessed a large number of insolvencies, particularly among farmers who had rushed into ostrich farming. The depression of the eighties, like that of the sixties, was part of a world pattern, to which conditions at the Cape gave a particular emphasis. The depression which gripped the country in the period 1881-1886 was not simply the result of a sudden fall in ostrich feather prices; other factors were over speculation in diamonds, inflation of currency and credit, the withdrawal of British troops from South

1. See Cape of Good Hope Blue Book for the period 1870-1875, Reports of civil commissioner.

2. Arndt, p.274.

3. G 27 - 1879; see also G 26 - 1878.

4. G 35 - 1872.

5. The inauguration ceremony was held on 25 January 1877 {C.G. Henning, A Cultural History of Graaff Reinet (1786-1886), p.469}.

6. G 34 - 1878; see also G 37 - 1881.

Africa after the Zulu and Sekhukhune wars, the Basuto rebellion and the First Anglo-Boer War.¹ Apart from these circumstances which were responsible for the trade depression, the town of Graaff-Reinet was saddled with a considerable debt for improvements undertaken to the water supply. The clash between the east end and the west end of town which attended the construction of a new waterworks added to the financial chaos, and by the end of 1886 the ratepayers were labouring under heavy rates imposed by the courts and the government to repay overdrafts and loans contracted in carrying out the scheme.²

The seventies were Graaff-Reinet's last fling of prosperity. While communications were tortuous and the economic significance of the north was confined to the wool of the Orange Free State, Graaff-Reinet was well situated on the road to Port Elizabeth to receive wool from the north. The relative and actual decline in wool after 1872 and the opening up of the diamond and gold fields altered the situation. When economic conditions improved in the second half of the eighties, Graaff-Reinet ceased to be a major receiving depot on the main road to the north, and she was cut off from participating in the large markets developing to the north. This change in fortune was largely the result of the advent of the railway.

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1. De Kock, p.114; Schumann, p.85; S.T. van der Horst, Native Labour in South Africa, pp.64-65.
 2. The question of the town's water supply and the conflicts to which it gave rise, is discussed in Chapter 8.

(ii) Transport

By 1869 there was a marked improvement in the state of the roads,¹ which had since 1864 been under the control of the Divisional Council.² However, the inability of the council to decide upon a system for the upkeep of the roads³ caused much needless expense and a deterioration in the condition of the roads. In their address to Hougham Hudson, the newly arrived civil commissioner in May 1874, the Divisional Council admitted that the roads were not quite what they should be. This they attributed

principally to the adoption of the contracting system a few years ago. Having, however, lately abandoned that system, and taken again the making and repairing of roads in hand, under the supervision of our own inspector and overseers, we trust that ere long there will be no more reason to complain of the bad roads in this division.⁴

But this decision was reversed a number of times in the following years which tended to be expensive, for on each occasion that the council adopted the contract system, they sold their road-making equipment.⁵

1. GRH, 10 July 1869.
2. The maintenance of branch roads had been in the hands of the Divisional Council since 1855, but the control over the main roads was only given to them in 1864.
3. GRH, 1 May 1869 (D.C. meeting, 30 April), 3 May, 13 September 1873.
4. GRH, 30 May 1874 (D.C. meeting, 29 May).
5. GRA, 19 April 1879, 27 April, 22 June 1880, 11 October 1894 (Editorial and D.C. meeting, 9 October).

The biggest revolution in the sphere of transport was the advent of railways. Railways had been one of the main topics of conversation in Graaff-Reinet from the time of the Road Committee Letter of 1857. Not all were in favour of railways; the erfholders in particular were divided, unable to decide whether the bigger market for their produce which the railway would bring would outweigh the expected decline in transport riding.¹ It was difficult to maintain interest at fever pitch, and in 1866 the Herald complained that no sooner did the transport rate

decline to 4s. per 100 lbs., owing to the number of carriers eager to get a share of the loads of wool, than the utmost satisfaction prevails amongst the mercantile class. Former losses from detention of valuable produce for want of transport, are for the time forgotten, and everything goes on so easily that it is questioned whether a Railway would be a real advantage if we had it.²

The campaign in favour of a railway line was a bold attempt by Graaff-Reinet to divert the produce of Colesberg and the north-eastern part of the Orange Free State through Graaff-Reinet. In 1861, 21 658 550 lbs of wool, representing some 75 000 bales, were exported from Port Elizabeth, and the promoters of the Graaff-Reinet line maintained that 50 000 of these bales came from districts which would be affected by a railway line having Graaff-Reinet as its terminus, and that much of the produce of Somerset and Beaufort West would converge on the line to a point south of Graaff-Reinet.³

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1. GRH, 15 August 1857 ("Een Agterstraater"), 21 November 1857 (Noome).
 2. GRH, 23 June 1866.
 3. GRH, 12 July 1862.

In 1874 the line from Port Elizabeth to Graaff-Reinet was passed as part of a large railway scheme,¹ and in 1879 the line was open.² This railway line had a long-term significance, but in the years immediately following its opening, transport riding competed successfully with the railway. Wagon transport was cheaper than rail carriage, nor was the latter so much quicker, particularly as goods could not be transported all the way to the diamond fields until 1885.³ While part of the distance had to be travelled by wagon, it was in many ways preferable that the wagon be used for the whole journey. As the General Manager of Railways pointed out in 1881, the ox wagon had the advantage

that its proprietor is the only person with whom the owner or agent of the goods conveyed has to deal, between the port of arrival and the place to which the goods have to be conveyed. If goods are damaged or lost in transit, only one person is responsible; whereas if they are conveyed partly by rail and partly by ox-wagon, responsibility is divided, and the owner is not sure to which carrier he is to look for compensation.⁴

Before the completion of the Port Elizabeth-Graaff-Reinet line, Graaff-Reinet debated the question of an extension northwards. There were those who maintained that it would be better for Graaff-Reinet to remain the terminus, but it was clear that this would be an advantage only while there were no other lines to compete with it. The Herald's words of 1875 were prophetic:

1. GRH, 24, 27 June 1874.

2. See Map 6, p.154.

3. J. van der Poel, Railway and Customs Policies in South Africa 1885-1910, pp.8-9.

4. G 64 - 1881.

Wool wagons outside the offices of De Graaff Reinetter
(established 1881). To the right is one of the water furrows



Graaff-Reinet was ludicrous to men like Merriman. In 1888 he stated that Graaff-Reinet annually produced 2 600 tons of grain, of which she required 1 300 tons for consumption, and that the exportable balance certainly did not warrant the extension of the railway line. The supporters of the line maintained that agriculture was ready for expansion but that people would not produce more until they had an outlet for their produce.¹ In 1879, Anthony Berrangé and 254 other petitioners did not see the Sneeuwberge as an obstacle in the way of an extension, and described it as "most productive and thickly populated, having proved during the severest droughts, the granary of the north and north-west divisions, which depend mainly upon it for their supplies of colonial agricultural produce". The petitioners maintained that it was "an admitted fact that Graaff-Reinet is the depôt of a very large and increasing trade with the north and north-west divisions", and that the Sneeuwberge needed "an outlet northwards for its enormous agricultural produce, now entirely consumed by the above-mentioned divisions, from which it will be most effectually cut off by any line not passing through the town".² In 1882 petitioners concentrated their arguments on the town's production of "a very large quantity of fruit, for which a better market is required than the present line affords".³

1. Hansard Debates in the Assembly, 1888, pp.157, 245-246, 1889, pp.264-265, 1890, pp.73, 110, 1895, pp.252, 275, 365, 372, 374.

2. A 58 - 1879.

3. A 28 - 1882.

These arguments about the agricultural output and potential of town and district did not succeed in persuading the opponents of an extension northwards that the cost of constructing a line through the town would be justified on economic grounds. Graaff-Reinet, by making efforts to reduce the losses on the existing Port Elizabeth-Graaff-Reinet line, attempted to persuade the rest of the colony of the viability of an extension northwards. One of the main arguments against the construction of a northern extension was that the line to Port Elizabeth ran at a considerable loss, but Graaff-Reinet firmly believed that this was due to ox wagon competition; Graaff-Reinettters were sure that once this source of competition was eliminated the railway line would show a profit.¹

In May 1887 leading citizens attempted to persuade railway officials that if the rates on the line were cut by half this would eliminate ox wagon competition and the line would flourish. The Railway Department was sceptical, but promised to reduce the rates,² if the mercantile men guaranteed to place all their traffic in the hands of the railways. The Commissioner of Crown Lands and Public Works said that the merchants would not agree to this, "for they pointed out that the farmers in many cases would not agree to it, and that they would lose many of their customers if they did not occasionally give the farmers loads of goods to carry".³ To what extent this reflected the view of the mercantile

1. GRA, 13 June 1887.

2. GRA, 23 May 1887.

3. GRA, 14 July 1887; see also G 31 - 1888.

community as a whole is uncertain, and some merchants maintained that Graaff-Reineters did not ride transport, but that the competition came mainly from Jansenville and poor bywoners whose custom was not a significant consideration.¹ The Railway Department did sanction a reduction in rates, but most Graaff-Reineters believed that it was too small to reduce ox wagon competition.² Ox wagon competition continued, and leading spokesmen of the Afrikaner Bond blamed merchants who hired blacks to carry goods at 1/6d per 100 lbs, instead of supporting the railway, where goods could be transported for 1/8d per 100 lbs.³ Ox wagon competition was finally ended by the rinderpest of 1897-1898.⁴

As people throughout the colony clamoured for railway lines, it was clear that Graaff-Reinet's claims to consideration on economic grounds alone were not good. However, Graaff-Reinet had a number of influential politicians, and it was in the political sphere that the battle for a railway extension northwards was eventually won. There were two possible routes for an extension northwards, either to Richmond or to Middelburg Road. The majority of Graaff-Reineters were in favour of an extension to Middelburg Road, but much depended on the support they could muster from outside; as this support varied, so did Graaff-Reinet favour first one then the

1. GRA, 14 July 1887.

2. GRA, 1, 25 August 1887.

3. Remarks of Botha and Dr Te Water at the Graaff-Reinet district bestuur meeting of 3 March 1888 (GR, 6 March 1888 and GRA, 5 March 1888).

4. G 20 - 1899, p. xxx.

other. The issue was complicated by the fact that certain members of parliament from the Graaff-Reinet electoral division came from Murraysburg, and favoured an extension to Richmond, which would include Murraysburg.¹

In the parliamentary sessions of 1888 and 1889 motions for the extension of the line via Richmond were lost.² Bond congresses at Paarl and Middelburg in 1888 and 1889 respectively, also refused to support such a line.³ There seemed little hope of mustering sufficient support for an extension in this direction, when Sir Gordon Sprigg suddenly included it in his grand railway plan of 1890, with a determination to carry the scheme in its entirety or dissolve parliament.⁴ Although Graaff-Reinet would have preferred an extension to Middelburg Road, Dr Te Water pointed out that beggars could not be choosers, and a public meeting passed a unanimous resolution thanking the government for its scheme and urging its representatives in parliament to support it.⁵ But the government fell with Graaff-Reinet no closer to a realization of its hopes.

At the Somerset East congress of the Afrikaner Bond in 1890, it was agreed to support a northern extension of the Graaff-Reinet line, although this decision

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1. Te Water Papers, vol. 56: J.H. Smith to T.N.G. te Water, 16 June 1890.
 2. GRA, 11, 15 July, 7 October 1889; see also Te Water Papers, vol. 56: R.P. Botha to T.N.G. te Water, 18 July 1889.
 3. GRA, 1 May 1890 (G.L. Hauptfleisch).
 4. For correspondence regarding Sprigg's scheme, see Te Water Papers, vol. 56: A.J. Herholdt to T.N.G. te Water, 2, 12 June 1890, R.P. Botha to T.N.G. te Water, 3 June 1890, Alex Innes to T.N.G. te Water, 10 June 1890.
 5. GRA, 9 June 1890.

was obtained only by the casting vote of R.P. Botha, chairman of the provincial bestuur of the Bond.¹ Nor did this decision mean an end to Graaff-Reinet's long battle to secure the extension. It was only in 1895 that an extension northwards to Middelburg Road (Rosmead) was passed as part of the Railway Extension Act, 28 of 1895.² The Bond, which contributed twenty-seven of the forty-one votes obtained in favour of the Graaff-Reinet extension, played an important role in securing this victory, as Dr Te Water did not fail to remind Graaff-Reinet.³

In March 1898 the extension to Middelburg Road was officially opened by the Governor, Sir Alfred Milner.⁴ Graaff-Reinet was at last linked to the north, but she had lost her leading position on the main route to the north to Cradock, which had been connected with the north by rail since 1884-1885. After 1898 the main railway line to the north continued to be the line passing through Cradock.

(iii) Farming

This period witnessed the last major contraction of the Graaff-Reinet district, and in 1880 about one

1. GRA, 23 April 1891 (N.F. de Waal).
2. GRA, 25, 29 July 1895.
3. GRA, 15 August 1895; OC, 19 August 1895.
4. Milner's visit attracted widespread interest throughout the country as a result of his reply to an address presented to him by the Afrikaner Bond (see pp.605-607).

third of the farms in the district were transferred to other divisions, particularly to the newly created division of Aberdeen.¹

The droughts of the sixties focussed attention on the building of dams. While such dams were made primarily for stock, they also enabled more land to be cultivated; the problem was to raise sufficient capital to construct dams large enough for this purpose. There was also much experimentation with different types of pumps, to find the one best suited to the country. A comparison of the 1865 and 1875 census figures shows that the amount of land under cultivation rose from 3 179 morgen to 4 937 morgen.² The bringing of more land under cultivation placed a strain on labour resources; this was particularly so as agriculture was confined to certain areas. Limited mechanisation helped to offset the problem of obtaining labour, and there was a good deal of experimentation with ploughs. By 1875 machines such as reaping machines (four), thrashing machines (seven) and winnowing machines (three) were beginning to make their appearance.³

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1. Cape of Good Hope Government Gazette, 2 March 1880; G 91 - 1883, Report for Aberdeen; Cape of Good Hope Blue Book, 1880, Report of civil commissioner of Graaff-Reinet.
 2. G 20 - 1866; G 42 - 1876.
 3. The reports of the civil commissioner in the annual Cape of Good Hope Blue Book give much prominence to this experimentation with pumps and ploughs; statistics containing the number of such implements and machines are also contained in these Blue Books.

Droughts and low wool prices were responsible for the increasing attention given to the breeding of angoras. Mosenthal Brothers had first introduced angoras to Graaff-Reinet in the fifties, and from time to time there were fresh importations of angora rams and ewes. By 1864 most farmers had crossed angoras with their Cape goats, and in some areas, notably Aberdeen, these soon began to outstrip merinos.¹ It was no coincidence that a decade in which there were severe droughts should have seen more attention being devoted to angoras which were better able to withstand the ravages of drought than merinos. The angoras preferred rocky, mountainous terrain, where sheep could not survive, and farmers soon discovered that by combining angoras and sheep, they could make more effective use of their farms.² In the colony as a whole angoras became very popular; the 1 036 lbs of mohair exported in 1862 had by 1885 risen to 5 251 301 lbs.³ In the Graaff-Reinet district, which was a leading producer of mohair, the number of angora goats increased from 19 862 in 1865 to 149 887 in 1875, the mohair production of Graaff-Reinet in this latter year totalling 54 432 lbs.⁴

The domestication of ostriches was undertaken on a large scale in this period. The total weight of feathers exported from the Cape in 1865 was 17 522 lbs,

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1. Cape of Good Hope Blue Book, 1864, 1868-1869, Reports of civil commissioner; G 91-1883: Report for Aberdeen, p.3.
 2. Cape of Good Hope Blue Book, 1870, Report of civil commissioner.
 3. J. Noble, ed., Official Handbook; History, Productions, and Resources of the Cape of Good Hope, p.240.
 4. A 72-1865; G20-1866; G42-1876.

which came mainly from wild birds, the 80 tame ostriches supplying only 120 lbs. After A. Douglass had in 1869 perfected the artificial hatching of eggs, many farmers turned to the breeding of ostriches, and in 1875 there were 21 751 domesticated ostriches in the colony, including 1 035 in Graaff-Reinet. The high prices obtained for feathers, an average of £6.3.0 per lb in 1875, caused many people without proper knowledge or preparation to invest in ostriches. In the early 1880's drought and a fever which attacked many small chicks resulted in a decreased yield, while a turn of fashion caused a drop in the price of feathers. The value of feathers exported from the colony fell from £1,094,000 in 1882 to £348,000 in 1888.¹ For many who had rushed into ostrich farming the fall in prices spelt ruin. The industry flourished in Graaff-Reinet in 1880, although the civil commissioner felt that the concentration on ostriches was leading to the neglect of other farming activities. In 1881 and 1882 there was a drop in the price of feathers in Graaff-Reinet, while the drought at the end of 1881, which continued into 1882, worsened matters, and there were many insolvencies, particularly among beginners, who had invested everything they had in ostriches.²

The significance of ostrich farming lay not so much in the fact that many who rushed into it were ruined, but rather in its introduction of the concept of fodder and fencing. In 1877 it was remarked that

1. Noble, pp.259-264; De Kock, p.235.

2. Cape of Good Hope Blue Book, 1880 and 1881, Reports of civil commissioner; G 91 - 1883, Report for Graaff-Reinet.

sheep received no artificial food but were entirely dependent upon natural pastures.¹ Ostriches required both grain and green food; the chicks thrived on lucerne, which aided the production of good feathers. Feed produced for ostriches soon spread to other types of stock.² Numerous enclosed camps had to be made for ostriches, and once these fences had been erected, their utility for other purposes was soon appreciated.³ Not all farmers had the capital to emulate the Parkes' of Wheatlands, who erected forty-five miles of fencing at £75 a mile,⁴ but any fencing was an improvement on the unprogressive farming methods generally employed. The almost universal practice was to drive sheep out of the kraal in the morning to undertake a long trek to their grazing ground, trampling and killing the vegetation on their way, making tracks which became sloats and led to erosion. In the evening they were driven back to the kraal, where the dung accumulated in an unsanitary manner, making sheep more prone to disease. A serious complaint against South African wool was its impurities, such as sand and dust, to which the long treks to grazing and water were contributory factors.

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1. H.B. Thom, Die Geskiedenis van die Skaapboerdery in Suid-Afrika, p.86.
 2. Noble, p.261; De Kock, pp.192-193; Cape of Good-Hope Blue Book, 1880, Report of civil commissioner.
 3. G 91 - 1883, Report for Graaff-Reinet.
 4. GRA, 28 August 1883.

Subdividing farms by means of fences allowed sheep to spend a considerable period in one camp and to manure it thoroughly; fenced in land did not therefore become exhausted as quickly as unfenced land. Subdivision tended to improve the quality of the wool and sheep grazed better if left in one camp for a time; the weight of sheep was saved if long journeys were avoided, while protection of animals and control of scab was at the same time easier.¹

Wool remained the main industry of Graaff-Reinet. In the colony as a whole 1872 marked the height of the wool industry, with a record export of 48 822 562 lbs with a record value of £3,275,150. The next occasion on which the value of wool exported topped this was in 1910, when the value of wool exported was £3,830,179; but the weight of wool required to attain this value in 1910 was 121 653 000 lbs. After 1872 both the weight and value of wool tended to decline. There were many reasons for this decrease, and droughts and reaction to overstocking and overgrazing played a role in decreased production. Increasing competition from other countries and a greater demand for rough wool, where South Africa produced mainly fine wool, contributed to the decline in prices.²

One of the more immediate reasons for the low price of wool was that the shopkeepers and merchants to whom the farmer sold his wool were not generally expert wool sorters and paid "almost as much for scabby and short wool as for clean and long, they making their

1. A 15 - 1880; Noble, pp.241-243, 255; De Kock, p.222; Thom, Skaapboerdery, pp.80-81, 111-112, 188.
2. Thom, Skaapboerdery, pp. 198-206.

profit out of the long prices they charge the farmer for the goods he requires, the buying of which is a condition of purchasing his wool". The farmer thus received little encouragement to improve the quality of his wool. The editor of the Advertiser however believed that there was nothing inferior about Cape wool and that the main reason for the low prices was "the bad state in which it reaches the market, rotten with scab, and of six months growth as a consequence of Scab".¹ Control of scab was a burning issue in the colony, particularly in the 1890's.

As early as 1869 forty-three farmers of the Graaff-Reinet district, of whom some twenty were English-speaking, pleaded for a Scab Act which would penalise farmers who failed to dress their flocks, and who allowed diseased sheep to mix with flocks free from scab. The signatories stated that they had enjoyed considerable success in treating their flocks but that as they could not persuade their neighbours to take action, they often suffered when scabby sheep from neighbouring farms mixed "with flocks that have just been dressed, or with such as are clean and free from Brandziekte, thereby rendering all their appliances for its cure nugatory".² This petition highlighted one area of controversy surrounding legislation for the control of scab, viz, whether such legislation should be of a compulsory or permissive nature. Another area of controversy concerned the manner of appointing scab inspectors; these officials had wide discretionary powers, and it was essential that they should have the confidence of the farmers.

1. GRA, 17 March 1885.

2. GRH, 21 August 1869.

The majority of English-speaking farmers favoured a general compulsory Scab Act, but Afrikaner farmers were more opposed to compulsory measures and there was no consensus of opinion among Bondsmen on the question of scab control.¹ In 1886 the Divisional Council of Graaff-Reinet, having examined petitions from the field cornetcies, the majority of which were in favour of the new Scab Act of 1886, decided to take steps to bring the district under the operation of the Act.²

Graaff-Reinet came under the Scab Act but in 1891 a petition was organised to effect the suspension of the Act in the district.³ This petition did not have only the support of the backward and unprogressive farmers of the district, for many of the more enlightened men of the district supported this agitation on the grounds that the Act should be repealed and replaced by a compulsory Act.⁴ The farmers of Voor Sneeuwberg, which field cornetcy bordered on the Middelburg district where the Scab Act was not in force, were hampered in their efforts to comply with the requirements of the law because sheep from Middelburg continually crossed the divisional border and infected healthy sheep. It was thus not surprising that the people of Voor Sneeuwberg

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1. In 1885, for example, two of Graaff-Reinet's parliamentarians from Murraysburg expressed diametrically opposed views on the question of scab control (GRA, 13 March, 1 May 1885); see also T.R.H. Davenport, The Afrikaner Bond; The History of a South African Political Party, 1880-1911, pp.155-159.
 2. GRA, 16 December 1886 (D.C. meeting, 15 December).
 3. GRA, 1 October 1891.
 4. GRA, 1 October 1891 (C.A. Nesor).

should have played a prominent role in organising the petition.¹ In practice it was easier to move stock into a proclaimed area than for stock to be moved from one place to another within a proclaimed area.² The most serious defect of the Scab Act in the eyes of the farmers was that a scab inspector could compel a farmer to dip thousands of sheep with long wool in the middle of winter, even though he might be able to see scab in only one or two sheep.³ J.H. Smith later referred to "the unfitness of the inspectors",⁴ and the smooth working of the Act obviously depended much on the manner in which inspectors used their discretion to allow dressing by hand in cold weather.⁵

There was much common ground between those who wanted the Scab Act suspended and those who did not, and the latter, in an appeal to the Divisional Council said that if they thought the suspension of the Act

would be the cause of getting a general Scab Act throughout the Colony, or at least throughout the Eastern Province, we would support the suspension of the Act; but we are positive that such will not be the result. In the absence of a general Act we are quite satisfied to retain what we have, half a loaf being better than no bread.⁶

Further moves to prevent the suspension of the Act⁷ were unsuccessful, and the Divisional Council on

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1. GRA, 1, 10 October 1891.
 2. GRA, 30 November 1891 (Scab meeting).
 3. GRA, 1 October 1891 (C.A. Nesor).
 4. Hansard Debates in the Assembly, 1894, p.157.
 5. GRA, 5 November 1891 (Zwart Ruggens Farmers' Association quarterly meeting).
 6. GRA, 26 October 1891.
 7. GRA, 26, 30 November 1891.

8 March 1892 decided in terms of section two of Act 37 of 1891 to apply to the Governor to suspend the Scab Act in Graaff-Reinet.¹

Although a majority of farmers in the field cornetcy of Achter Op Sneeuwberg were against any Scab Act, and a majority in Voor Sneeuwberg were against the manner in which the existing Scab Act operated, in other field cornetcies there was widespread support for scab control. In terms of section one of Act 25 of 1889, field cornetcies could come under the operation of the Scab Act if a majority of registered voters in the cornetcy expressed a wish to do so. By early 1894 four of the six wards (excluding the town) had elected to come under the Act.²

In 1894 a general compulsory Scab Act was passed. This satisfied those farmers who under the old legislation had suffered because they lived on the borders of unproclaimed areas. In an attempt to meet the wishes of those who objected to the manner of appointing scab inspectors, the Act laid down that such officials should be elected by the Divisional Council electors.³ This led to the election of men who were frequently unsuited to fill the position of scab inspector.

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1. G 24-1893; G 57-1893; GRA, 14 March 1892 (D.C. meeting, 8 March).
 2. GRA, 29 December 1892, 27 November 1893, 11 January, 23 April 1894, 2 March 1896 (Editorial comment on scab meeting).
 3. Te Water Papers, vol.102: Kort berigt oor Brandziekte Wet, 1894.

C.A. du Toit,¹ one of those elected, was a bitter opponent of legislation for the control of scab; in 1887 he had let it be known that he "was sterk van opinie dat Brandziekte niet ontstand door eene luis, maar dat het eene inwendige kwaal was".² Towards the end of 1895 Du Toit was suspended for having allowed the movement of scabby sheep.³ The Achter Op Sneeuwberg branch of the Bond expressed its full confidence in him,⁴ and although a government inquiry showed negligence on his part, he was reinstated.⁵

In the more sparsely populated north-western districts of the colony which were particularly subject to droughts, the Scab Act was most unpopular. The high mortality rate among sheep was frequently attributed to the long journeys to the dipping tanks rather than to the effects of the disease itself.⁶ The majority of Graaff-Reinetters, however, supported the Scab Act although they were prepared to admit that it had faults. D.P. van den Heever, M.L.C. for the north-eastern circle and a leading opponent of the Scab Act, at a public meeting at Graaff-Reinet early in 1896, attempted to push through a motion in favour of the repeal of the Scab Act. Such a motion from a district

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1. He played a leading role in the movement to stop the English services in the Dutch Reformed Church (see p.602), and was a leading spokesman for the Achter Op Sneeuwberg branch of the Afrikaner Bond which in 1894 passed a resolution condemning the resident magistrate, Alexander Stewart (see p.386).
 2. GR, 24 January 1887.
 3. GRA, 14 November 1895.
 4. OC, 14 November 1895; GRA, 21 November 1895.
 5. GRA, 9 December 1895.
 6. Davenport, p.156; see also pp.549-550.

which was generally well-disposed to scab legislation would have embarrassed the government, particularly as Dr Te Water, M.L.A. for Graaff-Reinet, was Colonial Secretary in Sprigg's cabinet. Van den Heever sent an open invitation to farmers from other districts to attend the meeting and he brought numerous supporters with him. Dr Te Water travelled from Cape Town to attend the meeting. Van den Heever suffered a tactical defeat when it was ruled that only people from the Graaff-Reinet district would be allowed to vote and a resolution supporting the government in its attempts to give the Act a fair trial was passed.¹

In Graaff-Reinet the agitation against the Scab Act was confined mainly to the field cornetcy of Achter Op Sneeuwberg, and J.F. du Toit, M.L.C., brother of C.A. du Toit, continued to speak against the Scab Act and sponsor resolutions condemning it at meetings of the local branch of the Bond.² In 1899 when Scab Boards were created to recommend scab inspectors, two of the three members of Graaff-Reinet's Scab Board, J.F. du Toit and J.A. Enslin, were opponents of the Act.³

By 1897 interest in scab control in Graaff-Reinet had given way to concern over the rinderpest epidemic. The first outbreak of rinderpest in the district was reported from the farm Clifton in the middle of August 1897.⁴ The Graaff-Reinet Rinderpest Committee decided

1. GRA, 2 March 1896.

2. OC, 5 June 1899; GRA, 30 June 1899.

3. GRA, 19 January 1900.

4. GRA, 19 August 1897.

to close all roads to cattle transport and to make inoculation compulsory.¹ Neither of these decisions was popular, and a public meeting declared itself against the closing of the roads.² The opposition to inoculation arose partly as a result of the number of deaths that occurred after inoculation.³ Of 21 510 head of cattle in the district before the outbreak, some 11 741 were inoculated and a total of 2 280 head of cattle were lost in the course of the epidemic.⁴

The problem of the alienation of land remained unsatisfactory. The Crown Lands Leasing Act, 19 of 1864, reintroduced leasing, and an urgent need was felt in Graaff-Reinet for the extensive tracts of crown land to be leased out so that squatters could be forced off the land. In August 1864 the Divisional Council sent a remonstrance to the government to the effect that it was unfair to stop the sale of crown lands which had been surveyed over four years previously and for which survey and related fees had been deposited eight years previously. The Council asked the government either to sell the lands or return the money. Cape Town replied that the Surveyor General was preparing a list of farms for sale.⁵

1. GRA, 26 August 1897.
2. OC, 30 August 1897.
3. Te Water Papers, vol. 57: C.A. Nesor to T.N.G. te Water, 7 October 1897.
4. G 72 - 1898.
5. GRH, 17 August (D.C. meeting), 20 August, 1 October 1864 (D.C. meeting, 23 September).

The government suspended the sale of land in order to give the Leasing Act of 1864 a trial, but by early 1866 no crown lands in Graaff-Reinet had been leased under the Act nor was the government willing to allow the Divisional Council to lease these lands temporarily.¹ On hearing that land was being leased in Beaufort West, the Divisional Council in 1866 contacted the civil commissioner of that place to find out by what authority it was being done. Although the civil commissioner of Beaufort West confirmed that crown lands were leased on an annual basis, the original authority to do this could not be found.² This answer left Graaff-Reinet as confused as it had been.

In 1866 the government again began selling land and 20 291 morgen were sold in Graaff-Reinet. In 1867 the Divisional Council estimated that there were 225 000 morgen in the division available for leasing, apart from pieces of land situated between private properties. There were no known supplies of permanent water on this land, although in parts of it there were pools which held water after rains.³ It is clear that many squatters wanted titles to land, and also that farmers objected to squatters on crown land since they were alleged to live by preying upon stock. It was only in July 1868 that the first lots leased in Graaff-Reinet under the 1864 leasing Act were disposed of when four pieces were leased for a total rental of £136.17.8.⁴

1. GRH, 20 January, 10 February 1866.

2. GRH Supplement, 26 May 1866.

3. GRH, 15 June, 30 October 1867 (D.C. meeting, 25 October); see also C 7 - 1873.

4. GRH, 29 July 1868.

Between 1868 and 1871 some 353 657 morgen of crown land in Graaff-Reinet was leased for a total rental of £2,758.¹ By the early seventies there was virtually no unoccupied crown land. Some of the white squatters forced off the land entered the growing ranks of the poor whites. Many of the black squatters found refuge on private farms, where farmers allowed them to squat in return for their labour. Although legislation was passed to combat such locations, the practice was difficult to stamp out.

With the influx of Xhosa into the colony after 1857 the labour supply was good, but in the depression of the early sixties when work was difficult to obtain, many labourers left Graaff-Reinet. When the economic situation improved labourers again entered the district in large numbers but the opening up of the diamond fields once again drew many labourers away from Graaff-Reinet and intercepted the stream of labourers from the north. More opportunities for labour on the railways and in town increased the difficulties of farmers in obtaining adequate supplies of labour. An increasing number of blacks gravitated to town and, although the municipal authorities for many years remained undecided as to whether they preferred the blacks living in the location or in hire-rooms in town, they were not averse to charging a rental for hut sites. As the location increased in size surrounding farmers complained as they blamed the inhabitants for their stock losses; it was also maintained that many potential labourers, who would otherwise have been forced to work on farms, were able

1. C 1-1874.

to live in ease in the municipal location while sending their womenfolk out to work as domestics in town.¹

(iv) Political Developments²

Ziervogel, who ever since he first entered parliament in 1854 was a staunch campaigner for responsible government, still served Graaff-Reinet in the Assembly when this ideal was realised in 1872.³ It was not easy to find a second member to accompany Ziervogel to parliament. Few of the men sent to parliament served out the period for which they had been elected. It was frequently impossible to obtain the services of a local man, and Graaff-Reinet made use of carpet-baggers from Cape Town. These carpet-baggers were mainly men who had family connections or other close associations with Ziervogel or Stockenstrom. Most of the Eastern Province outside of Grahamstown had difficulty in finding men of ability with sufficient leisure to devote to politics, but whereas other centres looked to Grahamstown for their parliamentary representatives, Graaff-Reinet looked to Cape Town.

In elections to the Legislative Council, where the whole of the Eastern Province voted as one constituency, the cumulative vote enabled Graaff-Reinet to secure the election of a local candidate by plumping for him. But here, too, few men sat out the life of the

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1. Squatting and the labour situation in general, is fully discussed in Chapters 10-11.
 2. The account that follows is a bare outline of developments that are analysed in detail in Chapters 12-14.
 3. He retired at the end of the parliamentary session of 1873.

Council, and in bye-elections, where plumping did not apply, Graaff-Reinet was at a distinct disadvantage. The stranglehold which the separatists of Grahamstown had on the Legislative Council did much to cause Graaff-Reinettors to sink their differences and unite, if not to secure the election of their own candidate, at least to limit Grahamstown's representation by supporting a candidate from Port Elizabeth. But Graaff-Reinet's influence on such occasions was minimal, and seldom could any enthusiasm for a candidate be aroused unless there was a popular local candidate in the field.

The incorporation of Kaffraria in 1865 and the creation of new electoral divisions meant a relative weakening of the dominant position hitherto enjoyed by Grahamstown, while the Seven Circles Act of 1874 finally broke the stranglehold of the cities in the Legislative Council, particularly as Grahamstown and Port Elizabeth were placed in the same circle.

Until the late sixties the mass of Afrikaners in the district showed little interest in politics. In a bye-election in 1867 a farmer for the first time made an appearance as a candidate, and asked the assembled voters to elect him because of his familiarity with the interests of the farmers. In 1869 farmers were again among the candidates, and it was symptomatic of this challenge to the dominant position of the town that this was also the first occasion since the introduction of representative government that Graaff-Reinet went to the polls. Despite this evidence of a growing awareness of politics, the town continued to dominate the political life of the district until the advent of the Afrikaner Bond in 1881.

The Afrikaner Bond revolutionised the political life of the district. It gained the immediate and widespread support of the Afrikaner farmers of the district and the erfholders of the town. The Afrikaner business men of the town for the most part held themselves aloof from the movement, which had an adverse effect on the quality of the men whom Graaff-Reinet sent to parliament. This weakness of the Afrikaner Bond was evident in all spheres where men of education were required. Although the Bond won all elections to the House of Assembly after 1884, their representatives were generally poor, and it was only with the election of Dr T.N.G. te Water in 1894 that the Bond obtained a man of some stature. Te Water served as Colonial Secretary in Sir Gordon Sprigg's cabinet from the beginning of 1896, and he was later included in W.P. Schreiner's cabinet of 1898-1900.

Although English-speaking farmers had much in common with the Bond where farming matters were concerned, the Bond's tendency to racial exclusivism and its role in the advancement of Afrikaner cultural interests made the majority of English-speaking farmers fight shy of it and turn to the Zwart Ruggens Farmers' Association (ZRFA). The ZRFA rigorously excluded the discussion of party political matters from its programme in an attempt to win the support of Afrikaner Bondsmen. Although it failed to convert Afrikaner Bondsmen, the ZRFA adhered to its non-political character which reduced friction within the association at a time when a number of its leading members were attracted to the Bond. The ZRFA preserved its unity, but it remained essentially a debating society, and had almost no effect on the

political balance of power in the district. The Bond's opponents bemoaned their lack of a political organisation to rival that of the Bond in contesting elections, and before almost every election an attempt was made either to transform the ZRFA into a political association or to form a separate political organisation. The ZRFA was not to be converted, and although other associations were from time to time established, they were all shortlived for it was difficult to sustain interest in an association which was always beaten at the polls.

After 1886 there was a period of relative calm in relations between the Bond and its opponents. The Jameson Raid of 1896 shattered this, and there was a sudden polarisation of political forces according to race. The new mood was reflected in the attempts to abolish English services in the Dutch Reformed Church. The growing confrontation between the British government and the South African Republic found Afrikaner Bondsmen divided between their sympathy for the republic and their loyalty to the British connection. Bondsmen were charged with disloyalty, and when the local Bond, on the occasion of a visit to Graaff-Reinet by the Governor, Sir Alfred Milner, in March 1898, refuted such charges, the Governor in his reply gave notice of his adoption of a more aggressive political role in South African affairs. The Raid welded the English elements of the midlands circle into a more united group and anti-Bond elements voted solidly in favour of the Progressive candidate in the 1898 Legislative Council elections. The Bond in the midlands suffered its first reverse when G.H. Maasdorp, a Progressive, topped the poll.

(v) Education

The Graaff-Reinet College had an unfortunate start; in the years immediately after its establishment the business community who had contributed so largely to its foundation were in desperate financial straits and many of the leading men, having become insolvent, left Graaff-Reinet. There was much truth in the Herald's statement of 17 December 1864 that the "commercial depression, and numerous failures, which have affected every individual in the District, and removed from our midst whole families, could not fail to tell seriously against an institution depending upon the public for support".¹

Professors Guthrie and Gill soon found that few of the pupils who came to them were fit to enter a College course, and as the government school did not provide the right sort of preparation required for the College, it was decided to establish a preparatory school in conjunction with the College. In the first years of its existence, enrolment at the College varied from twenty-three to thirty-eight students, while the preparatory school had between five and twenty-eight pupils.²

The preparatory school was discontinued in 1864 because of lack of support,³ and enrolment at the College itself remained small despite a reduction of

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1. GRH, 17 December 1864.
 2. College Minutes, 17 September 1861; G 30-1861; G 25-1862; G 14-1863; GRH, 24 September 1862.
 3. College Minutes, 12 July 1864; G 13-1865; it was re-established for a few years in the early 1870's (College Minutes, 12 February 1872, 7 April 1876; G 5-1873; G 14-1874).

fees in 1865 and arrangements made for the boarding of the sons of farmers. Standards were high,¹ but this was no recommendation to a Boer population to whom education was closely tied to church membership. By 1870 the average number of students at the College had dropped to fourteen and schemes were afoot to remodel the College in accordance with its limited income and to bring its educational scope more into line with younger pupils,² to provide "for a more thorough training of scholars in the elementary branches".³ Professor Gill's remarks of 1871 are not unprejudiced as the College Council had seen fit to dispense with his services when the institution was remodelled, but his opinion is worth quoting as his conclusions were not very different from that other dissatisfied pedagogue, George Bremner.⁴ Gill wrote that:

Graaff Reinet is a trading station, and nothing more. As a place of residence, it offers no attractions to men of wealth ... It offers no society to the class of youth for whom colleges are intended, nor, as far as I can see, is it likely to possess for years to come the material from which the ranks of a college could be recruited ... The real crying want of this district is a cheap boarding-school for farmers' sons, and some means of aiding and organizing the education of girls.⁵

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1. College Minutes, 14 August 1865; GRH, 19 August 1865.
 2. College Minutes, 12 December 1870, and special meeting, 14 December 1870; GRH, 17 December 1870, 15 February 1871.
 3. G 9-1871.
 4. See pp.138-139.
 5. GRH, 10 June 1871.

The reorganisation of the College caused a temporary increase in the number of students to about forty.¹ In 1875 Guthrie resigned,² and was succeeded by Dr J.K. Dall.³ Once again there was some reorganisation,⁴ but there was no lasting improvement in the fortunes of the College and it had almost closed down by 1882, when a public meeting decided to request the College Council to keep the College going for one more year while plans were made for its rejuvenation.⁵ Ill-feeling among the professors was solved by a complete change in teaching staff, and in the first term of 1885 there were between seventy and eighty boys at the College.⁶

The days of the Graaff-Reinet College as a college were numbered. The College catered mainly for the sons of the professional and business community, although even among them it had to compete with schools in Grahamstown and elsewhere.⁷ Among the farming community there were few boys who obtained an adequate elementary education to enable them to follow a college course. The need to establish a preparatory school in conjunction with the College had been present from the beginning. In 1879 Dall referred to this same problem,

1. G 9-1872; G 5-1873; GRH, 7 February 1872.

2. College Minutes, 13 July 1875.

3. College Minutes, 20 September 1875; GRH, 29 January 1876.

4. College Minutes, adjourned meeting, 22 March 1876.

5. GRA, 1 July 1882.

6. G 25-1885.

7. In 1882 some fourteen or fifteen boys were receiving schooling in Grahamstown (GRA, 13 June 1882).

that boys of fifteen or sixteen years of age came to the College from the rural areas, knowing nothing except what "they may have picked up from very irregular and inefficient lessons on the farms".¹

Dr Langham Dale, Superintendent General of Education, in his report for 1885 stated that as from the beginning of 1886 the Graaff-Reinet College was to be placed "on the footing of a first-class public school". He wrote that "as the development of the College has been always impeded by the absence of any provision for elementary teaching, it is proposed to leave the strictly collegiate studies in abeyance, and to arrange the work in three departments, - primary, intermediate, and superior".² The Graaff-Reinet College was born of the optimism of the thriving and vigorous business community of the 1850's, but the promise of those years was not fulfilled. Instead of moving to an assured and prosperous future, Graaff-Reinet had moved from the main stream of colonial life into the quieter back waters, where she had to be satisfied with a first class public school.

In 1871 Gill had drawn attention to the need for more facilities for the education of girls. An important milestone in this regard was the opening on 18 April 1876 of the Midland Ladies Seminary with twenty

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1. Report of a Commission Appointed to Enquire into and Report upon the Working of the Education Acts in Force in this Colony 1879, p.21.
 2. G 9-1886, p.4.

boarders and twenty day pupils.¹ It was the success of the Ladies Seminary at Wellington which had quickened the interest of Charles Murray and others in the establishment of a similar institution at Graaff-Reinet.² The school was under the temporary control of Miss Helen Murray, Charles Murray's sister, until the arrival from the United States of America of Misses Thayre and Ayres. They departed about 1880 and Helen Murray was appointed principal in a permanent capacity, a position which she retained until her retirement in 1916.³ By 1902 the Midland Seminary had an enrolment of 230, which number did not vary significantly in the next few years.⁴ The Seminary had from an early date played a role in teacher training. From 1905 its activities in this sphere were expanded, and by the middle of 1907 there were eighty-six pupil teachers on the roll.⁵

The economic crisis of the sixties brought the question of the education of poor children to the fore. A newspaper correspondent in 1862 complained that the kerkraad "seem to forget that there are many children of the poor, both white and black, now growing up in the remote parts of this district, who but seldom, some never, see the inside of either a church or school". The correspondent went on to voice a complaint that was

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1. GRH, 19 April 1876; it was later stated that the Seminary had started with twenty-four boarders and thirty-five day scholars (GRA, 6 December 1909).
 2. GRH, 7 July 1875.
 3. GRH, 11 October 1876; Henning, p.436.
 4. GRA, 15 August 1902, 6 December 1909.
 5. GRA, 30 January 1905, 31 July 1907.

later to be heard frequently, that "their solicitude seems to be for the heathen. Every farmer, even the poorest, is made to subscribe in aid of the church and Graaff Reinet Missionary Society, whilst the education of their children is overlooked, and even discouraged".¹ In 1867 when plans were under way to establish a school for the children of poor whites in the town, S.A. Probart pointed out "that a large number of white children were growing up here without education, because their parents were too poor to send them to school; while the coloured population had two schools provided for them".² The belief that blacks were receiving a better education than whites was to come more strongly to the fore after the establishment of the Afrikaner Bond, and in 1887 in parliament, Rothman apparently maintained "that white children were running about barefoot while coloured children were sent to school".³ But such sentiments were by no means confined to the ranks of the Afrikaner Bond, and people such as Henry Sandford, editor of the Advertiser, and members of the ZRFA were not averse to reflecting that blacks often received a better education than whites, and that the main use blacks appeared to be making of their education was to forge passes!⁴

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1. GRH, 25 January 1862 ("A Member of the Dutch Reformed Church").
 2. GRH, 27 March 1867.
 3. Hansard Debates in the Assembly, 1887, p.205.
 4. GRA, 23 February, 5 November 1884 (Zwart Ruggens Farmers' Association meeting).

The appeal for better educational facilities for the poor people of the district in 1862 appears to have found no echo at the time. But the depression of the sixties focussed attention on the plight of the erf-holders in town, and in 1867 a memorial to the kerkraad stated that:

Het is de Eerwd. Kerkraad bekend hoe veele bezoeken en plagen op de inwoners gerust hebben en noch op hen rusten, zoo als de ziekte in de wyngaarden, enz. Deze allen hebben groote invloed uitgeoefend op den staat der opvoeding; daar vele ouders, die vroeger bemiddeld waren, nu arm zyn, en verplicht om hunne kinderen in onkunde te zien opgroeijen.¹

Steps were taken to establish a school, under the control of the Dutch Reformed Church, which would be open to white children of any denomination. It was made clear that the school was to cater only for the children of parents who were too poor to afford other schools, and that the establishment of this school would not harm any existing school.² The school opened in January 1868 with eighty-four pupils.³ The Dutch Reformed Church continued to play a role in education. In 1896 a boarding school for poor white boys was opened,⁴ and Dr Te Water at the same time helped to establish a school for poor white girls,⁵ which eventually opened in mid 1898.⁶

1. GRH, 16 March 1867.

2. GRH, 16, 27 March 1867.

3. GRH, 18 January 1868.

4. Te Water Papers, vol.60: C. Murray to T.N.G. te Water, 8 September 1896.

5. De Kerkbode, vol. XIV, No.27, 8 July 1897, p.416.

6. GRA, 27 July 1898.

The Herald said of the teaching of Dutch in schools in 1868 that there was "not a single school where Dutch is taught grammatically, or as a part of the regular studies; and there are only a few infant schools where Dutch is used at all".¹ Even the Dutch Reformed Church school for the poor had, as far as possible, to use English as a medium of instruction in order to qualify for government aid.² The position of the Dutch language in schools was one that the Afrikaner Bond challenged soon after its establishment in 1881. In the early 1880's the local Bond engaged in a campaign to exclude English from the kerkschool but the school committee was unsympathetic and left it to the parents to decide in what language, if not both, their children should be taught. The school at this time had sixty-four pupils, of whom only twenty received instruction exclusively in Dutch, the remainder being taught either in English or in both languages.³

According to the census of 1911 there were in the Graaff-Reinet district 47 government and government-aided schools, with 1 303 white and 529 black pupils. There were also 11 private schools, attended by 127 whites and 32 blacks.⁴

(vi) The Church

New churches continued to be established in Graaff-Reinet. The first Methodist minister, the Rev John Edwards, came to Graaff-Reinet in 1870 and the

1. GRH, 29 January 1868.

2. GRH, 18 January 1868.

3. The Bond's attempts to exclude English from the school are discussed on pp. 528-530.

4. U.G. 32 - 1912.

Methodist church building was officially opened in September 1875, during the incumbency of the Rev J. Wilson. The Baptists made a brief appearance in Graaff-Reinet in the eighties.¹ The flourishing Jewish community of the fifties declined as many of its members moved to the diamond fields, and later to the gold fields. Herrman states that by 1890 the Jewish community of Graaff-Reinet had ceased to exist. But it is clear from the account of Saron and Hotz that new immigration from Eastern Europe in the nineties and from the Transvaal during the Anglo-Boer War witnessed a rebirth of Jewish society in Graaff-Reinet. In 1905 the first Jewish minister, the Rev Mr Wiskin was appointed, and Jews from Aberdeen, Pearston, Middelburg and Cradock "came to participate in all major functions, making the town the focal point of Jewish life in the area".²

In the Dutch Reformed Church, in January 1866 Andrew Murray, who had served the congregation since 1822, informed the church "dat hy zich verpligt gevoel van wegen zyne toenemende zwakheid, zyne betrekking als Leeraar op te geven".³ He was not destined to enjoy a long period of retirement as he died on 24 June 1866.⁴ The choice of a successor fell on Andrew Murray (jnr), and when he declined to accept the invitation, Charles Murray was elected to succeed his father.⁵ He served

1. Henning, pp.367-368.

2. I. Herrman, A History of the Jews in South Africa (from the Earliest Times to 1895), pp.204, 241; G.Saron and L.Hotz, The Jews in South Africa; A History, pp. 313-314.

3. G 6, 1/3: 15 January 1866.

4. GRH, 27 June 1866.

5. G 6, 1/3: 9 April, 21 May 1866; GRH, 16 June 1866.



Church Square, in the days of the old church, which was replaced
by the present church in 1886

Graaff-Reinet until his death in 1904.¹

The need for a new church building had been felt for many years, before the decision was finally taken in 1880 to press on with the project. Graaff-Reinet's fourth Dutch Reformed church was built on the same site as the second and third churches. The foundation stone was laid on 12 April 1886, and the church was inaugurated on 10 September 1887.²

Despite these signs of order and progress, the years after 1861 were troubled ones for the Dutch Reformed Church in Graaff-Reinet. The Graaff-Reinet community in common with others, was split as a result of the church crisis in the sixties. Graaff-Reinet had close ties with some of the leading figures involved in the controversy between liberalism and orthodoxy. The Rev Thomas Burgers had been born in the Graaff-Reinet district and family ties made him a frequent visitor. Other Graaff-Reinettters who studied in Europe at about the same time as Burgers were Gerrit van Niekerk, C.T.Muller and S.P.Naude. At the end of 1859 the Rev Naude returned to the Cape from Europe and, before proceeding to Graaff-Reinet, he preached several times in the Groot Kerk in Cape Town, where he was well received. Although no proof was adduced to support the allegation, he was accused of holding Unitarian beliefs.³ When Naude arrived in Graaff-Reinet to take his first service there in February 1860, his notoriety had preceded him,⁴ but he soon found favour in Graaff-Reinet,⁵ and when he left

1. OC, 26 September 1904.

2. Henning, pp.343-347.

3. S.P. Engelbrecht, Thomas Francois Burgers; A Biography, pp.2-6, 19, 31.

4. GRH, 31 December 1859, 11 February 1860.

5. GRH, 18 February 1860 ("A Member of the Church").

the town in August 1860, having accepted a call to Queenstown, he was presented with an address signed by 139 members of the Dutch Reformed Church "en andere uwer vrienden in deze stad". The address deplored the fact "dat er niet gearzeld werd pogingen aan te wenden, u te benadeelen en te belasteren, hetwelk echter alleen diende, om onze belangstelling te meer op te wekken (hetgeen wy niet betreuren)". The signatories were townsmen, and while the names of erfholders were not absent, the majority of the signatures were those of the mercantile community. Naude's reply must have made some of the signatories uneasy, for Naude said that he had noticed among many of the signatories a striving "naar een zelfstandig Christendom, naar eene zelfstandige overtuiging in zake der Godsdienst; dat zy niet meer het hoofd buigen en eigen oordeel gevangen geven, onder de orakelspreuken van hunne voorvaderen".¹ The address and its reply received much attention in Graaff-Reinet, and the Herald reprinted it in its following issue, the original edition having been sold out.²

That members and ex-members of the kerkraad should be among the signatories of the address to Naude made "eenen allerpijnlijksten indruk" on the Rev J.H.Neethling of Stellenbosch, and in an Open Brief he attacked the signatories and Naude. Graaff-Reinettors and members of the Queenstown congregation, where Naude was serving, were quick to defend the young minister.³

1. GRH, 15 September 1860.

2. GRH, 19 September 1860.

3. De Gereformeerde Kerkbode, in Zuid-Afrika, vol.XII, No.22, 3 November 1860, pp.345-347, No.24, 1 December 1860, pp.375-378, No.25, 15 December 1860, pp.391-392, No.26, 29 December 1860, pp.412-413, vol.XIII, No.1, 12 January 1861, pp.12-13; GRH, 1 December 1860.

Burgers and his colleagues of like mind expressed themselves against the excesses which sometimes occurred during revivals which took place in certain churches in the sixties. Other church leaders, however, felt that such revivals were an effective manner of combating liberalism in the church.¹ Professors Hofmeyr and Murray and the Rev J.H. Neethling were active in organising a conference in Worcester in August 1860 which discussed such revivals. In the months following this conference a number of towns in the colony experienced revivals.² In April 1861 a Christian Conference was held in Graaff-Reinet,³ in the arrangements for which Neethling was active,⁴ doubtless in the hope of counter-acting the influence of Naude and Burgers. Before the Conference took place, Graaff-Reinet experienced a revival. At nagmaal, "kwamen eenige opgewekten uit de Camdeboo, zingende onze stad ingereden, en namen hun intrek in een huis in de achterstraat, en daar waren zij dadelijk werkzaam". The revival was most evident in the back-streets of town; it was here that "oude zondaars" were seen in tears.⁵ To an outsider it was all somewhat bewildering, and besides "an orderly

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1. Engelbrecht, pp.33-34.
 2. J.A.S. Oberholster, Die Gereformeerde Kerke onder die Kruis in Suid-Afrika; Hul Ontstaan en Ontwikkeling, p.165.
 3. De Gereformeerde Kerkbode, in Zuid-Afrika, vol.XIII, No.5, 9 March 1861, pp.78-79, No.9, 4 May 1861, pp. 139-142; GRH, 20 April 1861.
 4. See for example the reply of J.H. Cloete, J.J. Naude, S.J. Naude, D.P. Liebenberg to Neethling's Open Brief (De Gereformeerde Kerkbode, in Zuid-Afrika, vol.XII, No.24, 1 December 1860, pp.375-378).
 5. De Gereformeerde Kerkbode, in Zuid-Afrika, vol.XIII, No.8, 20 April 1861, pp.123-124.

assemblage of persons singing psalms in the open air", there were less orderly scenes, "and in several houses there were excited crowds, engaged in noisy demonstrations of their love to God. The holiest name of the Saviour and allusions to the sacred wonders of redemption, were bellowed out amid a jargon of contending voices. The scene was exciting and strange".¹ Although Andrew Murray gave his blessing to the revival, he also raised a warning voice against "het zingen op straat, het sterk geschreeuw, enz." At church, too, some unusual behaviour was recorded: "Eene groote schare was zingende in de kerk gekomen, hetwelk de kerkeraad niet kon goedkeuren, hoewel die innerlijk daardoor werd bewogen".²

When the Rev Naude visited Graaff-Reinet in 1861 and 1862 he officiated at services in the Dutch Reformed Church,³ but after the adjourned synod of 1862 had taken action against the Revs J.J. Kotze and Burgers,⁴ Naude's position became more difficult as he closely identified himself with the stand taken by Kotze and Burgers. In January 1863 he was forced to preach in the Oefening's Kerk as Murray did not invite him to preach in his church. Some twenty-five persons, mainly from the business and professional community, challenged Murray to explain

1. GRH, 17 April 1861 (Quoted by Henning, p.316)

2. De Gereformeerde Kerkbode, in Zuid-Afrika, vol.XIII, No.8, 20 April 1861, pp.123-124.

3. GRH, 30 January, 8 May 1861, 19 March 1862.

4. Engelbrecht, pp.35-46.

his attitude towards Naude. Murray was not to be drawn into a religious argument and replied "dat ik myn eigen werk en pligt heb wenschen te doen, en gedaan heb".¹ There were rumours abroad of an attempt to establish a separate church, but it would seem as if the supporters of Naude were in the minority.² They were a more articulate group than those who supported the orthodoxy of Neethling but, if anything could move the latter to express themselves, it was an attack on their church. It is not surprising that an address in favour of Neethling should have come from the Sneeuwbergers, who were among the most conservative members of the Dutch Reformed Church.³ The address to Neethling, signed by 134 persons, informed him that they appreciated his endeavours:

Particularly we wish to thank you for the order and faithfulness with which you have sought, at every opportunity, to maintain the purity of the doctrines of our church ... We become more and more convinced how pernicious the doctrines are in their tendency and results, against which you have lifted up your warning voice; and it becomes clear to us that it is our sacred duty to thank and encourage those ministers who still shew us the good old ways, and lead the way therein.⁴

From at least March 1858 Murray conducted services in English in the Dutch Reformed Church.⁵ He

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1. GRH, 7, 10, 14 January 1863.
 2. GRH, 10, 17 January 1863 ("A Member of the Dutch Church").
 3. B. Spoelstra, Die "Doppers" in Suid-Afrika 1760-1899.
 4. GRH, 14 January 1863 (translation).
 5. GRH, 13, 27 March, 10 April 1858, 5 November 1859.

appears to have discontinued these in 1863,¹ but they were resumed by Charles Murray in 1868.² There was thus a liberalising element in the Dutch Reformed Church, as also found in the support enjoyed by Naude and Burgers. This group were mostly Afrikaners who had some association with the English-speaking residents, and they found themselves increasingly alienated from the Dutch Reformed Church. A number of them were soon to be found among the ranks of the Free Protestant Church. Outside of Cape Town, Graaff-Reinet was the only centre in the colony to boast of a Free Protestant Church. The history of this congregation dates from August 1869, when Dr Peter C. Vintcent, a school friend and fellow student of the Rev D.P. Faure, founder of the Free Protestant Church in Cape Town, founded a church in Graaff-Reinet.³ Services were initially conducted in the town hall, but plans were soon under way to erect a church.⁴ Vintcent died in July 1873,⁵ before the new church was completed and the church was dedicated by the Rev S.P. Naude on 18 October 1874.⁶ The Free Protestant Church in Graaff-Reinet had great difficulty in securing ministers. For four years after Vintcent's death they had no minister. In March 1877, H.C.V. Leibbrandt, who intended resigning

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1. GRH, 23 September 1863 ("English Language"); Henning states that Andrew Murray had conducted English services since the thirties, and that he only stopped them temporarily in 1863 (Henning, p.312).
 2. GRH, 29 January 1868.
 3. D.P. Faure, My Life and Times, pp.22, 34, 50.
 4. BJB, vol.6: P.C. Vintcent to municipal board, 4 January 1872.
 5. Faure, p.50.
 6. BJB, vol.7: E. du Toit to municipal board, 13 October 1874; GRH, 14, 21 October 1874.

as Dutch Reformed Church minister at Victoria West, was invited to take charge of the Free Protestant Church in Graaff-Reinet. He accepted the offer, and remained there until the beginning of 1881, when he was appointed archivist in Cape Town.¹ Again the Free Protestant Church was without a minister. They eventually obtained the services of the Rev H. Rawlings, who came out from England, and assumed office on 24 June 1883. He resigned in 1886, and it is uncertain whether they ever obtained another minister.² The Church seems to have declined after 1886, but had not apparently ceased completely by 1904, as the census gives the number of members of the Free Church as twelve.³

During the long periods when they had no minister of their own, no regular church services were held and they had to rely upon the occasional visits to Graaff-Reinet of the Rev S.P. Naude.⁴ When services were held, they appear to have been conducted alternatively in Dutch and English, although the majority of the members were Afrikaners. Membership of the Free

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1. G 49, 2/1: W.C. Naude to H.C.V. Leibbrandt, 18 March 1877 and Leibbrandt to Naude, 30 March 1877, and to Committee of the Free Protestant Church, 30 August 1877; G 49, 2/1: Report of the Committee of the Free Protestant Church for two years ending 31 December 1881; Faure, p.50.
 2. G 49, 2/1: E. du Toit to (T) Dixon, 7 October 1882, and report of the Committee of the Free Protestant Church, 13 July 1883; Faure, p.50.
 3. Part III of 1904 census; GRH, 20 March 1905; Faure, p.50.
 4. G 49, 6/1: Baptismal Register; G 49, 2/1: Report of the Committee of the Free Protestant Church for two years ending 31 December 1881.

Protestant Church in Graaff-Reinet was open to all who answered the following question in the affirmative: "Do you believe that true Religion consists in Love to God and Love to Man, and do you earnestly desire to practise this religion in your daily life?"¹ Altogether between 7 November 1871 and 18 May 1884, ninety-one members were admitted to the church. Among the more prominent families who were members were the Maasdorps, the Nesers, Naudes, and members of the Watermeyer family.²

The list of members of the Free Protestant Church was a closely guarded secret. The question of whether members of the Free Church should continue to have a right to seats in the Dutch Reformed Church was discussed on a number of occasions by the kerkraad of the Dutch Reformed Church, but no finality was reached.³ Part of the difficulty was to ascertain who were members of the Free Church as opposed to those who merely attended services at the Free Church and in other ways supported its activities. On occasion the Dutch Reformed Church requested such a list from the Free Church, but the Free Protestant Church refused to embarrass those of its members as wished to keep a foot in both churches and refused to give a list of members. The Rev Charles Murray was told that as they were a Free Church the committee thought that it would be acting against their principles to make

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1. G 49, 5/1: Rules and Regulations of the Free Protestant Church, Graaff-Reinet; G 49, 2/1: Annual Report of the Committee of the Free Protestant Church, 13 April 1880.
 2. G 49, 6/2: List of Members, 1871-1884.
 3. G 6, 1/4: Meetings of 5 January, 1 June 1874, 5 June 1876.

any rules by which the liberty of members might be interfered with and they therefore prefer leaving it to the judgment of members, whether or not they deem it necessary in joining us, to give notice thereof to the Church they have left ... I may however state as far as I know, that but few of the members of your Church have actually joined us as members - although several attend and otherwise lend us their support".¹

There is no reason to doubt the secretary of the Free Church when he wrote that "onze bestaan een doorn is in het oog der magthebbende kerkelyke party die alles in haar vermogen aanwendt om onze uitbreiding te stremmen".²

The English services in the Dutch Reformed Church continued, but with the sudden alignment of forces along racial lines after the Jameson Raid of 1896, attempts were made to abolish the English services. The campaign to effect this began in earnest in 1897, and was finally successful in 1900 when all services in English in the Dutch Reformed Church were ended.³

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1. G 49, 2/1: C. Murray to E.W. du Toit, 22 May 1875; G 49, 3/1: E.W. du Toit (July 1875).
 2. G 49, 3/1: W.C. Naude to Committee of the Free Protestant Church, Cape Town, 15 September 1877.
 3. These attempts are detailed on pp.602, 619-620.

CHAPTER 6

THE ANGLO-BOER WAR AND AFTERMATH, 1899-1910

(i) The First Invasion: Sympathies and Tensions

The invasion of the Cape colony in November 1899 by republican commandos did not result in a general rebellion by the Afrikaners. The great majority of Afrikaners in the Cape sympathised with the republics, and disliked British policy towards the republics, but they would not rebel by themselves against their own lawful government, a government which the Afrikaners as Bondsmen had themselves put into power.

That the sympathy of the Afrikaners was with the republics was clear from the manner in which the invading commandos were received in Aliwal North, Colesberg, Burgersdorp, Jamestown, Lady Grey, Venterstad, Barkly East and Dordrecht.¹ Although the Afrikaners of the colony would not rebel without receiving outside encouragement, a considerable number of them joined the invaders in the areas occupied by the commandos. In the first invasion of the colony the commandos did not advance much beyond Colesberg in the direction of Graaff-Reinet, and the area covered by the proclamations of the invaders did not extend beyond Noupoot to the north of Graaff-Reinet, or Stormberg Junction in a north-easterly direction.² In Graaff-Reinet there was no

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1. J.H. Breytenbach, Die Geskiedenis van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog in Suid-Afrika, 1899-1902, I, pp.444-450.
 2. Breytenbach I, Chapter XVIII, and map facing p.458.

movement to join the rebels, and although young men did run away from home to join the commandos, the number of rebels from Graaff-Reinet was small.

Graaff-Reinet chose sides largely along racial lines, and the possibility of a racial clash was never far below the surface. Tension at times threatened to break out into open hostilities, as when the loyalists held a fireworks display to celebrate the relief of Ladysmith. On the other side the wearing of the Transvaal and Free State colours by Afrikaners gave offence to the loyalists. With the increase in racial tension, the English services in the Dutch Reformed Church, which had been in the balance since 1897, ended.¹

At the end of March 1900, 350 officers and men of the Sherwood Foresters (Derbyshire Regiment) arrived in Graaff-Reinet.² Although feelings about the war were high, the hospitality of the erfholders did not fail them, and at least one Forester wrote home to say that the "Dutch people are very kind indeed, and offer us coffee on their stoeps and a feast of fruit in their gardens".³ The troops left Graaff-Reinet on 20 May 1900.⁴

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1. These sources of tension and the martial law situation are subject to a more detailed analysis in Chapter 15, (iii) "The Anglo-Boer War, 1899-1902", pp. 614-628.
 2. GRA, 30 March 1900.
 3. GRA, 27 April 1900.
 4. GRA, 23 May 1900.

Supporters of both sides made collections and held meetings. Of particular note was the Volks Congress held as part of the Reconciliation Committee campaign on 31 May 1900.¹ There were few rebels from Graaff-Reinet, but the district was drawn into the conflict over the treatment of rebels by virtue of the fact that Dr Te Water and A.J. Herholdt were both members of Schreiner's cabinet. Te Water took a firm stand on the question of the punishment of the rebels, refusing to acknowledge the right of the Imperial government to instruct the Cape government as to how it should treat its rebellious subjects. Herholdt, however, agreed with Schreiner that they should accept a compromise. Schreiner failed to secure cabinet solidarity on the question, and after a caucus of his parliamentary supporters voted against him, he resigned on 13 June 1900. Te Water's stand enhanced his reputation, but Herholdt's attitude earned him a vote of no confidence at a public meeting in Murraysburg in July 1900, which spelt the end of his political career.²

(ii) The Second Invasion and Martial Law

The second invasion of the Cape began with the crossing of the Orange River in December 1900. The activities of Hertzog from December, and of De Wet from February 1901, were of little effect in Graaff-Reinet, which was far removed from the scene of their opera-

1. See pp. 620-621.

2. See pp. 611-612.

tions.¹ Of greater consequence were the activities of the Boer commandos under men such as Kritzinger, Scheepers, Fouche, Malan, Lotter, Lategan and Naude, who spread out across the midlands. The commandos visited towns for provisions and wandered about sabotaging the British war effort, destroying rail links, attacking trains, and burning farmhouses as a retaliatory measure against British actions in the north. British troops remained close on the heels of these commandos, and a number of skirmishes took place. Whenever the pace of pursuit became too hot, the commandos escaped to the mountainous areas around Cradock, Graaff-Reinet and Middelburg.²

The second invasion differed from the first in that there was no extended occupation of any town; the highly mobile commandos were content to leave after obtaining provisions in town and remounts from the surrounding countryside.³ By early April 1901 Bethesda, Murraysburg, Aberdeen, Pearston and Petersburg had all been briefly occupied by commandos.⁴ Murraysburg fared badly as it was occupied on several occasions.⁵ While there was no chance of bringing districts into revolt, the number of rebels, as opposed to those who

1. L.S. Amery, ed., The Times History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902, V, pp.127, 132-139; C.J. Scheepers Strydom, Kaapland en die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog, pp.95-99.

2. Amery V, pp.241-245; Strydom, pp.98-99.

3. Strydom, pp.91-92.

4. GRA, 25 January, 18 March, 12 April 1901.

5. GRA, 26 June 1901.

quietly helped the republicans, was relatively smaller than in the first invasion. But as far as the area around Graaff-Reinet was concerned, where there were virtually no rebels during the first invasion, the presence of Boer commandos in the district caused numbers of men to join them. This was particularly true of the towns which were visited by the commandos. When Herholdt addressed his constituents in Murraysburg in July 1900, he was able to congratulate them on their behaviour: "Zy waren ook wel opgewonden en hartzeer, maar niemand heeft de wet overtreden, en niemand is in den tronk gezet".¹ During the second invasion, however, a considerable number of Murraysburgers joined the commandos, and Herholdt, the voice of moderation, himself became the victim of the passions of war when his home was burnt down by Scheepers and his commando.²

Of the 3 437 rebels who laid down their arms at the end of the war, 112 came from Murraysburg; Aberdeen, which was also occupied by Boer commandos, yielded 94 rebels; only 47 Graaff-Reineters were among the rebels who surrendered.³ Of the 114 men of Lotter's commando captured on 4 September 1901, only three were from Graaff-Reinet.⁴ Had Graaff-Reinet been occupied by Boer commandos, the number of rebels would undoubtedly have been much greater. The occupation of Graaff-Reinet appears to have been a near thing. There was

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1. OC, 16 July 1900.
 2. See p.622.
 3. A 6 - 1902.
 4. GRA, 6, 9 September 1901.

some consternation in Graaff-Reinet at the end of 1900 with the news that Kritzinger was in the neighbourhood of Middelburg, with his further movements uncertain. Kritzinger in fact made for, and occupied, New Bethesda, in the Graaff-Reinet district, but any plans he may have had for occupying the town of Graaff-Reinet were forestalled by the arrival at midnight on Old Year's Night, 1900, of 600 of the Coldstream Guards. By 7 January 1901 there were some 2 000 troops, mainly mounted, encamped on the slopes of Magazine Hill.¹

By the middle of January the whole of the colony, with the exception of the ports and the Transkei, was under martial law. Within a few days of the arrival of troops in Graaff-Reinet, a Town Guard, about 100 strong, rising to about 220 by the end of March 1902, had been formed. Later in the year, a district defence force was organised with the aim of helping to drive the Boer commandos out of the district. This force did not exceed 100 persons and had no effect on the course of events.²

The activities of the Boer commandos caused farming activities to suffer severely. Loyalist farmers, fearing the visits of commandos, came into town with their families. Fences were removed to

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1. GRA, 31 December 1900, 7, 21 January 1901, 10 March, 10 September 1902; J. Hall, The Coldstream Guards 1885-1914, pp.234-235.
 2. GRA, 9 January, 24 June 1901, 19 March 1902.

facilitate troop movements, and A.A. Kingwill later recalled that an Australian garrison camped at Oudeberg had used fencing poles at the campfire concerts to which they had invited the neighbouring farmers.¹ Farm servants too, showed a tendency to seek refuge in the town of Graaff-Reinet,² as blacks were often harshly treated by the Boer commandos if there was the least suspicion that they were acting as spies for the British. Farming was further hampered by the attempts of the military authorities to deprive the Boer commandos of provisions. The Martial Law Notice of 28 May 1901, for example, ordered that all forage, "including Lucerne, Hay, Oathay, Chaff, Wheat, Rye or Barley, dried, in bundles or in the form of Chaff, is to be brought into Graaff-Reinet at once". Those who could not bring these commodities into town were to burn them.³ While many farmers suffered heavy losses,⁴ G.H. Maasdorp later said in the Legislative Council that there were people who had made fortunes out of the war.⁵ A.A. Kingwill, for example, made a good profit from hiring out transport and oxen to the military.⁶

The martial law regulations were not severe, but their application depended much on the military commanders administering them. Many loyalists were hardly affected by the regulations, and some of them welcomed

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1. A.A. Kingwill, A Karroo Farmer Looks Back; The Memoirs of A.A. Kingwill, p.55; see also GRA, 17 April 1901.
 2. GRA, 13 February 1901.
 3. GRA, 29 May 1901.
 4. See for example, pp.624-626.
 5. GRA, 17 September 1902.
 6. Kingwill, p.53.

martial law, as it prevented Afrikaners from openly making statements in favour of the republics. Certain loyalists, it would appear, were able to embarrass their Afrikaner townsmen by acting as informers. For those Afrikaners who were suspected of sympathising with the republics, martial law often meant harassment, imprisonment or banishment. According to the Rev C.H. Radloff, whose experiences in the war were obtained in Graaff-Reinet, the evidence of loyalist witnesses against the supporters of the republics was invariably believed. If no witnesses were forthcoming, those people who were thought to be a bad influence on others were sent to Port Alfred as "undesirables". This fate overtook a number of Afrikaner town councillors. Although discussions of any consequence in the town council were held behind closed doors, Neser, an Afrikaner loyalist, forced his fellow councillors into awkward positions, by proposing motions such as that approving of Milner's policy. By July 1901 three of the councillors were in Port Alfred as "undesirables", while others were wary of offering themselves as candidates. The east end of town dominated the town council for the duration of the war, but even among them there was not a great deal of enthusiasm for municipal affairs.¹

Graaff-Reinet was also made aware of the war by the trials of the rebels which took place in town. From April 1901 the trial of rebels was in the hands of the military authorities; two of the best known trials held in Graaff-Reinet were those of Lotter and Scheepers.

1. See pp.322-323.

Although many rebels were sentenced to death in Graaff-Reinet, the sentences were actually carried out elsewhere; the death sentences on eight men, including Gideon Scheepers, were carried out at Graaff-Reinet.¹

(iii) The Aftermath of War

At the end of the war an attempt was made to indict Dr Te Water for treasonable activities. He had supplied President Steyn with the private telegraphic code of the Cape cabinet in May 1899, and had made inflammatory speeches in the early stages of the war, which it was maintained had led young men into rebellion.²

With the return of peace, the wearing of the colours of the former republics was again in evidence, and hats in imitation of that worn by Scheepers were also in vogue. The passions aroused by the war found expression in the erection of a monument to those executed in Graaff-Reinet. But the manner in which the Dutch Reformed Church and the town council refused to give the project official support by refusing to make available a site for the erection of the monument did

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1. G.S. Preller, Scheepers se Dagboek en die Stryd in Kaapland; OC pamphlet, "Onthulling van Monument te Graaff-Reinet op Woensdag, 2 Desember, 1908"; J.H. Snyman, Rebelle-Verhoor in Kaapland gedurende die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog met Spesiale Verwysing na die Militêre Howe, 1899-1902, p.56, appears to have assumed that the men sentenced to death in Graaff-Reinet were also executed there; Lotter, for example, was executed in Middelburg. According to Hall, The Coldstream Guards, p.290, it was Major H.G.D. Shute who suggested that the men be executed in their own districts.
 2. See p.612.

much to reduce ill-feeling, and was at the same time evidence of a desire to conciliate rather than antagonise those opposed to the erection of such a monument. On 1 December 1908 the bodies of seven of the men executed at Graaff-Reinet were laid to rest in proceedings attended by some 2 600 people.¹ The monument at the corner of Donkin and Somerset Streets was unveiled on 2 December on a piece of land donated by a private citizen.

Although there was much evidence of the enduring nature of the spiritual wounds inflicted by the war, parliamentary representation after the war was more fluid than in the previous two decades. The conciliation movement in Graaff-Reinet owed much to Gysbert Henry Maasdorp who had been elected to the Legislative Council by the Progressives in 1898. Maasdorp had supported the British war effort and had indeed lost a son fighting for the British, but after the war he forsook the Progressives who were campaigning for the suspension of the constitution. The loyalists of Graaff-Reinet were in the forefront of this agitation, since they hoped that the suspension of the constitution would prevent the Afrikaners from gaining the upperhand in the political life of the colony. Maasdorp opposed this movement, and on all other major issues he found himself in accord with the South African Party, the parliamentary wing of the Afrikaner Bond. In the Legislative Council elections in November 1903, the Bond nominated only two

1. The body of Scheepers could not be found, which was to give rise to widespread speculation that he had somehow cheated death (Preller, Scheepers se Dagboek).

candidates in the hope that Maasdorp, who stood as an independent, would obtain the third seat. Although Maasdorp was popular among the Progressives, they rejected him in favour of the Progressive candidate, P.D. de Villiers of Beaufort West, and Maasdorp failed to gain election.

In the Assembly elections early in 1904, Maasdorp, who had in the interim joined the South African Party, made a bid for the official nomination of the Afrikaner Bond. He was successful, but in the confusion resulting from the sudden late withdrawal of Dr Te Water from the contest for health reasons, certain delegates to the Bond nomination meeting voted irregularly. When this matter was rectified, Maasdorp was rejected, and F.R. Davel and C.A. du Toit became the two Bond candidates. Maasdorp did not withdraw from the contest, nor in view of his great popularity did the Bond censor him for his decision to stand against the official candidates. The outcome of the election was never in doubt. The Progressives, who had not succeeded in electing a candidate to the Assembly, did not put up a candidate, and to them there was no doubt that Du Toit, who had played a prominent role in stopping the English services in the Dutch Reformed Church, should be rejected. With the help of the Progressives, Maasdorp topped the poll and entered parliament with Davel. Both men retained their seats in 1908. After Union, where each constituency was represented by one member, Maasdorp continued to serve Graaff-Reinet until 1915. Maasdorp was the first candidate supported by Bondsmen to obtain the votes of the Bond's traditional opponents, but he was not the last to do this, and in

the fluid state of politics, the Advertiser during the Legislative Council elections of 1908, gave two of the three Bond candidates a measure of support.¹

After the war an attempt was made to strike a new path in municipal politics. This was partly due to the new policy of the Advertiser, which in 1903 passed out of the hands of the Sandford family. The first attempt of the new owners to conduct municipal elections on a non-party basis failed, largely as a result of "the after swell of the war", when the erfholders made a successful bid to regain a majority of seats on the town council. They had lost their majority during the war when certain of their representatives on the council had been sent to Port Alfred as "undesirables". For the remainder of the period until 1910 there were few contested elections. Although the erfholders were determined to maintain their majority on the town council, no attempt was made to prevent the east end of town from having a share of representation on the council. A compromise was reached, and although it was not always strictly observed, friction was kept to a minimum.²

If the question of the town's water supply had dominated the activities of the town council in the eighties, in the first decade of the twentieth century the main problem which confronted the council was that

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1. The above outline on political representation after the war, is a brief summary of Chapter 15, (iv) "A Fluid State, 1902-1910", pp.628-639.
 2. The municipal situation after the war is discussed in Chapter 9, (iv) "The Blurring of Party Lines", pp.324-329.

of the living conditions of the blacks. The number of blacks in the town and the location increased rapidly during the war. Years of neglect made the hire-rooms in town a serious health hazard and the council, for the first time in its history, made an effort to encourage people to move from the hire-rooms into the location. As the influx from the country areas increased after the war, the growth of the location gave cause for alarm, and the council was soon engaged in attempts to limit the size of it. By 1910 the town council had almost lost control of the location, partly as a result of its failure to enlist the aid of the increasingly sophisticated inhabitants of the location.

From the last quarter of the nineteenth century black townsmen showed a greater awareness of their position in town, as reflected in their petitions for rent reductions and their objections to white farmers labeling the location as a nest of thieves. This awareness may also be seen in their sensitivity to the cavalier manner in which they were sometimes treated by the whites on public occasions. The bulk of the black voting strength in the district was concentrated in the town. Black voters, however, formed but a small proportion of the total number of voters in the electoral division and had little effect on the outcome of parliamentary elections. In town council elections and in voting for the three town members of the Divisional Council, however, they were an important element where the two white sections were evenly matched. Although the black voters before the Anglo-Boer War were usually found on the side of the Bond's opponents, after the war they adopted a more independent line, and showed

signs of distributing their votes more in accordance with their own immediate needs in the location and on the labour market. Although the town council paid its black and white employees on the same scale of wages, towards the end of the period of this study there was a tendency for whites to demand certain positions as a right, and also to agitate for more money on account of their greater productivity.¹

Apart from a few belated objections to the draft constitution for the union of the South African states which filtered through to Graaff-Reinet from Cape Town, the events leading up to the Union of South Africa in 1910 were marked by unanimity among all sections of the community. Graaff-Reinet had a special interest in the National Convention as G.H. Maasdrorp was one of the twelve Cape delegates. A large gathering on Church Square on 31 May 1910, and addresses in Dutch and English by church ministers, saw Graaff-Reinet's entry into a united South Africa.²

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1. Chapter 11 contains a detailed analysis of the situation obtaining in the location, and the position of black townsmen in general.
 2. The events leading up to Union, and an examination of Maasdrorp's role, are dealt with at greater length in Chapter 15, (v) "Graaff-Reinet and the Unification of South Africa", pp.639-646.

PART II

A. THE MUNICIPAL BARQUE

The central feature of municipal government in Graaff-Reinet in the period 1845-1880 was the division of the townsmen into two main camps. Two separate and distinct communities existed within the limits of the town. The west end of town was populated largely by those who made a living from the produce of their vineyards and orchards,¹ supplemented by transport riding, and whose livestock grazed on the commonage. The mercantile and professional community had their businesses and residences in the eastern part of town.² The division was thus residential, and had as its base the divergent interests of a rural and an urban population.

The east-enders were not a homogeneous group, but included in their ranks Englishmen who had moved thither from Grahamstown and Cape Town, Afrikaners, mainly from the western Cape, and a good number of German Jews who had been introduced to the colony mainly through the agency of the Mosenthals.³ By contrast, the erfholders of the west were essentially men who had been born and bred in Graaff-Reinet, a homogeneous group, with definite characteristic views, ready to resist the introduction into their midst of foreign con-

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1. See photograph facing p.210.
 2. There were also a number of erfholders in the south-eastern part of the town.
 3. A branch of Mosenthal Brothers was established in Graaff-Reinet in 1849.



From the west, prior to 1886, showing the
vineyards and gardens of the erfholders

cepts and new ideas. They were overwhelmingly Dutch-speaking, whereas the east-enders were men who had mostly received their professional training in English and who used English as their medium of communication in their business lives, if not in their homes.

The distinction between the two groups was not always so clear cut, in that there were men from the business community who turned the produce of their gardens to financial advantage, and there were erfholders who owned shops in the business centre. For the great mass of the inhabitants, however, the distinction remains valid. It is also true that some of the champions of erfholder interests belonged to the business and professional community, but where the two groups had such widely differing interests, the number of leading men who retained the confidence of both groups was small.

It was not merely the differing means of livelihood that distinguished the two groups, but their attitudes. Bourke Street was more than the dividing line between a farming and business community: it was at the same time a cultural frontier.¹ The east end of town wanted a cricket ground and a town hall suitable for public entertainment. They wanted to raise money for these schemes by leasing out parts of the town commonage. The erfholders saw no need to spend money on improvements, nor were they willing to lease out part of the land on which their stock grazed. Their contribution to the municipal life of Graaff-Reinet was essentially negative. They were not interested in schemes of civic

1. See Map 7, p. 305.

improvement, but until 1864 the levying of rates was in their hands. The business community, who from inclination and ability took a positive interest in municipal affairs, were dependent for the revenue they required to undertake improvements on a majority who were averse to spending money. This conflict was to render municipal government virtually unworkable in the two decades after 1845.

Friction between the two groups resulted in the first breakdown of municipal government in 1864. After 1864 when the municipal board obtained the authority to levy rates without reference to public meetings, friction decreased. But for any extraordinary finance, such as the plan to improve the town's water supply, the approval of the assembled ratepayers was required.

The Act of Incorporation of 1880 enabled the town council to bypass the public meeting and raise large sums of money without referring to the public. At the same time the system of voting by wards, introduced in 1880, gave the business community a majority of seats in the town council. This was the setting of the scene for the second collapse of municipal government, as the business majority in the council in direct opposition to the majority of erfholders raised large sums of money and executed a plan to improve the waterworks of the town. It was with regard to the water supply that the divergent interests of a rural and urban community were most clearly discerned; the erfholders of the west were primarily concerned with obtaining water for their gardens, while the east end was motivated by a desire to obtain a pure supply of water for domestic purposes.

Conflict over the water supply had two aspects, the quarrel over the actual process of the division of water between the two main furrows leading water into town from the Sundays River, and the right of the erfholders to all the water running in these furrows. The strife was not confined to the eighties of the nineteenth century, and the distribution of water was a major concern to the erfholders throughout the history of Graaff-Reinet. In the eighties, when the business community, with a fine disregard for tradition, began tampering with the water supply, the stage was set for a conflict that had a parallel only in the disturbances in Graaff-Reinet in the late eighteenth century. Although the water dispute was a purely local issue, it provided evidence of the interaction between local and colonial issues, and was not without effect on the parliamentary representation of Graaff-Reinet. The Afrikaner Bond in its official capacity held itself aloof from the conflict, but the organisation of the Bond was used to promote the interests of the erfholders.

The conflict over the waterworks led to the breakdown of municipal government at the end of 1886. The fact that there was no town council in 1887 gave time for the passions generated to cool, and the fact that the resumption of municipal government appeared possible only by the co-operation of the rival groups, helped to make the town council elected in 1888 a compromise council, born of a new spirit of co-operation. This new spirit was at first hesitant, and the mistrust and suspicion aroused over a number of years was not immediately dispelled.

The question of the waterworks continued to crop up from time to time, but differences of opinion were not allowed to reach the same proportions as in the 1880's. Although plans continued to be made, 1910 saw Graaff-Reinet no nearer to providing its inhabitants with a clean supply of water.

Apart from the Anglo-Boer War period, when the circumstances of martial law deprived them of certain of their town council representatives, the erfholders, on whose behalf the local Bond acted, had a majority in the council from 1888 to 1910. They were determined to retain this majority, and when it was threatened, the erfholders could be relied upon to make strenuous efforts to maintain their dominant position. But within this framework there was a blurring of the rigid party lines, and some limited success was enjoyed by those who campaigned for the best men irrespective of the parties to which they belonged. The memory of the destructive conflict of the eighties seemed always to be present, and although differences arose, men were unwilling to push their point of view to the extreme, and some sort of compromise was generally concluded.

CHAPTER 7

THE DIVIDED TOWN, 1845-1880

(i) Establishment of a Municipal Board

The circumstances under which a board of municipal commissioners was established in 1845 provides an insight into the attitude of the erfholders of Graaff-Reinet. Regulations for the administration of the town were from time to time made by the board of landdrost and heemraden, and in 1830 the resident magistrate collected these regulations which were scattered among the records of the old board, so that from that date at least there was a body of local regulations to which reference could be made.¹ Ordinance 9 of 1836 made provision for the establishment of municipal boards in the colony, but there was little incentive for the Graaff-Reinettters to avail themselves of the opportunity of establishing a board while the government continued to pay the salaries of officials necessary to maintain the town. The majority had little desire to bring about improvements, which may be contrasted with the

1. C.O. 2722: E. Bergh to Lt. Col. John Bell, 27 June 1830, and accompanying "Local Regulations for the Town and District of Graaff Reinet, 1830"; Bergh found it necessary to revise some of these regulations in accordance with the new spirit of the law proclaimed by Ordinance 50 of 1828. In Grahamstown too, local regulations issued in 1820 were in conflict with colonial law, prescribing different penalties for whites and blacks (K.S. Hunt, The Development of Municipal Government in the Eastern Province of the Cape of Good Hope, with Special Reference to Grahamstown, 1827-1862, p.142).

position in Grahamstown, where the inhabitants immediately took advantage of Ordinance 9.¹ But the erfholders of Graaff-Reinet were slowly to be forced into a position where they could no longer deny the necessity for establishing a municipal board.

There was no provision in the market regulations of the town for the levying of market fees, and when the government stopped paying the salary of the marketmaster, the market ceased, as there was no revenue to pay the salary. Because this affected the livelihood of the erfholders, they were forced to take action, and arrangements were made for the market to be supported by fees. At a public meeting on 27 August 1839, "with some few alterations" the market regulations of Swellendam were adopted. Certain of the townsmen felt that the time was ripe for the establishment of municipal institutions, and on the same day as market regulations were adopted the civil commissioner received a requisition for a meeting to discuss the question. The meeting was held on 18 September 1839, but as on two former occasions, "a large majority" voted against establishing a municipal board.²

If the withdrawal by the government of the salary of the marketmaster was not sufficient inducement to adopt a municipal board, then further steps taken

1. Hunt, pp. 155, 158.

2. L.G. 222, pp.64-66, 68: W.C. van Ryneveld to H.Hudson, 3, 22 September 1839; L.G. 222, p.69: A.Berrangé to W.C. van Ryneveld, 2 September 1839 (copy); L.G.224, pp.128-141: W.C. van Ryneveld to H.Hudson, 7 June 1841. (This document deals with a dispute over the market regulations but also contains details of the circumstances which led to the framing of new regulations in 1839.)

by the government were, and a meeting of 5 February 1845 unanimously decided to establish a board.¹ The nature of these steps taken by the government is clear from the remarks by the committee elected to frame municipal regulations

that in consequence of the convicts having been removed from here,² and of the Government having since the beginning of this year declined to pay the salaries of the water overseer and of the superintendent of the Town clock, the Local affairs here are in the utmost confusion, and the village in a sadly neglected state, and that therefore the most urgent necessity exists, for bringing the Municipal Regulations in force, as soon as possible.³

The regulations were approved by a public meeting on 10 March 1845, and were published in The Cape of Good Hope Government Gazette on 29 August 1845. These regulations made Graaff-Reinet the fourteenth town to adopt municipal institutions.⁴

The establishment of a municipality was thus a negative response which did not spring from a desire

1. C.O.2826: W.C. van Ryneveld to Secretary to Government, 6 February 1845.
2. The convicts were removed to work on the roads of the colony under the control of the Central Road Board created in 1843 (J.J. Breitenbach, The Development of the Secretaryship to the Government at the Cape of Good Hope under John Montagu, 1843-1852); the municipal board of Grahamstown also made use of convict labour before 1843 (Hunt, p.171).
3. C.O. 2826: Remarks of the committee by whom municipal regulations were framed, on three memorials against the proposed regulations, 9 June 1845.
4. C.O. 2826: Proceedings of the meeting, 10 March 1845; Hunt, Appendix B, p.281.

by the majority of the inhabitants to have control over their own affairs. This negative response on the part of the erfholders helps to account for their parsimonious attitude towards the levying of rates, the voting of which was in the hands of public meetings until 1864. In the first years of the existence of the municipal board there was an unwillingness to serve on the board, and a meeting of resident householders in 1849 adopted a resolution, subsequently rejected by the Governor, that "any person duly elected, who shall refuse to serve ... shall be subject to a fine of Thirty Pounds sterling".¹ But the town was growing, particularly the business sector, and from the fifties this business community was to take a lively interest in municipal affairs, which was to bring them increasingly into conflict with the erfholders who were loath to provide the revenue necessary to undertake schemes of civic improvement.

(ii) Sources of Division

In the campaign against the issuing of retail liquor licences in the period 1848-1855, there developed a strong feeling among the business community in general, particularly those who wished to establish themselves as canteen keepers and hoteliers, that while the erfholders were encouraging the Licensing Court to refuse retail licences on moral grounds, they were in reality using the situation to gain an unfair advantage in selling the wine produced in their own vineyards.²

1. BJB, vol.1: Meeting of resident householders,
27 November 1849.

2. The ban on retail licences is discussed on pp.131-134.

Suspicion and antagonism between the two sides of town was also fostered by the controversy in 1856 over the siting of butcher shops and slaughter houses. The opening of such an establishment in Parsonage Street resulted in complaints that it was "unprovided with any proper means of removing the daily accumulations of blood and offal". There were other slaughter houses located in various parts of the town, and the board was requested to remove them all to areas outside the town.¹ The board decided to erect a public 'shambles' in the vicinity of the municipal pound, but this site found no favour in the east end of town on the grounds that this concentration of slaughter houses in one spot would not dispose of the nuisance, and the town would still be "exposed to the effects of the poisonous atmosphere".² The wardmasters then consulted the inhabitants of their wards, who showed a decided preference for the pound site. It was, however, a case of the majority being provided by a preponderance of west-enders who were furthest away from the proposed site.³ The issue itself was of little significance, and continued agitation caused the board to give way on its choice of site,⁴ but the incident indicates the division of the town into parties, based on residence. The fact that the majo-

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1. BJB, vol.2: W.H. Rabone to the municipal board, 5 May 1856; GRH, 8 March, 10 May 1856.
 2. BJB, vol.2: Petition to the municipal board, (July) 1856; GRH, 19 July (Advertisement columns), 26 July, 23 August 1856.
 3. GRH, 30 August (Municipal meeting), 6, 13 September 1856 ("One of the Memorialists").
 4. GRH, 21 February 1857.

rity of those protesting against the site had English names while the great majority in favour of the site were Afrikaners has no direct relevance to the question at issue.

As far as municipal affairs were concerned there was before 1880 little antagonism on the basis of language. The kind of situation that took place at a municipal meeting in July 1859 when "Mr. Ochse refused to speak in Dutch, whereupon Mr. Wilke declared that he would not sit there as he did not understand English, and although the Chairman offered to interpret, he took his hat and walked out",¹ occurred but infrequently in this period. So much was it taken for granted that English was the language of the municipal board, that in the early sixties the Town Clerk had no knowledge of Dutch.²

The objections to the board's resolution of March 1857 that all produce on the market would henceforth be sold in sterling was based on grounds of inconvenience, and the unwillingness of a conservative community to accept new ideas. A petition to the board pointed out that "De meeste Ingesetenen van het Dorp zyn de Engelsche taal niet magtig", and that there was a very real danger that they would make mistakes if they had to reckon in English money. They ended up by requesting "dat niet alleen de verkopenen weder in het Hollandsch zullen worden gehouden maar ook als voorheen voor Ryksdaalders, Schellingen en Stuivers". The

1. GRH, 9 July 1859 (Municipal meeting, 7 July).

2. See p.235.

board denied that it had given instructions for sales to be held in English, and claimed that it had given instructions only that "all articles be put up in Sterling Currency". But it seems as if sales were conducted in English, for the first municipal board composed of erfholders decided to instruct the marketmaster that as from 1 January 1864 all articles were to be put up in Dutch as well as English.¹

The clash of interests between the two groups in town was most marked in matters of finance. The public meeting played a significant role in the Graaff-Reinet community as their exaggerated sense of democracy caused the erfholder majority to consider it a right that they should be consulted on any matter of moment to themselves. The most important power enjoyed by public meetings in the two decades after 1845 was that of authorising the municipal board to levy a rate on the fixed property in the town. In the early years of the board's existence a rate of ½d or 1d in the £ was authorised by such meetings,² but this was only after a

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1. BJB, vol.2: Petition to municipal board, 13 March 1857, and draft reply of the board, n.d.; BJB, vol.3: Meeting of committee, 17 October 1863; GRH, 7 March 1857; an interesting sidelight to this incident is that the rix-dollar had been converted to sterling in 1825, the rate of exchange being fixed at 1/6d. It would appear that after 1841 the rix-dollar was no longer legal tender (see M.Wilson and L.Thompson, eds, The Oxford History of South Africa, I, p.295), yet the erfholders of Graaff-Reinet were still obviously calculating the value of their produce in rix-dollars over twenty years later.
 2. Municipal Minutes, 16 June 1847; BJB, vol.1: Minutes of public meeting (filed with documents of August 1852); BJB, vol.2: Minutes of public meeting, 9 June 1854.

strong appeal from the chairman of the board. In 1856 when the chairman, J.L. Leeb, asked the householders to vote a rate of 1½d in the £, "an overwhelmingly back-street majority" agreed to a rate of ½d in the £. In 1858 the chairman recommended a rate of 2d, but once again had to be satisfied with ½d in the £.¹

At these meetings the erfholders generally claimed that they were unable to pay more because of the poor state of their vineyards. Such complaints were made as a matter of course, but at this particular time there was indeed much hardship.² In 1860 when they were again asked to vote a rate of 2d in the £, Ziervogel "reminded some of the objectors who had again urged the state of their vineyards, that the vines had not been badly attacked, and that even if only one half-aum of wine was produced where two were made before, the one fetched as much money, from the scarcity, as the two would have done in ordinary years". Such arguments by their respected M.L.A. undoubtedly had a good effect, and although there were some heated exchanges, the meeting finally agreed to a rate of 1d in the £. In March 1862 another rate of 1d was authorised by a narrow majority of 44 votes to 41.³

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1. GRH, 22, 29 March 1856, 17 April, 4 June 1858.
 2. For the state of the vineyards at this time, see pp.142-143.
 3. BJB, vol. 3: Minutes of public meeting, 19 March 1862; GRH, 3 October 1860, 22 March 1862.

If it was difficult for the municipal board to persuade the erfholders to vote an adequate rate, it was virtually impossible to convince them of the necessity for their parting with money in order to establish a night-time police force. The police force in the town, paid by the government, had many duties in connection with the prison and attendances at court, and even before 1861 many business concerns had felt the need for a special police force to do night duty.¹ Act 15 of 1857 reduced the number of policemen to be paid for in full by the government, but provided for the employment of additional policemen according to a formula by which the government would contribute half the cost of the upkeep of such additional police if the municipality bore the other half of the cost. This reduction was not immediately effected because of the large number of Xhosa entering the colony after 1857, and also, according to Ziervogel, because he had persuaded the government not to reduce the force until the completion of the new prison, the old prison having been rather insecure.²

In 1861 the magistrate was instructed to reduce the number of policemen in accordance with the 1857 Act, and he informed the board that the remaining policemen

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1. BJB, vol.2: Heugh Wimble and Co., Mosenthal Brothers, Baumann Brothers, Hendrikz and Meintjes, Meintjes and Dixon and others to the municipal board, 8 May 1855; GRH, 22 January 1859, 24 March, 7 April 1860 (Municipal meeting, 5 April).
 2. GRH, 5 October 1861 (Municipal meeting, 4 October), 30 October 1861, 23 August 1862.

"will be required and will be exclusively employed for strictly Government purposes, including attendance at the Public Offices, assisting the Gaoler in guarding the prison, guarding the prisoners at hard labour, and aiding the Chief Constable in executing process at Court and serving warrants". He advised the board to obtain eight additional policemen (four each for day and night duty). The board however decided to inform the magistrate that they did not "at present feel justified in complying with the suggestion", and a back-street majority at a public meeting declared itself unable to pay such a rate in view of the bad state of the vineyards.¹

There was a feeling, particularly prevalent among the erfholders, that the whole town could not be expected to contribute towards a service required mainly by the business community, but the suggestion that the mercantile community themselves finance the establishment of such a force, met with opposition from those who felt that by virtue of their more expensive buildings the storekeepers already contributed more than their share to municipal funds. Another meeting in December 1861 again comprising an erfholder majority, passed a resolution that no extra police were required.²

There seemed little hope of the east end of town pushing through this measure in the face of strong

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1. GRH, 5 October 1861 (Municipal meeting, 4 October), 30 October 1861.
 2. GRH, 14, 21 December 1861, 23 August 1862; in later years the mercantile community did in fact make an additional contribution (GRH, 14 October 1876).

back-street opposition. In 1864 when the board discussed a request for the calling of a public meeting to assess a night police rate, S.J. Oertel said "he fully approved of the object, but the less they made it known the better. The Ordinance did not require them to make it known through the Wardmasters. People would then come in and overpower the movers in this matter with their votes. It was enough to do just what the law required about giving notice". D.C. Schultz, however, was pessimistic and feared that somehow the erfholders would hear of the meeting. Although notice of a meeting was given in the Herald, it was first postponed and then abandoned altogether.¹ This incident provides evidence of a conscious plan to take advantage of the fact that the erfholders were not readers of the local newspapers, where a notice in English would escape their attention. It was also planned to bypass the wardmasters who were the normal means of communication with the erfholders. These tactics were to be used with success on another occasion, but it was then claimed that the omission to inform the wardmasters or give notice in Dutch was an oversight.

Irregularities in town went unchecked. Although shops were the main target for thieves, in the latter part of 1862, a bad year in the depression, petty theft was on the increase, fowls, vegetables and chopped firewood being particularly in demand.² A number of bur-

1. GRH, 5 November 1864 (Municipal meeting, 3 November), 23 November 1864.

2. GRH, 23 August, 8, 11 October 1862.

glaries in the back-streets led the erfholders to take steps early in 1865 to meet the need for a night police. They held meetings and decided to solicit subscriptions for a night police, but these plans were made without in any way consulting the east end of town, and the scheme came to nought.¹

The murder of C.J. Spiller in his house early in May 1866² greatly shocked the town, and the magistrate as a temporary measure swore in a number of people as special constables.³ The increasing number of burglaries and Spiller's murder convinced many of the need for a night police, and a public meeting in July 1866 approved in principle an increase in the number of police. The Governor gave his sanction to the employment of twelve additional constables, and all that remained was for a public meeting to vote on a rate to bear the town's share of the cost. The meeting was one of the largest thus far seen in Graaff-Reinet, and the two sides were almost equally divided. The proposal for a rate of $\frac{1}{2}$ d in the £ was lost by 54 to 51 votes, but another proposal for a rate of $\frac{3}{8}$ d received 55 votes, to the consternation of the minority who "instantly left the Town Hall in a body, declaring they would not pay it". But the measure had been passed, and 13 November saw twelve night police begin duty. Robberies did not immediately cease, but in the long run the police had the desired effect, and when the three-year period for which the rate had been voted, expired,

1. GRH Supplement, 18 February 1865.

2. GRH Supplement, 12 May 1866.

3. GRH, 19 May 1866.

another rate of 3/8d in the £ was approved for the continuation of the force.¹

If the erfholders were loath to give their approval to the levying of rates, they were also to look with a jaundiced eye at any attempt to raise money by other means if this in any way conflicted with what they regarded as their true interests. The municipal board was established in 1845, but there was considerable delay in surveying the town lands, the titles of which were finally issued in 1860. Survey fees and other expenses connected with the issuing saddled the municipality with a debt of £750. The east-enders felt that this amount, as well as the financing of other improvements, could be paid for by leasing out or selling part of the commonage. But the erfholders were the owners of the livestock that grazed on the commonage, and although the 50 000 acres of town lands was far in excess of their grazing requirements, they objected to leasing because of their fear that some of their livestock might stray onto leased land and be impounded.²

A public meeting in September 1861 rejected a proposal in favour of leasing out part of the commonage, which result the Herald blamed on the fact that the municipal commissioners themselves were not wholeheartedly in favour of the proposal, and had used their in-

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1. GRH, 7 July, 11 August, 1, 26 September, 17 November 1866, 20 August 1870 (Municipal meeting, 18 August), 24 September 1870; this rate continued to be voted every three years (BJB, vol.6: Meeting of 29 October 1873; GRH, 14 October 1876).
 2. GRH, 18 August 1860 (Editorial and municipal meeting, 16 August), 9 August 1862.

fluence with the back-streets to secure the defeat of the proposal.¹ These were hard words against a municipal board that by no means represented only erfholder interests, but by April 1862 the composition of the board had changed somewhat and was more truly wedded to east-end interests. This board expressed the opinion that it was not necessary to obtain the approval of a public meeting in order to lease out municipal lands; all that was required was that three weeks notice be given in the papers of the board's intention to lease. Plans were at the same time made for the sale of portions of the town lands, but the Governor refused to sanction the sale for "general municipal purposes". The Governor's consent was however not required for the leasing of town lands, and after due notice had been given, three pieces of town land were leased out for a year for a total rental of £206.²

This step took the erfholders by surprise, and when the board gave notice of its intention to lease out further parts of the commonage, sixty-one erfholders requested them not to do so, while two back-street representatives appeared before the municipal board and complained that the board had ignored the decision of the public meeting of September 1861 not to lease any lands, had advertised their intention of leasing only in English, and had not given the wardmasters notice of it. The attempt to quietly push through the leasing of town

1. GRH, 7 September 1861.

2. BJB, vol.3: Colonial Secretary to municipal board, 5 July 1862; GRH, 19 April 1862 (Municipal meeting, 17 April), 2, 19 July 1862.

lands had failed, and the board now became uncertain as to whether it did indeed possess the power to lease out town lands without the prior approval of the resident householders. Thus they consented to a public meeting on the question.¹ The east-enders knew their limitations; they could rely on gentle subterfuge to make their point, but they could not contest the issue with the erfholders at a public meeting. There were few east-enders at the meeting which decided "by an overwhelming and triumphant majority", "That in consequence of the injury already sustained by the townspeople, on account of the leasing of the Municipal ground already let, that no further lease of municipal ground takes place".²

Although the erfholders could usually secure a majority for their point of view, there were public meetings at which the views of the mercantile and business community prevailed. One such occasion was the application to the municipal board for twelve acres of the town lands for a cricket ground. Graaff-Reinet suddenly "discovered" cricket, and the memorial in favour of the grant was signed by the English-speaking people of the town and the business and professional Afrikaners, whom newspaper correspondents were fond of referring to as those "whose views one would think it most desirable to obtain", or the "well-informed and intelligent" portion of the community.³

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1. BJB, vol.3: Undated petition (July-August 1862); GRH, 9 August 1862 (Municipal meeting, 7 August).
 2. GRH, 6 September 1862.
 3. GRH, 18 September 1861 ("Candidus"), 21 September 1861 ("Steelpen").

The board had the power to make the grant without referring the matter to a public meeting, and D.C. Schultz favoured this course, fearing that if a meeting were called "then all sorts of misunderstandings would get abroad about the matter, and it would be refused perhaps, as was the case the other day about the Town Lands". But the view of the chairman of the board, S.A. Probart, prevailed, that as the memorial was only from a section of the people, and as the public as a whole were the proprietors of the town lands, they should be consulted. The Herald lamented the fact that the board had "set aside their own calm judgment, and the expressed desire of a considerable number of influential and respectable inhabitants, in deference to a section of the community who, it is well known, can decide by their votes any municipal question upon which they may be consulted". But the east-enders were enthusiastic about their cricket and attended the meeting in strength, while the west-enders were caught napping. One of their representatives, Frans Weitsz, proposed that the meeting be adjourned for eight days so that the inhabitants could be properly informed of it, as the notice calling the meeting had only been printed in English, and the wardmasters had not received notice to advise the people of the meeting. Probart maintained that the omission had been accidental, and Weitsz's motion was lost.¹ It was rather a fortunate omission for the east end of town, and whether or not the erfholders

1. BJB, vol.3: G. Ryneveld to S.E. Wimble, J.L. Leeb and others, 14 September 1861; GRH, 14 September 1861 (Municipal meeting, 12 September), 28 September, 2 October 1861.

would have resisted giving up part of the commonage, which they tended to regard as a private preserve, must remain in the realm of speculation. Whether the east end of town deliberately misled the west must also remain largely a matter of speculation, but in the light of other examples it is certain that the east end was consciously aware of the possibility of using such tactics.

One other occasion on which the east managed to secure a victory for its plans was with regard to the purchase of a building for the town hall, the need for which had for some years been felt by the east end. A meeting in August 1862 expressed the opinion that with the fall in land values owing to the depression it was a good time to purchase a property for a town hall. F.K. te Water's proposal that the board be empowered to buy a property for a sum not exceeding £2,000 was carried. It appears that the erfholders, who were generally not interested in matters connected with public entertainment and cultural activities, were absent from the meeting as they did not realize that the meeting intended authorising the purchase of a town hall. The hall was obtained, as the Herald put it, "through a fortunate misunderstanding". A property on the corner of Caledon and Bourke Streets was eventually purchased in the insolvent estate of H.F. Hendrikz for £1,545.¹

(iii) Erfholders in Control

Bitterness and antagonism with regard to municipal affairs began to assume more serious proportions in

1. GRH, 25 August 1860, 9 August 1862, 22 April, 18 July 1863.

1863, and led to the first breakdown of municipal government in the town. In April 1863, in the midst of the depression, the erfholder majority opposed the levying of a rate, not only because "of the failure of all that they relied on in their gardens", but also on the grounds that the board had wasted money in filling up Market Square. The board had been aware of dissatisfaction on this score since at least October 1862, when it had been memorialised to discontinue the "filling up or macademising {sic} of Market Square". The board had continued on its course, but the meeting in April 1863 made much of this supposed waste of money, and voted against the levying of a rate.¹

At its next meeting the board decided to continue with public works in progress for one month, and that unless the townsmen voted in favour of a rate within that time "as much of the movable property belonging to the Municipality as is required to pay off the debts, be sold, and the labourers in the employ of the Board be discharged".² If this was a conscious attempt of the erfholder majority to force the board out of power, it succeeded. If the erfholders were ready to take their responsibility for municipal affairs, there was at least an equal willingness on the part of the business community to let them do so. Even before this meeting, it appeared as if the erfholders, who had

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1. BJB, vol.3: Haarhoff, Erlank and others to the municipal board, 20 October 1862; GRH, 11 April 1863.
 2. BJB, vol.3: Draft minutes of ordinary meeting, April 1863; GRH, 18 April 1863 (Municipal meeting, 16 April).

hitherto made little attempt to gain the election of men from their own ranks as opposed to men who sympathized with their interests, had decided to contest the elections.¹

The composition of the board changed rapidly. Harry Bolus resigned before the April meeting,² and the next few months saw the resignations of Ochse, Nathan, Schultz and Te Water, all of whom were replaced by representatives of the back-streets in elections that were not contested by the east end of town. When C.W. Crawford's period of office expired in September 1863 and D.P. Liebenberg, jnr, was elected unopposed to replace him, the erfholders held six of the seven seats on the board; only H.A. Enslin remained of the old board, and he was elected chairman.³

The resignation of most of the commissioners was not unconnected with the financial crisis through which Graaff-Reinet was passing, a crisis which was also not without effect on the moral influence of the business community in general.⁴ Many of the members of the

1. GRH, 10 December 1862.

2. There was some controversy over his position on the board, and it appears that he relinquished his seat as a result of his insolvency {BJB, vol.3: H.A.Enslin and F.K. te Water to municipal board, 5 February 1863; GRH, 28 March 1863 (Municipal meeting, 19 March)}.

3. GRH, 15, 18 April 1863 (Municipal meeting, 16 April), 9 May 1863 (Municipal meeting, 7 May), 27 May, 12, 15 August 1863 (Municipal meeting, 13 August), 29 August, 7 October 1863; BJB, vol.3: E.Nathan to municipal board, 18 April 1863, and municipal election, 1 May 1863.

4. See pp.144-146. On one occasion Enslin dismissed a requisition, saying that half the signatories were insolvents {GRH, 19 September 1863 (Municipal meeting, 17 September)}.

group from whose ranks the municipal commissioners had hitherto come were involved in insolvency proceedings, or were too busy staving off financial ruin to interest themselves in the unrewarding task of conducting municipal affairs. Though they willingly gave up the board to the erfholders, in the sense that they did not cling to their seats or contest the vacancies, this did not necessarily mean that they would refrain from rocking the boat.

The most conservative elements among the erfholders had for the first time a majority on the municipal board, and the east end gained an opportunity of paying them back in their own coin. No sooner had the erfholders a majority than they called a public meeting to assess a rate. There was a large attendance:

Mr. Attorney Blommestein said that on a former occasion, when the public was called together for the purpose of voting a rate, the very people who now proposed the measure, then opposed it, on the ground that the times were hard, and they could not afford to pay a rate. On these very grounds he would oppose a rate now. The times had not improved since then, - in fact they had become worse ... He would therefore propose that in consequence of the bad times, the inhabitants are not now in a position to grant a rate.

Weitsz said that the reason a rate had been refused earlier was that the board had been squandering money, a reference to the work that had been undertaken on Market Square, and that the rate had been opposed "merely for the purpose of shewing Commissioners that they should not act as they did". But the erfholder board was to see its efforts to run the town frustrated,

and the combination of the east end with erfholder elements who were opposed to rates no matter who was in control of the town, saw a rate rejected by a vote of 84 to 45.¹

Even before this meeting, relations in the town had become strained as a result of the board's decision to reduce the salaries of municipal officials. Part of the ill-feeling was due to a suspicion, not without foundation, that the board was aiming to dismiss the Secretary (Town Clerk) W.L. Mackie, because of his ignorance of Dutch, which language began to feature prominently in the board.

The incident, which generated much heat and decided the magistrate to take precautionary measures to prevent a possible breach of the peace began with the Herald's report that at its meeting of 3 September 1863 the board had carried a resolution to reduce the salaries of all municipal officials, to give officials three months notice, and to call for fresh applications for the posts. A requisition from the business community requesting a public meeting to discuss the question was read at a special meeting of the board which was attended by many townsmen who offended the commissioners by cheering heartily when they entered. After Mackie had read the requisition, commissioner Wilke showed his irritation, not only to Mackie but also to the assembled townsmen by insisting that the Secretary read the requisition in Dutch, a task to which Mackie declared himself unequal. Commissioner Rothman then said that the

1. GRH, 3 October 1863.

board did not intend dismissing the officials but would only call for new applications if the present incumbents declined to accept the lower salaries. The board refused to discuss the salary question in the presence of the unsympathetic townsmen.¹

At a subsequent meeting held without the disturbing influence of the public, the salary reductions were passed, including that of Mackie's from £200 to £180 per annum. Despite Rothman's assurances to the contrary the majority of the board called for applications for the post of Secretary and appointed C.T.Auret to this position,² thus giving substance to the suspicion that the salary reductions were not merely part of the financial policy, but were aimed at securing the dismissal of Mackie. This decision was taken in committee, but when the board met on 5 November to confirm the committee's action, Noome joined Rothman and Enslin in supporting Mackie's claim to continue as Secretary. Since Enslin had a casting vote as chairman of the board, there was a deadlock, and the matter stood over. Neither side would budge, and it was only at the end of December after Auret had withdrawn his application for the post "from a hope that by taking this step the Board will confirm Mr Mackie in his office being persuaded that he has the first claim to it, and also if possible

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1. GRH, 5 September 1863 (Editorial and Municipal meeting, 3 September), 9 September 1863 (Editorial and Special Municipal meeting, 5 September).
 2. BJB, vol.3: Committee meeting, 17 October 1863; GRH, 21 October 1863.

to prevent all ill feeling among the Public", that the board agreed to retain Mackie in his post.¹

This was not the end of the contest between Mackie and the municipal board. If the board were scheming to dismiss him, he in turn was initiating action to bring about the downfall of the board. At the board meeting of 5 November 1863 Mackie expressed the opinion that the term of office of certain of the commissioners had expired, and that they were thus sitting there illegally. Ordinance 9 of 1836 provided for a triennial election of commissioners: in Graaff-Reinet, the first municipal election had been held in September 1845, and a second general municipal election in September 1848. Thereafter, with frequent resignations and few commissioners remaining in office for three years, the three year term was calculated from the date of a commissioner's election, so that commissioners retired at different times. No general municipal election had therefore been held since 1848. The question at issue was whether, when a commissioner resigned, his replacement held office for three years, or only for the unexpired period of the three year term of office.²

The Attorney General agreed with Mackie that the period of three years was to be calculated from the date of the first general election, and that every commissioner replacing another before the expiry of the term of office was to retire with the other commissioners at

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1. BJB, vol.3: C.T. Auret to the municipal board, 21 December 1863; BJB, vol.3: Special municipal meeting, 26 December 1863; GRH, 7 November 1863 (Municipal meeting, 5 November), 21 November 1863 (Municipal meeting, 19 November).
 2. GRH, 7 November 1863 (Municipal meeting, 5 November).

the end of the three year period; at the same time he informed them that all the acts of an illegally constituted board were illegal. The board decided to continue exercising its municipal functions, but to ask the Attorney General how they should act now that they had discovered they were not legally constituted.¹

By the beginning of March 1864 the board had heard from the Attorney General that he would bring a Bill before parliament to regularize matters, and that the board should in the meantime continue, but should be careful not to raise the question of the legality of their acts in court by prosecuting for fines before the magistrate. Matters appeared to be turning out satisfactorily, but there was much anger with Mackie, and the board carried a unanimous resolution, "That all the functionaries of the Municipality shall obey all the orders and instructions of Commissioners, and not work against the Commissioners, but with them; and further, that the Town Clerk be instructed not to give his opinion to the Board except when desired to do so".²

The municipal debt was in the vicinity of £1,443, and in the uncertain conditions the poundmaster and marketmaster were inclined to hold back fees they received in order to cover their salaries.³ There were elements among the business community of the east end of town who were not averse to seeing the erfholder com-

1. GRH, 3, 6 February 1864 (Municipal meeting, 4 February).

2. GRH, 2, 5 March 1864 (Municipal meeting, 3 March).

3. GRH, 16 March, 9 April 1864.

missioners further embarrassed, and the board was not permitted to await the promised Bill: the directors of the bank informed the commissioners that they could no longer accept their signatures on renewed bills, and in the face of this obstacle the whole board resigned.¹

Thus did the first erfholder administration of the town come to an untimely end. Clearly municipal government was impossible without some measure of co-operation. The election which followed evoked much interest. Five members of the old board were nominated as candidates, but of these only Enslin was returned; the other successful candidates were largely representative of the east end of town. The newly elected board decided to conduct no business of any importance until the Bill was passed; there was in any event no money, nor any possibility of a rate, for in order to levy a rate a valuation had to be made in November, which the old board had omitted to do.²

Act 13 of 1864 legalised the deeds of illegally elected boards, and confirmed the commissioners in office until 1 March 1865; there was to be a municipal election on the last Monday of February 1865, and further elections every three years at the same time. Of great significance was the fact that municipal boards throughout the colony were given powers to assess a rate without having to call a meeting of resident house-

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1. GRH, 19 March 1864 (Editorial and Municipal meeting, 17 March).
 2. GRH, 9 April, 7 May, 9 July 1864 (Municipal meeting, 7 July).

holders, provided that the rate was not more than 1d in the £, and that only one such rate was levied in any one year.

In September 1864 Mackie asked the board to raise his salary "to the same as when he was first engaged". The board complied,¹ but at the end of February 1865, in accordance with the new Act, another election was held. All seven of the sitting commissioners made themselves available for re-election, but only two of them were returned. F.K. te Water, although representative of the business community, appears at this stage to have enjoyed more support from the west than the east end of town.² Te Water was elected chairman for the first time in his career, and was to remain at the head of municipal affairs intermittently until 1905.³ The division of the board into west end and east end became clear when Te Water proposed a reduction in the salaries of municipal officials, including a reduction in Mackie's salary from £200 to £130. In the face of a debt close on £2,000, apart from the cost of the town hall, the commissioners were not opposed to a policy of economising, but J.J. Norden, B.J. Joubert and C.W. Crawford objected strenuously to the salary cuts. The issue led to the resignation of Norden and Joubert from the board; C.W. Crawford resigned soon afterwards. They were replaced by representatives of the west end of town in

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1. BJB, vol.4: Minutes of ordinary meeting, 15 September 1864; GRH, 17 September 1864 (Municipal meeting, 15 September).
 2. See for example, GRH, 6 May 1865.
 3. GRH Supplement, 25 February 1865; GRH, 4 March 1865 (Municipal meeting, 2 March).

elections in which only the erfholders took any interest.¹ The erfholders were back in control.

The board passed a resolution to the effect that if the municipal officials did not inform the board by 15 June 1864 that they would accept reduced salaries they should accept the resolution as notice that their offices would be declared vacant. Despite Mackie's refusal to accept this as valid, on 15 June 1865 the board proceeded to call for applications for the post. To provide against a repetition of the circumstances which had caused so much trouble in the case of Mackie applicants were "to have sufficient knowledge of the English and Dutch languages". Mackie refused to go and the board proceeded to eject him from office under protest. Any public demonstration in favour of Mackie was probably stopped by the alleged discovery of irregularities in his entering of money in the cash book.²

(iv) Incorporation

After 1864 municipal affairs in Graaff-Reinet were relatively uneventful and few important issues divided the town into two camps. Act 13 of 1864 which provided for the board itself to levy rates removed the chief obstacle in the path of a smooth-running municipal government. This fruitful source of conflict was re-

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1. GRH, 6 May 1865 (Municipal meeting, 4 May), 20 May 1865 (Municipal meeting, 18 May), 3 June, 8, 22 July 1865.
 2. BJB, vol.4: Minutes of ordinary meeting, 15 June 1865; GRH, 17 June 1865 (Municipal meeting, 15 June), 24 June, 1, 8 July 1865 (Municipal meeting, 6 July).

moved from the public arena, and such division of opinion as existed was confined to the debating chambers of the board.

The idea of incorporation had on occasion been discussed, particularly in the early sixties, when the necessity of calling a public meeting to authorise a rate was making municipal government unworkable. It was the business community of the east who particularly favoured the idea,¹ since they were the minority who were always outvoted at public meetings by the erfholder majority which showed little interest in improving the town. The Act of 1864 however, altered the situation. In March 1879 Te Water expressed the opinion that an Act of Incorporation would mean little, and that almost all the powers it would confer had already been given by the Act of 1864.² If one of the reasons why the commissioners of Grahamstown sought incorporation, obtained by Act 29 of 1861, was "to strengthen the financial powers of the municipal authority",³ this after 1864 was not such a strong motivating force, although as the events of the eighties were to witness, incorporation did give the municipality financial powers in other spheres, separate from the levying of rates.⁴

The main reason for obtaining an Act of Incorporation for Graaff-Reinet was a desire to have the town

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1. GRH, 9, 23 August 1862 (Municipal meeting, 21 August), 9 May 1863 (Municipal meeting, 7 May), 7 October 1863.
 2. GRA, 15 March 1879 (Parliamentary nomination proceedings).
 3. Hunt, p.178.
 4. See Chapter 8.

divided into wards for election purposes, with each ward returning its own representatives. In the seventies attempts were made to conduct municipal elections by wards, and the municipal regulations were amended to provide for "the Resident Householders in each Ward to elect one Commissioner".¹ In February 1874 when the ratepayers requested that the election be conducted in accordance with this regulation, it was ruled that as this provision was ambiguous and "repugnant to the 12th Section of the Ordinance 9, 1836, the election must proceed according to the last mentioned Ordinance".² Before the next election the board, believing that there was no way around the difficulty, rejected the request of twenty-five erfholders to hold a meeting on the subject. After the board had refused to take the lead in introducing a Bill to parliament, a public meeting was held to discuss whether the public should not take this step. The meeting decided to take no action after Charles August Nesor had pointed out "the folly of going to Government to alter a general law, which applied to all the Municipalities in the country, merely because some people in the town thought it would be for their advantage to have it altered".³

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1. The Cape of Good Hope Government Gazette, 31 December 1872.
 2. BJB, vol.7: Triennial election of commissioners, 23 February 1874; the twelfth section of the Ordinance stated that "the said commissioners for the municipality or the wards thereof respectively shall be elected by a majority of votes of such resident householders" (Hunt, Appendix A, pp.225-226).
 3. GRH, Reports of municipal meetings in issues of 3, 17 June, 8 July 1876; GRH, 19 July 1876.

Although certain elements among the erfholders favoured representation by wards, it is difficult to see how they hoped this system could be of benefit to them. In March 1879 Te Water said "it was well known the greater part of the population were from Bourke-street on this {eastern} side of the town; and if population were taken as the basis of division, there would be only two wards to take in Donkin and Plasket Streets {the extreme west of the town}". Future events were to prove that this was no real exaggeration, and not many years were to pass before the erfholders were involved in a campaign to have representation by wards abolished.¹ Te Water prevailed upon the board to take no action, but rather to let the initiative for incorporation come from the public.²

The Advertiser, which regretted the board's refusal to take the lead, feared that throwing the matter into the public arena would divide the town into back street and front street:

What will be regrettable in this opposition will be the arraying of one part of the town against the other. This is a game that has been played for years, from accident or design, to the great detriment of the place. It has made the place for years a political nonentity; its social effects have been bad, and in the matter of material improvement it has left the town 30 years behind

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1. See pp.303-304; Map 7, p.305 outlines the wards as established by the Act of Incorporation of 1880.
 2. GRA, 22 March 1879 (Municipal meeting, 20 March), 5 April 1879 (Municipal meeting, 3 April).

what it ought to be. It is easy to frighten the West End people; and now a whole battery of terrors will be let loose upon them.¹

For the moment, however, the erfholders were unafraid. Although they were in favour of ward representation, they were uncertain of the implications of incorporation. They offered no opposition at a meeting which passed off quietly, and which carried a resolution in favour of petitioning parliament to give effect to a Bill of Incorporation to be drafted by a committee consisting of the board of commissioners and a number of business men.²

Sandford's prophecy of terrors that would be let loose upon them was fulfilled, but they came too late to thwart the incorporation movement. Eighty-five residents of the back-streets informed the board

that we openly declare ourselves against incorporation, for this reason, at a recent meeting held in the Town Hall to have this Town incorporated, we voted neither for nor against it {:} 1st Because we were totally unacquainted with the same {.} 2nd Upon enquiry we became more fully acquainted with the working and changes this act would bring forward especially as regards rates and c and c.³

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1. GRA, 22 March 1879; see also GRA, 8 April 1879.
 2. GRA, 3 May 1879.
 3. BJB, vol.8: 17 June 1879; the opposition to the rates apparently arose from a proposed tenants rate, which would mean that the occupier of his own house would have to pay double rates {GRA, 21 June 1879 (Municipal meeting, 19 June)}; no provision for a tenants rate was included in the Act of Incorporation as passed by parliament.

The erfholders thus remained true to their cause: They had been unwilling to establish a municipal board until virtually compelled to do so in 1845, and in 1879 they were opposed to incorporation. Their reasons in both cases were essentially the same, a fear of additional expense. In this sense their contribution to municipal government in the period 1845-1880 was a negative one. They were the remschoens on the municipal wagon, a function which they performed admirably.

Te Water piloted the Incorporation Bill through parliament,¹ and the Act for Constituting the Town of Graaff-Reinet a Municipality appeared in The Cape of Good Hope Government Gazette of 3 August 1880.

1. GRA, 26 July 1879.

CHAPTER 8

THE POLITICS OF WATER, 1827-1886

(i) Distribution Problems, 1827-1853

The problem of its water supply was a dominating theme in the life of Graaff-Reinet. In 1797 John Barrow found the appearance of Graaff-Reinet "as miserable as that of the poorest village in England. The necessaries of life", he wrote, "are with difficulty procured in it; for, though there be plenty of arable land, few are found industrious enough to cultivate it. Neither milk, nor butter, nor cheese, nor vegetables of any kind, are to be had upon any terms".¹ Graaff-Reinet was at that time only a decade old, and the years immediately following Barrow's visit appear to have witnessed a fairly rapid development of gardens. Lichtenstein, who visited the town in 1804 thought fit to mention Graaff-Reinet wine,² and it was in this sphere that Graaff-Reinet was to develop. In 1821 John Montgomery described the "fine gardens and orchards, vineyards, and orange and lemon groves, upon which the greater proportion of the residents depended".³ From an early date a large proportion of the inhabitants of the town made part or their whole livelihood from the produce of their gardens, particularly their vines.

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1. J. Barrow, Travels into the Interior of Southern Africa, I, pp.64-66.
 2. H.Lichtenstein, Travels in Southern Africa in the Years 1803, 1804, 1805 and 1806, I, p.468.
 3. The Friend of the Free State and Bloemfontein Gazette, Supplement, 30 December 1869.

Although they were placed within the limits of the town these people, referred to as erfholders, were in reality farmers.

Water was the lifeblood of the erfholders, and its supply was their most vital concern, overriding in importance all questions of national policy. It was also the most fruitful source of conflict in the community. Graaff-Reinet's water supply came from the Sundays River; from a temporary dam of driftsand and brushwood a furrow was led to the outskirts of town, where it was channelled into a number of canals for distribution to the erven. In 1820 another dam and furrow, which became known as the upper dam and furrow, were made. The original works then became the lower dam and furrow. It was realised that the making of a dam higher up in the river would reduce the flow of water into the lower dam. The district mill was at the same time located at the top end of town, and to compensate the users of water along the lower furrow, a proportion of the water of the upper furrow was turned over the mill and into the lower furrow. The most contentious aspect of the division of this water was the volume of water from the upper furrow that should be turned over the mill, and the proportion that should be left in the upper furrow to water the top part of town.¹

1. BJB, vol.1: Memorial by 109 persons, 12 February 1852; BJB, vol.1: A. Stockenstrom to municipal board, 29 September 1852.

After a number of years of trial, the landdrost and heemraden, shortly before their dissolution, on 19 November 1827 made the distribution of water, as it then was, final. Stockenstrom, as landdrost, was requested to do this as provision had been made for the distribution of water to erven which had not yet been sold.¹

In making this distribution permanent, the board of landdrost and heemraden did not state exactly what proportion of water in the upper furrow should be turned over the mill. In 1846 the municipal board disturbed these arrangements by moving the upper dam in the Sundays River closer to the lower dam; the object of this was to reduce the cost of maintaining the upper furrow, but it had the effect of weakening the stream of water in the lower canal, and strengthening that in the upper furrow or canal. But when the board, in an attempt to rectify the matter, turned an excessive quantity of water from the upper furrow over the mill and into the lower furrow, there were complaints from those using water from the upper furrow that they were not getting as much water as formerly.² Matters came to a head in 1852 when erfholders who obtained their water from the lower furrow complained that the upper furrow had more water in it than the lower, whereas the latter was entitled to the greater share of the water.³

1. G.R. 1/4: Minutes, 19 November 1827.

2. BJB, vol.1: Memorial by 109 persons, 12 February 1852; Municipal Minutes, 7 October, 4 November, 2 December 1846.

3. BJB, vol.1: Memorial, 12 February 1852.

The municipal board asked Stockenstrom what proportion of water should run in the upper furrow. The situation was complicated by the fact that since 1827 certain erven east of the Dry River were now watered by the upper furrow, not as formerly by the lower furrow.¹ Stockenstrom naturally enough was unable to recall the details of the distribution, but confirmed that "the solution of your question must hinge upon the comparative strength of the water in the upper and lower canals respectively".² After receiving representations,³ the board decided to remove the upper dam to its earlier site, but this was immediately objected to by those who obtained their water from the upper furrow.⁴

On 3 February 1853 the board decided that the only solution was to lay down the exact proportion of water that was to run in each furrow; henceforth all the water that came from the Sundays River would be divided into five equal streams at the mill, and the strength of the upper furrow after water had been turned over the mill was to be one fifth of the total.⁵ S.J. Meintjes on behalf of fifty-eight persons objected

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1. Municipal Minutes, 2 September 1852; BJB, vol.11, No.436: Town Clerk to Sir A. Stockenstrom, 15 September 1852.
 2. BJB, vol.1: A. Stockenstrom to Town Clerk, 29 September 1852.
 3. Municipal Minutes, 18 February, 22 April 1852.
 4. Municipal Minutes, 1 July, 2 September 1852; BJB, vol.1: Memorial by sixty-six persons, n.d.
 5. Municipal Minutes, 3 February 1853; BJB, vol.11, No.515: Town Clerk to S.J. Meintjes, 4 February 1853.

to this "unlawful interference", while on the other side, 137 persons threatened legal action if the board decided to give any more than one fifth of the water to the upper furrow.¹

Suggestions that Stockenstrom be asked to arbitrate in the dispute² were rejected by a public meeting which passed a resolution approving of the arrangement for distribution made by the municipal board and recommended to the board "if they shall deem it necessary to take steps for giving the force and effect of Law to the said Resolution".³ The board decided to have their decision incorporated in the municipal regulations, but the opposition of S.J. Meintjes and threatened court actions delayed this.⁴ The issue caused much ill-feeling in town, and Meintjes feared that it would "bring about a complete disruption of society".⁵ By early 1854 the dispute was threatening to break up the municipal board. The Herald summed up the situation thus:

1. BJB, vol.1: Memorial, 24 March 1853, and S.J. Meintjes to S.J. Oertel, 24 March 1853.
2. BJB, vol.1: E. Hull to J.F. Ziervogel, 2 April 1853, and S.J. Meintjes to municipal board, 9 July 1853.
3. BJB, vol.1: Minutes of proceedings of meeting, 9 August 1853; the municipal board did however in 1854 discuss the question with Stockenstrom, but the ex-landdrost was unwilling to commit himself to details, emphasizing only that erven along the lower furrow should receive more water than those along the upper furrow {GRH, 22 February 1854 (Municipal meeting, 16 February)}.
4. BJB, vol.2: Colonial Secretary to Town Clerk, 28 June 1854.
5. BJB, vol.1: S.J. Meintjes to municipal board, 9 July 1853.

There is not, during a drought, enough water in the Sunday's River for the increased and rapidly increasing requirements of the town; and consequently, some parties must fall short. Of course, those individuals who receive a scanty supply are dissatisfied, and appeal against the distribution. The parties entrusted with the apportioning of the water plead ancient custom, and shelter themselves under the excuse - that the erven now suffering from want of water were but indifferently supplied at the time of their sale, and therefore the present owners cannot now demand a sufficiency.¹

But the board remained firm and its decision became incorporated in the municipal regulations. These arrangements divided the total volume of water coming into town into five equal streams. This was really regarded only as a closer definition of the distribution as fixed in 1827, and was to remain unaltered throughout the period of this study. It was however by no means the end of the conflict over the distribution of water - the dispute in the fifties was to shrink into insignificance when compared with the wrangles that were to dominate the eighties.

(ii) A Defective Water System

The very system by which Graaff-Reinet was supplied with water became an increasing source of dissatisfaction to the new comers in town. The two temporary dams in the Sundays River were washed away every time the river came down in flood, and both furrows be-

1. GRH, 22 February 1854.

came choked with mud, so that no water came into town until the dams had been reconstructed and the furrows cleaned.¹ As far as irrigation was concerned, this was not a serious drawback if it had at the same time rained in town; but if the flood were the result of a thunderstorm in the Sneeuwberge, Graaff-Reinet gardens might have been in desperate need of water while the furrows were blocked.² The town was frequently without water for periods varying from a few days to a few weeks, as the municipal board directed all its labour resources to repairing the system.³ The unreliable source of water made the cultivation of vegetables an uncertain activity; the vines of the erfholders were not so subject to regular supplies of water and were better able to withstand such setbacks. The erratic water supply was also one of the reasons why Graaff-Reinet in the prosperous fifties failed to establish adequate facilities for the washing of wool.⁴

The frequent washing away of the dams was particularly inconvenient where the supply of water for domestic purposes was concerned. There were many private

1. For references to the washing away of dams and furrows until 1870, see Report of commissioners, attached to Municipal Minutes of extraordinary meeting, 11 September 1848; GRH, 1 November 1856, 16 February 1861, 4 March 1865 (Municipal meeting, 2 March), 27 October 1869, 19 February, 12 March 1870.
2. GRH, 18 October 1854, 8 October 1873.
3. It was not always easy to obtain the additional labour necessary for such repair work (Report of commissioners, attached to Municipal Minutes of extraordinary meeting, 11 September 1848; BJB, vol.1: Public Notice, 9 December 1846, informing public that board had been unable to engage sufficient labour to repair the damage).
4. GRH, 13 June 1868.

wells in town, and also rainwater tanks,¹ particularly from the sixties, when tin roofs replaced thatched roofs in increasing numbers but, apart from these sources, when the river was in flood and the supply cut off, the inhabitants had to rely on a number of so-called brand-dams or fire-dams for their drinking water. These dams were formed simply by a widening of the furrows into squares of ten or twelve feet.² In the middle of the nineteenth century there were three of these dams in Church Street. These dams were cleaned out every few months and, according to the Herald, "the accumulated filth which is exposed and thrown out is sufficient to turn the stomach of even a Municipal Commissioner".³

When the supply from the river was cut off, water had to be obtained from these dams or from such puddles as remained in the furrows. Even when the water supply in the furrows was normal, the water was not pure, as the furrows served to a certain extent as drains. Much of the drinking water of Graaff-Reinet had to be boiled.⁴ If the flooding of the river was one extreme, then drought was the other, and in the driest months of the year, there was an insufficient supply of water for irrigation. Every year excavations were made in the river bed when the water became weak.⁵

1. GRH, 13 June 1868, 8 October 1873.

2. GRH, 19 April 1854 (Copy of letter by "Dorothy Dry-dust" to GTJ in 1845).

3. GRH, 22 December 1855.

4. GRH, 16 March 1853, 11 January 1860, 30 January 1861.

5. GRH, 6 January 1866 (Editorial and Municipal meeting, 4 January), 9 February 1867 (Municipal meeting, 7 February), 22 January 1870 (Municipal meeting, 20 January); see also p.280.

The charges against the water supply were that it was dirty, erratic and inadequate. This ineffective supply affected erfholder as well as business man, but the former, who was used to accepting what he considered he could not change, quietly accepted his misfortune. The erfholder wanted water primarily for his gardens, but the mercantile community, mostly new arrivals in Graaff-Reinet, were interested primarily in obtaining a better supply for domestic purposes. They were also the ones who feared the water supply's inadequacy in combating fires, as they had the most valuable properties.

(iii) Plans for an Improved Water Supply

The municipal board did little, apart from sinking wells, installing pumps and building more branddams, to improve this supply.¹ Plans for an improvement in the town's water supply had from time to time been discussed,² and in 1870 the municipal board felt that the time had come to effect permanent improvements.³ For many years the board had been in debt as it had struggled to obtain a substantial rate from the resident householders at public meetings. From 1864 the board had been authorised to levy rates without recourse to public meetings. By the middle of 1873 the

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1. GRH, 14 September, 16 October, 4 December 1861, 9 March 1867, 15 January 1868; these pumps were installed to make it easier to obtain water without disturbing the sediment at the bottom of the dams.
 2. GRH, 15 December 1852 ("An Inhabitant" and "Homo"), 18 October 1854, 7 January 1860, (Municipal meeting, 5 January), 21 January 1865 (Municipal meeting, 19 January).
 3. BJB, vol.6: Various reports on the water supply, February-March 1870.

board was out of debt, and had a balance of £336: the commissioners felt that this was an opportune time to take steps towards obtaining a pure supply of water for the town. As a preliminary step they decided to test the supply of water from Mackie's Pit.¹

In the early sixties, W.L. Mackie, the Town Clerk, dug a hole in the sandy flats which lay between the old river bank and the course of the river as it was in the sixties. Although the flood waters did not reach most of this flat, the quantity of vegetation growing there suggested that there must be water under the surface. Mackie confirmed this and, from the levels he took, it appeared that the level of water in the Pit was some eighteen inches higher than that in the river. This led to the belief that the water in Mackie's Pit was not connected with the river. This was extremely important, since it meant that the board would be able to dispose of this water without reference to the erf-holders, who were entitled to all the water in the river above the two dams. But when the supply of water at Mackie's Pit was tested in 1873, it was discovered that the levels taken by Mackie had been incorrect, and that the level of water in the Pit was in fact about a foot lower than the level of water in the river. These levels indicated "that the underground water was connected with the river, and not with lateral springs, - that it is, in fact, a portion of a large body of water which percolates through a vast shingle bed, several miles in width, and which is known to exist on both sides of the river". As it appeared that this

1. GRH, 9 August 1873 (Municipal meeting, 5 August).

supply was not independent of the river, the question as to what use it could be put could not be answered until it had been ascertained to what extent drawing water off Mackie's Pit would cut off the supply of water flowing into the upper dam.¹

As the erfholders had a right to all the water in the river above the two dams, only such small quantity as escaped below the dams was available for any use to which the board chose to put it. The editor of the Advertiser later remarked that, if all the water in the river did not go to the erven, "the Backstreeters would set the Sunday's River on fire".² The erfholders firmly believed that the water in the gravel bed came from the river itself, and were thus opposed to any scheme which would tend to interfere with this supply. No sooner had the board begun experimenting in 1873 than fifty-two persons informed the board that they had inspected the works at Mackie's Pit "en moeten met waarheid erkennen, dat het eene noodeloze koste schynt te zyn", and that both the upper and lower furrows would suffer as a result.³

But the state of Graaff-Reinet's water system took a sudden turn for the worse, and gave some urgency to the attempts to improve the supply. Heavy rains in November and December 1874 resulted not only in the washing away of the dams, but in the almost complete destruction of the lower furrow. The damage to the

1. GRH, 4 October 1873 (Municipal meeting, 2 October), 11 October 1873.
2. GRA, 17 May 1879.
3. BJB, vol.6: Memorial by fifty-two persons, 1 November 1873; see also GRA, 30 March 1880.

furrow was considered to be permanent, for although it was repaired, it was believed that every little flood would again destroy it.¹ F.K. te Water, M.L.C., who as early as 1860 had spoken of the need for a pure supply of water,² at a public meeting on 17 February 1875 said that "the great floods had rendered matters so precarious that it was no use to put off any longer the consideration of some better system of supplying the town with water".³ With Te Water in the chair, a motion that the municipal board be requested to bring a Bill before parliament for giving them borrowing powers of up to £12,000 for the purpose of providing the town with "a better and purer supply of Drink Water and also of extending and improving the Waterworks within the Municipality", received fifty-one votes for and fifty-one against, whereupon Te Water used his casting vote as chairman to carry the motion.⁴ So did the decisive vote of Te Water launch Graaff-Reinet onto a course that was to have fateful consequences, not only on relations within the town, but also on Te Water's parliamentary career and upon Graaff-Reinet's parliamentary representation in general.⁵

Some 110 persons immediately expressed their dissatisfaction with the motion, but this was ignored

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1. GRH, 28 November, 2, 9 December 1874, 23 January 1875.
 2. GRH, 7 January 1860 (Municipal meeting, 5 January).
 3. GRH, 20 February 1875 (Public meeting, 17 February).
 4. Te Water Papers, vol.43: Written notice of board, 18 February 1875; GRH, 20 February 1875.
 5. See pp.533-540 for the repercussions on Te Water's career.

by the board,¹ and the Bill duly became Act 16 of 1875, the Graaff-Reinet Municipal Water Act. The Act stipulated that before the board could borrow the £12,000, plans and estimates for the proposed scheme had first to be approved by a meeting of ratepayers.² It was this that was to prove the major stumbling block in the years to follow.

Little time was lost in the submission of plans for the projected waterworks. A plan for the opening up of Mackie's Pit was submitted by Professor Guthrie and Sydney Stent,³ but at a public meeting on 4 November 1875 a proposal to submit this plan to the Government Hydraulic Engineer was defeated after T.N.G. Muller, father-in-law of F.K. te Water, expressed the view that the people were satisfied with the water as it was.⁴

In December 1875 the board nevertheless met the Government Hydraulic Engineer, John Gamble, to sound him out about various possible schemes.⁵ Gamble approved of Guthrie and Stent's plan, and reinforced with this, the board again called a public meeting to discuss the plan and Gamble's report on it. Once again

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1. GRH, 20 March 1875 (Municipal meeting, 18 March).
 2. The Cape of Good Hope Government Gazette, 6 July 1875.
 3. GRH, 3 April 1875 (Municipal meeting, 1 April), 11 August 1875 (Municipal meeting, 9 August); details of the plan are in GRH, 17 April 1875.
 4. GRH, 6 November 1875.
 5. GRH, 24 December 1875.

it was T.N.G. Muller who played a prominent role in the rejection of the plan. Muller said that: "He did not see why we could not go on as we had always done ... Those persons who made the greatest noise about clean water were just the people who, as soon as they had filled their pockets, would go away and leave us".¹ The majority of the erfholders of the back-streets appeared to be opposed to any scheme. The municipal board was in favour of improving the works, but even they were unhappy about the plan to open up Mackie's Pit.²

After the rejection of this scheme the board offered £50 for the best plan submitted, but found none of the plans to its liking.³ There the matter rested until April 1879, when Alfred Essex⁴ submitted yet another plan for the opening up of Mackie's Pit.⁵ There were grave doubts about Mackie's Pit, but the municipality seemed determined to come to grips with the water problem, and decided to obtain the services of Gamble.⁶ When the board met him to discuss the best method of improving and augmenting the town's water supply, Gamble gave his approval to the plan of Guthrie and Stent. The board obviously would have preferred

1. GRH, 12 February 1876.
2. GRH, 26 February 1876 (F.K. te Water).
3. GRH, 22 April 1876 (Municipal meeting, 20 April), 29 April 1876 (Special municipal meeting, 27 April), 6 May 1876 (Municipal meeting, 4 May).
4. He started the GRH in 1852 (A. Rabone, transcribed and ed., Records of a Pioneer Family).
5. GRA, 12 April 1879.
6. GRA, 24 April 1880 (Special municipal meeting, 22 April).

the hydraulic engineer to have produced another scheme, since the one in question had already been rejected by a public meeting, but they were in the hands of an expert. Although Gamble was in favour of the Mackie's Pit scheme, he was unable to give the board the firm assurance it required. While he was prepared to state that the plan would improve the supply, he was not able to say by how much, and he did not think it would be possible to do away with the old furrows. Similarly, on the crucial point of the opposition of the erfholders to the scheme, that it would diminish the supply of water in the furrows, Gamble said that he did not think it would do so, but he was not prepared to give a guarantee.¹

Gamble sent John A. Balfour to make tests on the gravel bed and to examine various other sites.² These experiments alarmed many erfholders and as the first municipal elections under the Act of Incorporation drew near, there was a rumour that an attempt was to be made to elect a council which would stop the works from progressing further.³ The water party however won the elections - those in favour of improving the supply won all eight seats in the four wards east of Bourke Street, while the erfholders most bitterly opposed to any scheme won all but one of the six seats in the three wards west of Bourke Street.⁴

1. GRA, 1 June 1880.

2. GRA, 3 July 1880 (Municipal meeting, 1 July), 31 July, 9 October 1880 (Municipal meeting, 7 October), 14 December 1880.

3. GRA, 14 September 1880.

4. GRA, 11 December 1880; in 1885, when the figures would not have been very different, the three wards in the west end had 226 voters, and the four wards in the east 321 voters (A25 - 1885, Report of the Select Committee on the Graaff-Reinet Municipality Loan Bill, Appendix M).

After he had received Balfour's report, Gamble detailed various possible schemes, but came down firmly in support of opening up Mackie's Pit. He believed that this scheme would best answer the needs of Graaff-Reinet, and that it would provide not only naturally filtered water, i.e., water that had been filtered by passing through the gravel and sand deposit, but that it would also greatly increase the total supply of water. Gamble recommended two similar schemes, and the town council gave its consideration to the cheaper of the two. This plan entailed the sinking of two wells at Mackie's Pit, and the construction of a concrete culvert to carry the water by gravitation to the mill; here it was proposed to divide the water between the upper and lower furrows, and by using the fall from the upper to the lower furrow, to employ a turbine to pump up some 50 000 gallons of water a day to a service reservoir. Water from this reservoir would supply the town with pure water for household purposes and could also be used in case of fires. The cost of carrying out this scheme was estimated by Gamble at £10,000.¹

When the council met early in 1881 to discuss Gamble's plan it was clear that the majority favoured the construction of a new waterworks but were somewhat dubious about the plan. Their attitude was typified by councillor C.E. Geard who encouraged the council to vote in favour of the scheme as Gamble "had had every means of enquiring into the sources of the town's water supply". He agreed that there might be some "doubt

1. GRA, 11 December 1880.

as to the result of Mr. Gamble's plans; but they could not do better than accept the very best advice obtainable". The erfholders of the back-streets, in the person of councillor F. Weitsz, were convinced that no good would come of the plan. He "thought that if this plan were adopted the greatest injustice would be done to the erfholders who had purchased their erven with the right to a certain quantity of water, for this plan would diminish that quantity". G. Waldek repudiated this suggestion.¹ Waldek was a much respected man in the west end of town, and the erfholders had attempted to run him in the 1878 parliamentary elections. But his advocacy of the waterworks plan was to ruin any further chance he may have had of being returned to parliament by the vote of the erfholders.²

T.N.G. Auret proposed that only part of Gamble's scheme be carried out initially, that wells be sunk at Mackie's Pit, and a furrow constructed to the upper furrow, and that it be left for a time to ascertain the strength of the supply, particularly in time of drought. This motion was carried, and of the full council of fourteen that were present, only councillors Wilke, Weitsz and Liebenberg voted against it. Even Rothman, whose opposition to the works later became so marked,

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1. GRA, 29 January 1881 (Municipal meeting, 26 January),
5 February 1881 (Special municipal meeting,
2 February).
 2. GRA, 15 November 1883.

voted with the majority.¹ The decision to appoint a Town Engineer at a salary of £500 to carry out the plan saw Rothman join the minority of councillors opposed to the scheme.²

In May 1881 two memorials, signed mainly by people with erven in the extreme west of town, requested that the work be stopped since it would result in a diminution of the water in both furrows, particularly the lower furrow.³ This appeal failed to move the council, and in July 1881, 134 persons protested against the scheme, threatening to hold the council personally liable for any damage done to the water received by their erven.⁴ Those in favour of the waterworks pointed out that while the value of fixed property in the town was £333, 195, the signatories represented only £75,000 worth of property.⁵

The council had approved of part of Gamble's scheme being undertaken, and Harold Henschman was

1. GRA, 29 January 1881 (Municipal meeting, 26 January), 5 February 1881 (Special municipal meeting, 2 February); Auret later said that the vote had been carried by 10 votes to 4 {GRA, 14 May 1881 (Municipal meeting, 12 May)}.
2. GRA, 22 February 1881 (Municipal meeting, 17 February), 12 March 1881 (Special municipal meeting, 10 March).
3. GRA, 14 May 1881 (Municipal meeting, 12 May); A 25 - 1885, Appendix H.
4. GRA, 23 July 1881 (Municipal meeting, 21 July), 26 July 1881; A 25 - 1882, Appendix I.
5. GRA, 6 August 1881 (Municipal meeting, 4 August); it would appear that the value of the fixed property owned by the signatories was in fact £97,710 (A 25 - 1885, Appendix I).

appointed as engineer to carry out these plans. A discussion of the costs involved then delayed matters. Te Water, as mayor, said that he was not prepared to spend £6,000 or £7,000 on what was an experiment, and that if they wanted more than £3,000 they would have to consult the ratepayers.¹ Both Henschman and Gamble agreed that the work could be done within the £3,000 limit.² A further delay was occasioned by a new plan brought forward by Rothman to obtain water by means of a pump situated below the two dams; this afloop water was at the disposal of the council, and in the face of considerable support for this idea from the council, who were only too willing to consider the possibility of a supply that would avert a confrontation with the erfholders, Gamble agreed to examine the feasibility of Rothman's scheme.³ He however estimated that the cost of adopting the scheme would involve an initial outlay of £4,000, and at least £1,000 a year in maintenance costs. The council decided that this was too high and agreed to press on with Gamble's plan.⁴

Another attempt in the form of a campaign to dismiss Henschman was then made to stop the works. Apart from the fact that the appointment of an engineer was anathema to those councillors opposed to the waterworks, Henschman himself made it only too plain that he had little sympathy with the objections of the erfholders,⁵

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1. For the various ways in which the council could raise money, see p.268n.
 2. GRA, 23 August 1881 (Municipal meeting, 17 August), 1 October 1881.
 3. GRA, 1 October 1881.
 4. GRA, 15 October 1881 (Municipal meeting, 13 October); A 25 - 1885, Appendix L.
 5. See for example, GRA, 1 February 1881 (H.Henschman).

and there was a large share of personal animosity behind the attempt to dismiss him. The Advertiser appreciated that Henschman was "a vulnerable place in the defences of the upholders of the scheme".¹ The motion to discharge Henschman was closely contested, but was lost by 6 votes to 8 after Te Water as mayor had used both his deliberative and casting votes to defeat the measure.²

As the council went ahead with its plans to make a start on the works, the opposition to the scheme became more bitter. The Advertiser was prepared to concede that the water in Mackie's Pit was only the river water which percolated through the shingle bed, but could not see the force of the argument that the undertaking would lead to any loss of water. Even if no additional water were obtained, the scheme had great advantages in that there would be a constant supply of clean water and that the town would not be without water after every flood; fires too would not pose as great a threat at such times.³ But the erfholders were convinced that it would diminish the supply of water to their erven. The reasoning behind this belief is not altogether clear as regards the total supply of water that would come into town; but since all the water from Mackie's Pit was to be led into the upper furrow, they foresaw all sorts of problems in connection with the distribution of the water. The scheme would weaken the stream in the lower furrow from which they

1. GRA, 15 October 1881.

2. GRA, 5 November 1881 (Municipal meeting, 3 November).

3. GRA, 26 July 1881.

mainly obtained their water, and would necessitate a new distribution in the volume of water which would have to be turned over the mill and into the lower furrow.¹ The feelings aroused among the erfholders were strong ones. Weitsz threatened that if the council proceeded with its plans the erfholders would turn them out forcibly.² This warning was again repeated in November 1881 when Liebenberg said that the dissatisfaction had reached such heights that it was leading "almost" to a rebellion.³

(iv) The Financing of a Water Scheme

Having failed to secure the reversal of the decision to proceed with the sinking of wells and the constructing of a concrete culvert to the upper furrow, the minority in the council turned their attention to preventing the council from obtaining money to carry out the scheme. The rates levied by the council were for the ordinary expenses of the municipality, and there was no surplus for spending on the works which Henchman had started towards the end of 1881.⁴ The attempt that was thus made at the end of 1881 to prevent the council from levying a rate was directed at the ordinary expenses of the municipality and must be seen as an attempt to oust the council. Nine of the fourteen councillors had to be present when a rate was levied;

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1. Something of these fears was appreciated by the GRA (GRA, 10 October 1881).
 2. GRA, 14 May 1881 (Municipal meeting, 12 May), 17 May 1881.
 3. GRA, 26 November 1881 (Editorial and municipal meeting, 24 November).
 4. See photograph facing p.278.

by absenting themselves from council meetings, the minority against the waterworks attempted to prevent a rate being levied. This reckless attempt failed.¹

In order to obtain the money for the waterworks, the council could have availed themselves of Act 16 of 1875, but before they could borrow the money they had to obtain the approval of a meeting of ratepayers for the plans. Such a meeting had already rejected the plan in the form that it had been issued, that of Guthrie and Stent. The minority in the council wanted such a meeting called as they were confident of an erfholder victory; the majority in the council likewise feared an erfholder majority at a public meeting, and did all in their power to avoid calling a meeting.

The Act of Incorporation of 1880 provided a number of possibilities for the raising of money.² The council applied to the government for a loan, but

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1. GRA, 24 December 1881 (Municipal meetings, 22, 23 December), 7 January, 4 February 1882 (Municipal meeting, 2 February).
 2. The relevant sections of the Act, as published in The Cape of Good Hope Government Gazette, 3 August 1880, read:
 "41. The council elected under this Act may, with the consent of the Governor of this colony ... sell by public sale any of the land or property in the last preceding section mentioned (in this connection the town lands) for any purpose of a municipal nature which the council shall deem desirable and the said Governor shall approve of: Provided that the said council shall, before applying to the said Governor for his consent, give public notice of not less than twenty-one days in the manner hereinafter mentioned of their intention to apply for such consent, in which notice so published shall be given a full and clear statement of the situation, nature, and extent

of the land or property to be sold, and of the object or purpose for which the money to arise from the sale is required ...

42. The council elected under this Act may, with the consent of the Governor aforesaid, testified as aforesaid, raise by way of mortgage of any land or property vested in the said council, or by debentures or other securities charged upon such land or property, any sum of money which shall be required for any purpose of a municipal nature which the said council shall deem desirable and the said Governor shall approve of: Provided that the provisions of the last preceding section requiring the publication of notice of an intended sale, shall mutatis mutandis, apply to the case of an intended mortgage or issue of debentures ...

43. The sum of money to be raised under the last preceding section in any one year, reckoned from the first day of January till the thirty-first day of December, shall not exceed double the amount which shall be estimated as the probable sum to be yielded by the municipal rate assessed, or to be assessed, in manner hereinafter mentioned, for that year ...

44. The council may, for any such purpose as in the forty-second section described, mortgage or charge by debentures the municipal rates of the said municipality in security for any sum to be borrowed by the said council: Provided that no sum of money shall be capable of being borrowed under the provisions of this section, unless with the previous consent of a majority of the ratepayers of the said municipality present at a meeting to be convened by the council, upon a notice of not less than twenty-one days, to be published in the manner hereinafter mentioned: And provided that it shall not be lawful for the said ratepayers to sanction, or for the said council to borrow upon security of the said rates, any sum or sums exceeding at any one time the sum of three thousand pounds sterling".

ninety-six persons asked the government to refuse permission for a loan to be raised under security of the town lands, on the grounds that section forty-four required that the council had first to obtain the consent of a public meeting and that the sum to be raised should not exceed £3,000. But these petitioners were talking at cross purposes, for the council had submitted a memorial for the approval of the Governor to raise £5,000 by mortgaging the town lands, as was provided for in the forty-second section of the Act. The council said that they had given notice of their intention to apply to the Governor, and that no objections had been received. A. van den Berg, the agent of the erfholders, informed the government that two protests had been sent to the council against the carrying out of the water scheme. The council however had been referring to the fact that no objections had been raised when the council had advertised its intention of applying to the Governor to raise money by mortgaging the town lands. The government also had its facts wrong, for it informed the petitioners that section forty-one afforded them protection, whereas the petitioners were too late to avail themselves of this as they had failed to lodge objections to the council's advertised intentions. The government at the same time informed the council that it should look at section forty-four and that the borrowing power of the council was restricted to £3,000. The council in turn pointed out to the Commissioner of Crown Lands and Public Works that the loan was required for a special work, that the application had not been made under the forty-fourth section

but under the forty-first and forty-second sections and that it was only the forty-fourth section that referred to loans under the security of the rates, the maximum for which was £3,000.¹ In February 1882 Te Water said that the petition of the erfholders to the government had been misleading in its reference to section forty-four which was applicable only to loans raised under security of the rates, and he referred to the mistake of confusing a loan raised on the security of the rates with one raised under the security of the town lands.²

But, however certain the majority in the council may have been of the correctness of their case, they could not convince the government, and the council was informed that the Commissioner of Crown Lands, John X. Merriman, felt "bound to carefully watch that the provisions of the law are rigidly adhered to, the more so that a strong protest has been sent to the Government against the loan". It was pointed out that section forty-three restricted the amount that could be borrowed to double the estimated rates. The Commissioner was of the opinion that: "the proper course for the Council to adopt is to submit the matter to a meeting of ratepayers, duly convened".³

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1. A 50 - 1882, Correspondence between the Government and the Town Council of Graaff-Reinet on the subject of the loan applied for by that body for waterworks for the improvement of the water supply of the town of Graaff-Reinet; GRA, 18 February 1882 (Municipal meeting, 16 February).
 2. GRA, 18 February 1882 (Municipal meeting, 16 February).
 3. A 50 - 1882, p.9.

The council failed to understand why the government maintained that they had not complied with the requirements of the Act, and sent Merriman a copy of the notice showing that they had given twenty-one days notice of their intention of applying to the Governor. The council also told the Commissioner that the rates levied for the current year on a valuation of £383, 195 at 1½d in the £, when doubled, would give a sum of £4,800, which was not far short of the £5,000 for which they had applied.¹ As to the important question raised by the Commissioner, that of a public meeting, Te Water informed Merriman that:

The Council would have no objection to call a public meeting of ratepayers, as suggested by you, if the provisions of that section (42) demanded the holding of such meeting. To do so now would nullify all the resolutions passed by the Council on the subject, which step would not be desirable for the integrity of the Council.

Te Water also made the point that the work was a special one requiring a special loan, and that it would be

1. It is difficult to understand the allusion to a rate of 1½d in the £. As Van den Berg, on behalf of the erfholders informed Merriman, section sixty-six of the Act of Incorporation provided for a maximum rate of 1d in the year; to obtain a rate of 1½d the approval of a meeting of ratepayers would have been necessary, and it seems unlikely that the majority in the council were contemplating such a course (A 50 - 1882, pp.10, 13).

impracticable, even misleading, to pledge the rates mentioned in clause 44 of our Municipal Act, inasmuch as the revenue of such rates is to be used for defraying all the ordinary expenses of the town, and this is the chief reason why the Council considered it very undesirable to obtain such a loan in terms of said section 44.¹

This may indeed have been the chief reason, but it is equally certain that had the matter been submitted to the ratepayers, it would have been rejected. In fact, the council's only hope of being allowed to continue with the works was to raise the money without reference to a meeting of ratepayers.

But still the government refused to agree to the loan. The council were informed that they had not complied with the Act in that the council's published notice did "not give a full and clear statement of the extent, nature, and situation of the land to be dealt with". This was in the nature of a technicality and the main reason for the government's refusal was the petition objecting to the council's proposals. Merriman felt that bearing this petition in mind, it would "be entirely contrary to the spirit of the law if consent were given to the proposed incumbrance of town lands with{out} a very clear expression of the wishes of the majority of those interested".²

In the meantime Te Water went to Cape Town to attend parliament, and the majority in the council who

1. A 50 - 1882, p.10.

2. A 50 - 1882, p.12; this letter as reproduced in GRA, 1 April 1882 (Municipal meeting, 30 March), reads "without a very clear expression".

were in favour of the waterworks were confident that once he had personally explained all the circumstances of the case to Merriman, the loan would be granted.¹ The opponents of the waterworks attempted to persuade the government that since Te Water had obtained leave of absence from the council, he could not be regarded as a councillor, nor could he "discharge the duties of a councillor, except in the city or town which he represents as councillor".² The government was however quite happy to discuss the question with Te Water, but he failed to convince them to sanction the loan. It was the failure to call a public meeting that was behind the refusal, and Te Water, in reporting back to the council, said that he had been asked "what objections there were to comply with the request of a section of the ratepayers to call a public meeting. The reply was simply, because the provisions of the Act do not require it when an application is made under the said section 42".³

Te Water now tried to force the government's hand by introducing a motion in the Assembly, "That the House is of opinion that the Government consent should not be withheld to the authorization of a loan for the Waterworks at Graaff-Reinet as applied for by the Town Council". It was Hofmeyr who moved that the following be added to the motion:

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1. GRA, 1 April 1882 (Municipal meeting, 30 March).
 2. A 50 - 1882, p.13.
 3. GRA, 15 April 1882 (Municipal meeting, 11 April).

Provided it be shown by the Town Council to the satisfaction of Government that the amount of the Loan will not exceed double the amount of the probable estimate of the municipal rate for the current year, levied in terms of Section 66 of the 'Graaff Reinet Municipality Act, 1880' and that the provisions of Sections 41 and 42 of the said Act have been acted upon.

Hofmeyr later withdrew this in favour of another amendment providing that the council "prove to the satisfaction of Government that the provisions of the Graaff-Reinet Municipal Act on the subject have been observed". These amendments were of no help to the town council of Graaff-Reinet, and with the defeat of Te Water's motion,¹ the council was no nearer to obtaining the sought for loan.

Hofmeyr's amendment shows that he had taken some trouble to familiarize himself with the subject, and it was also rumoured that the result of the debate had been telegraphed to the local Afrikaner Bond by Hofmeyr.² Although Hofmeyr was at this stage not a member of the Bond, his interest appears to have had a close connection with the forthcoming bye-election in the midlands circle, where his friend R.P. (Dolf) Botha was standing as a candidate of the Bond in its first trial of strength in the midlands. Botha's chief opponent was C.A. Nesor, a town councillor and prominent supporter of the waterworks scheme. The opponents of the scheme, both inside and outside the council, were Bondsmen or Bond supporters, and Hofmeyr's interest may well have

1. GRA, 6, 13 May 1882.

2. GRA, 6 May 1882.

been an attempt to win support for Botha among the erf-holders.¹

Thus far the only reactions from the public of Graaff-Reinet to the waterworks had been unfavourable, but in May 1882 a memorial supporting the plan was signed by 125 ratepayers, besides a number of householders, representing property valued at £160,000 according to the municipal valuation role. This was almost 42% of the total fixed property in the town. The signatories included several of the clergymen in the town, all the medical men, and the civil commissioner.²

As it appeared that the council would not be able to obtain a loan, the minority opposed to the water scheme called for a stop to further work. The majority however maintained a discreet silence when petulantly asked where they hoped to find the money to pay for the £3,000 already spent on the works. At a heated meeting, which Van Ryneveld in a private letter to Te Water described as "very noisy and unpleasant", there were some reflections on personalities: Auret in particular seemed to bring out the worst in Rothman. But the majority in favour of the works voted for their continuance.³

1. See also pp.532-533.

2. The idea was that this memorial would be sent to parliament to support Te Water's motion, but it arrived too late (Te Water Papers, vol.45: Telegram, D.J. van Ryneveld to F.K. te Water, 2 May 1882, and telegram, Water Works Committee to F.K. te Water, 10 May 1882, and D. de Graaff to F.K. te Water, 11 May 1882.

3. Te Water Papers, vol.45: D.J. van Ryneveld to F.K. te Water, 15 May 1882; GRA, 16 May 1882 (Municipal meeting, 9 May).

Although the government had refused the council's application, help was at hand, and Scanlen informed Te Water that the council could raise money through the Local Loans Bill which was about to be introduced into parliament.¹ The Bill was passed and became the Local Works Loans Act, whereby government loans to local bodies required only the approval of the Governor, and not the sanction of the assembled ratepayers. The council decided to apply for a loan of £5,000 under this Act. At the same time, Te Water, who had thus far led the water party in the council, resigned from the council as he was proceeding overseas on a visit. Van Ryneveld was elected as mayor to replace him.² The money for the works in progress had been obtained by means of an overdraft at the bank, which overdraft had increased from £372 in December 1881 to £6,701 by November 1882. It was at this stage, in November 1882, that the council received from the government £5,000 under the Local Works Loans Act, which amount was paid into the bank to reduce the overdraft.³

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1. Te Water Papers, vol. 45: H.H. McNaughton to F.K. te Water, 23 May 1882; GRA, 13 June 1882.
 2. GRA, 27 June 1882 (Municipal meeting, 20 June), 20 July 1882 (Municipal meeting, 18 July).
 3. E.J. Buchanan, ed., Cases decided in the Eastern Districts' Court of the Cape of Good Hope, V, Thornton and Others vs Hugo, N.O. and the Mayor and Councillors of Graaff Reinet, p.287.

(v) A New Waterworks in Action

The waterworks held out great promise. By the middle of 1882 a good stream of clear water from the new aqueduct, estimated at 1 000 000 gallons per day, had been obtained, and this without any apparent lowering of the strength of the stream in the river.¹ By the beginning of November 1882 that part of the plan the council had decided to carry out, viz, the sinking of wells and the laying of a concrete culvert to the inlet from the river to the upper dam, had been completed. The water party maintained that the experiment had proved successful and that they should proceed with the rest of the plan. In November 1882 a decision was taken to continue the works a little further so that they would be secure against a flooding of the river, despite the opposition of the minority who thought that the works should be left for a period to see if they were permanent. There was some point to this as the volume of water varied considerably according to the seasons. The Advertiser argued that there had been several months of severe drought which was a sufficient test.² The water party again won the municipal elections, and there was no break in continuity as Van Ryneveld was re-elected mayor and the old Water Works Committee was re-elected unchanged.³ Armed with this new mandate, the majority in January 1883 carried a motion in favour of continuing the works into town.⁴

1. GRA, 22 July 1882.

2. GRA, 4, 9 November 1882 (Municipal meeting, 7 November).

3. GRA, 11 January 1883 (Municipal meeting, 9 January).

4. GRA, 25 January 1883 (Municipal meeting, 23 January).



Construction of the culvert - upper furrow, 1882-1883

In June 1883 the council rejected a memorial requesting a public meeting to discuss the water question.¹ The opponents of the water scheme had gained some considerable strength from the accession to their ranks of Alfred Thornton and James K. Dall, principal of the Graaff-Reinet College: the signatures of these two men headed a list of 113 persons who informed the council that by refusing to call a meeting the council had left them with "no alternative but to appeal to the law" to protect their rights.² Van Ryneveld agreed to call a meeting. Whether or not the threat of legal action had anything to do with his decision is not known; possibly he saw little harm in a meeting since the major part of the works was now completed.³ All that remained to be done was the construction of a service reservoir and the erection of a turbine to pump the water up to the reservoir. The actual piping of water into the town had thus far not been considered in any detail, but the council saw the delay in laying on a town service as being only a matter of "months".⁴

The first public meeting to be held since the commencement of the waterworks was held on 19 July 1883. This meeting was preceded by considerable difference of opinion regarding the success of the works. As early as November 1882 Alfred Thornton had asserted that the

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1. GRA, 14 June 1883 (Municipal meeting, 12 June).
 2. GRA, 28 June 1883 (Municipal meeting, 26 June).
 3. GRA, 14 July 1883 (Editorial and J.K. Dall).
 4. GRA, 26 July 1883 (Municipal meeting, 24 July).

quantity of water in the aqueduct was falling off, that the dirty water of the river being drawn through the gravel bed was choking it, and that this was the cause of the decrease. Henchman denied that the stream was decreasing, but Thornton continued to repeat the assertion.¹ At the end of 1882 there was no widespread support for Thornton's contention, and detractors of the scheme complained instead that the council had spent a large sum of money but that the supply had not increased. Rothman, for example, insisted that the water in the aqueduct was simply the river water that would have found its way into the upper furrow anyway, citing as evidence the fact that only a poor stream was being obtained in the upper furrow. Auret, however, countered this with the argument that in the dry months it had always been necessary to make channels in the river to coax water into the upper furrow, but that this year there had been no need to do this; had the river been opened up as in former years there would be the same quantity of water in the upper furrow.²

Working on the basis that a fair average volume of water in the two furrows in October 1881, just prior to the works being started, had been 1 500 000 gallons, Henchman calculated that in July 1883, with a total volume of 1 750 000 gallons coming into town, the town had gained some 250 000 gallons of water a day.³

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1. GRA, 9 November 1882 (A.Thornton), 20 January, 1 February 1883 (A.Thornton), 6 February 1883.
 2. GRA, 9 November 1882 (Municipal meeting, 7 November); see also GRA, 4 November 1882, 1 March 1883.
 3. GRA, 5 July 1883 (H.Henchman), 17, 21 July 1883; A 25 - 1885, Evidence of Van Ryneveld.

But the meeting of 19 July 1883 was sceptical of Henschman's figures, and by then Thornton had widespread support for his contention that the water in the aqueduct was decreasing. The Town Engineer was speaking of a gain of 250 000 gallons a day, but as the Advertiser appreciated, there could be no gainsaying the fact that: "Erfholders, who from constant watering of their ground for years can measure the water supply almost to a bucketful by the ground they irrigate, or are unable to irrigate, tell us that their supply has been falling off since the waterworks were undertaken, and was never so low as it is now, when the works are completed".¹ The opponents of the waterworks believed that the assertion that there was a greater volume of water coming into town was based on a faulty reckoning of the supply prior to the commencement of the works and that the furrows were in such a bad state in October 1881 that any accurate measurement would have been impossible.²

The balance of evidence indicates that there was indeed a greater supply of water, although this varied according to the season. The most likely explanation for the complaints was that early in 1883 Henschman interfered with the actual division of water. Support for this contention is that at the end of 1882 when Thornton asserted that the level in the aqueduct was falling, the erfholders were complaining that the volume of water had not increased and by July 1883 they were

1. GRA, 21 July 1883.

2. A 25 - 1885, Evidence of Rothman.

complaining that they were receiving less water. The division of the water coming into town into five equal streams had always been done "by eye": the main furrows were divided by longitudinal plates about four feet long, termed "sny-yzers". Henchman found this a poor system because the furrows themselves were rough and uneven, nor was the fall of the water taken into account. The water in some areas had the advantage of a direct course and a fall of several feet, while in other places the water furrow turned a right angle, so that the water lost much of its velocity. The Town Engineer devised a more equitable system by using plate-iron notches.¹

The extreme west of town had been most favoured, and Gamble, when he visited Graaff-Reinet in March 1884, "found that nearly sixty per cent of the water that runs in the furrow at the upper end of Plasket street was divided between the two furrows that supply the Western side of the town, while the centre of the town was getting scarcely forty per cent", instead of the fifty to which it was entitled. He explained that

the position where the water is intended to be halved is most awkwardly arranged. There is a very swift current just above and the furrow supplying the centre is taken off at right angles, while the furrow supplying the West end goes on in the same line to the great advantage of the latter. This is somewhat but not sufficiently counteracted by lessening the width of the latter.

Gamble suggested further modifications to correct the imbalance.²

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1. GRA, 10 February 1883, 10 January 1884 (H.Henchman to J.G. Gamble, 9 January).
 2. GRA, 5 April 1884 (Municipal meeting).

These corrections are the most likely cause of the complaints of a water shortage, that some people had for many years been receiving more water than they were entitled to, and were unhappy when they received less.¹ Thus thirty-three erfholders in Donkin and Cradock streets requested "that the water in the different furrows ... be divided in the old way".² Not all the erfholders were dissatisfied with the volume of water they received, but those who were receiving more kept quiet about it.³ It would appear that many people along the upper furrow were obtaining more water than before,⁴ and a possible contributory factor to the decrease in the water received by some erfholders along the lower furrow may have been the failure to turn a sufficient quantity of water over the mill and into the lower furrow.

Thornton professed to having no confidence in Henschman's mode of measuring the water, and in February 1883 challenged the Town Engineer to measure the water according to the time that the aqueduct took to fill a 400 gallon tank. Henschman accepted the challenge, and the civil commissioner agreed to act as umpire.⁵ But the test was not carried out in the months that followed, and Thornton's doubts concerning the readings taken by Henschman gained wide acceptance among the erfholders, for whom Thornton had become a spokesman on the water question.

1. GRA, 21 July 1883.

2. GRA, 5 January 1884 (Municipal meeting).

3. GRA, 21 July 1883.

4. A 25 - 1885, Evidence of De Graaff.

5. GRA, 20 February 1883.

By November 1883 even according to Henchman's measurements the flow of water in the aqueduct was decreasing. Towards the end of July 1883 a total of 1 765 000 gallons was coming into town,¹ which figure had dropped to 1 647 000 by November. But it was not only the aqueduct which was showing a decrease, as the strength of the stream in all the furrows was weakening.² Those in favour of the works attributed this to the severe drought that was being experienced.³

On 1 December 1883 Thornton in a letter to Gamble ascribed the fall of water in the aqueduct to the choking of the natural filter. Thornton, who was able to speak from a better position since he had gained a seat on the council, at the same time mentioned Henchman's unwillingness to adopt his plan of measuring the water by means of a tank, and ended his letter by saying that he was "not aware if Mr. Henchman has kept you accurately informed of everything. Indeed I think him very little to be depended upon, as he is not responsible for results". What bothered Gamble was Thornton's assertion "that the top furrow is recovering its usual flow, exactly in proportion as the culvert loses". Henchman denied that this was the case, and informed Gamble that Thornton had "satisfied himself before the work was begun that it would be a failure, and nothing which either you or I can tell him will alter his opinion".⁴

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1. GRA, 26 July 1883 (Municipal meeting, 24 July).
 2. BJB, vol.9: Measurement of water by Henchman, 21 November 1883.
 3. GRA, 29 December 1883.
 4. BJB, vol.9: A.Thornton(sen) to J.Gamble, 1 December 1883 (copy), J.G.Gamble to H.Henchman, 17 December 1883, and H.Henchman to J.Gamble, 22 December 1883; GRA, 29 December 1883 (Municipal meeting, 28 December)

As the drought continued the level of water in all furrows declined, and early in 1884 the flow of water measured by Henschman in the aqueduct was 702 000 gallons, while the flow in the upper and lower furrows respectively was 162 000 and 556 000 gallons, giving a total of 1 420 000 gallons.¹ But the rains came to break what had been a most severe drought and predictions that the water in the aqueduct would rise to 800 000 gallons a day were surpassed. Thornton's idea of the 400 gallon tank was finally adopted and the test gave a quantity of 1 030 000 gallons per day in the aqueduct.² This seemed to put an effective end to Thornton's claims that the water was steadily decreasing as a result of the choking of the natural filter.

If the erfholders along the lower furrow were unhappy with Henschman's new arrangements for distributing the water, those who obtained their water from the upper furrow became increasingly concerned at the possible effect of the working of the turbine on this supply. All the water above the two dams in the river (including the water drawn from Mackie's Pit) belonged to the erven, and unless it could be shown that the water from Mackie's Pit was independent of the river, the erfholders would contest the right of the council to dispose of any of it.

When the public meeting of 19 July 1883 was held, the aqueduct had been completed and all that remained to be done was the construction of a reservoir and the

1. GRA, 5 January 1884 (Municipal meeting)

2. GRA, 26 January 1884.

installation of a turbine to pump water up to the reservoir. At the meeting Dr Dall proposed a resolution describing the plan of pumping water into a reservoir as "a distinct invasion of the rights of the erf holders" and pledging the meeting "to resist that action by every available means". A proposal was carried that no further money be spent on the works and that they "be stopped at once for a period of nine months to give time for a fair trial of the result during summer weather".¹

The council did not immediately stop the works. The turbine had already been ordered, and its purchase had been included in the estimates. The construction of the reservoir was part of the turbine contract. Once the turbine and reservoir were completed, there was little more the council could do, as no plan for the service to town had yet been made.² The council did however intend having estimates made for the cost of laying down the town service, and it was hoped to pay for the works by means of payment for water leadings. There was in any case a feeling among the majority in the council that they were acting within their rights, and that they were under no obligation to heed the decision of the public meeting. The public meeting was not the only expression of opinion, and shortly after the meeting 122 persons requested the council to continue with the works; it was pointed out that they should have attended the public meeting. This was not the only occasion on which the mercantile people failed to attend such public meetings in force: many of them

1. GRA, 21 July 1883.

2. A 25 - 1885, Evidence of De Graaff.

had a fear of offending customers, and on this occasion the Advertiser tended to excuse them by arguing that the meeting was held during business hours on a weekday when they found it difficult to attend.¹

The opponents of the waterworks held a meeting in Rothman's store and carried a motion regretting that the council had paid no attention to the resolution of the public meeting and resolving "to resist the illegal action of the Council by every possible means the moment their intention already expressed of pumping water into a reservoir is carried into execution".² What this threat meant in practical terms was seen when the representative of the suppliers of the turbine, as part of the contract, was present to test the turbine that had been installed. At the end of March 1884 a crowd of close on 100 persons, mostly erfholders, was present when Henschman attempted to test the turbine by pumping water into the reservoir. As the Town Engineer was about to turn the water off from the upper furrow, C.H. Olivier seized him and dumped him unceremoniously into the dividing tank. A few days later another attempt was made to test the turbine; once again there was a large crowd of erfholders present. At twelve o'clock Henschman turned the water on to the turbine; there were no objections as the water from twelve to one o'clock belonged to the hospital. R.A. Jansen however warned Henschman that if he did not receive his

1. A 25 - 1885, Appendix E; GRA, 26 July 1883 (Editorial and Municipal meeting, 24 July).

2. GRA, 26 July 1883 (Meeting of the Opposition).

water at one o'clock he would turn it off from the turbine himself. By one o'clock Henchman had ensured that he was nowhere near the turbine but this did not prevent Jansen from breaking the lock on the manhole and diverting the water.¹

Part of the blame for this breakdown of law and order must be laid at the door of the town council, who had made little attempt to calm the fears of the erfholders. In their private capacity certain councillors said that the water in the aqueduct was independent of the river, but no attempt had been made to persuade the erfholders of this. The effects of the working of the turbine were also left to the fertile imaginations of the erfholders.²

Some of the ill-feeling between the two groups came to light in the action for £1,000 damages brought by Henchman against Olivier. Henchman did not understand Dutch, and he appears to have adopted an attitude of contempt towards the Afrikaners opposed to the waterworks. These Afrikaners, who had from the outset opposed the appointment of an engineer, had found in the personality of Henchman further reason to oppose the institution. Henchman was awarded £400 with costs,³ but his career in Graaff-Reinet was at an end. After his experiences in the dividing tank he failed to appear at council meetings when requested to do so, and he

1. GRA, 2, 5, 9 April 1884 (Magistrate's Court), 23 April 1884 (Henchman vs Olivier).

2. GRA, 5, 19 April 1884 (Editorial and Charles E. Geard).

3. GRA, 23 April 1884 (Henchman vs Olivier).

accused the council of not giving him the necessary support in his action against Olivier. The insolvency of Olivier prevented Henschman from obtaining the damages awarded by the court, but Henschman maintained that, had the council supported him, Olivier and his friends would have paid the money. He excused his dereliction of duty on the grounds that he had been able to think of nothing except the impending case against Olivier and that he should have applied for leave.¹ At a council meeting on 1 August 1884 a decision was taken to dismiss Henschman.² He left the council under a cloud, and vanished, as Weitsz said, "without even saying 'dag ou baas', as a Hottentot would do".³

The court case between Henschman and Olivier revealed evidence of racial antagonism. Justice Shippard blamed the Afrikaner Bond for this, saying that he would be pardoned for

using one word exciting the most deplorable feelings, the most dangerous and the worst. There should be only one bond among men in the same country, and that should be one of fellowship, good feeling and brotherhood, and that feeling should be extended to all. There should be no other feeling, and any other is bad and dangerous. If men come among you to excite such feelings they are your real enemies, and I tell you so.⁴

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1. BJB, vol.10: H.Henschman to town council, 13 November 1884; GRA, 20 August 1884 (H.Henschman), 23 August, 14 November 1884 (Municipal meeting, 11 November).
 2. BJB, vol.10: Papers with special meeting of town council, 1 August 1884.
 3. GRA, 14 November 1884 (Municipal meeting, 11 November).
 4. GRA, 23 April 1884 (Henschman vs Olivier).

The Afrikaner Bond took exception to Shippard's remarks, saying that neither was Olivier a Bondsman, nor did the Bond have anything to do with the dispute.¹ The Advertiser countered by saying that although the Bond may not have taken an interest in the affair in its official capacity, "the local branch of the Bond did take up this water question warmly, giving a colour and character to it which it could hardly have had without it".²

In the light of the elections to parliament that had been held a few months earlier, there can be little doubt that there was much truth in the Advertiser's assertion. Rothman was only nominated as one of the Bond's candidates in the Assembly elections early in 1884 because of his role in the town council in opposing the waterworks at every step. The opposition to the sitting M.L.A., F.K. te Water, stemmed mainly from his role in promoting the waterworks scheme. While the Bond did not officially involve itself in the water question, the organisation of the Bond was used to secure the election of Rothman and bring a premature end to Te Water's parliamentary career. It was the organisation of the Bond which enabled the erfholders of Graaff-Reinet to put Rothman forward with some hope of success; as one of the official Bond nominees Rothman would be assured of the Bond votes in the rural areas. The erfholders may not have been able to gain control of the town council, but by using the Bond supporters in the whole

1. GRA, 30 April 1884.

2. GRA, 3 May 1884.

of the electoral division, they elected Rothman to parliament to continue the fight against the majority in the town council.¹ In 1882, when the majority in the town council was attempting to finance the water scheme, it had Te Water in parliament to plead its cause. Now the erfholders had their representative in Cape Town to further their interests. How Rothman was to promote the interests of the erfholders was to become clear over the next two years.

(vi) The Collapse of Municipal Government

The town council intended proceeding with plans to provide a town service, but the attempts to raise money for this and the financial situation in general overshadowed the question of the right of the council to pump water into the reservoir, which remained an academic question. Besides the £560.18.4 spent on the preliminary surveys and borings by Balfour, the cost of the work done by Henchman up to 31 August 1884 was £22,185.15.6. £2,979.19.9 had been paid in interest to the Cape of Good Hope Bank on the council's overdraft and to the government in interest on loans granted to the council, which loans amounted to £15,000, comprising the original £5,000 granted in 1882, and a further £10,000 received early in 1884. At the end of August 1884 the council thus owed the government £15,000 and had an overdraft at the bank of £14,143.3.6, of which £10,726.13.7 was on account of the waterworks,

1. These elections are discussed in detail on pp.533-540.

and £3,416.9.11 owing to other works of the council.¹

The council hoped to repay these sums from the money received in water leadings to the townsmen, but before this could be done, additional money was required to lay out the town service and leadings.² In April 1884 the council applied to the government for a further loan of £15,000 for this purpose but were informed that the government would await Gamble's report "before giving a definite reply" to the application.³ Gamble said that although the cost had been heavy, the works had been "decidedly successful". He attributed the high costs to the fact that the council had been unable to call for tenders for the whole work but had been forced by the opposition to do the work piecemeal.⁴ Thus Gamble attempted to reconcile his estimate of £10,000 with the £22,000 actually spent in the execution of the plan. In May 1884 the council was informed of the Commissioner's regret "that in the absence of any provision for the purpose it is not in his power to grant the additional loan applied for".⁵ Further attempts to persuade the government to change its mind were unsuccessful.⁶

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1. BJB, vol.10: Statement of expenditure on the Water Works from their commencement in June 1880 to the 31st August, 1884; BJB, vol.10: Assistant Commissioner of Crown Lands and Public Works to town council, 11 March 1884; GRA, 5 April 1884 (Municipal meeting).
 2. GRA, 21 June 1884.
 3. BJB, vol.10: Office of Commissioner of Crown Lands and Public Works to Town Clerk, 17 April 1884.
 4. GRA, 18 June 1884.
 5. BJB, vol.10: Office of Commissioner of Crown Lands and Public Works to Town Clerk, 21 May 1884; GRA, 4 June 1884 (Municipal meeting).
 6. GRA, 23 August 1884 (Municipal meeting, 19 August).

The council could not raise the money from the government, and was in addition paying 9½% interest on its overdraft to the bank. There was no difficulty in raising a loan at 6%, but the difficulty was that the council would first have to obtain the approval of a public meeting of ratepayers.¹ Although those in favour of the waterworks believed they were in the majority, they feared that a public meeting would favour the erfholders, giving as their reason for this the fact that the erfholders were able to spend time at such meetings while many business men stayed away from these meetings for a fear of antagonising customers.²

Soon after the government had refused to sanction another loan, the bank began exerting pressure on the council to reduce its overdraft. At the same time Rothman maintained that since no definite arrangement had been made between the bank and the council for an overdraft, it might transpire that the council had no right to allow such a large overdraft and that the bank had no right to grant it.³ This was the first indication of an attempt by the erfholders to saddle the majority of the councillors with a personal liability for the debt. Alfred Thornton, who was accused of having caused the bank to summon the council for the amount of the overdraft, said that the bank was determined to have its money before the council retired, in case a

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1. GRA, 30 August, 3, 6 September 1884 (Municipal meeting, 2 September), 20 September 1884 (Municipal meeting, 16 September).
 2. GRA, 24 September 1884.
 3. GRA, 6 September 1884 (Municipal meeting, 2 September).

new council repudiated the debt.¹ On 15 November 1884 in the Eastern Districts' Court judgement was given against the municipality for the overdraft of £14,190.6.10.²

At the municipal elections in December 1884, the erfholders elected six councillors and the water party returned eight councillors. In an attempt to break the domination of the water party, Thornton and Dall, who apart from the water question, were well thought of in the mercantile community, were nominated in wards where a majority were in favour of the waterworks; both were defeated.³ The six erfholder representatives took their seats under protest and gave notice "dat wij ons niet verantwoordelijk zal houden voor eenig som geld die de voorige Raad geleend heeft tot voorsetting van de Graaff Reinetsche waterwerken".⁴

Whereas the old council had attempted to raise £15,000 to complete the waterworks, this objective was clearly no longer practical, and the new council attempted to raise £15,000 to satisfy the judgement given in the Eastern Districts' Court. The council introduced a private Bill into parliament authorising them to

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1. GRA, 4 October 1884 (Municipal meeting, 30 September).
 2. A 25 - 1885, Appendix D, Copy of Judgement.
 3. GRA, 28 November 1884 (Notice, advertisement columns), 12 December 1884; Dall later gained a seat in a bye-election when he stood as a candidate in one of the wards where the erfholders were in the majority.
 4. BJB, vol.10: F.J. Weitzs, C.P. Liebenberg, G.F.Joubert, C.J. Smook, J.N. Rothman, S.J.B. Hugo, 5 January 1885; GRA, 16 January 1885 (Municipal meeting, 13 January).

raise a loan up to £15,000.¹ The Bill was referred to a Select Committee, where Rothman did his best to discredit the supporters of the waterworks.² In 1882 the water party had had Te Water in parliament to further their cause, and now it was Rothman who was able to present the case of the erfholders effectively in Cape Town. A petition against the Bill was sent to parliament,³ and the Select Committee's unfavourable report on the Bill resulted in its rejection.⁴

Rothman's reputation among the erfholders was high. Consequently when his high travelling expenses to Cape Town became publically known,⁵ the erfholders were willing to forgive the lapse. At a meeting in October 1885 a resolution was passed that, although the meeting did not approve of the system of paying travelling expenses, the outcry against Rothman had its roots in

de teleurstelling en ergenis van de party die hy tegengewerkt heeft in hunne poging om een Bill te passeren die een onwettige schuld van £15,000 op de schouders der Graaff Reinetsche belasting betalers wou leggen - waarom zy by dezen den hr Rothman bedankt voor zyne werkzaamheid in deze zaak, en verder haar volste vertrouwen in hem uitspreekt als haar Parlementaire verteenwoordiger.

1. The Cape of Good Hope Government Gazette, 30 June 1885.

2. A 25 - 1885.

3. A 25 - 1885, Appendix B.

4. A 25 - 1885; as Rothman was opposed to the Bill, the town council entrusted it to one of the Port Elizabeth members of parliament {GRA, 24 July 1885 (Municipal meeting, 21 July)}.

5. See pp. 541-542.

The Advertiser found it ironical that the very men who were always so loud in their demands for retrenchment should have passed a vote of confidence in Rothman, for had it not been for the water question they would have been yelling for his blood. The Graaff Reinetter expressed full confidence in Rothman, ending its eulogy of him and its criticism of his opponents with the words: "Leve Rothman, en naar den drommel met de schreeuwende Yahoos".¹

The whole object of the town council in trying to raise £15,000 was to prevent the court from levying a rate on the fixed property of the town, which rate would fall more heavily on the ratepayers than a private loan the council hoped to raise. By thwarting the Bill the erfholders were contributing towards the payment of a higher rate, but they did not see the situation in this light. They remained convinced that they would have to pay nothing and that they would succeed in making the councillors who had contracted the debt personally liable for the amount.² The minority in the council did their best to ensure that the council obtained no money, even succeeding in helping to defeat a motion for the levying of a rate of $\frac{1}{4}$ d in the £ to pay the interest on the government loan.³

Towards the end of 1885 the Deputy Sheriff of Graaff-Reinet set about making an inventory of the

1. GRA, 9 October 1885; GR, 9, 13 October 1885.

2. GRA, 23 June, 3 July 1885.

3. GRA, 28 August, 4 September 1885.

movables of the municipality. Obviously these would not go far towards liquidating the overdraft, while of the fixed property of the council, the town hall and market hall were already heavily mortgaged, and the town lands, with the exception of the farm Kruidfontein, were inalienable by law.¹ The council looked on helplessly, although not without some humour, at the situation in which it found itself.² On 26 October 1885 the movables belonging to the council were sold without reserve, realising £310.11.5. The erfholders appeared, wrote the Advertiser, "to enjoy the event as a cheap excitement; and were even jocular when a valuable machine, or some other article was knocked down for a trifle to the highest bidder". There was also some irony in the fact that the Deputy Sheriff was C.A. Nesor, one of the leaders of the water party in the council. A few men and firms themselves bought some of the articles being sold, which they then allowed the council to use. Thus some of the tools, the Scotch carts, and the furniture of the council chamber remained in the hands of the council and the Midland Fire Insurance and Trust Company stepped in and purchased the three fire engines, which were also placed in the keeping of the council.³

The Eastern Districts' Court granted the bank's application to attach the farm Kruidfontein, which had

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1. GRA, 29 September, 2 October 1885.
 2. See for example, GRA, 23 October 1885 (Municipal meeting, 22 October).
 3. GRA, 27 October 1885.

been granted to the municipality by the government in freehold in 1860.¹ After the writs of execution were levied, the debt of the council with the Cape of Good Hope Bank was reduced to £13,650; there were no other assets that could be attached, and in May 1886 the court imposed a rate of 1d in the £ on the fixed property in the town.²

This was not the only rate that was levied. Towards the end of 1885 the government, on the non-receipt of the interest on the loans advanced to the council, levied a rate of ½d in the £ on the fixed property in the town. The erfholders decided to resist payment on the grounds that the council had no right to borrow the money, but the government was in no mood for trifling, and told the magistrate to send up the names of all those who did not pay the rate by the due date so that they could be summoned in the Supreme Court. Everyone paid the rate with the exception of G.F. Joubert, who volunteered to be summoned in the hope that the question of the legality of the rate would be raised.³

If the erfholders had hoped that this case would establish whether or not the council had acted within its rights, they were disappointed, for the Chief Justice ruled that in deciding the case reference must

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1. GRA, 20 November, 4 December 1885 (Municipal meeting, 3 December).
 2. Buchanan, Cases decided in the Eastern Districts' Court, V, Cape of Good Hope Bank vs Graaff-Reinet Corporation, pp.123-125.
 3. GRA, 13, 17 November 1885.

be made only to the Local Works Loans Act, and that this Act could not be read in terms of other Acts. This Act defined local authority to include many bodies that had no borrowing powers whatsoever, and if it had to be read in connection with the regulations and laws to which they were subject, the Local Works Loans Act would be inapplicable to them, which it was not. With reference to the fifth section of the Act, that the Commissioner of Crown Lands and Public Works could "if satisfied that the loan applied for is a proper one, issue his certificate to the effect that in his opinion the requisite conditions prescribed by this Act have been complied with, and that no objection exists to the granting of such loan", it had been argued that the Commissioner had received objections. The Chief Justice, however, pointed out that the Act did not require the Commissioner to "certify that no objections have been raised, but that no objections exist; in other words, that, in his opinion, whatever objection has been raised, no valid objection exists". The government won its case,¹ and the erfholders had to concentrate on obtaining some redress by challenging the right of the council to have contracted an overdraft with the bank, and of the right of the bank to have permitted such an overdraft.

1. H. Juta, ed., Cases decided in the Supreme Court of the Cape of Good Hope, 1880-1892, IV, Colonial Government vs Joubert, pp.211-219.

This, a much more complicated case, was heard in the Eastern Districts' Court between 30 November 1886 and 12 January 1887. The court found that the water-works were indeed beneficial and dismissed the claim that they had diminished the supply. With regard to the contention of the erfholders that the water in Mackie's Pit was water that would have found its way into the old furrows, the Judge President found that the evidence had

proved conclusively that there was about a thousand square miles of ground above the town which received the water passed on to Graaff Reinet, and that there were large natural underground reservoirs both above and below the two new wells, and the water feeding them and the furrows would give a volume of running water far in excess of any water which was ever used in the old furrows, and which, if properly secured, would give the town a water supply very much in excess of what was contemplated to be secured by any of the many water schemes suggested.

Referring to the opposition of the erfholders, the Judge President said that there was "very much force in the argument that even the minority are willing to take the benefit of the works, but only object to the Council interfering with the water obtained". He found that the protest against the works in 1881

was based upon their anticipated interference with the water rights of certain erf-holders, and although during the discussion reference was made to their expense, and even to the fact that a meeting of ratepayers had not authorized the expenditure, such reference was made rather with a view of preventing the interference with water rights, than with the object of pointing out any illegality arising from excessive expenditure.

He pointed out that at the meeting of July 1883, the erfholders did not protest against expenditure, but against further expenditure, "and in fact adopted what had been done so far, by not directing the works to be stopped entirely, but only for a period of nine months, and that for the purpose of giving them a fair trial during summer weather". The court also pointed out that the erfholders were aware of the bank overdraft, but made no attempt to inform the bank that it was illegal for the council to contract an overdraft.

These were some of the points made in the court's finding that the erfholders were willing to enjoy the benefits of the scheme, and could not therefore repudiate their liability. Judgement was given in favour of the defendants, the manager of the Cape of Good Hope Bank and the town council. Justice Buchanan agreed that "the plaintiffs must be held to have waived any right which they may originally have had to object", but he also expressed the opinion that had the erfholders "come forward at the inception of the works, and claimed an interdict against their prosecution until a feasible plan had been laid before and approved of by the rate-payers, I think they would probably have done so with success".¹

This case marked the high point of feeling in, the efforts of the erfholders to repudiate the debts contracted by the majority in the town council. But

1. Buchanan, Cases decided in the Eastern Districts' Court, V, Thornton and Others vs Hugo, N.O., and the Mayor and Councillors of Graaff-Reinet, pp.280-311.

these court actions were only one aspect of the tension generated by the water question. While the situation with regard to the municipal debt was still uncertain, and the court cases had not yet settled matters, the erfholder representatives in the council made an attempt to prevent the council from obtaining any money whatsoever from the rates. In December of each year the council had to make an estimate of the money required for the next year, and assess a rate; but in order to assess a rate nine of the fourteen councillors had to be present when the rate was assessed. In December 1885 the six erfholder representatives remained away from council meetings, so that the remaining eight councillors could not levy a rate. It was however only the estimates that had to be made in December, and there was no actual time limit laid down for the assessment of a rate based on the estimates, so the six councillors continued to absent themselves from council meetings. In accordance with the municipal regulations, when these six councillors had not attended any meetings of the council for three months, their seats were declared vacant.¹

Councillors who thus forfeited their seats were prevented from seeking re-election, but the six candidates who replaced them undertook not to attend any meetings. By the time these six in turn forfeited their seats, the Act of Incorporation had been so amended that the council was to consist of only nine members. Thus only one councillor was elected to replace the six

1. *GRA*, 11, 18 December 1885, 26 February 1886
(Municipal meeting, 25 February).

who had lost their seats. But the amended Act neglected to reduce the number of councillors who had to be present when a rate was levied, which meant that for this purpose the whole council had to be present.¹ Although this arrangement may have given some temporary advantage to the erfholders who were set against the council's levying a rate, it was clearly unworkable in the long run, for if only one councillor was ill or on leave, it would be impossible to levy a rate.

This was merely one of the illogicalities and inconsistencies of the Act of 1886 which amended the Act of Incorporation of 1880. The aim of the amending Act was to end the domination of the council by the mercantile community of the east end. The system of voting by wards had given them eight of the fourteen councillors, and to the erfholders there appeared no likelihood of this balance being upset unless the system of voting by wards was abolished. But even this would not necessarily ensure the erfholders of a majority, and the amending Act denied the vote to occupiers of property valued at less than £100, which disfranchised numbers of the black tenants of hire-rooms, who had hitherto voted on the side of the mercantile community. It was the practice in Graaff-Reinet for the owners of property to pay the rates, and the clause in the amending Act barring all tenants from voting unless they also paid the rates on the property they occupied, was a further disqualification, partly aimed at the mercantile

1. GRA, 2, 9 March, 1 July, 5, 19 August 1886 (Advertisement by Returning Officer, 17 August 1886).

community, many of whom were tenants.¹ In practice however, it appears that it was mainly black voters who lost the franchise as a result of the amending Act.²

The majority in the council did all in their power to prevent the Act of Incorporation from being amended. Van Ryneveld, the mayor, refused to call a public meeting when requested to do so, apparently on the grounds that a public meeting could not decide to amend an Act of parliament. When the requisition was rephrased in the form of a wish to hold a public meeting to discuss bringing in a private Bill to amend the Act of Incorporation, he still declined to accede to the requisition.³ Rothman consulted the Attorney General who said that a court order should be obtained to force the mayor to call a meeting, but that as this would take time, possibly forcing the requisitionists to wait for another session of parliament and so enabling the mayor to defeat the object of the ratepayers, he advised the ratepayers to give notice of their intention to hold a public meeting and to point out that they had been obliged to take this course because of the attitude of Van Ryneveld.⁴

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1. Te Water Papers, vol.45: Draft letter F.K. te Water to Colonial Secretary, 25 July 1887.
 2. GRA, 8 November 1886; GR, 9 December 1886.
 3. A 13 - 1886, Report of the Select Committee on the Graaff-Reinet Municipality Act Amendment Bill; GRA, 2 March 1886 (Correspondence between mayor and certain ratepayers).
 4. A 13 - 1886, Appendix B.

Such a meeting was held and resolutions in favour of introducing a private Bill were passed.¹ But when Rothman brought the Bill before parliament, the Speaker refused to accept it, and ruled that the mayor must first be called upon by an order of the Supreme Court to show cause why he had refused to call a meeting.² Another call on the mayor was successful,³ and the amending Act, 34 of 1886, was promulgated on 6 July 1886.⁴ The power of the council to raise money was further restricted, but the main difference was that only those who owned or occupied property valued at £100 or more had the right to vote; those with property valued between £500 and £999 were to receive two votes and those with property valued at £1,000 or over, were entitled to three votes. Rothman's amending Act by abolishing the system of wards and disfranchising the tenants of hire-rooms, appeared likely to secure the object of the erfholders. But the Act which had been hastily prepared was in many ways typical of the mediocrity of Rothman himself. Although the Act made conditions for voters more stringent, it abolished the requirement that councillors should have property; the necessity for the whole council to be present when a rate was levied also seemed likely to present problems in the future.⁵ Other defects in the Act were to become apparent when the first general election under the new Act was held at the end of 1886.

1. GRA, 12 March 1886.

2. A 13 - 1886; GRA, 7 May 1886.

3. A 13 - 1886, Appendix A; GRA, 28 May 1886.

4. GRA, 5 August 1886.

5. GRA, 8 November 1886.

Early in 1886 the majority in the council had offered to apply to the Governor to have the General Municipal Act of 1882 proclaimed over the town;¹ but the Act of 1882 did not suit those who wanted the Act of 1880 changed, because its municipal voters list was the same as that for parliament, and they were bent on disfranchising voters. Before the amending Act came into force the town council petitioned the Governor to proclaim the town under the General Municipal Act. The Governor refused to grant the request because of the impending municipal elections under the new Act of 1886; the question, it was said, should stand over for the consideration of the new council.²

On 8 December 1886 the first election under the new Act took place. There was much uncertainty as to the effect of the new voting conditions, but it was clear that they would give the erfholders an advantage they had not enjoyed before. It was the most fiercely contested election in the municipal history of the town. There were a total of eighteen candidates, nine from each party. The anti-water party recorded a total of 2 552 votes, their voters having fixed property valued at £99,883.10.0. The water party recorded 2 433 votes, and the value of fixed property that this represented was £131,690.0.0. After the votes had been counted

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1. GRA, 26 March 1886 (Municipal meeting, 25 March).
 2. GRA, 8, 11 November, 6 December 1886; Act 45 of 1882 provided that a petition to have the Act proclaimed over a town should be signed by three quarters of the council; the water party met this condition as they held eight of the nine seats in the council (six of their opponents had forfeited their seats through non-attendance, and under the 1886 Act only one of these seats was filled, to bring the number of councillors to nine).

the erfholders obtained eight of the nine seats with only Nesor being elected from the water party. But Van Ryneveld as mayor was Returning Officer, and with the aid of two of the water party candidates, he scrutinised the votes and disqualified numerous voters who had not paid their rates: although most of the erfholders had made a point of paying their ordinary rates, they had not realised that they would be disqualified for failing to pay the night police rate. Other voters were disqualified on various technicalities, and the mayor's revised return gave a victory for all nine candidates of the water party.¹

A meeting with Rothman in the chair decided to seek redress at law.² The outgoing council held its last meeting on 30 December 1886,³ amid rumours that the erfholder candidates who thought they had been elected would take possession of the council chamber.⁴

The case came before the Supreme Court on 18 February 1887. Chief Justice De Villiers agreed that since Van Ryneveld had been one of the candidates in the election he had no right to act as judge in the matter of the voting papers, but he declared the election void because "proper instructions were not given

1. Juta, Cases decided in the Supreme Court, V, Rothman and Others vs Ryneveld and Others, pp.33-36; GRA, 9, 13, 16 December 1886; GR, 9 December 1886.
2. GR, 13 December 1886.
3. GRA, 3 January 1887 (Municipal meeting, 30 December 1886).
4. GRA, 6 January 1887 (Editorial and "In Medio").

to the polling-officers". This failure was by no means the error of Van Ryneveld, but rather a defect of the Act of 1886. Section nineteen of the Act of Incorporation of 1880 stated that:

No inquiry shall at any election be permitted to be made as to the right of any person to vote, except as follows: that is to say, the polling officer may, of himself, or at the request of any qualified householder, put to any voter the following questions, or either of them, and no other:-

1st. Are you the person whose name appears as A.B. on the roll of assessment of ward No. -, and in the voting paper now delivered in by you?

2nd. Has the latest municipal rate assessed upon the immovable property now occupied or owned by you been paid?

The Act of 1886 repealed this section without substituting anything in its place. Section twenty of the Act of Incorporation was however not scrapped, but was meaningless without section nineteen, prescribing as it did penalties for giving false answers to any of the questions mentioned in section nineteen of the old Act. Van Ryneveld had instructed the polling officers that they could ask no questions of the voters, which was quite logical in view of the expunging of section nineteen. But the Chief Justice, while agreeing that there was an inconsistency in the Act of 1886 and that section twenty should also have fallen away with section nineteen, felt "that the intention of the Legislature was to allow any relevant enquiries to be made, at the time the voting-paper was handed in". He declared the whole

election void, and ordered a fresh election.¹

But this was easier said than done, for the old council had retired and there was no mayor to initiate a new election.

1. Juta, Cases decided in the Supreme Court, V, Rothman and Others vs Ryneveld and Others, pp.33-36.

CHAPTER 9

UNEASY TRUCE, 1887-1910

(i) A Fresh Start to Municipal Government

The municipal election at the end of 1886 and the outcome of the lawsuits at about the same time marked the height of the ill-feeling between the east and west ends of town. An impasse had been reached. The question of who owned the water in the new aqueduct was of little importance as there was no prospect of the waterworks being completed while the town was labouring under the heavy burden of rates imposed by the government and the courts. Friction within the town council had done much to bedevil relationships in the town, and the fact that there was no council in 1887 allowed the tensions of the past few years to cool off. People of all shades of opinion were weary of the strife, and there was a growing willingness to reach some sort of compromise in the interests of the town as a whole. In many respects the relative peace that settled over municipal affairs from 1887 coincided with a period of calm in the relations between Bond and non-Bond in the colony as a whole from 1886 to 1895.

The business community petitioned the Governor to proclaim the General Municipal Act of 1882 over the town, but the petitioners were told that a town council should first be elected, and that body should then apply in the manner laid down.¹ The west end of town wanted

1. GRA, 28 July 1887.

nothing to do with the 1882 Act which allowed blacks to vote, and they still pinned their faith on the amended Act of 1886; they decided to approach the government to appoint a Returning Officer so that a new election could be held.¹

All sections of the Graaff-Reinet community believed that there was no mayor as the old council had retired without a new one taking its place. The Attorney General, however, still regarded Van Ryneveld as mayor, and saw the situation simply as one in which the mayor refused to act in arranging for an election.² Act 37 of 1887 was designed to set matters right in Graaff-Reinet, and it provided that:

In case the person directed by any Act or law to fill the office of Returning Officer at any election shall be a candidate at such election, or unwilling or unable through illness, absence, or otherwise, to act as such Returning Officer, it shall and may be lawful for the Governor, on application of not less than twenty-five of the persons qualified to vote at such election, to appoint some other person to be Returning Officer for the purposes of such election.³

When some ratepayers asked for the appointment of a Returning Officer,⁴ others objected because the

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1. GRA, 7 July 1887 (Editorial and proceedings of public meeting).
 2. GRA, 8, 15 August 1887.
 3. The Cape of Good Hope Government Gazette, 9 August 1887: Act to make better provision with regard to Returning Officers at Municipal and other elections.
 4. GRA, 18 August 1887.

Act referred not to the lack of such an officer but to the inability of an existing officer to act.¹ The government however appointed H.L. Momberg.² But only the mayor could appoint polling officers, which meant another deadlock unless contests could be avoided.³ In the interests of local peace, the Graaff Reinetter emphasized, contests were undesirable

omdat er misschien negen heeren gekozen zullen worden die niet juist vertegenwoordigend zullen zyn - te veel van een element, hetzy erfhouders of kooplieden; eene electie op het tegenwoordige tydstip zal ook meer kwaad dan goed doen, daar zy oppositie zal verwekken, en het algemeene verlangen is naar vrede en eensgezindheid, daar men ziek en moe is van de verdeeldheid die sedert jaren onder ons geheerscht heeft.

It was at the same time pointed out that a town council could possibly borrow money at more advantageous rates of interest, and so reduce the heavy rates being paid by the townsmen. This incentive made the resumption of municipal government a matter of some urgency.⁴

In December 1887 the local branch of the Afrikaaner Bond stepped in to try and organise matters amicably,⁵ and arranged with the east end of town to give the erfholders six of the nine seats in the council; the east-enders at the same time agreed not to nominate Van Rynéveld, Gregorowski or Auret, provided that the

1. GRA, 25 August, 1 September 1887.

2. GRA, 3 November 1887.

3. GRA, 30 November 1887, 16 January 1888; GR, 27 January 1888.

4. GR, 27 January 1888.

5. GRA, 8 December 1887.

erfholders agreed not to include Rothman among its six nominees. Thus were the men on both sides who had aroused the strongest passions to be kept out of the council. The east end nominated C.Wille, F.K. te Water and C.A. Nesor as its representatives. The Bond accepted this generous offer as the basis for a settlement.¹

Rothman now appeared as the main obstacle to the conclusion of the agreement. He at first insisted on approving of the nominees put forward by the east end,² and then questioned the names put forward by the ward bestuur of the local Bond on the grounds that 7 men could hardly be conversant with the wishes of 400 ratepayers.³ Rothman refused to stand down as a candidate, and the Graaff Reinetter began attacking him, blaming him for the inconsistencies of the amended Act of 1886, maintaining that he should have ensured that it had no faults.⁴ These attacks, and Rothman's replies, covered a wider range of subjects than the municipal question, but it was this local issue that was the catalyst for the exchanges.⁵

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1. GR, 27 January 1888; it was initially agreed that the erfholders would have five representatives on the council (GR, 6 January 1888).
 2. GR, 6 January 1888.
 3. GR, 13 January 1888.
 4. GR, 27 January 1888.
 5. See for example, GR, 20 January 1888, a letter from Rothman, under the headline, "Een Letterkundige Curiositeit" and GR, 31 January 1888, "Weer een bom van den heer Rothman; De heer Rothman zwaait de Sjambreel!"

When nominations closed towards the end of January 1888, both Rothman and R.Jansen, a close supporter of his, were candidates. Momberg postponed the election, believing that there could be no contest, a view that Rothman challenged, maintaining that Momberg could appoint the necessary polling officers. The local ward bestuur of the Bond persuaded Rothman to reconsider his position, and they patiently waited as Rothman delayed giving them a final decision.¹ At last Rothman's answer was received; he had after all decided to stand as a candidate. The bestuur then passed a resolution regretting that Rothman had worked against the bestuur:

zoo besluit deze vergadering een votum van wantrouwen in hem te passeeren, en zyn gedrag onder de aandacht van het Distrikts Bestuur te brengen; Dat hy verder verzocht worde zyn zetel als Bestuurslid neder te leggen; en dat intusschen het Bestuur volgens de Constitutie handelende, besluit om hem tydelyk te suspendeeren of schorsen, tot eene algemeene vergadering van den Bond kan gehouden worden.²

This was an attempt to enforce Bond discipline with regard to a purely local matter. Rothman at the same time wrote to the district bestuur complaining of his treatment at the hands of the ward bestuur, making the point that the Bond was a political institution and had no right to meddle in local affairs. The issue had all the ingredients for a major split in the Bond, and no-one could be certain of the degree of support

1. GR, 27, 31 January 1888.

2. GR, 3 February 1888.

enjoyed by Rothman among the erfholders. The district bestuur supported Rothman's view of the situation and passed a resolution regretting the difference of opinion between Rothman and the ward bestuur but declining to interfere in the matter.¹

Although this decision was in Rothman's favour, his clash with the local Bond was to rule out any possibility of his being considered as a Bond nominee in the next parliamentary elections. He had only gained a seat in parliament because of the support given him by local Bondsmen, who were also largely erfholders interested in the water question. They had remained loyal to him because of the influence he was able to exert in Cape Town to frustrate the aims of the majority of the town council. But now he was frustrating the attempts of the erfholders to obtain a town council in which they would have a majority. The situation at the market was chaotic, and the Chamber of Commerce appealed to the government to take action to regularize matters; it was believed that if the inhabitants did not themselves quickly straighten out their affairs, the government would do it for them by proclaiming the General Municipal Act of 1882.²

The water question had led to the defeat of F.K. te Water in the parliamentary elections of 1883-1884 and to the rise of Rothman; now the aftermath of that unhappy episode ended Rothman's parliamentary career. The papers in Cape Town never pretended to understand matters in Graaff-Reinet, but only to be per-

1. GRA, 9 February 1888.

2. GRA, 9 February 1888; GR, 10 February 1888.

plexed by them, and found it faintly ludicrous that the local Bond should censor its member of parliament simply because he aspired to a seat on the town council!¹

To the inhabitants of Graaff-Reinet the difficulties in the way of a contested election seemed greater than they did to the government, which ordered the Returning Officer to proceed with the election.² For the first time in the municipal history of Graaff-Reinet, east end and west end joined forces and voted for the same nine candidates, who each polled over 200 votes to the 61 and 81 votes obtained by Rothman and Jansen respectively.³ The good relations established between east and west end were reflected in the Graaff Reinetter, which extended its thanks not only to the Bond for its efforts, but also "aan de hh. Auret, Nesor, en de andere leden van onze oude (doch niet meer) oppositie voor de liberale wyze waarmede zy onze voorwaarden om eendrachtig tot welvaart van de stad te yveren hebben aangenomen".⁴ The era of bitterness appeared to be over, and as if to prove it, the erfholder majority in the council elected Nesor as mayor.⁵

The amended Act of 1886 was a clumsy instrument with which to regulate the affairs of the town, and in

1. GRA, 20 February 1888, quoting the view of the Volksbode.

2. GRA, 13 February 1888.

3. GR, 6, 16 March 1888.

4. GR, 16 March 1888.

5. GRA, 26 March 1888 (Municipal meeting).

the more cordial relations between business community and erfholder, it became possible to consider the General Municipal Act of 1882 in an atmosphere that was not so charged with mistrust and suspicion. The erfholders were persuaded that undesirable features of this Act could be amended to suit Graaff-Reinet, and by the middle of 1888 a meeting of ratepayers had expressed itself in favour of coming under the Act, and eight of the nine councillors signed the petition to the government requesting that the Act of 1882 be proclaimed over the town.¹

(ii) Water Again Intrudes

The agreement between the two groups in municipal affairs was maintained in elections between 1888 and 1892.² An element of competition again entered municipal elections as a result of renewed attempts to complete the waterworks. The east end of town continued to believe that the best way to reduce the municipal debt was to complete the waterworks, as much revenue would be obtained from water leadings.³

To avoid renewing the fight with the erfholders over the right to use water from the aqueduct, the water party in 1891 conceived of the plan of purchasing pro-

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1. GRA, 26 March 1888 (Municipal meeting), 9 April, 7, 18 June 1888 (Municipal meeting, 14 June).
 2. GRA, 15 October 1888, 5 August 1889 (Municipal meeting, 1 August), 17 July 1890, 10 August 1891, 1 August 1892 (Municipal meeting, 29 July).
 3. GRA, 2, 5 September 1889, 7 December 1891.

perty on the east side of the Dry River and using the water to which this property was entitled to provide a household supply of water. Some ninety-seven rate-payers objected that the town debt was already heavy on account of the waterworks and that this should not be added to, and the proposal to complete the waterworks was lost by five votes to four in the council. The Advertiser felt that it was time for the east end of town to again obtain a majority in the council,¹ but if this was a call to action, it failed, and there was no contest for the vacant seats in 1892.²

Under the 1882 Act three councillors retired every year. In 1893 the east end of town ignored the arrangement between the two parties which Onze Courant, not without reason, suspected was part of a plan to obtain a majority in favour of the completion of the waterworks. One of the retiring members, Neser, was re-elected but the other two, both representatives of the erfholders, were rejected amidst accusations by Onze Courant that unethical tactics had been employed, in favour of George Page and James Carter.³

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1. GRA, 7 May, 14 December 1891 (Editorial and municipal meeting, 11 December). This property had for many years been in the possession of the Schimper family, but at the time of this proposal it was owned by J.E. McCusker. Dr te Water's opposition to the sale may possibly have been connected with the increasing friction between McCusker and the Bond (see pp.578-583).
 2. GRA, 1 August 1892 (Municipal meeting, 29 July).
 3. OC, 20, 24, 31 July, 3 August 1893; GRA, 3, 14 August 1893.

But this victory did not see any progress made towards completing the waterworks, and apart from a bye-election in February 1895,¹ there was very little interest in municipal elections² until after the outbreak of the Anglo-Boer War.

In the late nineties renewed attempts were made to secure a pure supply of water for domestic use. It was argued that as more hire-rooms and houses were erected on sites where it was impossible for the water to be led away, the furrows were acting as drains, and with the railway extension to Middelburg, if Graaff-Reinet wished to expand and attract people, she would have to provide a clean supply of water. These arguments succeeded in persuading a public meeting to authorise the town council to consult a hydraulic engineer on the question.³ In June 1897, Alfred Garvey, the Government Hydraulic Engineer rejected the plan of pumping water from the aqueduct through the turbine,⁴ and the town council made a number of amateurish attempts to improve the situation, but with little success.⁵ The erfholders continued to insist that all the water above the intake of the furrows belonged to

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1. OC, 28, 31 January, 4 February 1895; GRA, 11, 18 February 1895.
 2. GRA, 5 August 1898.
 3. GRA, 23 November 1896; see also GRA, 2 November 1896 (Municipal meeting, 30 October).
 4. GRA, 28 June 1897; Garvey rejected it because the aqueduct supply was only 312 000 gallons per day, and the turbine could only pump up one sixth of the water passing through it.
 5. GRA, 7 April 1899.

the erven. On the eve of war a plan was afoot to use the water from the aqueduct for domestic purposes and to replace it with an equal quantity of water to be pumped from a well which it was intended to sink in the river bed below the intake of the furrows.¹ By 1900 this plan had been shelved.

During the Anglo-Boer War another attempt was made to complete the waterworks, but the government, mindful of the experiences twenty years earlier, informed the council, that, with regard to its plan of sinking two additional wells at Mackie's Pit, "all this is, rightly or wrongly, claimed by the erfholders, and it is necessary, before any loan can be issued, to obtain their consent to the Council's propositions in this respect".²

By 1908 people were thinking in terms of a weir across the Sundays River,³ and it was in this direction that further attempts were made to improve the water supply of Graaff-Reinet, which culminated in the Van Ryneveld's Pass dam in the twenties of the twentieth century. The wells of Mackie's Pit were covered by the dam, but in 1970 water flowing through the works constructed by Harold Henchman almost a hundred years earlier was still being used for irrigation purposes, and the water still ran in the furrows in time-honoured fashion.

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1. GRA, 25 August 1899.
 2. GRA, 12 December 1902 (Letter from Agricultural Department to the town council); see also GRA, 17 August, 1 October 1900, 10 April 1901 (Special municipal meeting, 9 April), 12 August 1901.
 3. GRA, 23 October 1908 (Special municipal meeting).

(iii) Martial Law and Municipal Representation

The Anglo-Boer War was not without its effect upon the municipal situation. Occupying a seat on the town council could be dangerous, particularly as Nesor, an Afrikaner loyalist, appeared to enjoy the role of agent provocateur. Nesor's actions had the effect of forcing the other councillors to show where their sympathies lay, an uncomfortable position with the military casting suspicious glances everywhere. Onze Courant was suspended on 4 March 1901, and its contract with the town council for printing the municipal notices in Dutch expired on 9 March. Nesor wanted the contract to be given to the Graaff Reinetter, but he was overruled by the rest of the council, and the municipal advertisements in Dutch were printed by Onze Courant on slips of paper.¹

To avoid adverse publicity from falling on councillors, council meetings of any consequence were held in camera. The discussions were secret, but such information as reached the public was often sufficient to raise suspicions. Nesor's motion on the occasion of Milner's departure for England, that they wish him "a safe and pleasant voyage to England and trust that he will soon return to South Africa in good health to resume his duties as High Commissioner, for which position he has proved himself so eminently adapted", was in

1. GRA, 29 April 1901 (Letter by Nesor, and municipal meeting, 26 April), 6 May 1901 (Municipal meeting, 3 May), 20 May 1901 (Municipal meeting, 17 May), 17 June 1901 (Municipal meeting).

effect a motion of confidence in Milner. The Bond-dominated council was placed in an awkward position, as for them to have rejected the whole motion would have raised an outcry, but the amendment which was eventually passed was equally damning, for it was virtually the same as Nesor's original motion, with the omission of the last few words regarding Milner's fitness as High Commissioner.¹

It was under the circumstances not surprising that by July 1901 three town councillors had been sent to Port Alfred as "undesirables". It was also not surprising that when the term of office of other councillors expired, they should have declined to stand. Te Water was one of those who declined to stand; three loyalists were elected unopposed and Nesor was elected mayor.² The Advertiser which had in the past been a firm supporter of Te Water, became anti-Te Water during the war.³ When Nesor expressed a cautious appreciation of Te Water's services to the town, although not agreeing with Te Water "in his political creed", the Advertiser would have none of it.⁴ In the absence of competition the anti-Bond party seemed to have lost their enthusiasm, and interest in municipal elections was at a low ebb. An attempt to form a ratepayers association failed because of lack of interest, only three people appeared at a meeting called for this purpose.⁵

1. GRA, 6 May 1901.

2. GRA, 19, 26 July, 5 August 1901 (Municipal meeting).

3. See for example, GRA, 6 May 1901.

4. GRA, 5, 7 August 1901.

5. GRA, 17 January, 12 February 1902.

(iv) The Blurring of Party Lines

After the war there were a number of interesting trends in the composition of the town council. This was partly due to a change of ownership of the Advertiser. Cormac Sandford, who had taken over the paper in July 1893 when his father Henry died, died on 16 January 1903.¹ At the end of June 1903 the Advertiser was taken over by a group of local men, who formed "The Graaff-Reinet Printing and Publishing Company, Limited". The provisional directors included A.H. Murray, Dr J.L. Rubidge, W.A. Way and the Rev J.H. Carter. A change of policy was clear in its first issue under new management, where it stated that: "We are of opinion that in local matters the town and district have suffered through the division of parties on racial and political lines. We shall advocate the return of suitable men to municipal and divisional offices irrespective of their political creed".²

The paper soon obtained a chance of trying out this new approach during the first municipal elections after the war. Onze Courant made a powerful plea to its readers to vote for "de Zuid Afrikaansche Party, door welk wy bedoelen allen die zich niet schamen Afrikaanders te noemen, en die Afrika boven elk ander land hun vaderland bescouwen en derhalve lief hebben". By winning all three seats the Afrikaner party would obtain a majority in the town council, "een toestand

1. GRA, 16 January 1903.

2. GRA, 1 July 1903.

van zaken die hun met recht toekomt, een soort van geboorte regt, dat hun met dwang ontnomen is geworden, doch dat nu terug geeischt en weder genomen kan worden".¹ The Advertiser agreed that two of the seats should go to the Bond, since it had lost two of its representatives on the council as a result of martial law. It further felt that of the retiring councillors, J.H.Crump deserved re-election. The paper disapproved of the Bond's nomination of F.K. te Water, as it felt that he was too old.² It was an interesting change that found Te Water nominated by the Bond and rejected by the opposition. However the Advertiser could not persuade the Bond to put up only two men, nor the Progressives to work for only one man. The paper's first attempt to fight municipal elections on a non-party basis had failed. "We have done our best to keep the coming contest off political party lines", the Advertiser said, "but the after swell of the war is too strong for us. There remains nothing for us but to urge upon the Municipal Electors to cast their votes on Wednesday for Messrs C.P. Liebenberg, J.H. Crump and H. Archer".³

The three Bond candidates, Liebenberg, J.F.Muller and Te Water, were returned with overwhelming majorities.⁴ Here was the first blurring of the traditional voting pattern of the past, and the large majority was secured partly because the Coloured voters forsook the Progressive cause after one of the Progressive candidates had supported the imposition of a curfew. A Coloured

1. OC, 16 July 1903.

2. GRA, 22 July 1903.

3. GRA, 31 July 1903.

4. OC, 6 August 1903; GRA, 7 August 1903.

correspondent of the Advertiser explained that in municipal matters "the coloured rate-payer is not prepared to bind himself to any party on account of party, but will look and put his trust only in such men, as he sees, are likely to see well after the well being of the community, and the general progress of their fellow coloured people in the location, and be good 'baases'".¹

Neser declined to stand for re-election as mayor, and resigned from the council because of his increasing deafness; Te Water succeeded him as mayor, and was re-elected in that capacity in 1904.² Te Water's resignation as both mayor and councillor in 1905³ brought to an end a distinguished career and a period of service on municipal board and town council going back to 1848.⁴ His role in the waterworks controversy had lost him the support of the Bond, but his attitude during the war⁵ had made him once again acceptable to the Bond, and the local bestuur of the Bond in the name of the "Afrikaander Party" expressed their "diepste spyt" on his retirement, and referred to his services, "niet alleen voor onze party in het byzonder, maar het publiek in het algemeen".⁶

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1. GRA, 31 July, 3 August 1903 ("Native Rate Payer").
 2. GRA, 10 August 1903 (Municipal meeting, 7 August), 26 August 1903 (Municipal meeting, 21 August), 15 August 1904.
 3. GRA, 3 July 1905.
 4. He was appointed Town Clerk as from 15 September 1848 (Municipal Minutes, 6 September 1848).
 5. See pp.616, 627-628.
 6. OC, 13 July 1905.

An era in the municipal affairs of Graaff-Reinet ended with the retirement of Nesor and Te Water, and a new period was ushered in when C.P. Liebenberg was elected mayor, a position he was to hold for many years. Other additions to the council in the next few years included two men destined to play a leading role in the community, A.A. Kingwill and H. Urquhart.¹

The Bond regained its majority on the council in 1903, and municipal elections in the next five years appear to have been uncontested. In the municipal elections in 1908 the Advertiser felt that the council was not a fair representation of the town, as it should ideally "consist of five on the one side and four on the other - His Worship the Mayor and four other representatives of what, for the sake of allocation, may be called the horticultural sections of the inhabitants; and four representatives of the commercial men of the town and that large body of residents who are not identified with the Bond".²

The Bond nominated the three retiring members of the council, and this was possibly the cause of the rebuff it received, since there was clearly a general feeling that a change in the composition of the council could do no harm. The Advertiser supported those it

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1. GRA, 5 December 1906, 7 August 1908: for Liebenberg's election in the next few years, see reports of municipal meetings in GRA, 31 July 1905, 13 August 1906, 12 August 1907, 10 August 1908, 9 August 1909.
 2. GRA, 8 July 1908.

considered to be the best men, Urquhart, J.J. Smit and L. Slabbert; they were not anti-Bond candidates as such, and Slabbert himself was a Bondsman. The three candidates of the Advertiser were elected,¹ a victory for the stand that the paper had taken in 1903. The paper rejoiced that the three elected had "not by any means been sent into our Municipal Parliament by English-speaking ratepayers only", that they had been elected "by the people, by men of both languages, both races, both traditions".² Onze Courant confirmed this, writing that, "Het eigenaardigste van de gansche elektie was dat byna uitsluitelyk bondsmannen werkten voor de oppositie kandidaten"; the paper felt that this was due to a desire by many people to see a change of direction in municipal affairs.³ It was not a rejection of the Bond as such, but it is nevertheless significant that Bond supporters were no longer prepared to follow blindly the recommendations of the local Bond.

Neither party any longer fought to obtain as many seats as possible on the council, and there was a willingness to allow the other party what was considered its due. But the Bond was determined to retain a majority on the council, and in 1909 when this majority seemed threatened Bond supporters rallied around to secure the election of all three Bond nominees. Onze Courant felt that to maintain a majority was vital, that "zoodra de Bond Party

1. GRA, 15 July, 7 August 1908.

2. GRA, 7 August 1908.

3. OC, 6 August 1908.

in de Municipaliteit alhier in de minderheid is, dan wordt de belasting zwaarder, en heeft die Party de meerderheid dan krygt de belasting betaler eene verlichting. Daar hebben wy persoonlyk ondervinding van gedurende de laatste zes en twintig jaar".¹

In general, compromise was the order of the day, and although party lines remained paramount, such divisions were not as rigid as they had been in the nineteenth century. It was in many ways the beginning of a new era, as seen in the change in describing the west end of town from "the more primitive inhabitants, distinguished as wine growers, or vulgus, 'back-streeters'" of 1863, to "the horticultural sections of the inhabitants" in 1908.²

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1. OC, 15 July 1909; GRA, 9, 19 July, 6 August 1909.
 2. GRH, 3 October 1863 (Meeting on rates); GRA, 8 July 1908.

B. MASTER AND SERVANT

Towards the end of the nineteenth century an increasing number of poor whites began entering service, but they were a small percentage of the total servant population, which was throughout the period of this study predominantly black. The Hottentots formed the largest group of the servant class, and with a leavening of Bushmen and slaves, were absorbed into what became known as the Coloured people. African labour was present from the earliest days of white settlement in the area, but with few exceptions the authorities set themselves against the use of African labour before 1828. After 1828 the number of Africans increased, but by 1857 their numbers were still small in comparison with the Coloureds. From 1857 the number of Africans increased considerably, and in the period 1857-1910 they comprised about 40% of the black labouring population.

Legislation between 1809 and 1819 made it relatively easy to retain labour on farms, and the labour supply after 1828 was by comparison unstable. Until 1857 there was a steady stream of complaints about a labour shortage. The Cattle Killing of 1857 changed this, because Africans came into the colony in large numbers. As the late fifties were prosperous years this additional labour force was easily absorbed. In the depression of the early sixties the scarcity of labour prior to 1857 was replaced by an overabundance of labour. Vagrancy and crime increased as people found it difficult to obtain work. The depression caused a reduction in the labouring population, and

although the district had recovered its stability by the middle sixties, the opening up of the diamond fields a few years later, continued to draw away labourers and potential labourers. Complaints of a scarcity of labour were again common.

The census figures, however, do not show a decrease in the overall number of potential labourers in the district over a long period. Shortages were often confined to certain times or localities. The tendency for more blacks to gravitate to town in the last quarter of the nineteenth century and the increasing variety of employment opportunities must also be taken into account.

Apart from these explanations of the shortage of labour, the greatest single cause for the continual complaints of a scarcity of labour was the discrepancy between the potential and the actual number of labourers. The white farmers tended to see all blacks as potential labourers, and throughout this history of the Graaff-Reinet district they were engaged in a struggle to ensure that as many of these potential labourers as possible worked on their farms. Legislation prior to 1828 gave the Hottentots little opportunity, apart from the mission stations, for a life free from service on white farms. After 1828 vagrancy was no longer a punishable offence, and unoccupied pieces of crown land all over the district gave them such freedom. But the leasing of these crown lands from 1868 forced black squatters off the land, and they sought refuge on private farms. Laws were passed to combat this, but it was difficult to stop as many farmers allowed such squatters on their

farms in return for their labour, or for a rental. From the end of the nineteenth century the municipal location became a place of residence for many who did not wish to work on farms. The farmers objected to these places of refuge on two counts: firstly, because these retreats deprived them of much needed labour, and secondly, such places allegedly harboured thieves who lived by preying upon the Boers.

One aspect of labour was to secure sufficient of it, the other was to control it. The first serious clash over control was when Maynier opened his courts to the Hottentots at the end of the eighteenth century. The Hottentot register instituted by the first British administration was continued and enlarged upon by the Batavian government who also introduced labour contracts. These steps in the direction of more control over the interior were continued by the second British administration after 1806 which instituted the circuit court to give effect to the law.

The abolition of the system of passes for colonial subjects in 1828 and the freeing of the Hottentots from the obligation of working left the colony prey to much insecurity. For many years policing of the district remained a source of much complaint, particularly in the areas furthest removed from the magisterial seat.

Although there were always complaints of labour shortages, wages on the farms did not rise rapidly. In the outlying areas of the district, wages in the 1830's were still generally in kind. Wages in town were usually higher, but the cost of living in town was also

higher. Farm labourers had the advantage of free board and lodging and grazing privileges.

Ordinance 50 of 1828 changed the labour pattern, but it did not change the opinions of the majority of the farmers. Complaints were still being made about magistrates in the 1890's, but government control was no longer weak. Whereas the frontiersmen of the eighteenth century expelled an unpopular magistrate, Graaff-Reinetters of the late nineteenth century had to content themselves with passing resolutions at meetings of the Afrikaner Bond. As the colony developed, the shortcomings of the circuit court system became more irksome. The delays in obtaining justice and the inconvenience to farmers wishing to lay charges against servants made many farmers look back wistfully to the good old days when field cornets had judicial powers.

There were many similarities between the situation in town and country, but also significant differences. Many of the differences have to do with accommodation. The blacks in town lived in hire-rooms, and large scale settlement on the town lands was prohibited by the municipal board, which refused to accede to the wishes of the blacks for a location; the blacks agitated for a location that would free them from the necessity of paying high rentals for the hire-rooms in town.

The influx of Africans into town from 1857 and the consequent fear of disease led the municipality to reconsider its attitudes, and at the end of 1858 permission was granted for the establishment of an African location. For many years the board believed that the

location was a temporary expedient, and a number of attempts were made to abolish it. These attempts were made against a background of white uncertainty as to whether they wished to have the Africans in the location or living in hire-rooms in town; the debate hinged upon differences of opinion as to whether control was easier if the blacks were congregated together in the location or spread out in town.

The municipal board had at an early date turned the location into a source of revenue by charging a rent for the site on which the inhabitant erected his hut. The municipality did not spend as much money on providing proper supervision and facilities at the location as it received in rental. While it kept rents high, it ignored most petitions for a reduction in rent or for the provision of better facilities.

From time to time the hire-rooms in town gave cause for concern on account of poor sanitation. Although little was done to improve health conditions, the whites in 1896 voted in favour of the removal of blacks to the location. Since there was no law that could force them to do so, without also forcing poor whites into the location, the town council hoped to encourage blacks to move into the location by building its own hire-rooms there. During the Anglo-Boer War all idea of encouraging people to move there from town was soon abandoned. While the municipality was trying to persuade blacks in town to move into the location, it was at the same time trying to prevent blacks from the country from moving into the location. It failed to do either. The town council charged too much for

their rooms in the location to encourage many people to move there from town, but they could not prevent large numbers of people from streaming in from the country areas. The high rentals for hut sites and prohibitions on blacks from the rural areas erecting huts simply contributed to overcrowding in the location under circumstances which made control or supervision of the inhabitants almost impossible.

The failure of the council to give effect to the regulations framed for the control of the location brought forth the criticism of neighbouring farmers, who complained about the adverse effect of the location on their labour supply and also on the security of their property.

There was some evidence of the growth of a political awareness among the blacks towards the end of the century. There was no significant black vote in parliamentary elections, but in municipal and Divisional Council elections the black vote was often decisive. The new political consciousness found expression in a growing resentment at the way they were sometimes treated by the whites. In times of depression, there had probably always been an element of competition between whites and blacks for work, but early in the twentieth century such competition appeared to be increasing. Whites were beginning to demand certain jobs by virtue of their white skins. Although there was no difference in the pay of white and black for the same job, whites were beginning to demand more money on account of their greater productivity.

CHAPTER 10

FARM LABOUR, 1786-1910

(i) The Servants

The colonists who from the beginning of the eighteenth century began moving away from the more closely settled areas of the western Cape had comparatively few slaves. What they did however carry with them into the interior were the attitudes of a slave-owning community. They had a rooted aversion to the performance of manual labour in the service of another. In the seventies of the eighteenth century it was possible for every white colonist to lead an independent existence as a farmer. The labour force of the farmers was drawn mainly from the indigenous races of the country, and in the Graaff-Reinet district on 1 December 1834 there were only 2 157 slaves, owned by a white population of 31 889.¹ A detailed return for the field cornetcy of Op Sneeuwberg for 1808 suggests that the distribution of slaves was uneven, and the 197 slaves were concentrated in the hands of the wealthiest inhabitants.²

The main labour force of the Boers as they moved into the interior was the Hottentots who did not provide any serious resistance to Boer expansion. Their loose tribal organisation began disintegrating before the trek to the interior really gained momentum; inter-

1. H.B. Thom, Die Lewe van Gert Maritz, pp.59-60.

2. G.R. 14/107.

tribal wars and conflict with the colonists, Bushmen and Xhosa, had a disastrous effect upon them; cattle barter robbed them of their herds, smallpox reduced their numbers. Many retreated as the whites advanced, only to be caught up in the advance of the Xhosa. On the few occasions when the Company was made aware that Hottentots were occupying the land requested by a colonist as a loan farm, they were prepared to uphold the rights of the Hottentots,¹ but in most cases the Hottentots were simply dispossessed.² When John Barrow travelled through the Graaff-Reinet district in 1797 there were no independent Hottentot kraals remaining,³ for without their cattle they could not lead an independent existence. From the point of view of the white farmers, once they were bereft of their cattle, the Hottentots were either useless vagrants or useful servants. There was an element of compulsion in Hottentot labour, as the only alternative to farm labour was vagrancy.

In the last thirty years of the eighteenth century there was no peace between the Bushmen in the Sneeuwberge and the Boers, and consequently little voluntary employment. Commandos operating against the Bushmen did, however, carry off Bushmen women and children, and there were charges that commandos went out expressly to capture apprentices.⁴ But even the incen-

1. Moodie III, pp.10-11.

2. Dirk Gysbert van Reenen describes the process of dispossession in Die Joernaal van Dirk Gysbert van Reenen; 1803, pp.83-87.

3. J. Barrow, Travels into the Interior of Southern Africa, I, p.93.

4. Moodie V, p.23.

tive of obtaining apprentices did not ensure a good response to the call to commando service. Colonel Collins attributed the smaller number of commandos that operated after 1798 to Macartney's proclamation forbidding the capture of women and children, but this was undoubtedly also because there was less trouble from the Bushmen.¹ Besides this, for some years after 1798 commandos continued to take prisoners.

Andries Stockenstrom who was alive to the possible dangers of Boers obtaining Bushmen children subjected commandos to greater control.² In 1817 he drew the government's attention to Boers who sometimes bartered for Bushmen children. Parents who were unable to provide for their children or who, for any other reason, did not want them exchanged them for "some trifles". Provision was made for the apprenticeship of such children after he reported that he had "strong reason to suspect" that such children were being passed on and that this was leading to an irregular trade.³ In 1822 Stockenstrom explained that the commandos took prisoners as "a matter of course or rather of charity", as in most cases, the Bushmen leaders, upon whom the band depended for its existence, had fled or been killed,

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1. S.D. Naude, ed., Kaapse Plakkaatboek, V, pp.140-143; Moodie V, p.23; P.J. van der Merwe, Die Noordwaartse Beweging van die Boere voor die Groot Trek (1770-1842), pp.87-88.
 2. See for example, 50 of 1835, pp.70, 81: A.Stockenstrom to W.W. Harding, 12 October 1822 and A.Stockenstrom to J.Baird, 7 February 1822.
 3. Records XI, pp.325-328, 365-367; in 1824 in the Cradock sub-district there were 547 adult and 388 child apprentices, and 405 adults and 437 children living with farmers, but not apprenticed (50 of 1835, pp.143-144).

so that those remaining would die unless taken by the farmers.¹

From the beginning of the nineteenth century Bushmen voluntarily hired their services to the Boers. From about 1798 friendly relations between the Boers and the Bushmen were established.² The efforts of the colonists to provide the Bushmen with food made the Bushmen dependent upon them. As the Boers advanced into Bushmanland killing and chasing away the game, an increasing number of Bushmen who found it difficult to lead an independent existence, took service with the white farmers. Servants were particularly scarce on the northern frontier and the Boers welcomed the Bushmen, who were apparently trustworthy herders.³

In places in the Sneeuwberge Bushmen were the only servants,⁴ and in 1809 Colonel Collins found a Bushman family at every farm from the Sneeuwberge northwards.⁵ At this stage the Bushmen who were not yet entirely dependent upon the Boers would disappear every year for a few months "to enjoy a ramble, and to eat locusts, wild roots, and the larvae of ants".⁶ Both

1. Records XIV, pp.384-386.
2. The change for the better in relations with the Bushmen is discussed on pp.38-43.
3. Records X, pp.94-95; H. Lichtenstein, Travels in Southern Africa in the Years 1803, 1804, 1805 and 1806, I, pp.121-122; Van der Merwe, Noordwaartse Beweging, pp.72-74, 144-145, 150-160.
4. Records X, p.95.
5. A. Stockenstrom, (ed., C.W. Hutton), The Autobiography of the Late Sir Andries Stockenstrom, Bart., I, p.39.
6. Moodie, V, p.24.

Collins and the first circuit court felt that this tendency made it impracticable to register the Bushmen in the same way as the Hottentots.¹ But this distinction between Bushmen and Hottentots soon became blurred. Stockenstrom in 1822 wrote that many captured Bushmen, being eventually "confounded with the Hottentots, often bind themselves voluntarily by contracts".²

The third indigenous labour force in the interior was the African. One of the reasons for the failure of the policy of separation inaugurated by Van Plettenberg in 1778 was the mutual advantage Boer and Xhosa enjoyed from the contacts between them. While the Boers objected to Xhosa cattle and Xhosa hunters among them, they had no such reservations concerning Xhosa traders and servants. While the Company did not countenance the employment of Xhosa, Graaff-Reinet's first landdrost had no power to enforce its demands that the Boers dismiss their Xhosa servants.³ Despite the hostilities that broke out on various occasions from 1779, the Boers continued to employ Xhosa although this was generally illegal until 1828. There was a considerable gap between theory and practice, and strange compromises were on occasion necessary. Thus while the Batavian authorities kept the ideal of separation before them,⁴ in the orders to the colonists to dismiss

1. Records VIII, p.307; Moodie V, p.24.

2. Records XIV, p.386.

3. P.J. van der Merwe, Die Trekboer in die Geskiedenis van die Kaapkolonie (1657-1842), p.298.

4. J.P. van der Merwe, Die Kaap onder die Bataafse Republiek 1803-1806, pp.228-238.

their Xhosa servants, Janssens also gave provisional permission for Xhosa who had been employed for more than a year and who wished to remain, to do so.¹ Such an exemption tended to nullify the enforcement of the proclamation.

Stockenstrom senior maintained that part of the reason for the presence of Xhosa in the Graaff-Reinet district prior to the operations to clear the Zuurveld in 1811 was that the farmers "made more and more use of the services of the passing Kaffers".² After the clearing of the Zuurveld, orders for ending all intercourse and prohibiting employment, were renewed.³ In early 1820 Xhosa again apparently entered the service of farmers along the frontier.⁴ It was only in 1828 that the position of the Xhosa was regularised. However in 1823 other Africans, the "Mantatee" refugees, victims of the Difaqane in the north, wandered into the Graaff-Reinet district in a state of near starvation; another group came into the district in 1825. Permission was given for the apprenticeship of these refugees, many of whom were distributed in Albany in accordance with the

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1. Kaapse Plakkaatboek VI, pp.30-31.
 2. Moodie V, p.60.
 3. Records VII, p.171, VIII, pp.374-375.
 4. Records XIII, pp.11-12.

wishes of Lord Charles Somerset.¹

Ordinance 49 of 1828 allowed Africans to enter the colony with passes obtained from the nearest field cornet or justice of the peace. Although Sir Lowry Cole suspended this ordinance on 25 August 1829, the suspension appears to have been of a temporary nature,² and contracts under the ordinance continued to be made until 1857.³ The African labour force prior to 1857 was not large when compared with the Coloured labouring class. In the Graaff-Reinet division in 1853, there were 768 Africans and 5 265 Coloureds.⁴

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1. Records XX, pp.405-406, XXII, pp.422-426, XXIX, pp.261-262; G.Thompson, Travels and Adventures in Southern Africa, II, p.115; Van der Merwe, Noordwaartse Beweging, pp.272-273; 50 of 1835, pp.225-227; the refugees were the survivors of the battle at Dithakong. The specific identification of the refugees is unknown, for although the word "Mantatee" is derived from MmaNthatisi, regentess of the Mokotleng group of Tlokwa during the Difaqane, her followers were not participants in the events at Dithakong; the term "Mantatee" was used in a general sense to distinguish refugees from across the Orange River from the "Kafirs" (W.F. Lye, The Difaqane: The Mfecane in the Southern Sotho area, 1822-24; L.M. Thompson, ed., African Societies in Southern Africa, p.203 n.).
 2. J.S. Marais, The Cape Coloured People 1652-1937, p. 183n.; G.M. Theal, History of South Africa, 6, pp.11-12, 155.
 3. G.R. 15/43.
 4. GRH, 30 March 1853.

The Cattle Killing episode of 1857 caused over 30 000 Africans to enter the colony.¹ The initial impact on Graaff-Reinet was minimal. Thus of some 5 000 Africans indentured in the colony between 1 January and 30 April 1857, only 27 were indentured in the Graaff-Reinet district.² Most of Graaff-Reinet's labour force had come from the north, in the form of Bechuanas who entered the colony through Colesberg,³ and even after 1857 a good deal of the labour continued to come from this direction. Of 589 Africans contracted in the division between 7 October 1864 and 31 March 1865, for example, there were 294 "Kafirs", 225 "Mantatees" and 70 "Tambookies" (Tembu).⁴ It was only after the discovery of diamonds that this supply from the north tended to dwindle.⁵ A full picture of the influx into the Graaff-Reinet district is difficult to obtain, for although there are census figures for 1855 and 1865, the Graaff-Reinet district was radically altered in the intervening period. The increase in the late fifties was to a large extent offset by a decrease in the depression of the early sixties. But even so, while the Africans in 1853 formed less than 13% of the black population of the division, in 1865 they represented over

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1. A.E. du Toit, The Cape Frontier: A Study of Native Policy with Special Reference to the Years 1847-1866, p.254; S.T. van der Horst, Native Labour in South Africa, p.28.
 2. Van der Horst, pp.28, 31.
 3. GRH, 13 December 1854.
 4. GRH, 15 October 1864, 2 September 1865.
 5. GRH, 27 September 1873.

40% of the black population, a proportion that was maintained with minor variations until 1911.¹ In 1911 there were 7 395 whites, 7 013 Coloureds and 4 988 Africans in the Graaff-Reinet district.²

The great majority of the labouring population was black. There were many whites in the town who were extremely poor, but these for the most part lived independently on their erven. In the rural areas poor whites were more prevalent in some localities than in others, and they generally found a precarious existence as bywoners, living on prickly pears, taking odd jobs to eke out a meagre living. This class was particularly on the increase in the latter part of the nineteenth century. In the early nineties, R.P. Botha stated: "My kitchen girl is a white Afrikanergirl, and so is my neighbour's". J.H. Smith, one of Graaff-Reinet's members in the Assembly, at the same time said that he employed poor whites on the same level of wages and rations as his black servants.³ Although the number of poor whites was on the increase, the long tradition that was already well established by the end of the seventeenth century, that every farmer's son could and would be an independent farmer, was too firmly rooted for a condition of landlessness to cause a sudden change in values. Smith referred to the fact that many poor whites refused to hire themselves out because "our peo-

1. G 20 - 1866; G 42 - 1876; G 6 - 1892; G 19 - 1905; U.G. 32 - 1912.

2. U.G. 32 - 1912.

3. G 3 - 1894, pp.662, 669-670.

ple are either so stupid, or so clever, that they regard work as a degradation".¹ This view of manual labour formed part of those early frontier values which enabled Graaff-Reinet frontiersmen to retain an identity separate from the great majority of the black population about them. It was the strength of such values, later reinforced by legislation, which helped perpetuate a "poor white" problem, and prevented such whites from becoming absorbed into the poor black population.

These were the main groups from which the labour supply of the district was drawn. Judging from the complaints of employers, it was a deficient supply, both from the point of view of its availability and its quality. Concerning the availability of labour, some attempt must be made to separate myth from fact, and to examine the reasons, real and apparent, for the almost constant complaints regarding the shortage of labour.

(ii) The Supply of Labour

The Hottentot legislation from 1809 to 1819 which forced all Hottentots to have a fixed place of abode and restricted their movements had the effect of forcing Hottentots into farm labour. Although the Boers complained of mission stations which absorbed part of the labour that they felt should be working on their farms, and objected to the protection given to the Hottentots, they were in other respects satisfied with the position. Ordinance 50 of 1828 swept this legislation aside, so that vagrancy was no longer a punishable offence. Hottentots were freed from the

1. G 3 - 1894, p.670.

legal obligation of working, and although Ordinance 49 of 1828, which permitted the hiring of Africans, to a certain extent offset this, there is much evidence after 1828 of a shortage of labour. Even before 1828 there are instances of Boers being left entirely without labour. An examination of a detailed return for the field cornetcy of Op Sneeuwberg for 1808 indicates that there were Boers without servants.¹ The opgaaf figures for the Graaff-Reinet district in the period 1806-1824 show that the number of Hottentot men² was roughly equal to the number of Boer men, and that the inclusion of even all the Hottentot males below the age of sixteen gave less than a ratio of two to one.³ The statement of C.H. Olivier in 1826 that most of the Boers of Graaff-Reinet tended their cattle themselves⁴ may well contain a measure of truth. Barend Vorster asked to be relieved of his duties as field cornet as he had no servants, and had to care for his livestock himself.⁵ Such accounts of Boers without servants are more numerous in the period after 1828. Cloete personally vouched for the fact that he had "known farms which had been completely abandoned, by the last remaining Hottentots having given up service, or retired to the missionary schools".⁶ M.J. Herholdt,

1. G.R. 14/107.

2. Some Bushmen were undoubtedly included in these figures.

3. Records VI, pp.75-76, 247-249, 442-443, XI, pp. 51-52, 238-239, 438-439, and also opgaaf figures in Records VII, XVI, XIX.

4. Records XXIX, p.478.

5. G.R. 14/107.

6. H. Cloete, The History of the Great Boer Trek and the Origin of the South African Republics, p.38.

who was born in the field cornetcy of Voor Sneeuwberg said that as a boy, "Het oppassen der schapen werd tusschen de broeders verdeelt, en wel zoo dat ik de eene week ter school ging en het ander week het herders ambt moest verrigten".¹ Steedman's party met a Boer family in the vicinity of the Sneeuwberge who were without servants: "the Hottentots whom they had brought up from childhood had lately left them, and they were at this time almost destitute of aid, having no means of engaging others".²

There was still an acute shortage of labour in 1840 when the civil commissioner, W.C. van Ryneveld, reported that the field cornet of Camdebo had said that he could not obtain drivers for transporting the judge on the forthcoming circuit. The civil commissioner added that "the complaint of scarcity of servants is general and I believe well founded".³ In 1857 the civil commissioner blamed the scarcity of labour for the fact that agriculture was not more extensively practised.⁴ Mechanisation was increasingly seen as the answer to this problem.⁵

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1. South African Library Manuscript Collection: Herholdt Family (Lewensgeschiedenis van M.J. Herholdt, p.2).
 2. A. Steedman, Wanderings and Adventures in the Interior of Southern Africa, I, p.135.
 3. L.G. 223, pp.96-97: W.C. van Ryneveld to H.Hudson, 4 August 1840.
 4. C.O. 5998: Cape of Good Hope Blue Book, 1856, Report of civil commissioner.
 5. C.O. 6001: Cape of Good Hope Blue Book, 1859, Report of civil commissioner.

In 1856 much of Graaff-Reinet's attention was devoted to alleviating the situation by introducing European immigrants. Although the Afrikaners of Graaff-Reinet, led by Ziervogel, were opposed to Sir George Grey's immigration scheme, they were enthusiastic about the possibility of obtaining members of the German Legion or people from St Helena. When such schemes failed to materialise, M. Noome took the initiative in a scheme to bring Dutch orphans to Graaff-Reinet.¹ At a cost of £20 per child, 12 girls, 44 boys, 2 young men and a teacher and his family arrived in Graaff-Reinet at the end of 1856.² The successful arrival of these children resulted in further efforts along these lines,³ but the future of labour in Graaff-Reinet lay not in European immigrants but in African immigrants.

The influx of Africans after the Cattle Killing of 1857 largely solved the labour problem.⁴ The fifties were the prosperous years of Graaff-Reinet's golden era, and the new labour force was easily absorbed into the expanding economy. But the depression of the early sixties radically altered the situation. The depression and accompanying drought made work scarce in both town and country. In the district sheep breeding had been so profitable, besides demanding less labour than the pursuit of agriculture, that mealies and vege-

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1. GRH, 22 December 1855 (Noome), 3, 31 May, 7 June, 12, 19 July, 2 August, 27 September 1856, 23, 30 May 1857 ("Justitia").
 2. GRH, 27 December 1856, 3 January 1857 (Editorial and "A Looker On").
 3. GRH 4 April 1857; see also C.G. Henning, A Cultural History of Graaff Reinet (1786-1886), pp.143-148.
 4. GRH, 14 August 1858 (Address to Sir George Grey).

tables were frequently not cultivated, and farmers found themselves unable to provide for their labourers.¹ Looking back on 1862 and 1863, the worst years, the Herald said "that the country was over-run with vagrants, professing to seek work, and many of them, no doubt, honestly desiring it, with but little chance of finding employment. Necessity compelled farmers to dismiss from service, servants whom they could no longer afford to feed, in a time of hardship and scarcity".²

The depression witnessed a reduction in the number of people in the district as labourers of all races went in search of work. However, by 1864 migrant labourers were again coming into the Graaff-Reinet district, and between 7 October 1864 and 31 March 1865 some 589 blacks were contracted. Since only 43 of the 589 were women, it would appear that these Africans were migrant labourers rather than settlers.³

The discovery of diamonds brought about new complaints concerning the scarcity of labour. Charles Rubidge who sold Merino breeding stock was unable to send ten rams to John Powell as he had no-one he could trust to transport them. He said that "many of the servants from this part" were leaving for the diamond fields.⁴ In 1872 it was reported that land that was normally cultivated was being left fallow. By 1873 many farmers were said to be employing their children

1. GRH, 1 October 1862.

2. GRH, 8 October 1864.

3. GRH, 2 September 1865.

4. South African Library Manuscript Collection: Charles Rubidge (Rubidge to Powell, 10 July 1870).

as they had no domestic servants. It was maintained that the diamond fields had not only drawn away black workers, but had also cut off the supply of labour from the north.¹ This shortage was apparently only of short duration as there was no significant decrease in the number of Africans between 1865 and 1875.² The diamond fields appear to have drawn their main labour force from the north, but after the opening up of the gold fields in the Transvaal, the diamond fields were possibly deprived of labour from the north, causing more labour to be drawn from the south. Thus the Rev Phillip Momoti in 1893 complained that his mission station was daily becoming poorer as people trekked to the diamond fields.³ The demand for labour on the diamond and gold fields may have led to a temporary dearth of labour, but the census figures of 1891 show that from 1875 there had been an increase in the number of blacks in the district.⁴

Although complaints concerning the shortage of labour are not in the long run borne out by the census figures, it is clear that there was a large migratory African labour force, so that at particular times there may well have been significant variations in the number of blacks seeking work. There were a number of factors

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1. GRH, 27 September 1873.
 2. Between 1865 and 1875 the number of Africans dropped from 3 493 to 3 451; the number of Coloureds at the same time increased from 5 189 to 6 133 (G 20 - 1866; G 42 - 1876).
 3. G 3 - 1894.
 4. G 42 - 1876; G 6 - 1892; a comparison is complicated by the fact that Aberdeen became a separate district in 1880, but it appears that in 1875 the number of blacks on land which was to remain part of the Graaff-Reinet district after the separation of Aberdeen was 6 812, which number had risen to 10 176 by 1891.

responsible for complaints about a scarcity of labour. The bringing of more land under cultivation put a strain on labour resources as agricultural pursuits required more labour. The growing of wheat which was confined to certain localities placed a premium on the available labour in those areas. As the nineteenth century advanced there were also increasing opportunities for other types of work, such as transport riding.¹ There was also work on the railways in the seventies when the line from Port Elizabeth to Graaff-Reinet was under construction, and again in the late nineties, when the construction of the extension to Middelburg Road gave employment to some 2 000 to 3 000 labourers.² In the latter part of the nineteenth century there was also more call for seasonal labour. A shortage of labour at critical periods such as reaping and shearing time was therefore more likely. There was also much piece work connected with the building of dams, fences and dipping tanks.³ As part of the labour force was frequently on the move, it was inevitable that the pattern of labour should have been unstable. The Boers themselves, particularly the less affluent ones, were forced by drought and other natural calamities to trek in order to find grazing and water with friends or relatives. In the early nineties, J.H. Smith charged his relatives 6d a head for grazing, and if he required additional

1. Van der Horst, pp.100-106.

2. GRA, 13 January 1898.

3. G 3 - 1894: See inter alia, pp.660-661, 667-670.

grazing land he hired it from his neighbours.¹ But for the poorer inhabitants there was no such opportunity. Droughts fell particularly heavily on the poor, especially the poor blacks, who could find water and grazing only by taking employment where such commodities were available. In times of drought it was not only the whites who trekked, but very often their servants were also on the move.

Another circumstance which tended to disturb the labour supply to the farms was that the greater opportunities for social intercourse and education caused many blacks to gravitate to the town of Graaff-Reinet.² This trend was most marked in the period after 1875, when the number of blacks increased between 1875 and 1891 from 2 296 to 3 082. This movement was accelerated during the Anglo-Boer War when the disruption of farming activities and the presence of Boer commandos in the midland districts caused many farm servants to seek refuge in town. Although for many this was only a temporary move, the number of blacks in the town continued to increase rapidly after the war.³ The Blue Book on Native Affairs for 1907 drew attention to this tendency of the blacks to migrate to the town rather than work for the farmers.⁴ This touches on what the great majority of farmers would have given as the reason for the

1. G 3 - 1894: Evidence of Smith, pp.668-670.

2. G 3 - 1894: p.666; G 7 - 1895.

3. See pp.420-421.

4. G 24 - 1908.

labour shortages of which they complained: that there was a discrepancy between the potential number of farm labourers and the actual number of such labourers. Much of the history of labour relations in the Graaff-Reinet district is the history of the attempts of the white farmers to close this gap, and of a section of the black population to find alternative means of livelihood.

(iii) Farm Labour: Actual and Potential

The majority of Boers believed that there was no real shortage of potential labourers, but rather a dearth of men actually employed. Besides the fact that the Boers had a deep-seated objection to blacks who were idle (frequently synonymous in their eyes with those who obtained a livelihood by means other than working on their farms), such idlers posed a threat to the security and property of the Boers.

The Hottentots had early lost the means of existing independently and for many of them there was no halfway house between vagrancy and farm labour. The need to provide some alternative means of existence for certain Hottentots came to the fore after the Hottentots had made common cause with the Xhosa in the war of 1799. Klaas Stuurman, the leader of one of the largest Hottentot bands, consistently cited their grievances against the Boers as justification for their actions.¹

1. Barrow I, pp.393-395; S.Bannister, Humane Policy; or Justice to the Aborigines of New Settlements, Appendix No.3, pp.cxxxviii-clxi; E.C.Godée Molsbergen, ed., Reizen in Zuid-Afrika in de Hollandse Tijd, IV, pp.147-148; J.S. Marais, Maynier and the First Boer Republic, pp.139-140.

The need to settle such Hottentots as had no desire to re-enter Boer service on land of their own was realised by the British authorities of the first occupation. Very little was however done to achieve this, and most of these Hottentots remained in the Sundays River area under Klaas Stuurman. By the middle of 1801 they were still in their woody fastnesses.¹ When the Rev Van der Kemp led some Hottentots who had gathered at Graaff-Reinet during the disturbances of 1801 to the vicinity of Algoa Bay to start a mission station early in 1802,² this step was too late to solve this problem for the British.

Governor General Janssens during his tour of the colony in 1803 found bands of Hottentots among the Xhosa. He realised that they would have to be coaxed away from the Xhosa if there was to be any hope of a lasting peace on the frontier.³ He did much to encourage Hottentots to re-enter Boer service, but at the same time appreciated the need for providing them with an alternative means of existence. Alberti said that the Hottentots "gradually" left the Xhosa and returned to work for the Boers, or went to the special sites given them.⁴ Little appears however to have been done towards the provision of such special sites. Janssens's

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1. Bannister, Appendix No.3, pp.cxxix-cxxx; Marais, Maynier, pp.117-119.
 2. Bannister, Appendix No.3, pp.cxxxvii-cxxxix; A.D. Martin, Doctor Vanderkemp, pp.114-119.
 3. BHD III, p.234.
 4. L. Alberti, Ludwig Alberti's Account of the Tribal Life and Customs of the Xhosa in 1807, pp.104-105.
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messengers failed to effect contact with the Hottentot bands of Boesak and Trompetter. Janssens did make arrangements with Klaas Stuurman for the establishment of such a site on the Gamtoos, which after the death of Klaas in November 1803 came into the hands of his brother David Stuurman. This reserve was soon broken up and Stuurman arrested after he had allowed Xhosa to visit the reserve and refused to deliver up Hottentots who had broken their contracts and sought refuge there.¹

Janssens felt that Van der Kemp could play a vital role in providing a home for Hottentots who did not wish to work for the Boers.² Janssens had found the missionary and his assistant with 200 Hottentots living in extreme poverty at Algoa Bay,³ and he arranged a site for a mission station within easy reach of Fort Frederick. This became Bethelsdorp.⁴ Although Janssens professed himself satisfied with the missionary,⁵ he later had grave doubts about the political threat posed by Van der Kemp after the renewal of war in Europe. He decided that as long as the war continued, Van der Kemp should be removed from Bethelsdorp and placed various restrictions on the missionaries.⁶

1. W.B.E. Paravicini di Capelli, Reize in de Binnenlanden van Zuid-Africa, pp.66, 68, 79-80; Van Reenen, p.129; Lichtenstein I, pp.374-375; H.B. Giliomee, Die Administrasie Tydperk van Lord Caledon 1807-1811, pp.272-273.
2. BHD III, pp.234-235.
3. Paravicini, pp.63-64; BHD III, p.161.
4. Van Reenen, pp.123-131; Paravicini, pp.95-96.
5. BHD III, p.219.
6. Kaapse Plakkaatboek VI, pp.243-247; J.P. van der Merwe, Bataafse Republiek, pp.257-258, 266-269; G.D.Scholtz, Die Ontwikkeling van die Politieke Denke van die Afrikaner, I, pp.396-397; 50 of 1835, pp.163-164; Proclamation, 20 February 1805.

Fears concerning the missionaries were perhaps natural where most of the missionaries were of the London Missionary Society. Janssens, in any event, appears to have had a low opinion of missionaries and their value to society.¹

Bethelsdorp had few friends and Van der Kemp blamed the unfavourable impression on ill-intentioned persons.² The Boers' mistrust of mission stations may be seen in Dirk Gysbert van Reenen's opinion of the Moravian institution at Baviaanskloof (Genadendal), where most visitors were greatly impressed by the industry of the Hottentots, and where the knives they made were much sought after at the Cape.³ Van Reenen said that these Hottentots had formerly contributed more to the community by working for the farmers; when they now hired themselves out to the farmers they did so at an exorbitant rate, and only worked at ploughing and harvest time, spending the rest of the year in "sloth and idleness".⁴ How much more could such criticism apply to Bethelsdorp, where the impractical Van der Kemp and his indifferent assistant made little attempt to encourage the Hottentots to acquire skills and habits of industry? The colonists' view that the station harboured vagabonds and layabouts who should be turning an

1. Paravicini, p.95 n.

2. BHD III, pp.238-239.

3. Paravicini, pp.8-9; BHD III, p.146; Lichtenstein I, pp.187-195; Augusta Uitenhage de Mist, Diary of a Journey to the Cape of Good Hope and the Interior of Africa in 1802 and 1803, pp.39-40.

4. Van Reenen, pp.21-25.

honest penny as labourers on their farms, Van der Kemp's willingness to take up the cudgels on behalf of Hottentots who complained of ill-treatment,¹ De Mist's poor impression of the settlement and Lichtenstein's unflattering description of Van der Kemp and the station² have made "Bethelsdorp" a somewhat disreputable name in South African history.

Complaints about the effect of the missionary institutions on the labour supply were not confined to Bethelsdorp, as the situation developing beyond the northern frontier came under attack on the same grounds. After Erasmus Smit³ failed to make any progress among the wild Bushmen at Tooverberg,⁴ later the site of Colesberg, he requested permission to open a station in the colony where he hoped to have more success among the domesticated Bushmen. Landdrost Stockenstrom's remarks about the undesirability of this course has an applicability wider than the specific case to which he alludes. He wrote that:

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1. See for example, BHD III, pp.225-228 and Paravicini, pp.63-64.
 2. BHD III, pp.160-161; Lichtenstein I, pp.291-296.
 3. He had been a lay assistant at Bethelsdorp, and as Gert Maritz's brother-in-law was to feature in the events of the early years of the Great Trek. His diary has recently been translated into English by W.G.A. Mears. See H.F. Schoon, ed., The Diary of Erasmus Smit, Cape Town, 1972.
 4. See G.R. 8/6: C. Bird to J.H. Fischer, 8 July 1814 and G.R. 8/7: C. Bird to A. Stockenstrom, 9 January 1818.

It is natural to foresee that the 'partly civilised Bosjesmen' ... will flock to the Establishment, if they find food there without being obliged to work for it; but it is not as natural to suppose that Mr. Smit will afford to feed these numbers long, without contributions from the farmers, who are not likely to contribute much to an Institution which deprives them of servants, without which they cannot carry on their business; consequently, in a short time these Bosjesmen being reduced to want, and disused to a restrained life, will not return into the service of the farmers; but most likely leave Mr. Smit ... resort to their former vagabond life, and rob for subsistence.¹

Smit remained at Tooverberg. In 1816 one of his colleagues opened a station further north at Hephzebah. After constant complaints from the farmers that all their Bushmen servants were being drawn to the station, Smit was ordered to withdraw.²

Of more significance, and not so easily disposed of, was the problem raised by the collection of a large number of Coloureds at the mission station at Klaarwater, later Griquatown. This presented a problem to the farmers as Coloureds in the Nieuweveld and Coup of Tulbagh and Graaff-Reinet began joining the troublesome Griquas across the Orange River.³ Furthermore, Griquas who came into the colony to trade returned home accompanied by slaves and Hottentots from the colony.⁴

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1. H.A. Reyburn, "Studies in Cape Frontier History", IV, Tooverberg, pp.205-206; see also Van der Merwe, Noordwaartse Beweging, pp.245-246, 254-255.
 2. Reyburn IV, pp.206-207.
 3. See pp.82-84.
 4. H.C.V. Leibbrandt, The rebellion of 1815, generally known as Slachters Nek, pp.847-848.

Although the Boers objected to such places of refuge as harbouring vagabonds and absorbing potential labourers, legislation between 1809 and the passage of Ordinance 50 of 1828 kept the majority of Hottentots in-service. The problem of labour was physical, in the attempt to secure adequate quantities of it, and spiritual as it affected the place of the labourers in society. When Ordinance 50 swept aside the legislation that had forced Hottentots to have a fixed place of abode so that after 1828 vagrancy was no longer a punishable offence, and all blacks, except slaves, were made equal with whites before the law, the farmers were affected with regard to both these aspects of labour. It also made them insecure as they became prey to continual petty stock theft. Ordinance 49 of 1828, which permitted the hiring of Africans, while easing the labour shortage, also added to the problem of vagrancy. The slaves were emancipated on 1 December 1834. After a four year apprenticeship with their former owners, they also became free persons of colour. While there can be little doubt that the great majority of Hottentots and ex-slaves continued working, unoccupied areas of crown land which dotted the district became a new source of refuge from farm labour. The problem was aggravated by the influx of Xhosa after 1857.

Some areas were more troubled by squatters than others. The evil increased further away from the magistracy in the outlying parts of the division, where there were large tracts of unoccupied crown land and where supervision was difficult. The distance from the magistracy tended to make farmers put up with petty stock

theft rather than inconvenience themselves in order to report the disappearance of a sheep. Squatting was particularly bad in the field cornetcy of Camdeboo, in the area between Aberdeen and the Kariega River, around Narrogas Poort. In August 1852 white farmers complained of black squatters, "some with and others without ostensible means of existence who live in idleness".¹ In 1860 the civil commissioner referred to the squatters in this area as "Hottentots, and some Kafirs, who, possessing a few head of cattle of their own, manage to eke out a lazy and unprofitable existence by either thieving or destroying the game".² This area was close to the later boundary between Uitenhage and Graaff-Reinet, and when crown land in Uitenhage was leased and squatters driven off, they sought refuge across the divisional boundary in Graaff-Reinet.³ It was only after this land was leased in 1874 that the trouble ended.⁴

Running through the complaints concerning black squatters is the statement that they lived "in idleness", and eked "out a lazy and unprofitable existence". Here was the traditional complaint of those who saw potential labourers in all blacks and felt that they would be better employed on the farms. Squatters were also a source of annoyance to farmers who wished to use crown

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1. C.O. 2881: Eight farmers to civil commissioner (George Dyason), 1 August 1852.
 2. C.O. 6002: Cape of Good Hope Blue Book, 1860, Report of civil commissioner; See also GRH, 27 January 1864.
 3. GRH, 28 January 1871 (D.C. meeting, 27 January).
 4. GRH, 13 May 1874.

land bordering on their farms as additional grazing land. One of the objections of the Camdeboo farmers in 1852 to squatters was that the latter pleaded "an equal right with other Inhabitants who occasionally migrate there with their Flocks and herds".¹

By no means all the squatters on crown lands were blacks. The civil commissioner in his annual report in the Blue Book for 1857 described them as "both white and colored, who are possessed of more or less stock, and who have been living in that state for a very long time".² Dependent upon pools of rainwater for their stock, they wandered about in search of water and pasturage. They were particularly hard hit by droughts as most of this waste land could not support stock throughout the year without dams. Squatters with no rights to the land did not build dams, but there is reason to believe that many squatters wished to obtain titles to the land they occupied. There were also men of means among these squatters, and the civil commissioner, bothered about the loss of revenue which such land represented, wrote that there were instances of white squatters "who never owned an inch of land of their own, having become rich by depasturing their stock upon Crown lands".³

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1. C.O. 2881: Eight farmers to civil commissioner, 1 August 1852; see also GRH, 30 July 1864.
 2. C.O. 5999: Cape of Good Hope Blue Book, 1857, pp.488-489; see also C.O. 6000: Cape of Good Hope Blue Book, 1858, p. JJ 7 (p.510).
 3. Cape of Good Hope Blue Book, 1868, Report of civil commissioner, pp. JJ 38-39.

It was difficult to remove such squatters from crown land, even though many squatted with no "visible means of subsistence; and, therefore, with the moral certainty that they must steal".¹ With reference to the complaints of the Camdebo farmers in 1852, Richard Southey, the Colonial Secretary, wrote that "a general ejection of the alleged squatters" was inadvisable, and he suggested that the complainants should rather "seek redress at law" for individual cases of trespass or theft.²

The only way in which to stamp out such squatting seemed to be the disposal of the crown lands in question. The government appeared uncertain about the removal of black squatters, for to do this, Richard Southey told Anthony Berrangé, "is to demand the abandonment by the native race of the mode of existence to which they have been accustomed for centuries; and to set before them the fact which has never yet been practically brought home to them, that no land belongs to them".³ As early as 1857 the civil commissioner was looking forward to the sale of crown land,⁴ but it was only in 1866 that the government sold 20 291 morgen of land in Graaff-Reinet.⁵ Act 19 of 1864 provided for

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1. Cape of Good Hope Blue Book, 1865, Report of civil commissioner, p. JJ 50.
 2. G.R. 8/2: Richard Southey to civil commissioner, 23 September 1852.
 3. GRH, 7 December 1867 (R. Southey to A. Berrangé, 26 November 1867).
 4. C.O. 5999: Cape of Good Hope Blue Book, 1857, pp.488-489.
 5. GRH, 15 June 1867; see also C 7 - 1873.

the leasing of crown lands, but here too the government dallied,¹ and it was only in July 1868 that the first lots leased in Graaff-Reinet under this Act were disposed of when four pieces were leased for a total rental of £136.17.8. One of these pieces, some 4 769 morgen in extent, was obtained by a young Fingo at an annual rental of £43.10.5: he at once paid two years rental in cash.²

Between 1868 and 1871 some 353 657 morgen of crown land in Graaff-Reinet was leased for a total rental of £2,758.³ By the early seventies there was virtually no unoccupied crown land left in the division. Very few of the lessees appear to have been black. The leasing of crown land in the Graaff-Reinet district deprived squatters of land on which to live. Some squatters hired farms from white farmers and on occasions sub-let it themselves.⁴ Some farmers in order to have a supply of cheap labour at hand permitted squatting on their farms, which squatters were blamed for the stock losses of neighbouring farmers. The Native Location Act, 6 of 1876, amended by Act 8 of 1878 restricted the number of huts and people allowed on farms if they were not in the continuous employ of the owner. But the practice was difficult to stamp out, partly because the farmers themselves were divided into two classes, "those

1. GRH, 20 January, 10 February 1866.

2. GRH, 29 July, 1 August 1868.

3. C 1 - 1874.

4. For one such case, see GRH, 5 February 1870.

who make money by squatters and those who do not and say they are victimized by the squatters - kept by neighbours for their neighbours' profit".¹

Little was apparently done in Graaff-Reinet to enforce these laws, and at the end of September 1882, Hougham Hudson, the resident magistrate, issued a circular to all field cornets and assistant field cornets to the effect that he had

received representations from some of the Fieldcornets and also from farmers in the division that native foreigners and others are allowed to settle on certain farms in the division, paying rent for grazing their cattle and cultivating pieces of ground on the half of the returns; and in consequence of this illegal proceeding the neighbours are victimized by the loss of stock, and c., most of these places becoming the abode of squatters and the receptacles of stolen property, it is absolutely necessary that this evil should be put a stop to at once.²

By this time it was no longer a problem of the impotency of the authorities to deal with vagrancy, as the Vagrancy Act of 1879 made this punishable, but rather a question of trying to detect persons who were liable to prosecution under this Act. Further Acts aimed at reducing the number of squatters and forcing them into service continued to be passed throughout the period of this study. Act 37 of 1884 for example, exempted from tax only those blacks who were in the full-time employment

1. GRA, 5 October 1882.

2. GRA, 5 October 1882 (Advertisement columns); G 8 - 1883, pp.77-78. The quotation is taken from the newspaper.

of the owner of the farm. This was designed to encourage more squatters to seek work.¹

The town of Graaff-Reinet also provided an alternative means of existence for blacks. In the late eighteenth century Maynier had been accused of enticing Hottentots to the town, and in the disturbances of 1801 many Hottentots sought refuge there. Complaints against the municipal location were not confined to farmers, nor to the period after the Anglo-Boer War,² The large number of blacks who sought refuge in town during the war made the location in the first decade of the twentieth century a major source of concern to farmers and the Zwart Ruggens Farmers' Association took the lead in condemning the location.³ Not only the location was blamed for the labour position. In 1908 farmers objected to the Ladies Benevolent Society for providing food for Coloureds, as this made it more difficult for them to obtain labour.⁴

In the early nineteenth century the missionary institutions, particularly Bethelsdorp, were regarded as depriving the farmers of much needed labour. In the last decades of the nineteenth century the private locations were regarded as detrimental to the labour supply, and at the beginning of the twentieth century

1. Van der Horst, pp.113-116, 148, 291.

2. See for example the complaint of twenty-one farmers in 1883 (BJB, vol.9: J.H. Booysen and twenty others to the town council, October 1883; GRA, 27 October, 20 November 1883).

3. See Chapter 11.

4. GRA, 13 October 1908.

the municipal location came in for a share of the blame. In the intervening period the Boer had not changed his opinion that it was offensive for potential labourers to find other means of subsistence. Blacks who lived in "sloth and idleness" at missionary institutions, on private locations or in the municipal location, were thus regarded with the deepest suspicion, and places of refuge from farm labour were regarded as the breeding places of vice.

(iv) Master, Servant, and the Law

The white farmers wanted not only plenty of labour but the right to control it. At the same time, they wished to be free from government control but empowered by law to look after their own security. This was too much to ask of any government, and once the Dutch East India Company had decided to exert authority, however weak, on the frontier, the frontiersmen found themselves increasingly dissatisfied as governmental control was slowly but inexorably extended.

The Company's failure to maintain its own border and policy on the eastern frontier caused much dissatisfaction among the frontiersmen, particularly as Maynier was the active protagonist of the policy. However, the ideological clash between Maynier and the colonists was most apparent in the Hottentot policy followed by him. The fact that Maynier opened his court to the Hottentots and was prepared to receive their complaints was anathema to the Boers who deeply resented what they considered to be interference in their relationships with their servants. As Maynier put it, they objected to being

"hindered in their arbitrary manner of dealing with the poor Hottentots".¹ The landdrost conducted much correspondence regarding the ill-treatment of servants, withholding of wives, children, property and wages and refusal to release servants when their period of service expired.² If the government was to make its influence felt on the frontier, this was clearly one of the fields in which it would have to assume control.

The rising of the Hottentots in 1799 gave added strength to the government's conviction that relations between the Hottentots and their Boer masters should come under closer scrutiny and control. Proceeding on the assumption that the harsh treatment of the Hottentots had caused them to rise,³ Maynier persuaded the Hottentots "that Government did indeed conceive they were not well treated, and that it was really the intention of Government that their condition with the Boers should be altered". The outcome of the peace concluded by Maynier was the provision for a register of Hottentots employed, containing their terms of service, wages, names of the Hottentot and the master, which register was to be kept at the drostdy. Maynier said he persuaded "a considerable number" of Hottentots to resume service with the Boers,⁴ and the register con-

1. Marais, Maynier, pp.70-72.

2. Marais, Maynier, pp.71-72.

3. This was not only Maynier's opinion. Dundas obviously shared it, and it was Yonge's official view (Records III, p.37)..

4. Records IV, pp.292-294.

tains some 400 agreements made between 24 November 1799 and 3 January 1801.¹

When the Boers again assembled in arms to oppose Maynier in 1801, they demanded that the registration of contracts should be in the hands of the field cornets and commandants. Their objection to equal treatment for Hottentots may be seen in the complaint made against the Rev Van der Kemp, that he had preached to the Hottentots in the Graaff-Reinet church and that they were instructed in reading and writing and religion, and so made equal with Christians.²

The situation was still uneasy when the Batavian government took over the Cape. When Janssens toured the eastern and north-eastern parts of the colony in 1803 the Xhosa were still in the colony with bands of Hottentots among them. Everywhere he went, Janssens, and De Mist after him, heard complaints from the Hottentots. Janssens wrote that the complaints were not about beatings or "naaktheijd, dit schijnd reeds beneden het klaagpunt te zijn", but about the withholding of wives, children, wages, stock and property, so that the number of such complaints would fill a book.³

From the Boer point of view, the advent of the Batavian administration saw little improvement as far as Hottentot policy was concerned, and there was much con-

1. G.R. 15/43.

2. Martin, pp.102-104; Marais, Maynier, pp.126-127.

3. Paravicini, pp. 18, 33-34, 64; Molsbergen IV, p.115; BHD III, pp.218-219, 225-228; Lichtenstein I, p.272; Kaapse Plakkaatboek VI, p.24.

tinuity between the British and Batavian administrations. In the compilation of his Memorandum, De Mist relied largely upon Barrow,¹ and prominence has been given to the fact that he revised his opinion once he had seen conditions for himself.² Janssens's party had a copy of Barrow's work with them, which they checked against their own experiences.³ It is true that the party made their own independent assessment which on occasion differed from that of Barrow,⁴ but even after Janssens had seen the devastated farms along the eastern frontier, he felt able to inform De Mist that the stories of cruelties against the Hottentots were true and that he had declared that if it continued, the hangman would avenge the victims.⁵

The Batavian authorities were to continue the policy of protecting the Hottentots in court which had been such a prominent source of dissatisfaction with Maynier, and to elaborate upon the Hottentot register that the British had elevated to an important point of policy.

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1. J.P. van der Merwe, Bataafse Republiek, pp.225-227.
 2. Scholtz, I., p.391; J.P. van der Merwe, Bataafse Republiek, p.251; J.A. de Mist, The Memorandum of Commissary J.A. de Mist, pp. vi-vii, 112 n.; see also Marais, Maynier, p. 75 n.
 3. BHD III, pp.212-214, 250; Paravicini, pp.28-29; De Mist later did the same (BHD III, p.151). The second part of Barrow's work only appeared in 1804, so Janssens could only have had the first part with him (Paravicini, p. 28 n.).
 4. Paravicini, p.29; BHD III, p.211.
 5. BHD III, p.218.

The Batavian government laid great stress on labour contracts, which were to be "written and worded equitably and unambiguously", while the Hottentots were to be free to lodge complaints. In respect of any Hottentot going into service for longer than three months, contracts on a prescribed form would have to be made out in triplicate and signed in the presence of an official, each of the contracting parties would retain one copy, while the third would be lodged at the drostdy.¹

Janssens wrote of the Graaff-Reineters that although they said nothing, he obtained the impression that they had hoped they would be left free to deal with the Hottentots.² Earlier experience of the dislike of the frontiersmen for what they considered to be interference in the relations between them and their servants, suggests that Janssens was not wrong in his surmise. If the objections which were raised when Van der Kemp preached to the Hottentots in the church are considered, it can hardly be thought that the Boers approved of De Mist's instructions that the church be opened to all, Christian or heathen, black or white, free or in bondage.³ If their various rulers were products of the Enlightenment, the Boers of Graaff-Reinet must by this time have been uncomfortably aware of the gulf between themselves and those in authority, whether British or Dutch.

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1. Kaapse Plakkaatboek VI, pp.24-25; Van Reenen, pp.41-43; J.P. van der Merwe, Bataafse Republiek, pp.248-249.
 2. BHD III, p.243.
 3. J.P. van der Merwe, Bataafse Republiek, pp.203-204.

The provision of the Hottentot register and contracts were steps in the direction of more government control over its subjects, and as such, apart from the fact that the very existence of registers and contracts was anathema to the Boers, was likely to meet with opposition. Although there had been some division of opinion over the need for "a more strict administration of public Justice"¹ during the first British occupation of the Cape, both Sir George Yonge and Dundas had seen the need to decrease the size of the district. De Mist also saw this as a necessary step, and the Batavian government carried it into effect with the establishment of the new district of Uitenhage in 1804. The Batavian government also gave attention to the speeding up of communications between Cape Town and the interior, as well as within the districts themselves.

Sir George Yonge had also envisaged an annual circuit to "correct Abuses" and report on conditions in the outlying areas.² Janssens, who thought along the same lines, envisaged a commissioner who would make an annual tour to hear complaints, settle differences, see that laws were respected, check that officials discharged their duties effectively, and visit the Xhosa chiefs.³ The annual circuit introduced by the second British administration in 1811⁴ did not follow exactly

1. See pp.69-70.

2. Records III, pp.90-91.

3. BHD III, p.222.

4. The Cape Town Gazette, and African Advertiser, 18 May 1811.

the pattern outlined by the two preceding administrations, but it had the same aim, to bring Cape Town into closer contact with the interior, and to secure a more effective enforcement of the law. There was much continuity between the various administrations in this period, and also with the administration of the Dutch East India Company, where Maynier had been the forerunner of things to come.

Maynier had worked for the better treatment of Hottentots in service and had opened his courts to afford them protection in their work. During the first British administration he was enabled to further his ideals with the introduction of a Hottentot register. The Batavian administration had enlarged upon this base by the introduction of contracts. The second British administration after 1806 continued this policy. The detailed provisions of the Hottentot proclamation of 1809, which decreed that every Hottentot should have a fixed place of abode,¹ indicate a logical development from earlier Hottentot laws, in that many of the defects of earlier legislation were remedied. This applied particularly to provisions prohibiting the detention of a Hottentot, his family or property, after the expiration of his contract.²

The law of 1809 was a continuation of the policy of earlier administrations, but the novelty lay in the steady enforcement of that law. The reaction of the Boers was not so much to the law, which had the effect

1. This proclamation is reproduced in 50 of 1835, pp. 164-166.

2. Records VII, pp.211-216.

of forcing labour on to their farms, as to its practical enforcement and the fact that the missionaries, whose leadership of the Hottentots seemed to the Boers to be in so many ways a threat to their very way of life, should have appeared to play a prominent role in the enforcement of that law. Reyburn came to much the same conclusion, that "what was new was the Government's subsequent action by which the law was put into force and not allowed to remain a mere pious expression of opinion. It was this that gave offence and lay at the back of the charges of oppression and tyranny levelled against the Government".¹ In May 1811 an annual circuit of two judges was instituted to enforce the law. They were to report on conditions in the interior, give special attention to the treatment of the coloured races, and try all cases beyond the jurisdiction of the court of landdrost and heemraden, with the exception that they could not pass the death penalty.²

Certain historians today still see in the so-called Black Circuit of 1812 the subordination of Boer interests to British philanthropy,³ whereas it was in reality the logical outcome of a policy Maynier had inaugurated before 1795. Whereas Maynier had lacked the backing of his government, the colonial government had

1. Reyburn I, Land, Labour and Law, p.52.

2. Records XXIV, pp.451-463.

3. C.R. Kotzé, Reaksie van die Afrikaners op die Owerheidsbeleid teenoor hulle, 1806-1828, p.166.

by 1812 so far succeeded in its attempts to bring regularity to the interior that it was able to enforce attendance at its courts, always a crucial test of government control. To single out the circuit of 1812 as a symbol of oppression, and enshrine it in history as the Black Circuit tends to distort the facts, for it ignores that in a quieter and less sensational manner, the first circuit of 1811 gave attention to the treatment of Hottentots, and that the landdrost and heemraden also did so in the course of their duties. Later circuits also tried cases brought by Hottentots against their masters. The enforcement of this law, as with other laws, was a continuing process, not something which was limited to 1812.

There are a number of reasons for the circuit of 1812 making a greater impact than other circuits. In 1811 the cases were spread over a number of drostdies so that not many were dealt with at any one place. In 1812 all the cases were heard at Uitenhage, where the criminal roll was longer. It is probably true that under the influence of the missionaries the Hottentots became more accustomed to appealing to the law courts, but the role of the missionaries in 1811 was not immediately apparent. In 1812, however, many of the charges were a direct result of the activities of the missionaries, which was of itself sufficient to ensure greater publicity and cause the Boers to view the proceedings with deep suspicion.¹

1. Reyburn I, Land, Labour and Law, pp.53-54.

Much has been made of the strictures of the judges concerning the Bethelsdorp missionaries, who they found had not made proper investigations of the charges,¹ and stress has been laid on the inconvenience caused by the Boers having to appear before the court at an awkward time to answer frivolous charges. It has been said that this circuit "engendered a bitter feeling of hostility towards the administration of justice",² that the Boers' "good name had been besmirched".³ All this explains the bitter feelings aroused by this circuit, but it should not be allowed to obscure the fact that this circuit, like others before and after 1812, found evidence of individual cases of harsh treatment and failure to abide by the law. As such the circuit court needs no apologist. To say that: "The trials proved that there was little justification for the government's suspicions concerning the Dutch colonists' treatment of non-Whites"⁴ is besides the point. What was relevant was that the court found breaches of the law of the land.⁵

1. Records IX, pp.68-69.

2. Cloete, p.15.

3. C.F.J. Muller, ed., Five Hundred Years; A History of South Africa, Chapter VIII, by C.R. Kotzé, p.112.

4. Muller, Five Hundred Years, Chapter VIII, by C.R. Kotzé, p.112.

5. Records IX, pp.54-128; S.W.J. Fryer, Die Instelling van die Rondgaande Hof (Kommissie van Regspleging) (1795-1820), p.185.

In the events which took place along the eastern frontier of Graaff-Reinet in 1815, known as the Slagtersnek rebellion, there were a number of reasons for the dissatisfaction which led to the rebellion. The underlying cause, however, was the same as it had been in 1795, when the Boers claimed that heathens were preferred to Christians, that the Hottentots were protected "whereby the inhabitants, who had to bear intolerable burdens, were oppressed and persecuted".¹

One of the main criticisms of the legislation after 1809 was that it immobilised Hottentot labour. The law sometimes did this directly, as with the proclamation of 1812 which allowed for the apprenticeship of Hottentot children until they were eighteen years of age if they had been "born in the service of the farmers" and maintained by them until the age of eight.² In the Graaff-Reinet district however, very few Hottentots were apprenticed in this way, as Stockenstrom was against it. Children were apprenticed either at the request of their parents, or if they were without effective guardians.³ The main reason for the immobilisation of Hottentot labour was the administration of the pass system by field cornets, themselves farmers. There can be little doubt that the pass provisions of the 1809 law, insofar as they restricted the movement of the Hottentots, were effectively enforced, as this was in the interests of the farmer field cornets.

1. Quoted by Reyburn III, Stockenstrom and Slagters Nek, p.154; see also Reyburn III, p.149 and Leibbrandt, SlachtersNek, p.226 for the expression of similar sentiments.

2. Records VIII, pp.385-387.

3. Records XXXIV, pp.429-430.

While these farmer field cornets administered laws having to do with the relationship between Hottentots and other farmers, an impartial interpretation of those laws could hardly be expected. Misgivings about the field cornet's dominant role in this regard were perhaps natural, and Ordinance 50 of 1828 took the administration of labour contracts out of their hands.¹ The heemraden came under fire for the same reason. The Commissioners of Enquiry had expressed themselves strongly against these officials "whose views of impartiality or of justice in cases in which the coloured classes were engaged before them, were much perverted by the prejudices and habits that have become almost hereditary amongst them".² From the beginning of 1828 the office of heemraden was abolished and the landdrost too made way for the civil commissioner and resident magistrate, which functions became unified in one individual.

The removal of restraint upon the Coloureds in 1828 was not compensated for by any provision for dealing with the new situation. The labour position entered a critical period in these years, and contributed materially to the dissatisfaction and despair that gave rise to the Great Trek. This is particularly true of the Graaff-Reinet district where the Voortrekkers from this part of the Cape had not been faced with the traumatic experiences of their fellows on the eastern frontier.

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1. For the detailed provisions of this Ordinance, see 50 of 1835, pp.169-173.
 2. Records XXVII, p.377.

The restrictions placed on the authority of the Boers over their slaves gave rise to what was almost a traditional objection on the part of the Boers to interference in relations between them and those under them. As the Boers had no voice in the government of their own affairs, the suggestion from Graaff-Reinet for the progressive abolition of the institution of slavery by the freeing of female slaves, was brushed aside.¹ The rising tide of humanitarianism moved inexorably towards its highwater mark of 1 December 1834. In the Graaff-Reinet district on 1 December 1834 there were 2 157 slaves.² There are indications that these were concentrated in the hands of a few of the wealthiest inhabitants,³ and their losses must have been heavy. Gert Maritz, for example, had twelve slaves, valued by the official valuator at £1,540. According to the compensation formula this represented a loss of £908.⁴ But the main cause of dissatisfaction was that the slaves would be placed on the same basis of equality as the Hottentots. Here again was the old cry, uttered against Maynier in 1795, and repeated often in various forms in the years that followed, that the heathens were preferred to Christians.

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1. Thom, Gert Maritz, pp.63-64; Stockenstrom I, pp.258-266; Bourke, however, had been optimistic that "it is possible that the foundation for the final extinction of Slavery in this Colony may be laid in Graaff Reinet" (Records XXVIII, pp.271-272).
 2. Thom, Gert Maritz, pp.58-60.
 3. See for example the return for the field cornetcy of Op Sneeuwberg for 1808 (G.R. 14/107).
 4. Thom, Gert Maritz, pp.60-61, 68.

Although master and servant legislation continued to be passed after 1828, never again did colonial subjects have to carry passes. Passes did however continue to play a role in labour legislation, as with the passes authorising Xhosa to come into the colony after Ordinance 49 of 1828. The influx of Africans after 1857, saw the passage of a number of Acts regulating terms of service and prescribing harsher penalties for entry into the colony without a pass. According to Act 27 of 1857 Native Foreigners¹ had to be hired under a written contract for a year. This law was largely ignored in Graaff-Reinet, and the Herald towards the end of 1857 said that the magistrate would "fill the public purse and swamp the prison, were he to proceed upon the letter of the law".²

With the passage of time the pattern of crime underwent a few changes, as also did the attempts to combat it. The Cattle Removal Act of 1870 prohibited the moving of cattle for more than ten miles without a certificate from a magistrate, a justice of the peace, a field cornet or landholder. This Act, which was permissive, was brought into operation in the Graaff-Reinet district on 1 October 1870.³ The new difficulties in the way of thieves moving stock, the increasing

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1. This did not include the Fingoes, who had been regarded as colonial subjects since their settlement around Peddie after the Sixth Frontier War.
 2. GRH, 10 October 1857.
 3. GRH, 30 July 1870 (D.C. meeting, 29 July), 6, 27 August 1870 (D.C. meeting, 26 August), 24 September 1870, 12 December 1877 (Advertisement columns).

popularity of the angora, and the improvement in the flocks of sheep led to an increase in the incidence of the theft of sheep for their skins, which could readily be disposed of to shopkeepers or country canteens. In Graaff-Reinet in 1870, the skin of a half-bred Angora was worth 3/- to 4/- if it had one and a half to two pounds of hair on it.¹ The increasing popularity of the ostrich led to the theft of feathers, which was extremely difficult to combat as feathers were not readily identifiable.²

In the prevention and detection of crime the question of a police force assumed significant proportions. Where there was no police force in the colony, the passes which the Hottentots had been obliged to carry between 1809 and 1828 "enabled Fieldcornets and even ordinary farmers to act as policemen. When passes were abolished the Colony's rural police system was practically destroyed".³ Police powers were taken away from the cornets, but no police force was substituted. In 1867 Richard Southey in a letter to Anthony Berrangé about the poor policing of the district wrote: "Many years must, in the Governor's opinion, elapse, and the social condition of the colony must be greatly changed, before the Government can be in a position to give all the protection afforded by high civilization, to the inhabitants of the remote portions of this thinly-populated and extensive colony".⁴

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1. GRH, 30 July 1870; see also GRH, 30 September 1871.
 2. For further details and attempts to combat this, see GRA, 23, 27 April, 14 May, 1 June (Farmers' Association meeting), 4 June 1878, 10 January 1884.
 3. Marais, Cape Coloured People, p. 181 n.
 4. GRH, 7 December 1867 (R.Southey to A.Berrangé, 26 November).

This letter was written in connection with the first rural police force which had been disbanded mainly on account of its ineffectiveness. The influx of Xhosa into the colony after 1857 had focussed attention on the need for a rural police force.¹ As a temporary measure Sir George Grey had stationed parties of the Cape Corps at Cradock, Somerset and Graaff-Reinet, the presence of which in Graaff-Reinet had "a very beneficial effect".² In November 1858 the government decided to station six mounted policemen and a sergeant at Graaff-Reinet.³ But this District Mounted Police was not a success, for although they were appointed particularly for the farming population, they spent most of their time in town, and the farmers seldom saw them unless in response to a specific complaint of stock loss.⁴ This force was discontinued as from the beginning of 1867 because, in the words of Southey, an impression "had been gaining strength for some years, that this description of police, while very costly, was not as useful as had been expected".⁵

There was no continuous police force in the district from 1867 to 1873, although the temporary services

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1. GRH, 27 March, 14 August 1858 (Address of municipal board to Sir George Grey, 8 August).
 2. GRH, 14 August 1858 (Address of municipal board to Sir George Grey, 8 August); see also GRH, 8 May (Municipal meeting, 6 May), 22 May 1858 (D.C. meeting, 21 May).
 3. GRH, 20 November 1858; see also GRH, 11 December 1858 (Editorial and D.C. meeting, 3 December).
 4. GRH, 2 September 1863.
 5. GRH, 7 December 1867 (R.Southey to A.Berrangé, 26 November).

of the Frontier Mounted Police were on occasion enjoyed, as when they scoured the district early in 1868 arresting all Native Foreigners without passes or permits for entering the colony.¹ Provision for the establishment of another police force was made under Act 8 of 1873, whereby the government would contribute two thirds of the costs of maintaining such a force. At the end of May 1874 the Divisional Council took steps to establish a police force, and it was hoped that the stationing of a few men in each field cornetcy would result in an improvement over the old District Mounted Police who had been stationed in town.²

This new police force also failed to give complete satisfaction. Chief among the complaints was that the people in the district under whose supervision the police were placed, either abused their positions or in other ways failed to provide proper supervision.³ Although certain people were in favour of the discontinuation of the force, the majority opinion was that matters would be worse without the police.⁴ Despite the criticisms, the record of the police was not unimpressive. In 1887, for example, they travelled a total of 48 587 miles, visited 4 052 farms and made 196 arrests. A total of £150.9.3 worth of property was reported as having been lost, of which the police

1. GRH, 22 January, 1, 5, 8 February 1868.

2. Cape of Good Hope Blue Book, 1873, Report of civil commissioner, p.JJ 25; GRH, 30 May 1874 (D.C. meeting, 29 May), 27 June 1874 (D.C. meeting, 26 June).

3. GRA, 10 August 1878, 27 August 1884.

4. GRA, 24 May 1879 (D.C. meeting), 27 August 1884.

recovered £113.14.6.¹ In the first half of 1889, of lost property valued at £111.2.6, they recovered £109.10.0.²

At the end of 1889 the government decided to transfer the police force from service under the provisions of Act 8 of 1873 to service under Act 12 of 1882, which relieved the Divisional Council of the one third it contributed to the upkeep of the force. Graaff-Reinet henceforth came under district 1 of the Cape Police, a district which included Graaff-Reinet, Aberdeen and Jansenville, and which towards the end of 1898 had a force of sixty mounted men at its disposal.³

(v) Emoluments

Although there were complaints of a shortage of labour for most of the period 1786-1910, wages did not rise quickly. At the turn of the eighteenth century the most common wage was 6 or 12 sheep per year, frequently supplemented by a suit of clothes, a pair of trousers, a shirt or a hat.⁴ The immobilisation of Hottentot labour after 1809 probably prevented wages from rising, and from a study of contracts made in the Tulbagh district in the period 1805-1815 and in the Graaff-Reinet district in 1823, Professor Reyburn concluded that almost half the Hottentots in the interior worked for nothing more than food and clothing.⁵

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1. GR, 27 January 1888 (D.C. meeting, 18 January).
 2. GRA, 18 July 1889.
 3. Details concerning the take-over are contained in GRA, 18 November 1889 (D.C. meeting, 13 November), 13 January 1890, 21 November 1898.
 4. G.R. 15/43.
 5. Reyburn I, Land, Labour and Law, pp.46-47.

The wages of Bushmen were even lower, and J.T. Bigge, one of the Commissioners of Enquiry said that they seldom received "any other remuneration than their food and blankets".¹ The Commission of Enquiry believed that it was due to the presence of the Bushmen as a labour force that Hottentot wages in Graaff-Reinet were lower than elsewhere.²

In the middle thirties in the field cornetcy of Rhenosterberg, wages were still generally in kind (sheep, goats and clothing), but in town in the same period cash was the most common form of payment, wages varying widely between 1/6d and 9/- per month.³ In the late forties many blacks preferred daily labour, for although it did not include lodging, it was the most remunerative type of labour, the rate in Graaff-Reinet being 1/6d per day. This type of labour was obviously confined mainly to the town. The monthly wage for men lay between 7/6d and 15/- and included board and lodging, and often tobacco and clothing as well. Labour by the year, worked particularly by the Africans, was even less remunerative, the wage being £3 or two cows.⁴ This monthly wage did not appear to change significantly in the next half century, and in the early nineties farm labourers were still being paid between 10/- and 15/- per month. Towards the end of the seventies there was a tendency for the daily wage to rise to 2/-.⁵

1. Records XXXV, pp.319-320.

2. Records XXXV, p.315.

3. G.R. 15/43, 15/54, 15/57.

4. Legislative Council Minutes and Proceedings; Law of Master and Servant, 1848, pp.113-114; C.O.5993: Cape of Good Hope Blue Book, 1851, p.460.

5. The annual Cape of Good Hope Blue Book contains statistics of wages; see also GRH, 2 September 1865 and G 3- 1894, p.669.

While wages in town were higher than in the country,¹ the cost of living in town was higher, and blacks had to pay 10/- to 15/- a month for a hire-room in the seventies, or 5/- for a hut site in the location. It was thus considered that 10/- or 15/- a month in the country was worth more than 2/- or 2/6d a day in town.² The wages in the country were not high, but they were not necessarily the most important part of the emoluments. Country labourers generally enjoyed free grazing rights, a privilege which the black townsmen were either denied or for which they had to pay dearly.³ In 1847 A.P. Rubidge said that:

The Kafirs have, upon an average, each about ten head of cattle; this is a considerable item added to their wages, as much of their time, that ought to be occupied in the service of their masters, is expended in tending and milking their cattle. While it is an advantage to them; it is an annoyance to the farmer, who submits to it for the sake of their services.⁴

Such grazing rights were a significant part of the emoluments received and often served to keep an employee on the farm. It was reported, for example, of a white tutor in 1862 who had been badly treated by the farmer whose children he taught, that "if it had not been for his sheep now lambing, he would have left instantly".⁵

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1. For a more detailed discussion of wages in town, see pp.432-434.
 2. G 3 - 1894, pp.666, 691-692.
 3. See pp.415-416 for the position with regard to the townsmen.
 4. Legislative Council Minutes and Proceedings; Law of Master and Servant, 1848, p.114; see also C.O.5993: Cape of Good Hope Blue Book, 1851, p.460.
 5. GRH, 29 October 1862 (J. Bradley).

(vi) A Constant View

Although Ordinance 50 and subsequent colour blind legislation changed the whole pattern of labour, crime and policing, one constant factor was the adherence of the colonists to the habits of thought formed in the turbulent days at the end of the eighteenth century. A long if not venerable line of Graaff-Reinetters from Karel Tregard and Marthinus Prinsloo in the 1790's to Rudolph Botha in the 1890's complained of the unsuitability of magistrates. The men of 1795 accused Maynier of preferring heathens to Christians. A century later the right of access of Coloureds to the courts was no longer an issue, but there was an unmistakable continuity of tradition in Botha's complaints that the majority of magistrates placed whites and Coloureds on the same level, and did their best to shield and protect the servants. In May 1894 the Achter Op Sneeuwberg branch of the Afrikaner Bond tabled a resolution condemning the appointment of Alexander Stewart as magistrate of Graaff-Reinet,

daar zekere uitspraken onlangs door hem gedaan in de Heeren en Dienstboden wet geene satisfactie gaven en nadeelige gevolgen hadden voor den boer. Zy is van gevoelen dat de gewenschte onpartydigheid in vele gevallen niet betoond werd tusschen den naturel en den Europeeschen stand en zy zal het een gelukkig dag achten wanneer Graaff Reinet van hem ontslagen wordt.¹

Action along the lines of Maynier's expulsion from the district was no longer practical politics, but Botha

1. OC, 24 May 1894.

did suggest, rather wistfully perhaps, that landowners should be allowed to elect their own magistrates.¹

There was a feeling that colonial born judges had a better understanding of the situation at the Cape than new arrivals. From the fifties of the nineteenth century the circuit court came under increasing attack, particularly because of the long delays between circuits and the hurried manner in which the circuit court was forced to conduct its business.² An example of a long delay occurred when Judge Menzies died at Colesberg while on circuit in 1850. He had not yet been to Graaff-Reinet, and although the Attorney General gave the magistrate permission to deal with petty cases, the Graaff-Reinet Courant in September 1851 complained that it had been about eighteen months since they had last had a circuit. When a circuit judge eventually arrived, he was new to the colony, and his imposition of fines of

1. G 3 - 1894, p.666.

2. For further complaints against the circuit court system, see C 15 - 1859, GRH, 13 November 1858, 29 January, 28 May, 4 June 1859, 7 January, 8 September 1860, 28 December 1872, 13 September 1873, 10 April 1875, B.A. le Cordeur, Robert Godlonton as Architect of Frontier Opinion, 1850-1857, p.69, J.J.Breitenbach, The Development of the Secretaryship to the Government at the Cape of Good Hope under John Montagu, 1843-1852, p.225; the disadvantages resulting from the long delay between circuits were appreciated by early commissions of circuit, who suggested, inter alia, the appointment of resident judges in the outlying districts (C.O. 84: Report of commission of circuit, dated 1817 and C.O.95: Report of commission of circuit, 17 June 1818).

£500 each on a farmer and his son found guilty of assaulting an African, led to the signing of a petition, and an acknowledgement by the judge that he had been too harsh.¹ Thus it was that colonial born judges were generally well received, and when J.W. Ebdon visited Graaff-Reinet on circuit in 1854 a numerously signed address mentioned his conversance "not only with the Colonial Law, but also with the habits and practices of the people". His "intimate acquaintance with the Dutch as well as the English language", and his "thorough knowledge of the various tribes which compose the heterogeneous population of this country" were also stressed.² The kind of judge they appreciated was one who could speak Dutch and "understood" the blacks.

Magistrates and judges who favoured the lash were generally popular. Anthony Berrangé was one such popular magistrate, and in 1864 he said that "he did not spare the lash where he had the power to use it".³ In the following year the Herald said that the sentences of the circuit judge Denyssen "have given much satisfaction, as he has in most cases of sheep and cattle thefts, ordered flogging in addition to long sentences".⁴ There was very little difference of opinion among English and Afrikaans farmers in their attitudes towards

1. GRC, 12, 19, 26 September 1851, 9 January 1852.

2. GRH, 22 November 1854; see also GRA, 18 October 1879.

3. GRH, 30 July 1864 (D.C. meeting, 22 July).

4. GRH Supplement, 8 April 1865.

the blacks, but one of the differences was that concerning corporal punishment. In 1847 George Southey, although feeling that corporal punishment was the most effective deterrent, hesitated to recommend this course, and gave it as his opinion that "confinement in the stocks, and rice water, is the next best suitable chastisement".¹ In 1885 the English-speaking farmers of the Zwart Ruggens Farmers' Association also expressed themselves against the use of the lash for vagrants.² Afrikaner farmers were generally more in favour of the lash when it came to dealing with recalcitrant servants. In the 1890's when the so-called Strop Wet was a matter of hot debate, J.H. Smith was the subject of a whispering campaign because of his supposed advocacy of the lash on poor white servants as well as on black servants.³ R.P. Botha was not in favour of the lash for whites,⁴ but in other respects felt that "op de plaats moet men voor den baas een vrees hebben, kleurlingen hebben een beter besef van het kleine zweep of dubbelen riem dan van eenig ander vermaning".⁵

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1. Legislative Council Minutes and Proceedings; Law of Master and Servant, 1848, pp.116-118.
 2. GRA, 17 July 1885.
 3. Te Water Papers, vol.60: A.J. Herholdt to T.N.G. te Water, 9 January 1894.
 4. OC, 8 January 1894 (R.P. Botha).
 5. OC, 4 January 1894; see also OC, 8, 11 January 1894.

Ordinance 50 greatly weakened control over the servants, and farmers longingly looked back for certain, if not all, aspects of the situation as it had been before 1828. In 1847 two English-speaking justices of the peace, G. Southey and A.P. Rubidge, felt that justices of the peace should be allowed to punish servants, and that the distance of the farmers from the magistrates caused them to allow misdemeanours to go unpunished, or to take the law into their own hands. Rubidge advocated a pass system and wanted to see the Masters and Servants Ordinance cover "disrespectful and sullen behaviour". Southey criticised the leniency of punishments and felt that "much more severe and certain punishment, quick and promptly put into execution, is required to keep the coloured classes in order".¹

The difficulty of bringing recalcitrant servants to book was to continue plaguing farmers because of the distances involved. Agitation for justices of the peace or field cornets to be given something of the control that field cornets had enjoyed prior to 1828 continued.² New magistracies were established, periodical courts set up, special justices of the peace created, but in 1882 the complaint was still the same, that it was too inconvenient for farmers to take action in court, that "men will often put up with the less of two evils - the loss of their property and the insubordination of

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1. Legislative Council Minutes and Proceedings; Law of Master and Servant, 1848, pp.113-118.
 2. GRH, 3 February 1872; GRA, 31 January 1882; G 3 - 1894, p.666.

their servants - than incur the loss of time and money in prosecuting the offenders".¹

The same complaints and suggested remedies remained unchanged over the years. J.H. Smith's wish to see the property qualifications for the franchise raised would have had no relevance to an earlier age, but J.F. du Toit would have found many supporters down the years for his idea that servants should be held responsible for stock losses. The opinion of R.P. Botha before the Labour Commission of the early nineties could just as easily have been expressed at virtually any time after 1828. Botha said that

There was a time when a coloured person regarded himself as the property of the white man who hired him. Then the labourer came to learn that when you enter service you do not engage your person, but only your services, and that the law does not make any difference between the master and the servant, nor as regards colour. Consequently the respect for the master diminished. A man only works either through the pressure of fear or of hunger.²

In a letter to Onze Courant early in 1894 Botha appeared to appeal for the reintroduction of a system of apprenticeship when he wrote that: "Grondbezitters moeten ook meer magt hebben om meiden en opgeschoten kinderen die op hun grond wonen tot werk te dwingen".³

1. GRA, 31 January 1882.

2. G 3 - 1894, p.665.

3. OC, 4 January 1894.

Under these circumstances there can be little reason for doubting Maasdorp's statement in the National Convention, "that they feared the Native franchise and if possible they would like to go back".¹ It seems as if in other ways, apart from the franchise, many Boers would have liked "to go back".

1. F.S. Malan, Die Konvensie-Dagboek van sy Edelagbare Francois Stephanus Malan 1908-1909, pp.56-57.

CHAPTER 11

BLACK AND WHITE IN TOWN

(i) The Servants

In the town of Graaff-Reinet there was not so rigid a racial division between master and servant as there was in the rural areas of the district. There were a number of self-employed blacks, mainly artisans, while there was a sizable proportion of white employees, artisans, shop assistants and clerks. It is nevertheless true that the majority of servants in town were black. The largest black group in town was that of the Hottentot/Bushman strain. In 1853, that is prior to the influx of Africans after 1857, the Africans comprised some 20% of the black population of the town, compared to 13% in the district as a whole. In 1860 the Africans represented 43% of the blacks in town, but by the end of the depression of the early sixties they were down to less than 18% of the black population of the town. This contrasted with the position in the district as a whole where the Africans comprised 40% of the black population in 1865. By 1875 the proportion of Africans in town had risen to almost 23%, to reach close on 25% in 1891, and 34% in 1904, falling to slightly below 33% in 1911. The African population was more migratory than the Coloured population, and when business was booming in 1860 there were 1 036 Africans and 1 451 Coloureds in town. At the end of the depression in 1865 the number of Africans had fallen to 431, while the number of

Coloureds had actually risen to 1 485.¹ It is also clear from the statistics that in the period 1865 to 1911 the Africans in town did not form as large a percentage of the total black population as did Africans in the remainder of the district.

(ii) Quest for Living Space

One of the most important differences between town and country, and one upon which many other differences depended, was in the sphere of accommodation. In the town the servants had for the most part to find their own accommodation. A characteristic of the living conditions of servants in town was the hire-room or huurkamer, and rows of such rooms at the back of Graaff-Reinet's large erven became at an early date the most common living accommodation for the black population of the town. Until the beginning of the twentieth century the majority of blacks lived in such hire-rooms.²

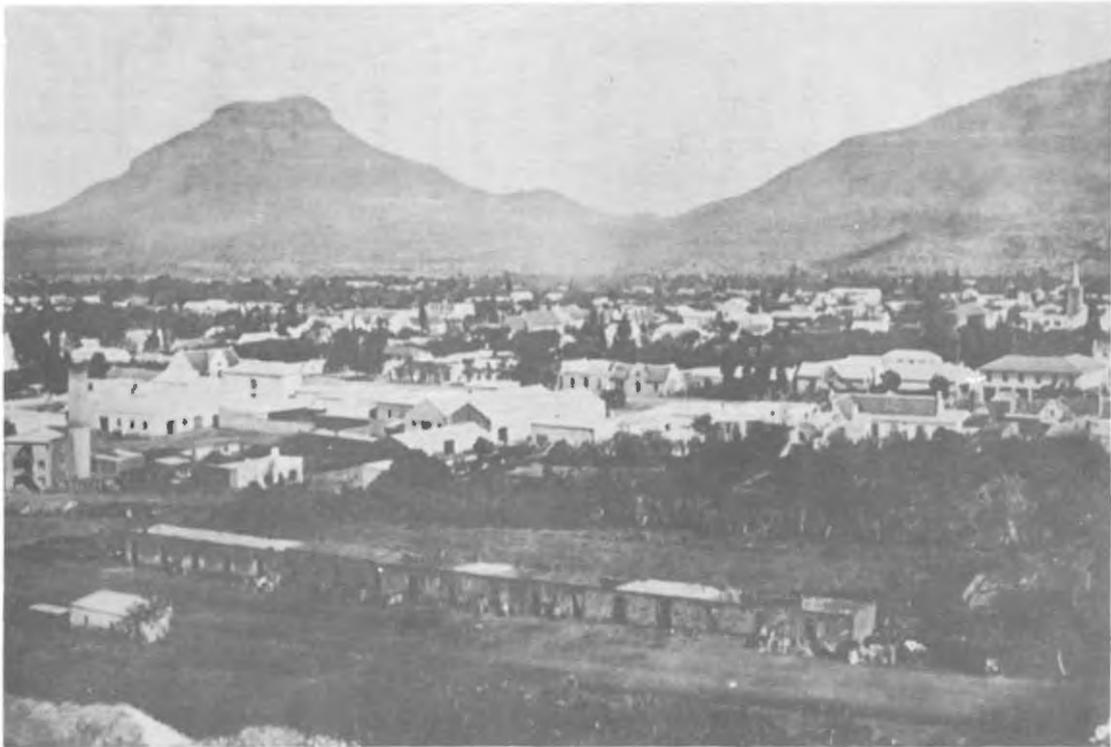
Besides the hire-rooms there were also a number of erven occupied by Coloureds. In 1837 the Governor conceived the idea of granting "small allotments" in the west end of town to "industrious poor" Coloureds.³ A number of these erven were given out in Stockenström Street in 1837,⁴ and grants of this nature were still

1. G 20 -1866; G 42 - 1876; G 19 - 1905; U.G. 32-1912; GRH, 16 February 1853, 5 April 1856, 1 February 1860.

2. See photograph, facing p.394.

3. L.G.220, No.43, pp.4-5: W.C. van Ryneveld to H.Hudson, 25 January 1837; L.G.220, No.58, p.81: Van Ryneveld to Hudson, 11 May 1837; L.G.220, p.91: Plan of erven.

4. L.G.220, No.71, p.117: W.C. van Ryneveld to H.Hudson, 24 July 1837.



Looking west, Spandau Kop in the background; a row of hire-rooms
in the foreground, 1878

being made in 1842.¹ A condition of the grant was that proper houses should be erected upon the erven. At the time Graaff-Reinet adopted its first municipal regulations in 1845, three of these government erven had only straw huts upon them, which made their occupiers liable to forfeiture of the erven.²

The forties and fifties of the nineteenth century were prosperous years in Graaff-Reinet, and it was from this period that master-servant relations and living conditions assumed significant proportions. Squatting on the town lands adjoining the town was illegal until 1828 by virtue of the fact that all Hottentots had to have a fixed and registered place of abode. After 1845 municipal regulations prohibited squatting on the town lands, and even blacks who came into town as witnesses for the circuit court were refused a temporary residence on the commonage.³

It was however difficult to detect illegal squatters since the occupiers or owners of houses in town with a value of £200 or over had a right to graze cattle on the commonage and to erect huts for their herders there. The same difficulty of control applied to the number of huts that were authorised at the municipal pound.⁴ Besides these herders and pound employees,

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1. L.G.225: W.C. van Ryneveld to H.Hudson, 21 November 1842.
 2. C.O.2826: W.C. van Ryneveld to the Chief Secretary to Government, 25 June 1845.
 3. Municipal Minutes, 19 May 1847.
 4. Municipal Minutes, 5 November 1845, 6 September, 6 October, 17 November 1847, 24 January, 16 February 1848, 2 May 1850; C.O.2826: W.C. van Ryneveld to Chief Secretary to Government, 25 June 1845.

from 1847 the municipal board allowed its own employees to live on the commonage.¹ This privilege was on occasion used as a lever to put pressure on the labourers, and in 1853 when the labourers refused to enter into contracts for six months or a year, the board decided that only those who entered into contracts would be allowed to have huts and stock on the commonage, and that no day labourers would enjoy this privilege.²

As a further discouragement to squatting on the town lands, no blacks resident on the commonage, apart from the municipal employees, were allowed to graze their own stock there.³ The municipal regulations permitted all inhabitants of the town to obtain free permits for cutting firewood, but the municipal board attempted to control the cutting and sale of firewood by those living on the town lands in an effort to reduce the incidence of squatting. In 1847 the board seemed prepared to allow African women who had permission to live on the commonage to cut firewood, and for a few months in 1849 monthly permits for 1/- were issued to all Native Foreigners not resident in town to "carry firewood" (presumably for sale).⁴ At the end of 1849 however it was decided to grant permits only to the wives of municipal employees, "one woman for each man".⁵ In 1850, after complaints had been received that the

1. Municipal Minutes, 3 March 1847.

2. Municipal Minutes, 18 August, 1, 29 September 1853.

3. Municipal Minutes, 7 March 1849.

4. Municipal Minutes, 6 May 1847, 20 June 1849.

5. Municipal Minutes, 7 November, 19 December 1849.

carrying around of firewood for sale by African women was "the cause of much annoyance to the inhabitants {white} and irregularity among the colored people", the issuing of permits was temporarily stopped.¹ The possibility of ulterior motives in such complaints cannot be ruled out, and in 1861, when African women were again selling wood, the objections were more specific. By selling wood they were not hiring out their services, while they were also freeing their men from the obligation of working.²

Thus while there was by the middle fifties a little location of Africans at the foot of Magazine Hill,³ the municipal board strongly resisted any large scale settlement on the town lands. Illegal squatting however appears to have been a widespread practice judging from the frequent arrests and fining of such squatters.⁴

High rentals for hire-rooms encouraged overcrowding as tenants sub-let their rooms. The municipal board and the whites in general may not have been in favour of the establishment of a location, but the blacks in an attempt to escape from the high rentals for hire-rooms throughout the nineteenth century evinced a desire for such locations. When Sir George Grey visited Graaff-Reinet in 1855 he was presented with a memorial signed by 150 blacks stating that

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1. Municipal Minutes, 17 April 1850.
 2. See pp.434-435.
 3. GRH, 8 September 1855.
 4. Municipal Minutes, 4 July 1849, 2 May 1850, 15 April, 5 August 1852, 29 September 1853; GRH, 9 January 1858.

the coloured labouring class of this community find - from the excessive high rate they have to pay for rent, together with the rates levied by the Municipality, that it is impossible for them in any way to further the advancement of their families and children, and therefore pray that his Excellency may be pleased to grant them a vacant piece of ground for the formation of a village.

Grey declined to intervene on their behalf, for which the Herald was grateful, feeling that these "exclusive communities already existing throughout the country are justly looked upon as social evils". At the same time the paper admitted that accommodation for the blacks was "of a miserable description". It was, however, not only the blacks who found it difficult to obtain housing, and the editor expressed the opinion that the "want of good roomy houses to hire is at present one of the greatest drawbacks to a residence in Graaff Reinet".¹

These were good years in Graaff-Reinet, and the population of all race groups was expanding. The Cattle Killing episode of 1857 resulted in a flood of African immigrants, and was radically to alter the accommodation picture. A comparison of the population figures for the town in 1855 and 1860 helps to give some idea of the housing problem that confronted the town:

1. GRH, 1, 22 September 1855.

	<u>1855</u>	<u>1860</u>	
Whites	1882	2193	
Africans	377	1036	
Coloureds	<u>1401</u>	<u>1451</u>	
	<u>3660</u>	<u>4680</u>	1

Additional accommodation had to be found for another 1 000 persons, a large proportion of them Africans.

(iii) The Location: A "Temporary" Expedient

Where the living conditions of black townsmen were concerned, until 1910 it was only the fear of disease spreading through the town that could stir the city fathers into taking action, and even then, their main concern was to safeguard the health of the whites, rather than the blacks. In 1858 the smallpox outbreak in Cape Town decided the municipal board to take precautionary measures to prevent an outbreak of the disease in Graaff-Reinet. As overcrowding in the hire-rooms was acute, the board concluded that there was insufficient accommodation for all the Africans in town and that they should be allowed to build huts for themselves on the town lands, and a headman appointed to exercise control over them.² A pre-dawn raid on the hire-rooms revealed cases where between 17 and 24 people were crowded into rooms 10 by 12 feet. Close on 400 Africans (men, women and children), who were considered to be "surplus lodgers" were informed that they would

1. GRH, 5 April 1856, 1 February 1860.

2. GRH, 25 September 1858.

be allowed to build huts for themselves at a specified spot on the commonage.¹ The fear of disease prompted this action, and it was decided to issue permits for only ninety huts, which would accommodate 500 souls. The hire-room accommodation was considered adequate for the remainder of the African population. The board believed that it was preferable for the Africans to live in town, for outside the town "they were removed from proper supervision, and encouraged one another in their heathenish practices".² But this was not the final, nor the unanimous expression of the town, and the debate as to whether it was preferable, from a white point of view, for the Africans to live in the location or in town was to continue until at least 1910.

No sooner had the location been established than the whites began to fear that they had created a monster. There was first of all the problem of supervision. The appointing of a headman had been found impracticable,³ while the siting of the location among the thick thorn bushes in the bend of the river was considered a bad mistake. Thieving was reported to be on the increase, and suspicious eyes were cast towards the location.⁴ The large numbers of Xhosa walking about town with knobkerries and the congregation of others in thick bushes outside the town heightened the apprehension of the whites. It was soon clear that

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1. GRH, 4 December 1858.
 2. GRH, 18 December 1858 (Municipal meeting, 16 December).
 3. GRH, 19 March 1859 (Municipal meeting, 17 March).
 4. GRH, 21 May, 11 June 1859.

other Africans besides those with permits had taken up their abode in the location.¹ The municipal board decided to approach the magistrate "to devise means for removing from the town lands such Kafirs as are found to have no sufficient employment and means of subsistence".² Thus there had within a few months of the establishment of a location arisen one of the great problems that was to bedevil those responsible for controlling the location, how to distinguish between workers and non-workers and how to keep the latter out of the location.

The first requisite for control appeared to be the removal of the site of the location to the pound.³ Only those in employment would be granted permits for huts,⁴ and only fifty-seven permits were issued as it was felt that there was adequate accommodation in town for the remainder.⁵ These measures appear to have had an immediate effect in decreasing the incidence of theft,⁶ but thefts were on the increase throughout the district in the depression of the early sixties, and in town the location was regarded as the source of this thieving. There were however few convictions and it was difficult to substantiate the charges. Certainly a midnight visit to the location by the Chief Constable in 1863, and a search of every hut, failed to reveal any stolen

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1. GRH, 5 February 1859 (Municipal meeting, 3 February).
 2. GRH, 19 March 1859 (Municipal meeting, 17 March).
 3. GRH, 26 February 1859.
 4. GRH, 4 June 1859 (Municipal meeting, 1 June).
 5. GRH, 18 June 1859 (Municipal meeting, 16 June).
 6. GRH, 9 July 1859.

property.¹ The removal of the location did not prevent the erection of illegal huts,² and the magistrate was frequently called upon to remove squatters.³

The municipal board regarded the location as a temporary expedient acceded to because of the smallpox scare. It continued to believe this fiction until as late as 1866.⁴ This did not prevent the board in December 1859 from deciding that the location should contribute to the municipal revenue and to the cost of supervising it. From the beginning of 1860 a tax of 3/- per month was to be levied on each hut. At this time there were permits for fifty huts.⁵

The whites of the town remained unsure whether or not they wanted the Africans in the location, and late in 1861 the board decided to abolish the location as from the beginning of 1862.⁶ It was expected that

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1. GRH, 22 August 1863.
 2. GRH, 19 November 1859, 21 January 1860 (Municipal meeting, 19 January).
 3. GRH, 23 February 1861 (Municipal meeting, 21 February), 5 March 1870 (Municipal meeting, 3 March), 18 March 1871 (Municipal meeting, 16 March), 17 August 1872 (Municipal meeting, 15 August), 22 February 1873 (Municipal meeting, 20 February), 12 July 1873 (Municipal meeting, 9 July), 19 July 1873 (Municipal meeting, 17 July); BJB, vol.11: W.L. Mackie to A. Berrangé, 25 October 1864; BJB, vol.6: Resident magistrate to municipal board, 18 March 1871.
 4. GRH, 22 September 1866 (Municipal meeting, 20 September).
 5. GRH, 17 December 1859 (Municipal meeting, 15 December), 21 January 1860 (Municipal meeting, 19 January).
 6. GRH, 27 November 1861 (Municipal meeting, 21 November); BJB, vol.3: Draft minutes, 22 November 1861 {sic}.

this would make it easier to control crime,¹ but the abolition seemed likely to increase overcrowding in hire-rooms. Those living near such concentrations of hire-rooms sent protests to the board, regarding the residence of additional Xhosa in town "Als Zeer nadeleg voor de Zuiverheid en Reinheid".² The fear was also expressed that the abolition would have a detrimental effect on the labour supply, as the Africans who paid 3/- per month for a hut site would have to hire rooms for 15/- to £1, which might result in their moving to other towns where they could build for nothing.³ In the face of these objections the board rescinded its decision, and the location continued.⁴

In October 1860 there were 225 inhabitants in the location.⁵ The depression in the early sixties resulted in a reduction of this number to 149 by 1865.⁶ Despite the decision of the municipal board in December 1861 to allow only Africans to live in the location,⁷ by 1865, 22 of the 149 inhabitants were Coloureds.⁸

1. GRH, 30 November 1861.
2. BJB, vol.3: J.D. Momberg and 26 others to municipal board, 29 November 1861, and L.C. Meyers and 23 others to municipal board, 29 November 1861. The quotation is taken from the latter document.
3. GRH, 30 November 1861.
4. GRH, 11 December 1861 (Municipal meeting, 6 December).
5. BJB, vol.3: H.A. Enslin to A. Berrangé, 21 October 1860.
6. G 20 - 1866.
7. GRH, 11 December 1861 (Municipal meeting, 6 December).
8. G 20 - 1866.

The reduction in numbers was not surprising in view of the conscious attempts of the municipality to restrict its size and the reduction in the number of Africans in the town as a whole from 1 036 to 431 between 1860 and 1865.¹ By 1865 almost all the Xhosa in town were in the location. The main African group not living there, said Berrangé, were "Mantatees who could not reside at the same location with the Kafirs". Many of these "Mantatee" were, he said, "in an advanced state of civilization".²

Despite appeals by H.A. Enslin, who was responsible for supervising the location, to the effect that the location did not harbour criminals and that no stolen property was ever traced there, in August 1865 the municipal board again decided to abolish the location.³ This decision was consistent with the board's view that the location was a temporary establishment, resulting from the smallpox scare and overcrowding in hire-rooms as a result of the influx of Africans after 1857. In 1865 the reasons for its creation no longer applied: the depression had resulted in a reduction of the population so that there was sufficient accommodation in town. After the resident magistrate had persuaded the board that it was easier to control the Africans where they were all together, and that the African constable and field cornet were able to exercise

1. G 20 - 1866; GRH, 1 February 1860.

2. BJB, vol.4: A. Berrangé to municipal board, 12 August 1865; for "Mantatee" see also pp.341-342 and n.

3. GRH, 5 August 1865 (Municipal meeting, 3 August).

"a proper supervision", the board once again granted the location a reprieve.¹

The debate on whether control was easier if the Africans were in the location or in town continued. Robberies in town caused much concern, and few convictions were obtained.² In 1867, P.L. Buyskes, who as Clerk of the Peace had in 1864 blamed the squatters on the town lands for the crime in town,³ now believed that most of the crime could be traced to the hire-rooms, and he felt that all the Africans should be moved to the location. He suggested that the municipal commissioners should set an example by giving notice to the African tenants in their own hire-rooms. The municipal commissioners denied that they had African tenants. Any plan to move all the Africans to the location was fraught with complications, as many erfholders who led water at night wanted their servants close at hand, while others again depended on renting out hire-rooms for part of their livelihood. The proportions of the problem were not known, for it was considered impossible to obtain a return of the number of Africans in hire-rooms as those to whom rooms were let, sub-let them to others. Buyskes said that in Cradock Street alone at night he had found over 200 Africans in the hire-rooms.⁴

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1. BJB, vol.4: A.Berrangé to municipal board, 12 August 1865; GRH, 19 August 1865 (Municipal meeting, 17 August).
 2. GRH, 13 February 1867.
 3. BJB, vol.3: P.L. Buyskes to municipal board, 3 March 1864 {incorrectly filed with papers of March 1861}; GRH, 5 March 1864 (Municipal meeting, 3 March).
 4. GRH, 9 February 1867 (Municipal meeting, 7 February), 13 February 1867; see also GRH, 14 December 1872.

No change was made, but there was pressure from the blacks themselves for a location. The "Mantatees", as Berrangé had pointed out, could not be placed in the same location as the Xhosa, and a faction fight early in 1867 seemed to confirm this.¹ Hermanus Bruin, a "Mantatee" mason, requested a piece of ground for 200 of his fellow "Mantatees" to live upon, but the board was not sympathetic.² Towards the end of 1872 the Rev W.A. Steabler presented a petition from 120 persons, praying for a grant of land for a location. The petitioners pointed out that "in this Town resides hundreds of Natives, the greater part of whom are monthly servants at the moderate sum of 10/- per month. These servants have to rent their houses, or rooms the renting of which in many instances leaves them scarcely anything over".³ This petition was the occasion of another debate among the whites as to where they preferred the blacks to live. Two protests against the establishment of another location were sent to the board. One of these stated that: "Wy hebben voorbeelden genoeg, dat waar verzamelingen van plakkers zich gevestigd hadden, rooven en stelen de gevolgen waren. Wy geloven zeker dat er genoeg huurkamers in de stad zyn tot huisvesting der Kaffers. Binne de Stad, zyn de nacht Police, en dat verhinderd hunne vryheid grootendeels".⁴ In the

1. GRH, 5 January 1867.

2. GRH, 18 April 1868 (Municipal meeting, 16 April), 27 May 1868 (Municipal meeting, 21 May).

3. BJB, vol.6: Matthew Mabanga and 119 others to municipal board, 6 November 1872; GRH, 9 November 1872 (Municipal meeting, 7 November).

4. BJB, vol.6: Petition of 40 persons, 12 November 1872, and petition of 48 persons, 15 November 1872.

face of these two petitions, which were perhaps somewhat unkindly attributed to those who owned hire-rooms and were afraid of losing tenants,¹ the board refused to authorise the establishment of another location.²

Rentals in hire-rooms were rising, and with the great demand for labour at a time when the diamond fields were attracting labourers, fears were expressed that if the Africans could not be provided with cheap accommodation in Graaff-Reinet, they would go elsewhere.³ The municipal board did not appear to share these views and decided that from 1 April 1875 the rental for hut sites in the location would be raised from 3/- to 5/-.⁴ Some thirty-six inhabitants of the location appealed to the board not to raise the rent. A Tambookie appeared at a board meeting and said that the increased rent would be very hard to pay, as many of them did not have regular work, some days they had work and other days not. The board, however, refused to alter its decision.⁵ The suggestion by the Tambookie that many were daily labourers is not borne out by a return for the location for April 1875, in which only five persons are classified as day labourers.⁶ It is however likely that many did not have regular work, in that a number were engaged in transport riding, a circumstance which affected the

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1. GRH, 14 December 1872.
 2. GRH, 11 December 1872 (Municipal meeting, 6 December).
 3. GRH, 14 December 1872.
 4. BJB, vol.7: F.K. te Water and C.A. Nesor, (Committee to draw up rules and conditions for the Native Location), 18 February 1875; GRH, 20 February 1875 (Municipal meeting, 18 February).
 5. GRH, 6 March 1875 (Municipal meeting, 4 March).
 6. BJB, vol.7: Report on location for April 1875, 18 May 1875.

prompt collection of rent, as they were often away with their wagons.¹

By May 1880 the municipality had increased the hut rental to 6/- per month, at which stage the location was showing signs of rapid growth. Between 1860 and the beginning of 1877 the number of huts had remained at between 38 and 52. By the middle of 1879 there were 68 huts, 80 by May 1880, 117 by October of that year, rising to 143 by the end of 1881. By the middle of 1882 there were 155 huts housing 855 inhabitants, a considerable increase on the 149 inhabitants of 1865. After 1882 the location does not seem to have grown significantly until the Anglo-Boer War.²

In the depression of the early eighties there was much dissatisfaction with the high rental of 6/- per month. In the middle of 1883 a memorial requesting a reduction to 3/- was refused.³ In December 1883 some 100 persons repeated the request, and attention was at the same time focussed on the board's custom of pulling down or selling the huts of those who did not pay their rent promptly. This was a hardship for daily labourers

1. BJB, vol.9: J. Steiner to municipal board, 15 July 1880.
2. GRA, 7 June 1879, 11 May 1880 (Municipal meeting, 7 May), 18 February 1882 (Municipal meeting, 16 February), 18 March 1882 (Municipal meeting, 16 March), 20 July 1882 (Municipal meeting, 18 July), 26 July 1883 (Municipal meeting, 24 July), 23 August 1883 (Municipal meeting, 21 August), 26 January 1884 (Municipal meeting, 22 January), 27 June 1889; BJB, vol.9: Location report by N. Haarhoff, 16 November 1880; BJB, vol.10: Report by N. Haarhoff, 17 March 1885 {incorrectly filed with papers of meeting, 17 March 1884}.
3. BJB, vol.9: Petition to town council, 11 June 1883; GRA, 14 June 1883 (Municipal meeting, 12 June).

whose income was "precarious owing to fluctuations in the demand as well as liability to sickness".¹ Although there was some opposition in the municipality to any reduction in the rent, and the opinion was expressed that it would be better "if the locationists gave up their huts altogether and came to live in the town, where they would have to pay 10s. or 12s. a month for a kamer", it was agreed to reduce the rent to 5/- per month.²

This concession was regarded as inadequate by the inhabitants of the location and in 1885, 140 persons drew the attention of the town council to the following points:

1. That on account of the depression of trade throughout the whole Colony the rent of houses has fallen considerably. In many cases rooms that were getting a monthly rental of ten shillings, now only getting {sic} six shillings.
2. That the majority of the people living on the Native Location have been without employment for a long time and are still without employment.
3. That the rent which is now being paid by us, notwithstanding the badness of the times, is higher than that paid in any Location in the Cape Colony.
4. That in consequence of the high rent we have to pay and the manner in which it is collected (selling our houses for a mere song when we are a few months in arrears) we are prevented from building substantial houses.

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1. BJB, vol.10: Undated petition; GRA, 29 December 1883 (Municipal meeting, 28 December).
 2. GRA, 10 January 1884 (Municipal meeting, 8 January).

The consequence being that our Location is the worst in appearance in the whole Colony, and yet we pay more rent than any other Location .¹

(iv) The Location: Supervision and Facilities

These memorials and petitions touched on much that was unsatisfactory in the control of the location and the provision of facilities. The control of crime pointed to the need for supervision, as did the periodic outbreak of faction fights.² After one such fight in 1860 the magistrate said that what was required was a superintendent "who shall visit the location daily, keep a register of the names of those allowed to be there ... and prevent any irregularity or disturbance". H.A.Enslin, for a number of years chairman of the municipal board, was appointed assistant field cornet for the location and was to be assisted by an African constable, who would also act as interpreter.³ This arrangement was still operative in 1865 when Berrangé felt that they were exercising "a proper supervision".⁴

In 1865 the board made new arrangements and dispensed with the services of an interpreter. The Overseer of Public Works now appears to have had the task of looking after the location added to his other duties.

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1. BJB, vol.10: Petition to town council, March 1885; GRA, 20 March 1885 (Municipal meeting, 17 March).
 2. GRH, 8 September 1855, 3 March 1860, 5 January 1867, 21 July 1877.
 3. BJB, vol.3: A. Berrangé to Colonial Secretary, 2 June 1860 and to municipal board, 4 September, 31 October 1860; GRH, 8 September 1860 (Municipal meeting, 6 September).
 4. BJB, vol.4: A. Berrangé to municipal board, 12 August 1865.

Supervision of the location at this stage seems to have been considered mainly in terms of rent collection with great stress being laid on its prompt payment. The Overseer was given strict instructions to pull down the huts of those in arrears with their rentals.¹

In a new attempt to ensure that only those in honest employment would be residents of the location, the board in 1875 framed rules for the location, by which every inhabitant would have "to prove to the satisfaction of the Commissioners or Superintendent when ever required, the manner in which he obtains his livelihood, and failing to do so, he may be ejected from the place upon a notice of seven days".² The board seemed about to assume proper control over the location. At the beginning of 1875 a Superintendent was appointed³ but by early 1878 the location was again without a Superintendent, nor was there any control over arrivals and departures.⁴

In November 1878 the acting resident magistrate, G.G. Munnik, referred to the "lax system of superintendance" at the location and maintained that numbers of stolen animals were "constantly brought into the Location by roving natives, and others".⁵ The municipal

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1. GRH, 5 August 1865 (Municipal meeting, 3 August), 19 August 1865 (Municipal meeting, 17 August), 21 July 1866 (Municipal meeting, 19 July).
 2. BJB, vol.7: F.K. te Water and C.A. Nesor (Committee to draw up rules and conditions for the Native Location), 18 February 1875; GRH, 20 February 1875 (Municipal meeting, 18 February).
 3. GRH, 3 April 1875 (Municipal meeting, 1 April).
 4. GRA, 19 March 1878 (Local and General).
 5. BJB, vol.8: G.G.Munnik to municipal board, 20 November 1878.

board however felt that the Streetkeeper was doing an effective job in keeping vagrants out of the location.¹ The magistrate felt it necessary to demonstrate his point by ordering raids on the location, which resulted in the apprehension of numbers of unauthorized persons there.² The board was finally persuaded that the Streetkeeper could not exercise proper control,³ and by the middle of 1880 a Superintendent had been appointed. There was an immediate improvement in control as squatters were again caught, and prickly pears growing at the entrance to the location were cut down as these were harbouring "a heterogeneous lot of rowdies".⁴

This renewed attempt at improving the control and supervision of the location coincided with a significant increase in the size of the location, which undoubtedly owed something to the depression of the early eighties. As the depression continued so more attention had to be devoted to the curbing of theft. Two night policemen were appointed exclusively to serve in the location,⁵ but this did not provide the full answer. Twenty-one farmers living near the town asked the council to provide better supervision as it appeared that thefts were

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1. GRA, 22 February 1879.
 2. BJB, vol.8: W.C. Naude to municipal board, 20 February 1879; GRA, 22 February, 1 July 1879.
 3. GRA, 8 March 1879 (Municipal meeting, 6 March), 22 March 1879 (Municipal meeting, 20 March), 11 May 1880 (Municipal meeting, 7 May); BJB, vol.9: W.C. Bland to H.Hudson, 12 May 1880.
 4. BJB, vol.9: J. Steiner to municipal board, 15 July 1880; GRA, 4 December 1880 (Municipal meeting, 2 December).
 5. GRA, 4 January 1883 (Municipal meeting, 29 December 1882).

being traced to the location.¹ Additional policemen were employed, and the area around the location again cleared of prickly pear.² These steps were still considered ineffective, and in August 1885, J. Sanders, sergeant of the District Mounted Police, said that he had "on several occasions traced theft and slaughtering to natives residing in the Location here; and the Location is a great receptacle for stolen meat and other property".³

The greatest problem of control appeared to be the inability of the authorities to keep friends, many of them from town, from visiting the inhabitants of the location. Such visitors were considered a source of trouble, but as they were usually employed in town, they could not be arrested as vagrants.⁴ The only solution seemed for the town council to pass a bye-law. Special regulations were passed, and although these tightened up control,⁵ they failed to deal effectively with the problem of visitors to the location. No means of controlling the arrival and departure of strangers was devised.⁶

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1. BJB, vol.9: J.H. Booysen and 20 others to town council, October 1883; GRA, 27 October, 20 November 1883.
 2. GRA, 17 November 1883 (Municipal meeting, 13 November).
 3. GRA, 25 August 1885 (D.C. meeting, 19 August).
 4. GRA, 3 September 1881 (Municipal meeting, 1 September).
 5. GRA, 2 December 1889.
 6. GRA, 11 November 1889 (Municipal meeting, 7 November), 27 October 1890.

There is little doubt that in its attempts to control the location, the municipality could have spent more money. Te Water's objection in 1865 that the collective rentals were less than the salary of the constable¹ must even with reference to that time be regarded with scepticism, for the constable received £3 per month, and an average of forty huts at 3/- gave an income of £6 per month. This argument was even less valid in later years. Munnik had in 1879 pointed out that the municipality obtained £17 per month from the location.² In 1879-1880 the monthly income from the location averaged out at almost £22 per month, and in 1886 at more than £29 per month.³ Although revenue from the location dropped in 1887, there remained after the deduction of the Overseer's salary, house duty payable to government, and the location's share of the police, a balance of £88.⁴

If the municipality used little of this surplus money towards improving control over the location, it likewise failed to use the money to provide adequate facilities in the location. The hard and broken nature of the ground in the location also played a role in this failure. There was, for example, no water in the location, and the inhabitants obtained their water from the furrows, much to the annoyance of the white occupants

1. GRH, 5 August 1865 (Municipal meeting, 3 August).

2. BJB, vol.8: W.C. Naude to municipal board, 20 February 1879.

3. GRA, 28 September 1880; BJB, vol.10: Statement of Revenue and Expenditure, 1886.

4. GRA, 12 April 1888 (Municipal meeting, 5 April).

of erven across the Dry River, who complained that "Zy scheppen hun drinkwater, water voor huis gebruik, waschwater, ja sommigen ook voor kleine tuinen allen uit de bovenvoor. Emmers werden uitgespoeld en het water vermorst, vaten vol water gemaakt en di locatie ingetrokken alles van ons water".¹ A decision to sink a well in the location was taken in 1883, and although this was in operation by the beginning of 1885, water continued to be taken from the furrows, as the lone well remained the only water supply of the location.²

The blacks in general and the inhabitants of the location in particular had to struggle in order to obtain the same rights and privileges enjoyed by white townsmen. The municipal regulations allowed occupants of erven in town to graze stock on the commonage, the number of stock being dependent upon the value of the property occupied. The only cost was an annual permit of 1/-. Those occupying property valued at less than £25 had no such grazing rights, but the municipality could use its discretion in granting them licences to graze cattle at 6d per head per month.³ For many years, apart from the municipal labourers, the inhabitants of the location were prohibited from grazing stock on the commonage. By 1882 the inhabitants of the location were allowed to graze stock on the town

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1. BJB, vol.9: Widow J.F. Schimper and 5 others to town council, 17 February 1883; see also BJB, vol.10: A. Hartzenberg to town council, 3 March 1885.
 2. BJB, vol.10: J.E. Cruickshank to D. de Graaff, 27 April 1885; GRA, 31 May 1883 (Municipal meeting, 29 May), 23 January 1885 (Municipal meeting, 20 January).
 3. GRH, 11 September 1869.

lands,¹ but they had to pay dearly for this privilege, and the special location regulations of 1884 fixed grazing charges at 1/- per month for every head of cattle, and 3d for every sheep or goat.² It is thus not surprising that by early 1885 the inhabitants of the location together owned only 14 horses, 61 head of cattle and 46 goats.³

(v) Hire-rooms and Sanitation

From time to time the state of the hire-rooms in town occupied the attention of the city fathers. The sanitary arrangements frequently left much to be desired, and people were often fined for failing to provide any privies for their tenants. Some areas such as Cradock Street and Hare Street were particularly bad in this respect.⁴ In March 1880 some twelve owners of hire-rooms in Hare Street were fined for failing to provide privies for their tenants. "In one case", reported the Advertiser, "one owner, himself a schepsel, had eight rooms and no place for his schepsel tenants. He had none for himself".⁵

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1. GRA, 6 July 1882 (Municipal meeting, 4 July),
8 August 1882 (Municipal meeting.)
 2. GRA, 2 December 1889.
 3. BJB, vol.10: Native Location report by N.Haarhoff,
17 March 1885 {Incorrectly filed with papers of
meeting, 17 March 1884}.
 4. Special municipal meeting, 29 September 1853; GRH,
7 August 1858 (Municipal meeting, 5 August),
19 February 1859 (Municipal meeting, 17 February);
GRA, 9 March 1878 (Municipal meeting, 7 March), 7
May 1878 ("Anglia"), 3 May 1879 (Municipal meeting).
 5. GRA, 20 March 1880 (Municipal meeting, 18 March).

In 1892 because of a cholera scare the Chief Constable investigated conditions in the hire-rooms. His report laid bare a most unsatisfactory state of affairs. On Magazine Hill he found 192 blacks of 25 tenements who had no other privies but the hillside. On the south-east side of Magazine Hill there were about 300 people in about 60 tenements who also simply used the open ground. In other parts of town as many as 90 persons shared 2 closets.¹

Towards the end of 1894 a sanitary inspector was appointed, but little was expected of him at a salary of £60 per year, and indeed he failed to improve the situation.² By the Public Health Act of 1897 the council could appoint a Health Officer, or be forced by the government to appoint one. The council delayed acting,³ while the Advertiser towards the end of 1898, in writing of the hire-rooms in Hare Street, said that "the whole hillside at the back of the tenements is a vast latrine".⁴ It was only in 1899 that applications were called for a Health Officer. After some initial difficulties Dr Rubidge was appointed to this position in February 1900.⁵ He however resigned after a few months because he foresaw that any improvements would entail considerable outlay, and the difficulty he had ex-

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1. GRA, 3 October 1892 (Municipal meeting, 30 September).
 2. GRA, 5 November 1894, 20 February 1896.
 3. GRA, 5 October, 25 November 1898.
 4. GRA, 24 October 1898.
 5. GRA, 10, 24 April 1899 (Editorial and Municipal meeting, 21 April), 12 February 1900.

perienced in trying to persuade the town council to pay small amounts convinced him that there would be little point in continuing.¹ He was replaced by Dr Kegan,² but the sanitation problem was a major one, and little had been done by 1910 towards finding a solution.

The whole sanitary situation once again focussed attention on the water supply after Dr Rubidge had expressed his opinion that the use of the furrow water was responsible for the high sickness rate in Graaff-Reinet.³ The town council applied to the government for a loan to complete the waterworks and introduce the tub system for hire-rooms.⁴ The government had learnt from experience that loans to Graaff-Reinet should be treated with caution, and refused to act until the position of the rights of the erfholders had been cleared up. As there seemed no likelihood of this being settled, the work was stopped.⁵ Other projects were discussed but by 1910 there had been no real progress towards the provision of a better supply of water.⁶

Another solution to the sanitary situation was seen in the removal of the hire-rooms. A public meeting in 1896 carried a resolution asking Graaff-Reinet's

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1. GRA, 9 May 1900.
 2. GRA, 23 November 1900.
 3. GRA, 11 May 1900.
 4. GRA, 17 August 1900.
 5. GRA, 5 February, 12 December 1902.
 6. GRA, 27 September 1907 (Health Report), 23 October 1908 (Special Municipal meeting).

members of parliament to work for a Bill to empower town councils to abolish hire-rooms for blacks. This was the first occasion on which there was a general expression of the opinion that it would be preferable from the white point of view for the blacks to live outside the town. The situation was however complicated by the increasing number of poor whites living in hire-rooms, and there were objections to forcing them out of town.¹ Although it was not envisaged that poor whites should live in the black location,² there was a move afoot to reserve a site near the shambles where poor whites could erect dwellings.³ It is uncertain whether many whites did move there, but in 1897 a case was reported of a poor white herder, who with his wife and three or four children, occupied a room eight foot square at the shambles.⁴

There was no law which could force people to live in the location. The Advertiser in 1896 clearly saw that the only way of achieving the desired end was to build cheap places out of town, thereby encouraging people to move there.⁵ This was the logical solution, and in 1901 the council formulated plans for the erection of ninety-six hire-rooms in the location. A loan

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1. GRA, 20 February 1896 (Editorial and proceedings of public meeting).
 2. By 1904 there were five whites in the location.
 3. GRA, 2 November 1896 (Municipal meeting, 30 October).
 4. GRA, 22 July 1898 (Health Report for 1897).
 5. GRA, 20 February 1896.

of £5,000 was obtained for this purpose, and by the beginning of 1904 the rooms were completed.¹ If this plan was a conscious effort to reduce the number of hire-rooms in town, this object was soon forgotten because of the rapidly changing situation in the location which was creating more problems even than the hire-rooms in town. Instead of encouraging people to move into the location, the council was soon busy taking steps to limit the size of the location. It was a problem of influx. While the council wanted the occupiers of hire-rooms to move into the location, it tried at the same time to prevent blacks from the rural areas from coming into the location.

(vi) The Problem of Control, 1901-1910

From the beginning of 1901 the location grew rapidly as farm labourers took alarm at the presence of Boer commandos in the district and flocked to town where many of them took up residence in the location. The 1 000 inhabitants of the location before the war² had by May 1904 swelled to 3 536, made up of 1 794 Africans, 1 737 Coloureds, and 5 whites.³ This was not merely a temporary increase as the location continued growing after the war.⁴ The number of inhabitants in the hire-rooms had also increased, although not at

1. GRA, 3 June, 2 October 1901 (Municipal meeting, 27 September), 4 January 1904.

2. GRA, 20 March 1899 ("Alpha").

3. GRA, 6 May 1904.

4. GRA, 10 December 1909, 31 January 1910.

the same rapid rate. From the 1850's there had been about 1 800 blacks living in town, which figure had risen to about 2 200 around 1890.¹ In May 1904 the black population in town numbered 2 484, comprising 2 237 Coloureds and 247 Africans.²

It is probable that there was not a steady increase in the population of the location, but that there was a large floating population. An examination of the number of dwellings in the location, derived from the rentals collected by the council,³ shows that in August 1901 there were 420 occupied huts in the location. Early in 1910 it was reported that there were 436 occupied rooms in the location.⁴ Until 1910 there were seldom more than 500 huts erected by the inhabitants themselves in the location.⁵ The number of huts thus remained virtually static at a time when the population of the location was growing rapidly. The crowding of more persons into each hut must be attributed partly to the town council's prohibition in February 1901 on the erection of huts by new comers from the country. It is open to doubt whether this ban could have been

1. GRH, 16 February 1853, 5 April 1856; GRA, 27 June 1889; G 20 - 1866; G 42 - 1876; G 6 - 1892; BJB, vol.7: Location reports, 18 May, 21 October 1875.
2. GRA, 6 May 1904; the total black population of the town and the location was 6 015.
3. It must be borne in mind that a number of huts were exempted from payment; in 1907 there were thirty-four free huts {GRA, 3 June 1907 (Municipal meeting)}.
4. GRA, 4 September 1901 (Municipal meeting, 30 August), 9 February 1910; it is uncertain whether or not the 1910 figure includes the municipal hire-rooms in the location.
5. GRA, 15 June 1903 (Municipal meeting, 12 June), 15 May 1905 (Municipal meeting), 3 June 1907 (Municipal meeting).

enforced had there not been other factors operating, such as the high rental of 5/- per month charged by the council. That this rental was a burden may be judged from the number of petitions addressed to the council asking for a reduction, or for improved facilities in the location.¹

These petitions failed to move the council to whom the revenue from the location was an important source of income. In the period after the war the council received over £100 per month for the rental of hut sites, apart from the money from its own hire-rooms in the location.² For its own hire-rooms the council charged 10/- per month for single and 15/- for double rooms, reduced to 8/- and 13/- respectively in 1904.³ For a while there appears to have been a high, but not full, occupancy rate for these rooms,⁴ but by early 1908, 6 or 7 of the single rooms, and about 18 of the 26 double rooms were empty. The council rejected a suggestion that the rent be reduced. Later in the year when 22 of the double rooms were unoccupied the council finally agreed to reduce the rental to 7/6d per month, a move which it was hoped would enable it to compete with the hire-rooms in town, where double rooms could apparently be obtained for 10/-.⁵ The

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1. GRA, 18 February 1901 (Municipal meeting, 15 February), 29 March, 1 April 1901 (Municipal meeting, 29 March), 17 August 1904 (Municipal meeting).
 2. GRA, 15 June 1903 (Municipal meeting, 12 June), 22 June 1904 (Municipal meeting, 17 June), 15 May 1905 (Municipal meeting).
 3. GRA, 17 August 1904 (Municipal meeting).
 4. GRA, 15 June 1903 (Municipal meeting, 12 June), 22 June 1904 (Municipal meeting, 17 June).
 5. GRA, 10 February 1908 (Municipal meeting), 5 October 1908 (Municipal meeting).

reduction was made, however, not so much to entice people away from the hire-rooms in town, as to ensure a high occupancy rate for the municipal rooms, the loan for the building of which had to be repaid. The original idea of encouraging the inhabitants of hire-rooms in town to move into the location had become submerged in the new problems created by the rapid growth of the location.

Despite the substantial revenue it received from the location, the council did little to improve the facilities in the location. In 1901 the council still blamed the nature of the terrain for its failure to sink additional wells,¹ and water was still taken from the water furrows.² There was also no control over sanitary arrangements, which were left to the individual location dwellers. Fortunately, as the district surgeon pointed out, the location was "on a natural incline", and was "well drained".³ The inhabitants received very little from the council in return for their money. It seems that the council felt that to make conditions more comfortable in the location would merely increase its size, and increase their problems in dealing with it. This was certainly a factor where the high rentals were concerned, and in 1901 the council refused to reduce the hut rent as they feared that this would lead to an influx from the country areas.⁴

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1. GRA, 1 April 1901 (Municipal meeting, 29 March).
 2. GRA, 27 October 1909 (Municipal meeting).
 3. G 35 - 1904, p.53.
 4. GRA, 18 February 1901 (Municipal meeting, 15 February).

There is no evidence that the high rentals discouraged people from coming into the location, but it seems likely that it was responsible for overcrowding. In February 1901 the Overseer of the location had been instructed to enforce the regulations against overcrowding,¹ but it is not clear how he was expected to do this. In September 1901 a raid on the location revealed some eighty persons with no visible means of support.² Farm servants came in and out of the location at will,³ and there appears to have been a seasonal migration to the location when the prickly pears on the commonage were ripe.⁴ It was easy for women to obtain work as domestic servants, and it appears that many women supported their men with food taken from town to the location.⁵ The Blue Book on Native Affairs for 1907 gave as one of the reasons for the shortage of farm labourers the tendency of the blacks to migrate to the municipal location where "a great many" of them "either live on the earnings of their females or relatives, who hire their services as domestics in the town, or subsist on odd jobs offering. During the prickly pear season many live entirely on the fruit or by hawking it about for sale".⁶ In 1910 the Inspector of the location said that he was not aware of any people who did not

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1. GRA, 18 February 1901 (Municipal meeting, 15 February).
 2. GRA, 22 September 1902.
 3. GRA, 21 March 1904 (Municipal meeting, 20 March).
 4. GRA, 9 February 1910.
 5. GRA, 11 March 1907 (Labour meeting).
 6. G 24 - 1908: Blue Book on Native Affairs, 1907, p.6.

work,¹ but this probably meant that they kept out of his way, not a difficult task where there was no effective supervision.

The town council failed in its attempts to control the location. In 1903 new regulations for the location were submitted to the Governor. These provided for visitors to the location to report immediately to the Location Inspector, while the inhabitants of the location also had a duty to report the arrival of such visitors; the onus was placed on all men in the location to prove, if called upon to do so, that they obtained an honest livelihood.² Much was expected of these regulations once they came into effect,³ but in the meantime the council was powerless to act in accordance with the request of twenty-seven farmers who asked them to help relieve the labour shortage by expelling the unemployed from the location.⁴

The regulations were duly approved, but the council was to discover that there was a considerable gap between the existence of laws and their effective enforcement. A well attended meeting in March 1907 expressed its disappointment that the council had taken no steps to enforce the regulations, and complained bitterly that a large number of stock thefts was traced

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1. GRA, 9 February 1910.
 2. GRA, 27 July 1903, 18 March 1907 (Labour meeting in Bondzaal).
 3. See for example the resolution moved by the Zwart Ruggens Farmers' Association in 1904 (GRA, 2 May 1904).
 4. GRA, 17 October 1904 (Municipal meeting).

to the location. A deputation from the meeting met the council,¹ but there was no improvement, and in January 1910 dissatisfaction was again expressed. A deputation from the Zwart Ruggens Farmers' Association met the council, where it was stated that blacks from as far afield as Aberdeen, Murraysburg, and Middelburg left the farms to live idly in the Graaff-Reinet location, particularly during the prickly pear season.² From the mayor's remarks that the police who were "supposed to patrol the location" were afraid to venture beyond the entrance to the location,³ it is clear that all control had been lost.

Since the location had been established in 1858, the whites had debated among themselves whether it was better to have the blacks living in town or in the location. A public meeting in 1896 appears to have strongly favoured the location, but in 1910 the magistrate, A.S. Hoole, expressed the opinion that the size of the location should be reduced and that the blacks should come into town where they would be under closer supervision.⁴

(vii) Growth of a Black Urban Community

From the beginning of the last quarter of the nineteenth century there is strong evidence of a growth of a political consciousness among the black townsmen.

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1. GRA, 18 March 1907, 8 April 1907 (Municipal meeting).
 2. GRA, 31 January, 9 February 1910.
 3. GRA, 9 February 1910.
 4. GRA, 9 February 1910.

The townsmen were a more closely knit group than the black rural population, and they were more sophisticated, with a leavening of ministers and school teachers. They formed a more articulate body as is seen in their petitions to the municipality. They were sufficiently aware of themselves to resent the indiscriminate categorizing of the location as a nest of idlers and thieves, and to give vent to their feelings on the matter in the Advertiser.¹

The failure of the new location regulations of 1904 was a foregone conclusion after the African Political Organisation, of which there was an active branch in Graaff-Reinet, had sent a deputation to the town council protesting against the regulations.² As leading inhabitants of the location were fully prepared to help the council preserve order, the council must shoulder part of the blame for its failure to control the location. At the end of October 1904 a meeting in the location appointed twenty men to act as a committee of management under the supervision of the Location Inspector, should the council agree. This committee would at the same time act as an employment bureau to which employers could apply for labourers.³ Here, in embryo form, was the beginnings not only of a town council in the location, but also a trade union! There is no

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1. See for example, GRA, 23 March 1904 ("A Location Resident"), 18 March 1907 ("Coloured Resident"), 22 March 1907 ("Location Man").
 2. GRA, 13 April 1904 (Municipal meeting).
 3. GRA, 31 October 1904 (Municipal meeting).

evidence that the town council took up the offer. At the end of 1907 the African Political Organisation asked the council to appoint an African headman to the location and a night policeman.¹ Here were indications of a desire to have a say in the running of the location: opportunities which the council did not, to its own cost, use.

The blacks in town were able to give voice to their resentment of white attitudes and actions. Thus in 1875 the black municipal labourers thought fit to remind the municipality that they were not all the same: "We are afraid", they wrote, "you look to us as we are the same like Piet. We do not get liquored up, it is only Piet that get drunk".² The procession to celebrate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897 was the occasion of a slight to the blacks of the town. According to Onze Courant, "Toen de Burgers vernamen welke de volgorde van de processie was, namelyk dat aan de inboorlingen scholen toegekend was de voorste plaats waren zy met DE GROOTSTE VERONTWAARDIGING vervuld en besloten zy dat als zulks geschiedde noch zy noch hunne kinderen in de processie zouden deel nemen". The Chief Marshall, Walter Rubidge, explained that he had picked on this order because in England the lowest classes always headed the procession, but after it had been pointed out to him "dat Afrika in deze zaak niet met Engeland kon vergeleken worden, en dat de kleurlingen alreeds te permantig waren", Rubidge changed the

1. GRA, 16 December 1907 (Municipal meeting).

2. GRH, 21 August 1875 (Municipal meeting, 19 August).

order of precedence.¹ The Coloureds were now placed at the very end of the procession, whereas they had hoped to be placed after the other schools. This was not the first occasion on which this had happened. At the ceremony for the turning of the first sod on the railway extension to Middelburg, the Coloured school had been placed not after the other schools, but behind all the carriages, "really outside of the procession". The Coloureds apparently requested that they be made part of the Jubilee Procession "and not a mere dusty appendage". But once again they had ended up virtually outside the procession. Several Coloureds in a letter to the Advertiser asked a number of pertinent questions:

What crimes have we committed that we should constantly be placed outside of everything? Is it because some coloured people are murderers and some thieves, and some are disreputable in other ways? Surely that does not apply to those who were invited to take part; or else they would not have been invited. The only real reason is our colour ... We do not ask to be treated in a familiar way; only to be recognized as citizens.²

As the most politically aware section of the black community, the townsmen formed the bulk of the black voting power of the district. Prior to 1887 there were numbers of black voters throughout the district but they were concentrated on a few farms, where the owners had obviously encouraged their servants to register as voters. In the field cornetcy of Buffelshoek for example, of the 57 or so black voters, at

1. OC, 24 June 1897.

2. GRA, 28 June 1897 (William Boggendoel, A. Hermans, A. Sampson and others).

least 12 gave the farm Wheatlands as their place of residence, while another 8 gave Ordonantie as their residence.¹

The voters list was drastically revised in 1887. The Bond's opponents had some misgivings about the field cornets, whose appointment was dependent upon the recommendation of the Bond-dominated Divisional Council, being entrusted with the task of registration. It was felt that the cornets would do their best to disfranchise blacks.² The new voters list saw a reduction in the number of registered voters in the electoral division from 3 033 to 1 975, which seemed to indicate that the old list required drastic revision. It appears as if the movement of people to the gold fields was a factor of importance in this reduction.³ Concerning the disfranchisement of the blacks, an estimate may be based upon a study of the names appearing on the voters list. Such an analysis of names and occupations suggests that the number of black voters decreased from about 296 in 1886 to 126 in 1887. The decrease was greatest in the rural areas, and in the town of Graaff-Reinet the number of black voters appears to have dropped from 138 to 93, which is not a significant decrease when compared to the total drop in the number of registered voters

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1. Cape of Good Hope; List of Persons Residing in the Electoral Division of Graaff-Reinet, whose Names have been Registered in the year 1886, as Qualified to Vote in the Election of Members for the Parliament of this Colony.
 2. GRA, 18 April 1887.
 3. Te Water Papers, vol.56: A. Innes to T.N.G. te Water, 28 November 1888; GRA, 8 March 1888.

in the town from 1 125 to 658. In the field cornetcy of Buffelshoek the total number of registered voters fell from 302 to 124, and the number of black voters from about 57 to 3. The number of black voters in the electoral division did not show much variation in the period after 1887, and in 1903 there were 127 black voters in the electoral division, of whom about 96 were in town.¹ The position was thus virtually the same as in 1887.

Despite drives by the more politically conscious Coloureds to register as many Coloureds as possible,² they were never sufficiently numerous to have a significant effect on the outcome of parliamentary elections embracing the whole of the electoral division. In municipal elections and in the election of the three town members of the Divisional Council, however, the black vote was often the decisive factor. It was in no small part due to the Coloured vote that the erf-holders of town failed to gain a majority on the town council prior to the late eighties. This had significant repercussions on the municipal history of Graaff-Reinet when the Act of Incorporation was altered mainly with a view to disfranchising Coloured voters under the cloak of disfranchising tenants.³

In elections before 1903 the Coloureds invariably ranged themselves against Bond candidates. G.H.Maasdorp

1. Voters Lists for the years, 1886, 1887, 1903.

2. See for example, GRA, 6 December 1881.

3. This aspect is dealt with at length in Chapter 8.

was a favourite of the Coloured voters, who did much to help him retain his seat on the Divisional Council. He also enjoyed their wholehearted support in the parliamentary elections of 1894 and 1898.

From 1903 Coloured voters were not automatically found in the ranks of the Bond's opponents: There was a blurring of the lines of division, which owed something to the fact that Maasdorp threw in his lot with the South African Party.

(viii) Wages and Competition

Wages in town were generally higher than in the country, but the cost of living was also higher, particularly the cost of accommodation. Grazing rights were not so easily available in town, or as cheap as in the rural areas, but certain labourers in town received other fringe benefits. When the municipal board in 1847 hired twelve Fingoes as day labourers for £1 per month, they were allowed to live on the commonage.¹ Another fringe benefit in the form of medical attention was soon added to their conditions of service.² Within a few months their wages had been raised to 1/- per day, besides which they were to receive "2 wine glasses of Brandy (soopies) per day".³ This was a customary practice in Graaff-Reinet without which it was difficult to obtain labourers.⁴ An extra benefit received by the municipal employees was that their women-

1. Municipal Minutes, 3 March 1847.

2. Municipal Minutes, 7 April 1847.

3. Municipal Minutes, 16 June 1857.

4. Municipal Minutes, 17 November 1853.

folk were allowed to cut and sell firewood. In 1850, when this was stopped,¹ to compensate the labourers their wages were increased to 1/6d per day.²

In 1855 and 1856 when the shortage of labour was being keenly felt in both town and country, it was extremely difficult to obtain African servants, and virtually impossible to get them to work by the month. Daily labour was the rule, and even then 2/- per day had to be paid.³ After the influx from 1857, Native Foreigners had to be hired under written contract for a period of not less than a year. In town this was simply ignored, and when the magistrate received instructions to enforce the law, the Herald remarked that if he did so "nearly all the merchants and storekeepers of the Town would be found offenders under the Act".⁴

There was a greater range of jobs in the town than in the country, and wages depended much upon the type of work. In the 1870's most monthly servants, a large proportion of whom were domestic servants, received about 10/- per month.⁵ Their wages do not appear to have risen much in the next thirty years, and in 1904 the prevailing wage was quoted as between 8/- and 15/- per month.⁶ The wages of the municipal

1. Municipal Minutes, 17 April 1850.
2. Municipal Minutes, 2 May 1850.
3. GRH, 26 January 1856 ("W" and editorial); GRH, 15 March 1856 (Noome).
4. GRH, 10 October 1857.
5. BJB, vol.6: Matthew Mabanga and 119 others to the municipal board, 6 November 1872; GRH, 9 November 1872 (Municipal meeting, 7 November).
6. GRH, 17 August 1904 (Municipal meeting).

labourers was generally higher. In 1875 they campaigned for 3/- per day, as against 15/- per week. Their request to the municipal board is an interesting reflection on working conditions, and serves also to make a number of distinctions between the situation in town and country, where the weather and temporary illness were not critical factors in the determination of the pay packet: "And again, we don't get holidays like others, and if we do why should our wages come short or {be} kept away for the day we had holiday? But more especially we speak about the wages to be increased, even if it rains we must get the full wages". The board decided to increase the salaries of the best men, but would pay no more than 2/6d per day.¹ Shortly afterwards there was a strike among certain blacks in town for 3/- per day, but it seemed doomed to failure, and the Herald firmly stated that there was "no disposition on the part of employers to go beyond 2s.6d. per day for unskilled labourers and errand men".²

White attitudes towards squatters in town were the same as attitudes in the country. In 1870, for example, a complaint about squatters living among the prickly pears on the commonage was as much concerned with the fact that they did not work as that they were squatters.³ In 1861 white inhabitants of the town presented a petition to the board objecting to Africans cutting and selling firewood:

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1. GRH, 21 August 1875 (Municipal meeting, 19 August), 18 September 1875 (Municipal meeting, 16 September), 9 October 1875 (Municipal meeting, 7 October).
 2. GRH, 24 November 1875.
 3. BJB, vol.6: A.S. van den Berg to municipal board, 1 February 1870.

Onze reden zyn meest byzonderlyk dat door de vergunning aan de Kaffers om hout te kappen en te verkoopen het publiek er onder lydt dewyl de Kaffer vrouwen zich niet willen verhuuren en door het dragen van hout door hen de mansperzoonen altoos in de hutten blyven om hunne dieveryen des te beter te kunnen voortzetten dewyl als de Kaffer vrouwsperzonen belet worden hout te kappen de mans perzonen geene voorwentzels hebben zullen en dus verpligt in de stad te werken.¹

This petition resulted in the cutting of wood by Africans for sale being prohibited.² An interesting sidelight of this petition is that as this was the beginning of the depression, within a few years, if not sooner, numbers of whites in the town were selling firewood "as a means of living".³

Competition between black and white may possibly not have been behind this petition, but certainly in 1885, in the time of another severe depression, a town councillor objected to vacancies in the night police being filled by blacks. That the corporal was black was considered bad as it was held that a white could not very well serve under a black. The difficulty here was that in good times only blacks could be obtained.⁴ Many of the erfholders lived close to the breadline: when their vineyards and gardens were flourishing, they did not sell firewood, nor were they interested in

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1. BJB, vol.3: Thirty-one petitioners to the municipal board, 9 May 1861; GRH, 8 June 1861 (Municipal meeting, 6 June).
 2. GRH, 8 June 1861 (Municipal meeting, 6 June).
 3. GRH, 16 September 1865.
 4. GRA, 23 October 1885 (Municipal meeting, 22 October).

applying for positions as police constables or cart drivers, but when all was not well in the vineyards they competed with blacks for jobs, and demanded such jobs as their right as whites.

There did not appear to be any discrepancy in the wages of whites and blacks for the same job, but whites on occasion attempted to claim higher wages because of their higher productivity. By 1877 the black cart drivers of the municipality had been replaced by whites, who soon complained of their wages, writing that they were "fully aware that the Natives lately employed by you in driving the carts, did so, for (18) Eighteen shillings per week; but considering that we ride on an average (6) six cart loads 'per diem' more than they did, we consider that we are entitled to an advance".¹ It was not only the white cart drivers who found it difficult to make ends meet on 18/- per week. At the beginning of 1878, five black constables in charge of the hard labour party also requested an increase from 18/- to £1 per week.²

It was in the sphere of semi-skilled and the better type of unskilled labour that competition between black and white was most evident. If most of the complaints concerning idlers were aimed at blacks, by the late seventies at any rate, many poor whites spent their time waiting around the canteens. Of the

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1. BJB, vol.8: Five cart drivers to municipal board, 30 November 1877.
 2. BJB, vol.8: Five constables to municipal board, 31 January 1878.

Vagrancy Act of 1879, the Advertiser said that it "was almost as much needed for whites as for blacks. Within the last three years the town has hardly ever been free of ... brandy-stinking whites who went about begging for a sixpence or a shilling".¹ In 1906 there was also no shortage of whites of the wood-gathering class.²

In the first decade of the twentieth century the preference given by the municipality to white workers did not pass unnoticed by the blacks. Thus in 1903 "Native Rate Payer" wrote that the Coloureds would in municipal elections only vote "for such men as will see that the native people are not merely used as a gold mine to enrich the funds of the Council, from which they derive very little in return, and men who will see that they get good employment in some of the public works of the town".³ At the end of 1907 the council was again requested to give employment to blacks on the town's public works. Nothing came of this, and in 1908 an inhabitant of the location asked: "Where are the coloured drivers of the rubbish carts? Why should it all be white men that do the work? Surely there are enough men in the Location who would gladly come forward and accept such work. Enable all to live and let live, is the prayer of your humble servant".⁴

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1. GRA, 28 October 1879.
 2. GRA, 4 May 1906 (Some Impressions).
 3. GRA, 31 July 1903, 3 August 1903 ("Native Rate Payer").
 4. GRA, 16 December 1907 (Municipal meeting), 4 May 1908 ("A Tenant of the Graaff-Reinet Location").

C. POLITICAL RELATIONSHIPS

For the greatest part of the period before the advent of the Afrikaner Bond in Graaff-Reinet in 1881, apathy was the commonest reaction of the Afrikaners of Graaff-Reinet towards the political questions of the day. Interest in public affairs was confined to a small group of English-speaking farmers and to the business community of the town. Such differences of opinion as existed on political matters, were differences of opinion among the business community of the town. A section of this mercantile community had close ties with Cape Town, while another section had an affinity with Grahamstown. This difference was to lead to conflict over the separation issue which dominated political life until the 1860's. This division found expression in such crises as the anti-convict agitation, the question of burgher service in the Seventh and Eighth Frontier Wars and the introduction of representative government. The Afrikaner section of the business community usually obtained its way, as it was able to call upon the large, if apathetic reservoir of Afrikaners in the town and district. Political power was concentrated in the hands of the families and connections of Stockenstrom and Ziervogel. Many of the early conflicts revolved around Stockenstrom, the doyen of the Afrikaners who was regarded with distaste by most of the Englishmen whose roots were in Albany.

Economic competition between Grahamstown and Graaff-Reinet and the struggle for trade routes soon alienated the English in Graaff-Reinet from their fellows

in Grahamstown, and Afrikaner and English business men drew together to ward off the threat from Grahamstown. This was evident as early as 1857, when Graaff-Reinet began to see her salvation in the construction of railways, and to see the separation movement as opposed to her hopes in this sphere. In the years after 1857 this English community became increasingly opposed to separation, although their opposition did not attain the same emotional content as the reaction of the Afrikaners.

In the matter of representation in parliament, a clear distinction must be made between the House of Assembly and the Legislative Council. Mainly as a result of apathy and difficulty in finding local men willing and able to attend parliament in Cape Town, Graaff-Reinet, in common with most other centres in the east with the exception of Grahamstown, made use of the services of carpet-baggers. Whereas most of the east looked towards Grahamstown in this respect, Graaff-Reinet's carpet-baggers came from Cape Town, where they were mostly men who had some connection with the Stockenstrom-Ziervogel combination which dominated representation. Although there was relatively little competition for seats in the Assembly before 1869, the English minority were frequently opposed to Graaff-Reinet's representatives in the Assembly. They were however a powerless minority, and differences of opinion seldom found expression in a contested election. Such competition as began to appear from 1867 was the result of the increasing claims of the farmers of the district to representation. As the dominance of the town began to be challenged, at first hesitatingly, then later

with more confidence, the townsmen, or rather the business section of the town, closed ranks as townsmen. This trend was apparent before the establishment of a branch of the Afrikaner Bond in 1881, and was to become more rigid after that date.

From the late fifties onwards, there was not the same division over representation in the Legislative Council as existed in representation in the Assembly. The divergent interests of Graaff-Reinet and Grahamstown caused the politically conscious section of the community to join hands in an attempt to secure the election of a local candidate. The system of plumping made her chances of success good in a general election, but as resignations were so frequent, there were many bye-elections, where the apathy of the voters in the midlands made it difficult for them to defeat a man put up by Grahamstown. Graaff-Reinet, as a voice opposed to the separatist aspirations of Grahamstown, could never command as much support as Grahamstown, and although she used the divisions in the ranks of the separatists to secure the unopposed return of two of her nominees in 1857, it was only in 1864 that Graaff-Reinet for the first time succeeded in electing a local man, J.L. Leeb. Even this victory was shortlived, for when he resigned in 1865, Grahamstown won the bye-election. It was only after the incorporation of Kaffraria in 1865 that the position of the midlands as a whole improved in the fight against Grahamstown for representation. In 1869 and 1874 Graaff-Reinet gained the election of a local candidate to the Legislative Council. The Seven Circles Act of 1874 guaranteed the midlands equal representation in the upper house. There was no longer a

contest to limit Grahamstown's representation, and competition within the midlands itself became fiercer. This was not immediately apparent, and in the first elections under the Seven Circles Act, Graaff-Reinet was without a candidate of her own.

Although the farming community, apart from the small group of English-speaking farmers, showed little interest in politics as such, and were aroused only when the church felt its interests threatened, the beginning of a change may be seen with the election of the first farmer to parliament in a bye-election in 1867. The appearance on the scene of J.A. Burger of Murraysburg in 1869 is a milepost in the history of parliamentary representation in Graaff-Reinet. For the first time since the introduction of representative government in 1854, Graaff-Reinet went to the polls, and that this was the result of the appearance of a candidate from the farming community, was no coincidence. Encouraged by her success in gaining Burger's election, Murraysburg put forward candidates at virtually all elections. By 1878 the dominant position of the town, although challenged, was unassailable. Even the promotion of farming interests was in the hands of the business community of the town. Such stirrings of political consciousness in the form of a desire to establish a farmers' organisation to ensure that the farming interest was well represented in parliament came from the small group of English-speaking farmers around Wheatlands. The organisation that they looked for, when it came to fruition, was brought into being under the aegis of the Afrikaner farmers. Its close bonds with the cul-

tural and national movement of the Afrikaners was to make English farmers wary of throwing in their lot with the Afrikaner Bond.

With the advent of the Afrikaner Bond in the Graaff-Reinet district there was an immediate change in the political life of the district. There was a sudden quickening of antagonism between Afrikaner and Englishman on a wide front. The Afrikaner Bond failed to carry with it the Afrikaners of the business community, a lack that was seriously to restrict it as far as the quality of its representatives was concerned. Powerful groups of Afrikaners remained opposed to the Bond, and in the first years of its existence it made no headway in persuading the committee of the kerkschool to abolish teaching through the medium of English. The newly formed Bond made the news as a result of its address to John X. Merriman in 1881. It also played a role in the amalgamation of the boeren beschermings vereeniging and Afrikaner Bond.

The first chance of testing its strength at the polls came with a bye-election to the Legislative Council in 1882, when the Bond won its first seat in the midlands. In the elections to the Legislative Council and House of Assembly in 1883-1884, the Bond captured all three seats in the midlands circle and both seats in the Assembly. However, in the course of the election campaign a serious rift between Murraysburg and Graaff-Reinet developed and the legacy of suspicion between the two centres continued to reappear in various forms at succeeding elections. The strength of the Bond was in the country, and the town remained firmly

anti-Bond, a circumstance that Bondsmen were to find vexing with regard to the Divisional Council, where three of the eight councillors came from the town, and were invariably opposed to the Bond.

After 1881 there was no shortage of parliamentary candidates, as numerous farmers and others were eager to use the organisation of the Bond to win parliamentary honours. The profusion of candidates was at times embarrassing, and in order to prevent a split in its ranks, the Bond often found it necessary to choose compromise candidates. In elections to the Assembly the real contest was for the Bond nomination, and if this proceeded without any serious breaches in the unity of the organisation, their opponents had little chance of success at the polls. In the Graaff-Reinet electoral division, although there was some dissatisfaction in Aberdeen over the monopoly enjoyed by Graaff-Reinet and Murraysburg in the matter of representation, prior to 1904 no aspirant Bond candidate who had failed to gain the Bond nomination ever stood in opposition to the official Bond candidates in elections to the Assembly. In a Legislative Council bye-election in 1889, however, the whole of the Graaff-Reinet electoral division rejected the official candidate and voted for A.J. Herholdt of Murraysburg. Although such rejections caused major splits in the Bond in other areas, the universal unpopularity of the official candidate in Graaff-Reinet preserved the unity of the Bond.

From the middle eighties until the Jameson Raid of 1896, relations between the Bond and its opponents were relatively good. The main source of friction in

Graaff-Reinet was among the Bondsmen themselves. J.E. McCusker, editor of the Graaff Reinetter, the Bond organ in the midlands, and R.P. Botha, president of the provincial bestuur of the Afrikaner Bond in the period 1886-1892, were the two leading figures in the friction which began to develop from 1888. McCusker's attacks on Botha were partly motivated by personal animosity, but there was also a principle involved, that of Bond support for Rhodes in the matter of the Adendorff Trekkers. Botha provided fuel for these attacks by some of his actions which were not above reproach. McCusker resigned from the Bond and attempted to lead it in another direction, but with little success. In 1892, a new Bond paper, Onze Courant, replaced the Graaff Reinetter as the chief organ of the Afrikaners in the midlands, but the Graaff Reinetter did not bow down easily. It was a serious source of embarrassment to the Bond as it sought to encourage divisions among sections of the Bond.

The Bond continued to suffer from a lack of educated men and had considerable difficulty in obtaining the services of even one attorney. It failed too in its campaign to have the Zuid-Afrikaan added to the list of newspapers subscribed to by the local library. In the election campaign of 1894 the Commissie van Toezicht op Elekties made a conscious attempt to improve the quality of Bond representatives throughout the colony. This succeeded in Graaff-Reinet with the election of Dr T.N.G. te Water, when the Bond for the first time obtained a man of stature in his own right as its representative in parliament. At the same time,

A.J. Herholdt, another man of above average talents, decided to relinquish his seat in the upper house and seek election to the Assembly. Although he gained the Bond nomination, his candidature caused so serious a rift among the supporters of the defeated candidates, that Herholdt decided to withdraw from the contest.

Electioneering in the period 1891-1894 is also of interest because of the tactics employed by the Bond's opponents. The independents did not put forward candidates they particularly favoured but worked for candidates they felt would obtain a share of Bond votes. This strategy was clearly seen in their promotion of the candidature of the Rev Dr Kotze in the Legislative Council elections of 1891, and in the nomination of F.K. te Water, father of Dr Te Water, in the Assembly elections of 1894. The nomination of Te Water senior appears to have been an attempt to keep the doctor out of the contest. When this ploy failed, the independents attempted to turn the incipient divisions in the Bond to their own advantage, by making an approach to one of the Bondsmen who had fallen out of the contest for the Bond nomination. These tactics highlighted the powerlessness of the independents in a straight fight with the Bond in elections for the Assembly. They stood a better chance in Legislative Council elections, where their smaller numbers were offset by the system of plumping. Here organisation was their weak point, and with voting spread over a number of electoral divisions, it was difficult to secure unanimity. Even the Bond found it difficult to do this, but they had a system whereby differences of opinion could be ironed out in

voting for candidates at nomination meetings. The Bond's opponents had no such means of effecting a compromise between conflicting local interests, and it was only in 1898 that they scored their first success in a Legislative Council election.

The English-speaking farmers who were averse to joining the Bond because of its preoccupation with the cultural advancement of the Afrikaner formed their own association, the Zwart Ruggens Farmers' Association (ZRFA). In an attempt to draw Afrikaner Bondsmen into their ranks they rigidly excluded all party political questions from their discussions. However, at election time, many of the Bond's opponents felt the need for an organisation to rival that of the Bond, and although the ZRFA did not allow itself to be used directly for political campaigning it condoned separate political organisations, having the same membership as the ZRFA. This allowed the latter to maintain that it remained outside of politics. Its success in attracting Bondsmen to its ranks was limited, and it did little more than provide a home for a number of English-speaking Bondsmen - in fact, from the middle eighties the Bond enjoyed more success in wooing members of the ZRFA to its ranks, than the latter had in attracting Afrikaner Bondsmen.

Towards the end of the eighties it appeared as if the ZRFA was on the verge of a major breakthrough when it elected G.M. Palmer, a Bondsman, as its president. Palmer, however, soon fell foul of the Bond. Although the ZRFA held itself aloof from the verbal battle between Palmer and the Bond, the credibility of its non-political image did not escape unscathed, and the accession of Afrikaner Bondsmen did not materialise.

While the ZRFA maintained its rule of no political discussions, the Eastern Province Farmers' Association, or the Central Association as it became known, moved ever closer to an identification of itself with non-Bond or Progressive supporters. Despite pressure on the ZRFA to review its stand on political issues in the light of its failure to win over significant numbers of Afrikaner Bondsmen, the majority of members of the ZRFA continued to believe that the introduction of party politics would spell the end of the ZRFA. Support for this view was that few of the political associations formed by English-speaking Graaff-Reinetters outlived the election campaigns which had given birth to them. There was dissatisfaction among certain members of the ZRFA as the Central Association continued to involve itself increasingly in political matters. The ZRFA weathered the storm and vindication for its unwavering stand seemed to come after the Anglo-Boer War, when the Central Association renounced all connection with party political matters.

The ZRFA deserves some recognition as the main body for the expression of English-speaking opinion on farming matters, and also because it outlived other associations the main aim of which had been to further the political interests of those opposed to the Bond. It could be maintained that the ZRFA had proved that among the Bond's opponents, a political association which had no real chance of success at the polls, had no future in Graaff-Reinet. But for all that, by failing to enter the political field, the ZRFA limited its own influence and remained primarily a debating

society. It was static in its views, and its membership remained virtually constant throughout the history of its existence until 1910.

The Jameson Raid of 1896 spelt the end of a period of quiet in relations between Bond and non-Bond. The Afrikaners were aroused to a sense of danger over their very identity as Afrikaners. The new mood soon found expression in attempts to abolish English services in the Dutch Reformed Church, and, as in 1881 when the Bond had presented Merriman with an address, the local branches of the Bond in 1898 again made headline news as a result of an address to Sir Alfred Milner.

The Graaff-Reinet district, in common with the rest of the colony, became divided along decidedly racial lines, and in this new atmosphere the anti-Bond forces united. The chief issues in the Legislative Council elections of 1898 revolved around the person of Rhodes, and for once local issues were subordinated to the racial division. The independents had a candidate of some talent, and for the first time the Bond in the midlands suffered a reverse when G.H. Maasdorp was elected as one of the three members of the midlands circle. Much of the interest in elections between 1898 and 1910 was to involve Maasdorp, who played a leading role in helping to reconcile Englishman and Afrikaner after the Anglo-Boer War had torn apart the fabric of Graaff-Reinet society. Maasdorp supported the British war effort, but after the war he identified himself with the South African Party, particularly on the question of the suspension of the constitution, which was the issue that cost him the support of those

who had elected him in 1898. Although the independents rejected Maasdorp in the Legislative Council elections of 1903 to gain the election of another independent candidate, the independents gave him strong support in the Assembly elections of 1904 where three candidates of the South African Party contested the two seats. Union saw Graaff-Reinet approaching a new stage in reconciliation, and a blurring of the rigid party lines of the previous three decades.

CHAPTER 12

POLITICAL GROUPING, 1847-1885

(i) Political Divisions and Cliques

The division of the town into east end and west end, or business community and erfholders, which was so much in evidence in municipal issues,¹ was to a certain extent maintained in the wider field of politics. The picture drawn in 1854 of politics in a "Slow Village" was true of the erfholders for most of the period prior to the establishment of a branch of the Afrikaner Bond in Graaff-Reinet in 1881. This account stated that

politics never trouble the peace of the Slow Village at all. The battle is fought afar off, and it is but seldom that even the echo of the clamour floats through the orange-laden trees, and it never, by any accident, penetrates the slaap kamers and disturbs the repose of the worthy villagers, save when some of their leading men see it to their own individual interest or advantage to disturb the slumbers of the Slow Village somnambulists.²

It was the business and professional community of the town and a small group of English-speaking farmers in the district who took a positive interest in politics. The great majority of Afrikaner farmers

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1. These municipal questions are discussed in Chapters 7-9.
 2. Railway Supplement to The Graaff Reinet Herald, 1879, "Some Account of a Slow Village", reprinted from the GRH, May 1854.

shared the political apathy of the erfholders. As late as 1875 the Herald could write of these Afrikaans farmers that they were a body "not much given to expressing political opinions on ordinary occasions, but who, when their interests are aroused, can carry everything their own way".¹ The erfholders and the Afrikaner farmers of the district showed very little interest in the political questions of the day before the advent of the Afrikaner Bond, but this did not mean that they were a negligible factor in the determination of political questions. The business community of Graaff-Reinet was divided mainly along racial lines, and the Afrikaner section of this community could always secure a victory for its viewpoint because it was able to call upon the great reserve of Afrikaans erfholders and farmers in the district.

The English minority found their powerlessness a frustrating experience, and complained bitterly that Graaff-Reinet's members of parliament in the House of Assembly could vote in accordance with their personal whims, because "the majority are too ignorant to trouble themselves about it, and the minority are not powerful enough to enforce the right course".² The division in the ranks of the business community, particularly in the period 1849-1857, was according to race, but race was not the cause of the division. The mercantile

1. GRH, 3 July 1875.

2. GRH, 28 April 1860.

community consisted predominantly of men who had their roots either in Cape Town or Grahamstown, and it was this difference of origin that was to give a racial aspect to the division of opinion over the separation movement, the dominant political issue of the period. On one side were the Englishmen lately from Albany who supported Godlonton and Grahamstown and were united in their dislike for Stockenstrom; on the other side were the Afrikaners, united in their support of Stockenstrom and suspicious of Godlonton in particular and Grahamstown in general.

The influence of Stockenstrom and his connections on the political life of Graaff-Reinet was considerable. Andries Stockenstrom's father had been landdrost from 1804 until his murder in 1811. From 1815 to the end of 1827 Andries served Graaff-Reinet as landdrost, and his services to the district, in an age when the landdrost played a significant role in the life of the community, were to remain the enduring memory. There was less interest in Graaff-Reinet in the aftermath of the Sixth Frontier War than on the frontier, and the distaste with which Grahamstown regarded him,¹ did nothing to lessen his popularity in Graaff-Reinet, but had the effect rather of widening the gulf between Grahamstown and Graaff-Reinet. His family connections with Graaff-Reinet were wide. He was married to Elzabe Helena Maasdorp, sister of Dr G.H. Maasdorp of Graaff-Reinet, who was married to Maria Hartzenberg. Stockenstrom's

1. This dislike extended even to the municipal board of Grahamstown (K.S. Hunt, The Development of Municipal Government in the Eastern Province of the Cape of Good Hope, with Special Reference to Grahamstown, 1827-1862, p.163.

youngest sister was married into the Meintjes family, members of which were to play a leading role in the political life of Graaff-Reinet. One of his sons, Andries, also married into the Hartzenberg family. J.J. Meintjes, Andries Hartzenberg and two of Dr Maasdorp's sons were to serve Graaff-Reinet in parliament. This was not the full extent of his connections with Graaff-Reinet. He had a close association with the Ziervogel and Watermeyer families,¹ who were related through the marriage of Maria Ziervogel to F.S. Watermeyer.² There were other Watermeyer relatives in the Graaff-Reinet district. The significance of these connections and associations becomes clear when the role of Jeremias Frederik Ziervogel in the political life of Graaff-Reinet is appreciated. His influence as member of parliament for Graaff-Reinet in the House of Assembly from 1854 until his retirement at the end of the session of 1873 was considerable.

Ziervogel was not a product of Graaff-Reinet but was born in Cape Town in 1802. He attended Tot Nut van 't Algemeen, entered the civil service and eventually became civil commissioner and resident magistrate of Somerset East. He left the civil service in 1842 and came to Graaff-Reinet about 1847, where he practised as an attorney. Although he did not have a numerous

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1. A.H. Duminy, The Role of Sir Andries Stockenstrom in Cape Politics 1848-1856, pp. 99n., 152, and Appendix III; Notes on the Maasdorp Family, in the possession of Dr P. de V. Maasdorp of Grahamstown.
 2. Personal information supplied by Mr Charles Stumbles.

following in parliament, it was not because of any lack of ability, but rather because he was somewhat of a "political sphinx", a mystery to most observers, so that "no one could tell when he had spoken whether there was not as much kept back as had been uttered".¹ One appreciation of Ziervogel was made by Saul Solomon on the occasion of a public dinner in Cape Town given to Ziervogel on his retirement from parliament in 1873. Solomon said that "if you were to ask me to single out from the members of the House of Assembly the man whose common sense I thought superior to the average common sense of members there, I should most assuredly single out our friend, Mr. Ziervogel".² "Limner's" remarks provide further evidence of his talents. He says of Ziervogel that

His reading must have been extensive, for there is hardly a subject discussed, in which historical facts are quoted, that Mr. Ziervogel does not take part in, and, when he does, his knowledge of European history, of Parliamentary practice, or of English, law as the case may be, is shown to be as extensive and perfect as that of any member or official in the House.³

The Herald, particularly in its early career, reserved some of its bitterest attacks for Ziervogel, which is perhaps the best testimony to the force of his presence. Having called upon him to resign after the defeat of a

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1. GRA, 10 July 1883. Ziervogel died in Pretoria on 2 July 1883.
 2. GRH, 25 June, 2 August 1873.
 3. R.W. Murray, Pen and Ink Sketches in Parliament, II, p.30.

motion for responsible government in the Assembly in 1856, on the grounds that his views were opposed to those of the majority of intelligent men in the district,¹ the paper shortly afterwards paid him a dubious compliment by saying that "none can deny him the merit of having most perseveringly represented the ignorance and prejudice of our District".² Ziervogel's presence loomed large in Graaff-Reinet, and the Almanac for 1860, by way of example, shows him as a justice of the peace, divisional councillor, commandant for Graaff-Reinet, chairman of the Graaff-Reinet Bank, the Board of Executors, and the Agricultural Society.³ In favour of responsible government throughout the period of representative government, a firm anti-Voluntary, a bitter opponent of separation, if any one man could be said to have been the political voice of Graaff-Reinet in the period 1854-1873, it was Ziervogel.

(ii) Graaff-Reinet vs Grahamstown

The opposing views of Graaff-Reinet and Grahamstown and the clash of interests between these two centres is a dominant theme of the period 1849-1878. Prior to 1857 this clash was particularly bitter as a number of English-speaking persons in Graaff-Reinet who had their roots in Albany and were comparative new

1. GRH, 19 April 1856.

2. GRH, 21 June 1856.

3. B.J. van de Sandt, compiled by, The Cape of Good Hope Almanac and Annual Register for 1860, pp.247-252.

comers to the midlands espoused the cause of Grahamstown. The bond between this English minority and Grahamstown was particularly evident in their antipathy towards Stockenström, their support for Smith and Godlonton in the anti-convict agitation and the question of representative government, and their sympathy with the frontiersmen in the Eighth Frontier War.

The relations between Grahamstown and Graaff-Reinet were of the greatest significance in determining Graaff-Reinet's attitude to the question of separation, with which Grahamstown was so closely associated. In 1847 the municipal board of Graaff-Reinet, together with other influential men in the town, recommended the removal of the seat of government to Grahamstown.¹ By June 1851 at least two of these municipal commissioners, J.J. Meintjes and J. Naude, were among the movers for a meeting which decided to frame a petition asking that the question of removal "be left to the decision of the Future Representative Assembly, which, as representing the whole Colony, will be best able and most competent to judge of the necessity or otherwise of such a measure, and the details of carrying it into effect".² In the years between these two expressions of opinion much had happened to strain relations between Graaff-Reinet and Grahamstown.

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1. Eastern Province of the Cape of Good Hope; Documents relative to the question of a Separate Government for the Eastern Districts of the Cape Colony, 1847, pp. 125-129; GRH, 23 March 1861.
 2. BJB, vol.1: J.J. Meintjes and 16 others to municipal board, 11 June 1851; GRC, 20 June 1851.

When Sir Harry Smith arrived in the colony as Governor at the end of 1847, four municipal commissioners, two of whom were J.J. (Cobus) Meintjes and Richard Southey, gave directions for the illumination of the town as an "expression of gratification on the arrival in the Colony of our new Governor Sir Harry Smith".¹ Smith's popularity was shortlived. The annexation of Transorangia and the Boomplaats episode earned him the dislike of many Afrikaners and the anti-convict crisis confirmed these feelings. While Richard Southey and his relatives and connections continued to support Smith, Meintjes did not, and he was soon to be found as chairman of the Anti-Convict Association of Graaff-Reinet. J.F. Ziervogel headed the list of justices of the peace who resigned their commissions in protest against the actions of Smith.² The issue generated much heat in the town of Graaff-Reinet. H.A. Enslin resigned from the municipal board after some seventy persons had objected to his presence on the board as he had refused to sign the Pledge.³ J.G.S. de Villiers resigned as agent for the Graham's Town Journal, "perceiving your {Godlonton's} views on the important object of our present struggle to be against the true interest of the Colony".⁴ If De Villiers was not the originator of the myth that Graaff-Reinet was ready with 1 000 men to

1. Municipal Minutes, 15 December 1847.

2. C.O. 2853: J.F. Ziervogel, J.L. Leeb, O. Fehrszen, Van Ryneveld, C.H. Grisbrook, J.J. Meintjes and John Heugh to Secretary to Government, 20 July 1849.

3. EPH, 13 October 1849 (Report from Graaff-Reinet, 5 October 1849).

4. EPH, 1 December 1849 (J.G.S. de Villiers to R. Godlonton, 16 November 1849).

march on Cape Town, and awaited only the arrival of Andries Pretorius to lead them, he appears to have kept it alive.¹ When news of the Neptune's arrival at the Cape was received in Graaff-Reinet, "the bells tolled, the shops were closed, and the door handles covered with crape".² A black flag was raised on the flag-staff. But the Anti-Convict Association did not have things all its own way, and one night an effigy of Meintjes, chairman of the Anti-Convict Association, was suspended from the flag-staff together with a document to the effect that he had been "sentenced justly by the decision of the right minded for disaffecting the people towards the Government and the powers that be".³

All this activity was confined to the town. There was no reaction from the mass of Afrikaners in the rural areas. The English-speaking farmers were the only politically conscious section of the farming community, and theirs was the only reaction from the district as a whole. Fifteen of these farmers, most of whom were connected with the Southey and Rubidge families, and who, as comparative new comers to the Graaff-Reinet district, still had their spiritual base in Grahamstown, in an advertisement in the Graham's Town Journal of 22 December 1849, affirmed their support for

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1. Southey Papers, vol.1: G. Southey to R. Southey, 21 December 1849, 24 January 1850.
 2. "In the Early Days", An address read by Miss Helen Murray to the Literary Society, Graaff-Reinet, 26 February 1906.
 3. Southey Papers, vol.1: W.Southey to R.Southey, 16 November 1849; Southey Papers, vol.4: An anonymous sheet, copied from a document "found in the pocket of the effigy of the hanged chairman of the Anti Convict Association of Graaff Reinet".

Godlonton's stand. They said that they opposed the introduction of convicts, but would not "be compelled to join a violent party against our lawful Sovereign and Government, until all claim to our allegiance shall have been forfeited; nor will we condemn the acts and proceedings of our worthy and excellent Governor, who has laboured so diligently for our good, and who has done more to prevent this colony from becoming a Penal Settlement than all the rest put together". What offended many Graaff-Reinettters was their claim that "9-10ths of the landed proprietors residing in the country are with you {Godlonton} in opinion, and hope you will pursue your steady course".¹

Their claim to speak for the farmers could not be convincingly refuted. Reaction from Graaff-Reinet was swift. Correspondents alleged either that not one-twentieth of the population agreed with them, or that ninety-nine out of a hundred "approve heartily of the proceedings of the Anti-Convict Associations". Attempts were made to deny the right of the sponsors of the advertisement to speak for the farmers, because "nearly one half of them are neither occupiers or owners of the soil". But these allegations and refutations came from men who were themselves not farmers, but agents, auctioneers and shopkeepers in the town.² It is almost certain that the great majority of Afrikaans

1. GTJ, 22 December 1849.

2. EPH, 5 January 1850 ("Dorothy Drydust", S.J. Meintjes, J.L. Leeb and others, "Lynx-Eye", "A Lover of Truth", "Candour"), 26 January 1850 (G. Southey).

farmers in the district did approve of the course taken by the Anti-Convict Association, but there was no expression of opinion from this quarter.

It is uncertain to what extent Stockenstrom and Watermeyer's joining the anti-convict cause was responsible for the Graaff-Reinet agitation, but it is clear that these two men enjoyed the confidence of the public at large. The direction in which Graaff-Reinet's sympathies lay was also clear from the "election" of 1850, held to replace the unofficial members of the Legislative Council who had resigned during the anti-convict crisis. Smith invited the municipal boards and divisional road boards to submit the names of five persons they wished to see appointed. The Graaff-Reinet municipal board placed Stockenstrom first, and J.J. Meintjes second. The road board also placed these two at the top, in reversed order.¹ This "election" also witnessed the start of Graaff-Reinet's struggle for representation, and when Smith appointed the top four, Brand, Stockenstrom, Reitz and Fairbairn, together with Godlonton, who had come eleventh in the poll, a public meeting in Graaff-Reinet was held to object to the appointment of Godlonton on the grounds that W.Cock, the only unofficial member of the Legislative Council who had not resigned during the convict crisis, already represented Grahamstown.²

1. Duminy, Appendix I; GTJ, 15 June 1850.

2. D.J.P. Haasbroek, The Struggle for Constitutional Safeguards and Political Supremacy in South Africa (The Cape Colony, 1841-1854), p.44.

The anti-convict crisis not only divided the Graaff-Reinet business community but widened the gulf between Graaff-Reinet and Grahamstown. It was however not the only issue to have this dual effect. The question of burgher service in the Seventh and Eighth Frontier Wars revolved largely around the personality of Stockenstrom. In 1846 when Boers served in the Seventh Frontier War there had been friction between the commandos and the military. Stockenstrom's resignation in November 1846 did nothing to diminish his popularity in Graaff-Reinet, but served rather to reinforce the ill-feelings harboured by the Boers against the military establishment.¹ There was in addition some dissatisfaction as a result of the failure of the government to compensate Boers for articles which they had provided in the conduct of the war. At the request of "several parties" J.J. Meintjes made a plea for compensation for horses, oxen, wagons and the like which had "been demanded by those in authority and furnished and not returned or paid for, - or were returned in such condition as to be useless".² The Eighth Frontier War further strained relations. In early January 1851, after the proclamation of martial law, 125 whites and 75 Coloureds of the town were balloted. Van Ryneveld, the civil commissioner and resident magistrate, informed the assembled burghers that those who possessed horses should take them to the front, and that he would issue certificates stating the value of such horses.

1. Duminy, pp.87-90.

2. C.O. 2833: J.J. Meintjes to A. Berrangé, 27 October 1846.

For those without horses he would purchase horses at government expense. However, presumably remembering the difficulties of obtaining compensation in 1846, "there was at once a general expression that the Horses taken by the people themselves should at once be purchased by the Government". S.J. Meintjes then stepped forward and made certain objections to proceeding to the front, which objections were endorsed by the burghers. Besides refusing to use their own horses, there were eleven other objections, two of which are particularly interesting as they reflect the dissatisfaction in which Stockenstrom had been involved during the Seventh Frontier War:

9. The Burghers will not go out except under their own commanders, chosen by themselves, and will not be subject to any one here or in Cafferland, except to such commanders - the Governor alone excepted ...

10. Before leaving, the Burghers must have an assurance, under the hand of H.E. the Governor, that no military officer shall have the right to punish them, but when that becomes necessary, it shall be done by their own officers.

The townsmen had taken the initiative, and Van Ryneveld's fear that their example would spread to the country was realized when the burghers of Camdeboo refused to proceed to the front unless all those ordered out from the town and district went as well.¹

1. C.O. 2875: W.C. van Ryneveld to Lt. Col. Garrock, 6 January 1851, and objections raised by the burghers of the town of Graaff-Reinet; C.O. 2875: Van Ryneveld to Secretary to Government, 10 January 1851; Southey Papers, vol.1: (R) Collier to R. Southey, 15 January 1851.

William Southey felt that they were "very anti-English in their hearts, far more so than I had supposed. Some of the fellows - rascals I was going to say, want to have Stockenstrom appointed again over the Burghers!!! God and man forbid it. Much rather let him go to his Grave, and be for once at peace".¹ Richard Southey believed that Stockenstrom's views on the war were responsible for the attitude of Graaff-Reinet, and Smith too tended to blame Stockenstrom for the refusal of the burghers to serve. Smith stated that while he did "not allege that he has counselled the Boers to refuse to serve against the enemy in the present war his organs of the press have openly done so".² Small groups of Graaff-Reinettters, mainly from the English-speaking section of the community, did eventually serve in the war for a short spell.³

The anti-convict crisis and the Eighth Frontier War had a significant effect on relations between Graaff-Reinet and Grahamstown. Apart from the clash over Stockenstrom, the failure of Graaff-Reinet to assist in the war helps to explain the failure of the separation movement to gain a hold in Graaff-Reinet. Graaff-Reinet had no urgent motive in the shape of an ever-threatening frontier. The Boers of Graaff-Reinet had always been ready to act in defence of their lives and

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1. Southey Papers, vol.1: W. Southey to R. Southey, 17 January 1851.
 2. Quoted by A.E. du Toit, The Cape Frontier: A Study of Native Policy with Special Reference to the Years 1847-1866, p.54.
 3. For correspondence in this connection, see C.O.2875: W.C. van Ryneveld to Secretary to Government, 10 January, 21, 27 March 1851, and John Heugh to W.C. van Ryneveld, 8 March 1851.

property, but it was true in 1851, as it had been true in the late eighteenth century, that aid from untroubled areas was difficult to obtain. As the Boers of Agterbruintjieshoogte had extricated themselves from aiding their fellows in the Sneeuwberge in their struggle against the Bushmen, so too, when the Bushman frontier had been secured, the Sneeuwbergers showed only a marginal interest in the turbulent events on the eastern frontier.¹

Godlonton attacked Graaff-Reinet, "the only safe district of the Eastern Province", alleging that: "While others have been fighting for existence, they have been huckstering - driving profitable bargains in grain, sheep and cattle".² It is true that affluence and apathy went hand in hand in Graaff-Reinet. Obtaining good prices for their wool, their property safe from the disturbed frontier, they could complacently agree with the editor of the Graaff-Reinet Courant that they should not allow themselves to be persuaded that there was "any necessary connection between a protracted Kafir war and a Table Mountain Government".³

The question of the introduction of representative government likewise found Graaff-Reinet and Grahamstown on opposite sides. While the majority of the Afrikaners in Graaff-Reinet supported the constitution which arrived from England in April 1853, the supporters of Godlonton were hostile to the idea. Numbers of Englishmen supported Godlonton, who, according to Dr B.A. le Cordeur

1. See Chapters 1 and 2.

2. GTJ, 31 July 1852.

3. GRC, 20 June 1851.

"continued to defend a higher franchise and to remind his readers that no constitution should be regarded as satisfactory which did not recognise the principle of resident government".¹ The decision of the Graaff-Reinet municipal board on 19 May 1853 to invite the inhabitants to have an illumination in honour of the Queen's birthday and also in gratitude for the grant of the constitution makes the position of this minority clear.² The Herald reported of the illumination that: "Some of the most respectable parties in Graaff Reinet would not illuminate at all, lest their doing so should be construed into approval of the Constitution, while others who did illuminate, were careful to show transparencies which left no room for doubt that their rejoicing was solely on account of its being the anniversary of the Queen's birthday".³

An indication of the divergent interests of Graaff-Reinet and Grahamstown may be obtained from the advertisement in the Herald in early 1855, wherein a mythical Wouter Meyer pretended to put himself forward as a parliamentary candidate for Graaff-Reinet. In this satirical piece, Meyer wrote:

My sympathies then, are entirely with the Western Province, and are on that account identical with your own. Statistically, it is true, your District is included within the Eastern Province, but I am fully

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1. B.A. le Cordeur, Robert Godlonton as Architect of Frontier Opinion, 1850-1857, p.103.
 2. Minutes of special municipal meeting, 19 May 1853.
 3. GRH, 25 May 1853.

aware that you would rather see at the helm of affairs those who have studied their morals and learned their politics in the Table Mountain school. To Messrs Fairbairn and Stockenstrom I am indebted for all I know in the abstruse science of political economy.¹

This reflects a common view as to the position of Graaff-Reinet, and it was valid to the extent that there was a greater sense of community between the Afrikaners in the midlands and Cape Town, than between the midlands and Albany.² Their family connections were with the Watermeyers and Stockenstroms, not with the Godlontons. When they were in need of parliamentary representatives they looked to Cape Town, not Grahamstown. Besides this natural affinity with Cape Town, they possessed what the Herald on one occasion referred to as "that traditional horror of Grahamstown, Settlers, and Separation, which is such a characteristic of the genuine old stock of Midlanders".³

This strong feeling of community between Graaff-Reinet and Cape Town among the Afrikaners was to remain unbroken throughout the period up to 1878, but the bond between the English minority and Grahamstown that was so much in evidence in the anti-convict crisis, the Eighth Frontier War and the question of representative government was to be of a less enduring nature. This English community were not slavish followers of Grahamstown, and from as early as the beginning of 1852

1. GRH, 24 January 1855.

2. See GRH, 15 June 1861 for Ziervogel's views on these connections.

3. GRH, 23 December 1865.

there was some disagreement between Godlonton and his supporters in Graaff-Reinet over the question of Godlonton's wish for separation rather than removal. His Graaff-Reinet allies believed that separation was a virtually unattainable ideal.¹ The strength of the anti-Stockenstrom vote at the beginning of 1854 on the occasion of the first elections to the Legislative Council may be gauged from the fact that of 4 136 votes cast in the Graaff-Reinet district, 556 votes went to W. Fleming of Port Elizabeth, while Godlonton polled only 65 votes. Stockenstrom received 2 152 votes and J.J. Meintjes 1 219.²

If the Graaff-Reinet business community as a whole were frequently divided on the question of representation in the House of Assembly, and Ziervogel was never very popular among the English business men and farming community, clashing economic interests between Graaff-Reinet and Grahamstown were to have the effect of uniting all politically conscious Graaff-Reinettters whenever the interests of Graaff-Reinet appeared to be threatened by Grahamstown. While there were men among this English community who always favoured separation, the majority of them were soon to be found among the ranks of the anti-separatists.³ They did not become as strongly opposed to separation as their Afrikaner

1. Le Cordeur, p.99.

2. GRH, 14 December 1853 (Advertisement of the election committees of Fleming and Meintjes), 25 January, 22 February 1854.

3. See for example GRH, 28 August, 18 September 1858.

compatriots, nor did they share the same affinity with Cape Town as the Afrikaners, but it is nevertheless true that from the late fifties and early sixties their opinions were midland rather than eastern. That this should be so was perhaps natural where there was little to foster and maintain their connection with Grahamstown, but much to draw them apart and at the same time draw them closer to their Afrikaner compatriots in the business sector, if not to the mass of Afrikaner erfholders and farmers.

The economic interests of Graaff-Reinet and Grahamstown were very different. Graaff-Reinet merchants were regular correspondents of the Port Elizabeth newspapers, particularly before the establishment of newspapers in Graaff-Reinet. Port Elizabeth firms on occasion evidenced a preference for staff who knew Dutch.¹ In 1851 the Graaff-Reinet Courant demanded a direct postal route between Graaff-Reinet and Port Elizabeth because "the immense traffic between the two places, equal, we have no doubt, to that between Graham's Town and Port Elizabeth, urgently demands it".² In 1857 the Road Committee of Graaff-Reinet pointed out that "nearly all the business establishments ... to the Northward are connected intimately with the mercantile firms of Port Elizabeth, and not with those of Graham's Town".³

1. Le Cordeur, p.72.

2. GRC, 7 November 1851.

3. The Graaff Reinet Railway: A letter addressed to Scott Tucker, Esq., C.E. by the Road Committee of Graaff Reinet, p.16.

There was considerable competition over the trade routes to the interior. The increasing rivalry between Port Elizabeth and East London, and for that matter, Grahamstown, was underlined by the fact that the most logical line from the Orange Free State, Albert and the eastern frontier districts was to East London, on which road the pasturage was also best. The main hindrance in the late fifties to the more extensive use of this road was the poor facilities at East London.¹ This battle over trade links between the coast and the interior became more intense as Kaffraria developed and East London became more popular. Grahamstown and Port Elizabeth were at odds, the latter fearing the scheme for the development of the Kowie. As it became clear in the sixties that the Kowie would not meet the high expectations which had been entertained for it, relations between Port Elizabeth and Grahamstown improved. With her public life dominated by business interests, Port Elizabeth's sympathies changed according to the commercial outlook. Because of business connections in both Graaff-Reinet and Grahamstown, opinion in Port Elizabeth was always divided, sometimes inclining towards the midlands, at other times leaning towards Grahamstown.² In general, however, Port Elizabeth was assured of the trade of Graaff-Reinet, which had no other outlet except Port Elizabeth, and tended if any-

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1. Report of the select committee on railroads, 1857, particularly Mosenthal's evidence.
 2. N.H. Taylor, The Separation Movement during the period of Representative Government at the Cape 1854-1872, pp.34-35, 62-64.

thing to flirt with Grahamstown in order to increase its links with that place.¹

There was thus keen competition between the various centres for the improvement of transport facilities. In 1857 there was dissatisfaction in Graaff-Reinet over the state of her roads, particularly the road which carried her wool to Port Elizabeth. There was also some concern with the roads to the north, which were in such a bad state that the traffic from Middelburg and Colesberg showed a tendency to go via Cradock.² A meeting of 6 April 1857 appointed a committee "To watch over and protect the interests of this District on the subject of the Main Roads". This committee "soon found themselves carried by the current of public opinion into the consideration of the feasibility of a RAILROAD from hence to Port Elizabeth".³ The publication of the Road Committee's report caused great enthusiasm in Graaff-Reinet for the railway project.

Commenting on the fact that the evidence of the railway select committee of 1857 had given the impression that the east repudiated railways, the Herald said that this idea had come from the evidence of two or three of the eastern members of the Legislative Council. It protested that "Grahamstown is not the Eastern Province".⁴ Opposition to the Graaff-Reinet railway

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1. Graaff-Reinet opinion on this tendency is expressed in GRH, 29 May, 21 July 1858.
 2. GRH, 21 March 1857; see also pp.120-123.
 3. Road Committee Letter, p.iii.
 4. GRH, 27 June 1857.

plan was not confined to Grahamstown, for Ziervogel himself ridiculed the idea,¹ but Grahamstown became linked in the mind of Graaff-Reinet with opposition to the scheme. Nor did Graaff-Reinet obtain any support from Port Elizabeth. The report of the Port Elizabeth Railway Committee in 1858 was that lines from the Bay to Graaff-Reinet and Grahamstown were "of about equal importance", but that as finance would not be available for the construction of both lines, the line to Grahamstown should be built, as it would be shorter and thus cheaper.²

Even before this Port Elizabeth report, Graaff-Reinet felt that separation would do little to advance her railway plans. At a meeting in August 1857 to consider certain separation circulars which had been received from Grahamstown and Cradock, it was an Englishman, W.J. Dixon, who, in reply to the request that Graaff-Reinet send delegates to a convention to decide on separation, moved that they take no part in it. Another Englishman, S.E. Wimble, moved that the meeting "is of opinion that the agitation of the question of Separation, at this moment cannot be otherwise than injurious to the best interests of this District". These interests were elaborated upon by G.A. Watermeyer, brother of F.S. Watermeyer: "We want Railroads, and other great general improvements; and we must beware how we support an agitation which might tend to sacrifice the objects we have before us".³ It was partly the attitude

1. GRH, 1 May 1858.

2. GRH, 22 May 1858.

3. GRH, 8 August 1857.

of the Graham's Town Journal that was responsible for Graaff-Reinet's belief that the separation movement was inimical to her railway hopes. The Graaff Reinet Herald said that the Journal had "published such a mass of contradictions, inconsistencies, and misrepresentations, that they alone would impress upon an impartial reader the conviction of its advocating the wrong side of the question. The Journal has fallen into this imbecility ever since it blundered into apathy on Railways, and ran blindly into Separation".¹

If her desire for a railway in 1857 was to make Graaff-Reinet wary of the separation movement, this motive was still a significant factor as late as 1875. By 1875 the railway line between Port Elizabeth and Graaff-Reinet was in the course of construction, but Graaff-Reinet had other railway hopes, in the form of an extension northwards through the town. These hopes were to make Graaff-Reinet fight shy of separation which had re-emerged as an issue as a result of Lord Carnarvon's recognition of the distinction between east and west. In discussing the question, the editor of the Herald said that the townsmen were not really opposed to separation, except for one reason:

We have only the West at present to rely on to get our direct railway. In an Eastern Province governed by Grahamstown influence, we should have to accept a Commadagga branch, and have all our up-country trade cut off by the Northern Line via Cradock and to the Kowie. If

1. GRH, 26 September 1857.

Port Elizabeth influence were to prevail, the Graaff Reinet line would also be a branch; and the Midland trunk line would pass as far as possible to the West, and again cut off our northern trade. In either case, the prosperity of the town would receive a fatal blow, and it would have to be contented to become simply the chief town in the Sneeuwbergen.¹

By 1857 there may have been a growing awareness of the dangers of separation in relation to Graaff-Reinet's own particular interests, but separation was not a major talking point in Graaff-Reinet, particularly among the Afrikaans farmers, where apathy was still marked save perhaps for those political questions having some bearing on the affairs of the church. For the most part these farmers were content to keep their opinions to themselves.² The Herald summed up the position thus:

The few grievances we have, sit so lightly upon us, that to shake them off is not worth the effort it would cost. While the hard-working Settlers and their descendants groan under all sorts of political wrongs, both real and imaginary, the farmers of the middle districts add farm to farm, and grow sleekly comfortable, in spite of Table Mountain domination, of which so much is said, and of which most of our neighbours know little and care less. The cry for Separation which has been constantly repeated in Parliament and the newspapers for years past, never found more than the faintest echo of a reply in this part of the Colony.³

1. GRH, 3 July 1875.

2. For one petition in 1856, supposed to have originated in the Richmond district, praying that Graaff-Reinet be joined to the Western Province, see GRH, 10, 24 May 1856 (H.C. van der Merwe).

3. GRH, 27 October 1860.

Although the town of Graaff-Reinet was more politically conscious than the country areas, it would be wrong to picture the town as being enthusiastic about political matters. Lieutenant Governor Sir H.E.F. Young's circular of June 1847 inviting comment on allegations that the east could not support a separate government raised much interest in the Eastern Province, and public meetings were held in a number of towns.¹ In Graaff-Reinet the municipal board called two public meetings, but both were so poorly attended "that it was not deemed advisable to proceed to business on so important a question, or adopt any measures".² In the "election" of 1850 the divisional road board had to call a second meeting as so few people attended the first meeting called.³

The activities of the Separation League in 1860-1861 caused widespread interest throughout the Eastern Province. Meetings were held in various towns, but Graaff-Reinet seemed unaffected by the agitation.⁴ Ziervogel decided to give a lead to Graaff-Reinet. At a meeting held in his house he put forward his ideas for the division of the colony into three provinces, with Graaff-Reinet as part of the midland province, which would have Uitenhage as the seat of the legislature. Ziervogel was reported to have said that in the

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1. D.B. Sole, The Separation Movement and the Demand for Resident Government in the Eastern Province (Comprising a Record of Political Opinion in the Province during the Half Century 1828-1878), pp.96-100.
 2. Eastern Province of the Cape of Good Hope; Documents relative to the question of a Separate Government for the Eastern Districts of the Cape Colony, 1847, p.125.
 3. GTJ, 15 June 1850.
 4. GRH, 17, 20, 27 October 1860, 16 January 1861.

event of a separation into two provinces only, Graaff-Reinet would suffer "for no matter with which we may be joined, we should be in the extreme region of the territory, and cared for by nobody ... We know the evils we have to bear; but under the domination of the 'Easterns', we should find ourselves in a bad case, without any chance at all of justice".¹ The idea of a midland province was not a new one, and the Herald had itself propagated the idea.² Meintjes visited Grahamstown and Port Elizabeth, but could find no support for the idea.³

The support that Ziervogel's plan enjoyed even in the Graaff-Reinet district itself is uncertain. For the most part there was little expression of opinion. On 7 February 1861 a small group of English-speaking farmers held a meeting at the farm Wheatlands, where there was a conclave of English farmers still wedded to the ideas emanating from Grahamstown. At this meeting the Buffelshoek branch of the Separation League was established.⁴ There was also a petition from twenty-six farmers from Achter Op Sneeuwberg favouring separation under certain conditions, such as equal representation of the midlands and northern districts, with the seat of government at Uitenhage or Somerset East.⁵ This appears to have been the sum of the reaction from

1. GRH, 3 November 1860.

2. GRH, 3 November 1860.

3. GRH, 28 November, 12, 15 December 1860 (J.J.Meintjes).

4. GRH, 13 February 1861.

5. GRH, 12, 29 June, 6 July 1861.

the outlying areas of the district. The situation in town was not much better. The only activity was a meeting of some sixty persons called specifically for those in favour of separation.¹ Nor did the Zamenspraak tussen Klaas Waarzegger en Jan Twyfelaar, which was aimed at persuading the Boers of the midlands, particularly those of Graaff-Reinet, of the justice of the separation cause and the groundlessness of their opposition to it, appear to move the mass of Afrikaners.² The Zamenspraak did however apparently bother Ziervogel to the extent that he himself financed the printing and distribution of anti-separatist propaganda.³

In the absence of any other expression of opinion, Ziervogel's view on the desirability of three provinces was regarded as the voice of Graaff-Reinet. The Graaff Reinet Herald which gave its qualified support to the separation movement in 1860-1861 doubted whether "twenty men in the whole district can be found who will support Messrs Ziervogel and Meintjes in advocating such a measure. The people of the district generally have no decided opinion; they are too comfortable and prosperous to care whether the seat of Government is at Uitenhage or at Cape Town".⁴ This was probably very true, but such was the influence of Ziervogel that it was his voice that counted. He remained true to his

1. GRH, 13 March 1861.

2. G.S. Nienaber, ed., Klaas Waarzegger se Zamenspraak en Briewe uit 1861.

3. Sole, p.210 and p.xxxiv of his bibliography.

4. Quoted by GTJ, 15 January 1861; see also Nienaber, Zamenspraak, pp.21-23.

plan of three provinces, and still favoured this in 1872 when federation was the issue at stake.¹ By 1871 the idea of a federation of three provinces enjoyed widespread support in the colony,² including the approval of the English-speaking farmers around Wheatlands.³

(iii) "Justice" for the Midlands

The determination of Graaff-Reinet not to be placed under the domination of Grahamstown did not imply full support for Cape Town, but indicated rather that domination by Cape Town was preferable to that of Grahamstown. It was an attitude that was not always understood. In 1864 the Graaff-Reinet municipal board received from Cape Town a memorial to be signed objecting to the parliamentary session being held in Grahamstown. The commissioners, and this was an erfholder board, refused to have anything to do with the memorial, but expressed their approval of having parliament in the Eastern Province, although they could not agree that Grahamstown was the most suitable location. The public meeting arising from this found William Southey, Charles Rubidge and Sam Probart all speaking in favour of a removal of the seat of government to Uitenhage.⁴

The sympathy and ties of the majority of Graaff-Reinettters lay with Cape Town rather than Grahamstown,

1. GRH, 12 March 1864, 2 December 1865 (D.C. meeting, 24 November), 4 May 1872.
2. Sole, pp.260-265.
3. GRH, 2 August 1873.
4. GRH, 19 September 1863 (Municipal meeting, 17 September), 3 October 1863.

but this did not imply satisfaction with their treatment at the hands of Cape Town. There was ample cause for complaint.¹ With no frontier problem Graaff-Reinet was more interested in administrative reform than in the security of the frontier. In 1851 the Graaff-Reinet Courant had put forward a view of what Graaff-Reinet required, a view that was later to find the support of men like Ziervogel. The paper expressed its belief that

the management of local affairs by the districts themselves, through corporate bodies of their own selection, will work much more effectually towards the advancement of the colony than the present system of centralization, which bears with it all the effects of despotism, aggravated by ignorance of local wants, wheresoever the seat of the supreme government may be ... it ought not to be necessary that transfers and registrations and other matters purely local ... be subjected to the delays, risks and needless expense of being effected six hundred miles off, so also the survey and disposal of public lands and reservations of servitudes thereon, are local entirely, and can only be decided on by a local authority which has the means of knowing all the exigencies and all the bearings of cases which are now settled in Cape Town by an arbitrary stroke of the pen, and for which there can be no remedy either in separation or removal. All these local interests, including roads, tolls and pounds should be in the hands of the Civil Commissioner and District Board ... and we must not suffer ourselves to be led into the idea that a removal or separation will gain for us proper local management.²

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1. See for example, pp.117-123, 171-172, 387-388, 390.
 2. GRC, 20 June 1851.

Many of these needs were provided for by the Divisional Council in the years after 1855, and judging from the apathy exhibited towards the Council in Graaff-Reinet, it would seem that the burden of grievances was not felt to any notable extent by the majority of farmers. Possibly it was disillusionment with the limited powers of the Council that was responsible for the low polls recorded in the early elections to that body. After the consolidating Act of 1864 there was more interest in the elections, but this applied particularly to the three town seats.¹ In the contest over the erection of tolls, which were designed to give some relief to the farmers in the payment of rates for the upkeep of roads, it was the town members of the Divisional Council who pressed for the erection of tolls at the entrances to town. The townsmen objected strongly but there were no similar demonstrations in favour of the scheme by the farmers.² The greatest interest taken by farmers in Divisional Council affairs appears to have been in connection with the valuation of their properties for rating purposes. In 1865 several farmers lodged objections without first having ascertained what valuation had been placed on their properties.³

If "justice" for the east was the motivating force of the separation movement,⁴ many of the concessions which might have been wrung from the west failed

1. GRH, 15, 29 September 1855, 6 April 1861, 2, 9, 16 April, 22 October 1864.

2. For the controversy concerning tolls see Te Water Papers, vols 43 and 44, BJB, vol.4, and the GRH in the period 23 September 1865 to 25 August 1866.

3. GRH, 3 June 1865.

4. Sole, pp.2, 39.

to materialise because of the disunity in the ranks of the east. In general Graaff-Reinet was engaged in a struggle for "justice" on two fronts: in common with the rest of the east she was anxious to obtain better postal services and roads. She was also concerned about the administration of justice and land alienation. Above all Graaff-Reinet also wanted "justice" from the rest of the east, and Grahamstown's unwillingness to support Graaff-Reinet, invariably caused the latter to side with the west to defeat the separatists of the east. Graaff-Reinet believed with some justification that in the distribution of seats in the House of Assembly, the midlands did not receive as many of the eastern seats as they were entitled to, and Ziervogel led a campaign for greater representation of the midlands in the councils of the east.¹ Grahamstown's unwillingness to compromise, her determination not to grant the midlands a greater share of representation, and her rejection of any proposals for the establishment of institutions she was demanding for herself at any other centre, alienated the majority of Graaff-Reineters.

In the early fifties, when the idea of a separate supreme court, registry and deeds office for the east was under discussion, the Courant felt that if such institutions were only located in Grahamstown, Graaff-Reinet would derive very little benefit from them as she would still have to employ agents to transact business.² In 1854 Ziervogel had expressed his opposition

1. Taylor, pp.35-36, 80-81.

2. GRC, 17, 24 December 1853.

to the creation of only one additional registry at Grahamstown. He was in favour of decentralisation and wanted registry offices in each division, with the central registry remaining in Cape Town. He continued to favour this idea,¹ and by 1864 the majority of the business men agreed with him. At a public meeting in which they figured prominently, a resolution was passed that the Bill for the establishment of a deeds office in Grahamstown did "not sufficiently provide for the requirements of the Eastern Province generally; that while by it the wants of Albany and its immediate neighbourhood are provided for, no sufficient provision is made for those of the Midland districts". If it was inconvenient for Graaff-Reinetters to conduct public business through Cape Town, they did at least have a long association with the agents there, whereas they knew no agents in Grahamstown.² This attitude was reflected in a petition which was drawn up shortly after this meeting, which stated that if Grahamstown was to be the only centre in the Eastern Province to receive a deeds registry office, the rest of the Eastern Province should "be relieved from the provisions of the thirteenth section of the said Bill, which provides that after the passing of the Bill, no deed or document relating to any person or property in the Eastern districts, shall be registered in Cape Town first".³ Grahamstown's insistence in the parliamentary session of 1864 that the

1. GRH, 26 July 1854, 12 March 1864.

2. GRH, 4 May 1864.

3. GRH, 14 May 1864.

deeds office be sited in Grahamstown, and her refusal to entertain any proposal for increased representation for the midlands, while she at the same time supported a Bill for the creation of an additional constituency in Queenstown, caused the midlands to join the west in throwing the deeds registry Bill out of parliament, and helping to defeat the Queenstown Electoral Bill. The opposition of the midlands also resulted in another Bill, the Eastern Districts' Court Bill, being drastically modified.¹

Ziervogel played an important role in these reverses suffered by the separatists. His mark was not only firmly placed on Graaff-Reinet in the separation question, but was a significant factor in the movement in general. "Limner", in his pen pictures of the members of the Assembly in the 1864 parliamentary session, depicted the midland representatives under Ziervogel as obstructionists, who believed that "to negative the hasty operations of East and West alike - the East chiefly - must ultimately result in positive good to the Midland districts". Sole says that while Ziervogel did not succeed in this

his conservative instincts kept him uniformly in sympathy with the Western party, and through the long period he represented Graaff-Reinet, his influence was strong enough to induce his fellow Midlanders to

1. Sole, pp.233-235; Taylor, p.129. This was not the first attempt by the separatists to create a new constituency in Queenstown, and the midlands had helped to defeat earlier attempts to prevent an accession of strength to the frontier party, notably in 1854, 1855 and 1856 (Taylor, p.35).

side with Fairbairn and his coterie on all major questions of policy. A firm opponent of Separation in any form whatsoever,¹ to his influence more than that of any other individual the Separationists owed the defeats which they suffered time and time again.²

(iv) Parliamentary Representation

The struggle between Grahamstown and Graaff-Reinet found expression in the fight for representation. Partly because of the apathy of the great majority of Afrikaners in the east, and partly because there were outside of Grahamstown few men with time to devote to politics, Grahamstown and the frontier party³ had an unequal share of seats in parliament. This was particularly true of the Legislative Council but it applied also to the House of Assembly. In the Assembly in 1864 men from Grahamstown had the two Grahamstown seats, both Fort Beaufort seats, one seat in Albany and one in Victoria East. More Grahamstowners obtained seats at

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1. This is not correct with regard to his idea of a division into three provinces. See pp.474-475.
 2. Murray II, p.29; Sole, p.168.
 3. Taylor distinguishes between a frontier party in the districts of Albany, Victoria East, Fort Beaufort, Cradock and Queenstown, and a midland party in Graaff-Reinet, Somerset, Richmond, Colesberg and Albert. He regards Uitenhage and Port Elizabeth as neutral, sometimes favouring the frontier party, and at other times supporting the midland party. (See Taylor's map, "The Electoral Divisions of the Eastern Province", and Le Cordeur, p.75.)

bye-elections, taking both Uitenhage seats in 1865 and one in Cradock. Candidates from Grahamstown won at Victoria East in 1866, and took the new Aliwal North seat in the same year.¹ Thus most of the centres in the east looked to Grahamstown to supply them with representatives which they could not obtain from among their own ranks. Graaff-Reinet suffered from the same disability, but she looked to Cape Town, not Grahamstown. Although the voice of Graaff-Reinet could not rival that of Grahamstown, it was a clear, dissenting voice which gave the lie to the attempts of Grahamstown to persuade the west that the east could speak with one voice. Graaff-Reinet in fact had its own carpet-baggers on a modest scale, and in the fifties Meintjes had held the Albert seat and in 1866 Sam Probart became Richmond's first member in the Assembly.

Although the politically conscious section of the Graaff-Reinet community was frequently divided on the question of representation in the House of Assembly, the clash of interests between Grahamstown and Graaff-Reinet, and the desire of the latter to secure for herself adequate representation in the Legislative Council in the face of Grahamstown's attempts to monopolise eastern representation, caused Graaff-Reinetters to sink their differences and join hands in an attempt to secure the election of local men. The cumulative vote which was used at Legislative Council elections gave Graaff-Reinet a reasonable chance of electing a candidate of her own choosing by plumping for him. But it was no easy

1. Taylor, pp.127-128.

matter to obtain the services of a local candidate who was willing and able to retain his seat for the full ten-year life of the Council. Resignations were frequent, and in bye-elections where plumping did not apply, Graaff-Reinet had little chance of returning a candidate in the face of opposition from Grahamstown. Port Elizabeth also had difficulty in securing candidates as did most of the eastern districts with the exception of Grahamstown, which seemed to have an abundance of candidates. The result of all this was that while Graaff-Reinet could secure the election of her candidate at a general election, Grahamstown candidates invariably won seats at the frequent bye-elections.¹

In the first elections to the Legislative Council in January 1854, the district of Graaff-Reinet helped to swell Stockenstrom's majority by 2 152 votes, but it did not have the strength to secure the election of J.J. Meintjes to whom it gave 1 219 votes.² Meintjes was again put up as a candidate in a bye-election in 1855, and although he received a majority in Graaff-Reinet, he was again rejected in the overall count.³ Graaff-Reinet stood aloof from the intrigues of the separation movement, and in the middle of 1857 when Godlonton and five others resigned from the Legislative Council, Graaff-Reinet quietly nominated W. Southey and S.A. Probart, both opposed to separation. Graaff-Reinet thus obtained two seats in the Legislative Council without a contest.⁴ This was Graaff-Reinet's only success prior to 1864.

1. Taylor, pp.29, 39n.

2. GRH, 25 January, 22 February 1854.

3. GRH, 22 September, Extra to the GRH, 17 November 1855.

4. GRH, 4 July, 8, 15, 29 August, 12 September 1857.

Early in 1864 Graaff-Reinet for the first time secured the election of a local candidate in a contested election. The successful candidate was J.L. Leeb, and his victory was all the more noteworthy as he was not the only midland candidate in the field; Von Maltitz of Colesberg also put forward a claim to the midland vote. Voting figures in the town provide an indication of the extent to which Graaff-Reinet was united. Leeb received 763 votes, Von Maltitz 116, and Chase and Tucker received 12 and 7 votes respectively. There were four vacant seats, and the result was a heartening one for the midlands, for although only Leeb was returned, Von Maltitz was not far behind, with 2 067 votes to the 2 113 polled by Leeb.¹

In the new Legislative Council of 1864, Grahamstown held four of the seven eastern seats, and in Tucker of Cradock they had another supporter.² When the seat of J. Cawood became vacant on his death, Graaff-Reinet united with Port Elizabeth in an attempt to elect H.B. Christian of Port Elizabeth. Although Christian's views on a number of subjects were somewhat vague, the main tenets of his faith, anti-separation and pro-removal, were satisfactory. The Herald pointed out that it was not so much a matter of supporting Christian as trying to limit Grahamstown: "Any Port Elizabeth man would be better than another from Graham's Town".³ But it was W. Cock of Grahamstown, who in

1. GRH, 28 November 1863, 6, 9, 16, 27, 30 January, 27 February 1864.

2. Taylor, p.128.

3. GRH, 20, 30 April, 4 May 1864.

Graaff-Reinet received only one vote to the 197 cast in favour of Christian, who won.¹

Graaff-Reinet in particular, and the midlands in general, suffered another setback in the struggle for representation in the Legislative Council when Leeb resigned towards the end of 1865. Graaff-Reinet nominated Phoebus Caro,² and hoped that since Grahamstown had so many representatives in the Council and as Leeb had been a Graaff-Reinet man, Grahamstown would not offer any opposition. It was a vain hope, and Grahamstown nominated J.C. Hoole. Graaff-Reinet's chances were never good in a bye-election, and they were on this occasion lessened by opposition from certain persons in Graaff-Reinet who were opposed to Caro on personal and not political grounds. Despite this Caro came in triumphantly in the town of Graaff-Reinet with 322 votes as against 54 for Hoole. But the apathy of Port Elizabeth, where Caro obtained a slender majority of 489 to 443 votes, together with Grahamstown's vote of 5 for Caro and 770 for Hoole gave Grahamstown another seat in the Council. The Eastern Province Herald attributed Caro's slender majority in Port Elizabeth to

1. GRH, 22 June, 24 August 1864.

2. Caro was a ship-wrecked sailor, who had been rescued and brought to Cape Town in 1842. With the aid of the Mosenthals he established a business in Graaff-Reinet and became a man of considerable wealth (G. Saron and L. Hotz, The Jews in South Africa; A History, p.313). In the course of the election campaign a rumour was circulated in both Port Elizabeth and Graaff-Reinet that Caro had not been a member of the crew of the wrecked ship, but a convict on board the ship [See GRH, 14 April 1866 (P. Caro vs C. Stewart)].

the impression gained in the city that Caro was opposed to railways while Hoole was known to favour them.¹

In June 1866, after the number of eastern members in the Council had been raised to ten, of the three additional seats which were uncontested, Grahamstown obtained one and the other two candidates returned were also supporters of the frontier party. In 1868, therefore, when Wodehouse agreed to dissolve the Council along with the Assembly, although it had only been elected in 1864, 9 of the 10 members belonged to the frontier party and 7 of them came from Grahamstown. But the struggle of the midlands for greater representation entered a new phase, and the parliamentary session of 1865 marked a significant turning point. Act 2 of 1865 gave the newly incorporated Kaffraria four seats (two each to Kingwilliamstown and East London) and created the new electoral divisions of Richmond and Hope Town, Aliwal North, and Queenstown on the frontier. The creation of the electoral division of Richmond and Hope Town meant a contraction of the Graaff-Reinet electoral division which had included Richmond. The midlands not only gained increased representation but they were strengthened relatively, as Grahamstown was weakened, for the Kaffrarians tended to side with the midlands against the frontier. The addition of six extra members to the Legislative Council, three for the east and three for the west, increased the value of the cumulative vote which had in the past enabled Graaff-Reinet to return its own candidate.

1. GRH, 4, 11 November (Supplement), 16, 23 December (and Supplement), 30 December 1865, 13, 20 January (and Supplement), 27 January, 3, 24 February 1866 (Supplement).

In the Legislative Council elections in early 1869, the stranglehold of Grahamstown on the Council was broken, and the frontier party gained four seats, the midlands four and Kaffraria two.¹ Graaff-Reinet, however, was not overly concerned with the rest of the midlands; her first duty was to herself, and town and district came out strongly in favour of the local candidate, F.K. te Water. Each voter had ten votes. In the town Te Water polled 2 998 votes. In the remainder of the district he obtained a little over 1 000 votes which indicated the significance of the town vote. Stretch, the Somerset East candidate, received the votes of some fifteen persons, mainly Coloureds in the town. The only other noteworthy deviation from the support given to Te Water was in Achter Sneeuwberg where about fifty voters divided their votes chiefly between Kennelley, Cawood and Godlonton.² For only the second time in a contested election, apart from 1854 when Graaff-Reinet had helped to swell Stockenstrom's majority, Graaff-Reinet had secured the election of a local candidate.

In 1873 Graaff-Reinet was again successful in returning Te Water. At the same time Murraysburg secured the election of J.A. Burger. Two candidates from the electoral division of Graaff-Reinet were thus returned, although Burger's election owed very little to Graaff-Reinet.³ The Seven Circles Act of 1874

1. Taylor, pp.131-132, 158-159.

2. GRH, 23 January 1869 (Advertisement columns and editorial), 30 January, 3, 20 February, 6 March 1869.

3. See pp.504-505 for a discussion on this election and the feelings aroused.

guaranteed equal representation in the Legislative Council for the midlands and secured them against domination by the more politically vigorous English-speaking community of the Eastern Province. It divided the colony into seven circles, three eastern, three western, and one midland, each returning three members to the Council. It broke down the domination of the Council by the cities, particularly as Grahamstown and Port Elizabeth fell into the same circle.¹

It is ironical that Graaff-Reinet succeeded in returning Te Water to the Council in 1869 and 1873 but did not have a candidate of its own in the first election under the Seven Circles Act in 1878. Nearby Murraysburg had J.A. Burger as its candidate, but Graaff-Reinet seemed disinclined to adopt him as their favourite candidate. Without a man of their own, and with Grahamstown no longer a threat, Graaff-Reinetters could vote according to their greatest need, a railway extension passing through the town.²

If one of Graaff-Reinet's main problems before 1878 was to secure adequate representation in the Legislative Council in the face of the dominance of Grahamstown, where the House of Assembly was concerned one of the main problems was to secure suitable candidates for parliamentary honours. In the first elections to the Assembly in April 1854 J.J. Meintjes having accepted a requisition from Albert, declined to stand. No poll

1. Sole, pp.281-282.

2. See p. 506 for further details concerning this election.

was demanded and a show of hands made Ziervogel and Thomas Nicolaas German Muller Graaff-Reinet's first members of parliament with 193 and 136 votes respectively. The only other candidate, C.H. Grisbrook, an Englishman who had earned the dislike of the Southey's because of his support for the Anti-Convict Association,¹ received 119 votes.² When Muller resigned after one session in parliament, Grisbrook was returned unopposed in February 1855, at a nomination meeting which the local paper described as "the most cheerless meeting that we ever attended, exciting far less interest than the election of a Municipal Commissioner, or even an ordinary police case".³ The state of affairs may be gauged from the fact that the voters of the electoral division of Graaff-Reinet went to the polls only once in an election to the Assembly in the period 1854-1878, and on only three other occasions, in 1854, in a bye-election in 1867, and in 1874, were there more than two candidates in the field.

This situation was, however, not entirely due to apathy. Graaff-Reinet, in common with most of the Eastern Province except Grahamstown, had few men with leisure to devote to politics and attending parliament in Cape Town. Ziervogel, who was responsible for the election of a number of carpet-baggers to represent

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1. Southey Papers, vol.1: W. Southey to R. Southey, 8 March 1850. Grisbrook, an apothecary also came into conflict with Dr Patrick MacCabe, who complained to the Colonial Medical Committee that Grisbrook was openly practising medicine, and thus competing with the medical practitioner (E.H. Burrows, A History of Medicine in South Africa up to the end of the Nineteenth Century, p.186).
 2. GRH, 8 March, 19 April 1854.
 3. GRH, 21 February 1855.

Graaff-Reinet, in 1861 said that he would have preferred "a representative from amongst us; but the difficulty was to find such a man".¹ That this was a problem is borne out by an examination of some of the difficulties in the way of Graaff-Reinet's representatives in parliament. Few men served out the period for which they were elected. Muller, who was elected with Ziervogel in 1854, resigned and was replaced by Grisbrook in February 1855. He apparently made little contribution and "Limner" later referred to Grisbrook "who sat for Graaff-Reinet, with his two hands upon his knees for three months upon the stretch".² Grisbrook missed the parliamentary session of 1857 because as Deputy Sheriff his presence in Graaff-Reinet was required when the circuit court visited the town. He consequently resigned,³ and F.S. Watermeyer of Cape Town was elected unopposed to replace him for the last session of the first parliament.⁴ At the end of 1858 Meintjes was elected with Ziervogel.⁵ He was unable to attend the 1859 session of parliament as his business partner, W.J. Dixon, had not yet returned from a visit to England. Meintjes asked his constituents whether they wished him to resign and make room for another who could attend the session. There appeared to be no objections to his non-attendance, and twenty-seven persons signed an address requesting

1. GRH, 27 February 1861.

2. Murray II, p.2.

3. GRH, 18 April 1857 ("Omnes"), 25 April 1857 ("Bogie"), 21 November 1857.

4. GRH, 9 January 1858.

5. GRH, 1 January 1859.

him to continue as their member.¹ He did, but was not long in parliament. The death of Dixon caused him to resign at the beginning of 1861 to attend to his business; in 1863 he was involved in insolvency proceedings.² Thus Graaff-Reinet lost one of her most able parliamentarians, and "Limner" found cause to regret that the services of Meintjes, "whose substantial appearance, mellow voice, and logical speeches, won for him a reputation, are lost to Graaff-Reinet".³

Even Ziervogel found it difficult to attend parliament. He missed the 1863 session and, in reply to a requisition in the general election of 1864, he stated that "various circumstances render it impossible for me to undertake to continue to give that constant attendance in Parliament, and uninterrupted attention to Parliamentary duties, which the electors are entitled to expect from their representatives. If, however, knowing this, you choose to elect me, I shall acquiesce in your decision".⁴ He was elected and missed the 1865 session of parliament. Richard Rutherford, who was elected with Ziervogel in 1864, resigned in August 1867.⁵ Rutherford was also a man of some talent, and in the session of 1865 he led the east in the struggle to equalise representation between east and west.⁶

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1. GRH, 9, 16 April 1859 (Advertisement columns).
 2. GRH, 5 January, 2 February 1861, 22 April, 2 May 1863.
 3. Murray II, p.3.
 4. GRH, 9 March 1864.
 5. GRH, 12 March 1864, 17 August 1867.
 6. Sole, pp.243-245; Murray II, pp.44-46.

Taking into account the apathy of the electors and the difficulty in obtaining men to stand, it is perhaps not surprising that Graaff-Reinet's representatives followed no consistent policy. Ziervogel who served for the whole period 1854-1873 was the one constant factor, and he was in favour of responsible government and opposed to the Voluntary Principle. If there was one common factor among Graaff-Reinet's members in the Assembly, it was that no representative ever supported separation as seen by Grahamstown. Some representatives did favour removal of the seat of government, but to Uitenhage, not Grahamstown. Although there was no great competition for parliamentary honours, it is reasonable to suppose that Ziervogel kept a watching brief over the candidates likely to accompany him to Cape Town. While he could not always ensure that such candidates shared his views on all subjects, it is almost certain that he would have taken steps to prevent the election of a candidate who favoured separation. Ziervogel himself later said that in the 1861 election, when F.S. Watermeyer was returned unopposed, there had been an attempt by separatists to obtain a candidate in favour of separation.¹

The attitude taken by parliamentary candidates towards the Voluntary Principle appears to have been important, as it was through the church that the majority of the country population maintained contact with events. The church was the one institution which could quicken the interest of the farmers in politics. In

1. GRH, 15 June 1861.

the first elections to the Assembly in 1854, Grisbrook attributed his defeat to a misunderstanding on the part of the voters as to his views on the Voluntary question. When he was elected at a bye-election in 1855 he told his Afrikaner constituents that he would always have their "real interests" at heart.¹ In January 1858 at a bye-election, a large number of farmers came into town to lend support to the candidature of F.S. Watermeyer, and it appears as if this sudden interest was the result of a church decision that it should protect its interests by influencing elections.² Ziervogel, Muller and Watermeyer were all anti-Voluntaries, but the fact that J.J. Meintjes was a firm supporter of the Voluntary Principle did not prevent his unopposed election at the end of 1858. Meintjes would in fact make no pledges, stating that he "must be left unfettered and be allowed to act as a sense of the interests of all parties concerned should seem to require".³ Rutherford was a Voluntary, as was S.A. Probart, elected in May 1869.⁴ Most of those who accompanied Ziervogel to parliament were against the introduction of responsible government. At the end of 1869, when the issue was a clear-cut one between Wodehouse's reform proposals and responsible government, J.A. Burger failed to give any expression of his views, but was nevertheless elected.⁵

1. GRH, 21 February 1855.

2. GRH, 9 January 1858.

3. GRH, 18 September 1858, 1 January 1859.

4. GRH, 16 September 1863 (Reply of Rutherford to a requisition), 12 May 1869.

5. See pp.501-503.

The imprint of the Stockenstrom-Ziervogel combination can be clearly discerned in the persons who represented Graaff-Reinet in the Assembly. It was Ziervogel's influence which secured the election of one of his relatives, F.S. Watermeyer of Cape Town, who was also a close associate of Stockenstrom, in 1858 and again in 1861.¹ Another relative of Stockenstrom, J.J. Meintjes, was elected at the end of 1858² and in 1867 Andries Hartzenberg, also connected to the Stockenstrom family, was elected to replace Richard Rutherford. Andries Stockenstrom, (jnr), was to receive a requisition from Graaff-Reinet in 1878, which he was regretfully forced to decline, having already agreed to stand in Albert.³ In 1874 Andries Ferdinand Stockenstrom Maasdoorp, who was related to the Stockenstrom family through Sir Andries's wife, was elected.⁴

Thus while Graaff-Reinet was served by a number of carpet-baggers, they were mostly men who had close associations with Graaff-Reinet or were connected with prominent Graaff-Reinet families. On the occasion of the election of F.S. Watermeyer in 1861, Ziervogel said that it was wrong to think that an outsider would not understand the needs of Graaff-Reinet. He said that if Watermeyer "studied the welfare of his own friends

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1. GRH, 9 January 1858, 27 February 1861.
 2. These family connections are discussed on pp.452-453.
 3. GRH, 18 September 1867; Te Water Papers, vol.44: F.K. te Water to A. Stockenstrom, 7 December 1878 (copy) and enclosed requisition (copy); Te Water Papers, vol.44: Telegram from Stockenstrom, 13 December 1878, and A. Stockenstrom to F.K. te Water, 24 December 1878.
 4. GRH, 31 January 1874.

and relatives who reside amongst us, then he must study the welfare of the public at the same time of course".¹ Ziervogel used his influence to secure the services of Watermeyer, not to keep out local men but because of the dearth of local men. This was, however, not always the case, and when Maasdorp was elected in 1874, there were local candidates willing to stand.²

It is uncertain to what extent the election of these carpet-baggers was the result of a conscious desire to have representatives with influence in Cape Town to further Graaff-Reinet's interests. Certainly in Watermeyer and in Maasdorp, who became Solicitor General while serving Graaff-Reinet in parliament,³ they had men of standing. In 1878 a requisition was sent to Andries Stockenstrom, who had just completed a spell in the cabinet as Attorney General. When he declined to stand, he suggested that an approach should be made to William Fleming (jnr), a wealthy Cape Town merchant. The suggestion was followed up and Fleming was elected.⁴ He was also a man of influence, and served as mayor of Cape Town at this time.

(v) Growth of Political Consciousness among the Farmers

Apart from the small group of English-speaking farmers in the district, the farming population of Graaff-Reinet had given no expression of opinion in the

1. GRH, 27 February 1861.

2. GRH, 31 January 1874.

3. GRA, 24 August 1878.

4. Te Water Papers, vol.44: A.Stockenstrom to F.K. te Water, 13 December 1878 (Telegram); GRA, 28 December 1878, 15 March 1879.

anti-convict crisis; divisions concerning the introduction of representative government were likewise confined to the town; and in the Eighth Frontier War, it was the townsmen who had taken the initiative in refusing to go out, and the district who had followed their lead. In the great debate on separation in 1860-1861, expression of opinion was confined to the town and the English farmers around Wheatlands.

An early indication of the political awakening among the farmers was evident in the bye-election in 1867 to replace Richard Rutherford. This bye-election marked the first appearance of a farmer as a parliamentary candidate. Although on this occasion the electorate did not go to the polls, the appearance of farmers as candidates was to introduce an element of competition into parliamentary elections to the House of Assembly. Where all candidates were townsmen, a show of hands on nomination day usually satisfied all contenders and their supporters, but where there was a candidate who had most of his support in the district, as opposed to the town, it was unlikely that his supporters could be satisfied with a show of hands taken in the town. But even a show of hands could on occasion result in a victory for a farmer candidate. The bye-election of 1867 was evidence of this.

If it is taken into account that apart from the very first election in 1854 all candidates had been returned without any sort of opposition, there was reason for the Herald's view in 1867 that "Judging by the small amount of political vitality which prevails amongst us, we think it hardly probable that there will be a contest

for the vacant seat".¹ There was, however, a contest with Andries Hartzenberg, a farmer, and Frans (F.K.) te Water, an agent, the largest landed proprietor in town, as the candidates. Besides the fact that he was the first farmer to stand for election, Hartzenberg's candidature is also noteworthy because he had first made his entry on to the public scene via the Divisional Council which provided some evidence of the value of local boards in training for wider service in colonial politics. Having served his apprenticeship on the municipal board Te Water himself was another example of this.

There was not much to choose between the views of the two candidates, and the election was not fought on party lines. Nomination day coincided with nagmaal so that there were many farmers in town, and it was to them that Hartzenberg made his appeal, saying that he "was born and bred amongst them ... He had laboured in the same field with them". He maintained that Te Water, as a townsman, could not possibly be acquainted with their needs to the same extent. "As a farmer he had to suffer and struggle on, amidst cold and heat, wind and snow, as they had done. Could Mr. Te Water put forth those claims?".²

Here was the first attempt to introduce a cleavage between town and country, to stress the identity of the farmers as a community with their own special needs. Hitherto it had been the town, more particular-

1. GRH, 24 August 1867.

2. GRH, 7, 18 September 1867; GRA Supplement,
1 October 1867.

ly the business community of the town, which had given the lead to Graaff-Reinet. This community was united over municipal questions, and also, to a large extent, in elections to the Legislative Council, where they were opposed to Grahamstown and the frontier districts. They were frequently divided on the question of representation in the Assembly, where a group of Englishmen, but by no means all Englishmen, found themselves at odds with the rest of the business community. These Englishmen had little chance of success while the Afrikaners of the mercantile community could rally support from the erfholders of the town and the Afrikaners of the rural areas. The stirring of the Afrikaner farmers, which culminated in the advent of the Afrikaner Bond in 1881, drew a sharp distinction between town and country. This was to cause English and Afrikaner business men to close ranks as townsmen, while the erfholders, really farmers, joined the country party.

In the late sixties there was no organisation or definite plan to further the farming interest, and in the Assembly elections of 10 May 1869, Probart and Ziervogel were returned unopposed, although Ziervogel was anti-Voluntary and pro-responsible government, and Probart was a Voluntary and opposed to the introduction of responsible government.¹ Elections to the Assembly were again held towards the end of 1869, where the principle issue was Wodehouse's Constitution Amendment Bill or responsible government. The issue was clear-cut and Graaff-Reinet's two retiring members were on oppo-

1. GRH, 12 May, 6 November 1869.

site sides. This did not, however, prevent numerous Graaff-Reineters from signing requisitions to both these men.¹ Probart declined to stand. Ziervogel's election was regarded by both sides as certain,² and the contest was to decide who should accompany him to parliament. P.L. Buyskes of the town of Graaff-Reinet stood as a candidate in favour of responsible government,³ while the anti-responsible sent a requisition to an Afrikaner farmer of the district, J.H. Booysen, leaving him unfettered on all questions provided he declared himself against responsible government. He agreed.⁴ The nomination of Booysen was a shrewd move to capture the farming vote, but Ziervogel was not to be outdone, and he now masterminded the entry into the field of J.A. Burger of Murraysburg, and a joint election committee was formed to run Ziervogel and Burger together.⁵ Burger, as a pillar of the church in Murraysburg could expect full support from this quarter,⁶ while the district of Graaff-Reinet would have to divide its votes among three local candidates.

Burger neither visited Graaff-Reinet nor gave an exposition of his views. On nomination day Ziervogel

1. GRH, 6 November 1869.
2. GRH, 22 December 1869.
3. GRH, 3 November 1869.
4. GRH, 27 November 1869.
5. GRH, 4, 11 December 1869 (Advertisement columns).
6. J.A. Burger was the eldest son of Barend J.J. Burger (Barend "Vleiplaas"), founder of Murraysburg. He was a nephew of T.F. Burgers, although some fourteen years older than Burgers. See S.P. Engelbrecht, Thomas Francois Burgers; A Biography, pp.2-3; GRA, 15 October 1888.

spoke for Burger, saying that Burger saw the necessity for some change but "had not quite made up his mind what remedy should be applied, but would wait and see what was proposed, and then he would judge for himself".¹ He also said that Burger "was well acquainted with the English language, and could write a good English letter", a circumstance which also bothered the Herald in its support of Booyesen, of whom the editor wrote that he was "not a fluent speaker in English, but will doubtless improve". At the nomination meeting, a show of hands gave a majority to Ziervogel and Buyskes, the two candidates from the town; the supporters of Booyesen and Burger would obviously not be content with the expression of the town's opinion, and a poll was demanded.² For the first time in an election to the House of Assembly, the electorate went to the polls.

The Herald had realised that to some extent the elections would "turn upon personal instead of political considerations, for it must necessarily be some time before people can be brought to regard measures and not men".³ That there was much truth in this is evident in Burger's silence as to measures. Te Water, who had earlier in the year gained election to the Legislative Council on an anti-responsible government platform, was consistent to the extent that he served on Booyesen's election committee, but this did not prevent him from signing the requisition to Ziervogel and in fact nomina-

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1. GRH, 8, 18 December 1869 (The comments of various correspondents on the failure of Burger to explain his views), 29 December 1869.
 2. GRH, 8 December 1869.
 3. GRH, 27 November 1869.

ting Ziervogel at the nomination day proceedings.¹ An analysis of the election returns is further evidence of the paramountcy of men and not measures. Ziervogel and Booyesen were on opposite sides in the great question of the introduction of responsible government, but in the fiscal division of Graaff-Reinet they topped the poll, and it was Murraysburg that gave the victory to Burger:

	<u>Ziervogel</u>	<u>Burger</u>	<u>Booyesen</u>	<u>Buyskes</u>
Town of Graaff-Reinet	181	120	145	143
District of Graaff-Reinet	157	110	99	34
Town and district of Murraysburg	137	144	3	0
	<u>475</u>	<u>374</u>	<u>247</u>	<u>177</u> ²

There was much truth in the Herald's assertion that:

In regard to the politics of the district, the election proves very little, save that Messrs. ZIERVOGEL and BURGER are personally popular men. There is a certain number of people in the town who intelligently desire Responsible Government; there is a certain number who intelligently oppose it either in toto, or for the present; these numbers are not very unequal. Over and above these, is the large mass who are ignorant of, and uninfluenced by the form of Government question; and who will vote for the most popular men, or the first men, if not unpopular, who are put forward.³

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1. GRH, 8 December 1869 (Nomination day proceedings and advertisement re Booyesen's election committee), 11 December 1869 (Requisition to Ziervogel); Te Water was not alone in this respect.
 2. GRH, 29 December 1869, 1 January 1870. This last return gave Buyskes 178 votes.
 3. GRH, 22 December 1869.

This victory did much for the political awakening of Murraysburg and Graaff-Reinet was no longer to have its own way. In the Legislative Council elections in the second half of 1873 Burger was again a candidate. Graaff-Reinet sent a requisition to Burger and F.K. te Water, and a joint election committee to secure their return was formed. Because of the system of plumping which applied in Legislative Council elections there was always a fear that any agreement would be ignored and that voters would give their full quota of votes to their favourite candidate. When Murraysburg formed an election committee to work only for Burger, Graaff-Reinet retaliated and deserted Burger.¹ The town of Graaff-Reinet came out strongly in favour of Te Water with 3 145 votes to 465 for Burger; Murraysburg gave Burger 2 030 votes and Te Water 58.² Both Te Water and Burger were returned, with 6 245 and 5 430 votes respectively.³ Burger received good support from other centres. That Graaff-Reinet had sent Burger a requisition but had failed to support him caused somewhat strained relations between Graaff-Reinet and Murraysburg. Burger himself entered the fray promising that "Graaff Reinet as an electoral division may expect more justice from me (to the best of my ability) than I have received from Graaff Reinet and its electors as their proposed candidate".⁴ The mistrust and suspicion

1. GRH, 18, 25, 29 October 1873 ("Fairplay"), 1, 5 November 1873.

2. GRH, 19 November 1873.

3. GRH, 29 November 1873.

4. GRH, 3 January 1874 (J.A. Burger). See also GRH, 17 December 1873 (J.S. de Villiers).

aroused during this election was to remain a feature of Legislative Council elections for many years.¹

The challenge from Murraysburg caused the townsmen of Graaff-Reinet to close ranks and defeat the attempt to break their stranglehold on representation. Before the Assembly elections early in 1874 Graaff-Reinet's first political association, the Midland Political Association, was established on 22 September 1873 with an executive consisting largely of members of the business community.² Murraysburg put forward J. Sissison as a candidate whose chances must have been considered good with Sam Probart, Charles Rubidge, J.H. Booysen and A.F.S. Maasdorp in the field. The Midland Political Association, however, had no intention of allowing matters to take a natural course. Sissison realised this, and in explaining why he had not attended a meeting called by the Association he said that he had received the invitation too late but that he would in any event not have attended:

As the Association in question has decided that both members for this division must be Graaff Reinet men, and that to insure this, two of the four Graaff Reinet candidates now in the field should retire, I think it becomes a patient {sic} fact that the Association looks on the interest of the town of Graaff Reinet as antagonistic to the general interests of the electoral division.

If this was the voice of the country objecting to the dominance of the town, the Herald found the reasoning

1. See pp.534-538.

2. GRH, 24 September 1873.

faulty, believing that the interests of town and district were generally the same, and that "the town is both the head and the heart of the district".¹

Sission had correctly interpreted the aims of the Midland Political Association and, when a show of hands on nomination day gave a majority of votes to Probart and Maasdorp, Rubidge and Booysen withdrew, thus ensuring that the Graaff-Reinet vote would not be split.

Sission, faced by a united Graaff-Reinet, also withdrew.²

In the Legislative Council elections of 1878, the first election under the Seven Circles Act, Burger was the only candidate from the electoral division of Graaff-Reinet. Graaff-Reinet, however, does not appear to have pledged itself to support Burger; Graaff-Reinet's support for the various candidates revolved largely around the desire for a railway extension passing through the town. Thus, J.B. Auret of Victoria West, who agreed to support such an extension, received 593 votes in the town, while Charles Pritchard of Beaufort West, who was definitely opposed to an extension through the town, received only one vote. For the rest Graaff-Reinet divided its votes between Marquard of Cape Town and Burger, both of whom refused to give a definite pledge, giving them 239 and 262 votes respectively.³

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1. GRH, 7 January 1874 (Report of meeting, 5 January 1874 and letter from J. Sission, dated Murraysburg, 5 January 1874).
 2. GRH, 31 January 1874.
 3. GRA, 24 September, 1, 19 October, 12, 16, 19, 26 November, 7 December 1878.

In the Assembly elections which followed shortly afterwards, F.K. te Water and William Fleming of Cape Town were elected unopposed. Although there was no competition from the rest of the electoral division to the election of the town's two candidates, evidence of the growing claims of local interests was not absent; some 148 erfholders attempted to nominate G.F.N. Waldek on condition that he gave a pledge to vote against the Excise Act.¹ Although nothing came of this, it is clear that Hofmeyr's recently formed boeren beschermings vereeniging had found an echo in Graaff-Reinet.²

Aberdeen also showed that it had special interests, and before the election an approach from this quarter was made to Te Water:

As regards the subjects of Railway extension, Confederation and other important public matters, we seek no pledge or promise from you, feeling assured that you will give them each and all that attention which the interests of the Colony demand.

There are however some matters of a purely local nature which are of such vital importance to us as a Community that before pledging ourselves to promote your election we should wish to have from you a promise of support.

These pressing local needs included the desire for a civil commissioner and resident magistrate at Aberdeen and telegraphic communications with the rest of the colony.³

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1. GRA, 14 January, 22 February 1879.
 2. T.R.H. Davenport, The Afrikaner Bond; The History of a South African Political Party, 1880-1911, pp.10-27 deals with the establishment of the vereeniging.
 3. Te Water Papers, vol.4: Letter from Aberdeen, 27 January 1879 and Te Water's draft reply, 3 February 1879.

In the seventies although there was more interest on the part of the farmers in politics, it was for the most part undirected and sporadic. By 1878 the town still controlled matters, even if it was on occasion forced to give attention to the claims of the country. In the fifties and sixties even such promotion of farming interests as there was came from the town. From 1828 there had been a number of agricultural societies in Graaff-Reinet. In 1853 "The Graaff Reinet and Richmond Agricultural Society" was formed; it held an annual show which was generally poorly supported by the farmers.¹ In January 1860 the Herald summed up the activities of this society by saying that it "gave its yearly sigh of life last March, as it does every year, by holding a show and giving a few paltry prizes; and but for this, - and this is really not worth living for, - it might as well cease to exist".² Within a year or so it does seem to have disappeared from the scene. Towards the end of 1864 steps were taken to revive it, an attempt which was not made without a serious clash of personalities. The conflict was resolved early in 1865 and "The Graaff Reinet Agricultural Society" emerged with a committee comprised largely of townsmen.³

A. Murray, in a letter to the Herald pointed out the anomaly of a committee of an agricultural society

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1. GRH, 4 January, 8 March 1854, 28 March 1855, 12 April 1856, 28 March 1857, 20 March 1858.
 2. GRH, 28 January 1860.
 3. Details concerning the controversy are contained in GRH, 21 September, 22 October, 5 November, 31 December 1864, 14, 21 January (Supplement), 1 April 1865.

consisting of "merchants, lawyers, and agents". He felt that the society had failed in that it had not excited the interest of farmers or tried to show them the benefits that could accrue to them from belonging to such a society. "You have", he wrote, "allowed merchants and others to compete for prizes for machinery and rams they never used, for wool they never raised, and horses they never bred".¹ The agricultural show at the end of March 1865 seemed to bear out his contention as there were only 118 entries from 47 exhibitors. A quarter of the entries were from Messrs Parkes Brothers, of the farm Wheatlands.² The drought caused the 1866 show to be abandoned,³ and lack of interest resulted in the society's collapse. There was talk of reviving it in 1870,⁴ but nothing appears to have come of it, nor of the decision taken by the Chamber of Commerce in 1875 to revive it.⁵

Among the farming community the most prominent supporters of these agricultural societies were a number of English-speaking farmers, particularly the Parkes' of Wheatlands. This group of English farmers in the field cornetcy of Buffelshoek had always been among the most politically conscious section of the farming community, and it was from among their ranks that a

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1. GRH, 28 January 1865.
 2. GRH, 1 April 1865.
 3. GRH, 10 March 1866. The report refers merely to the postponement of the show, but it appears that it was never held.
 4. GRH, 5 November 1870.
 5. GRH, 5 June 1875.

branch of the Separation League was established in 1861. A consciousness of the farmers as a special group with their own peculiar needs seems also to have arisen from this group. In July 1873 James E. Barnes wrote to the Herald from the farm Stapleford, expressing views with which Bondsmen a decade later would not have found fault. He wrote that the farmers

constitute the largest and most important class of the white population of the colony, and, consequently, ought to command a strong, if not the strongest party in the legislature; but hitherto there has not been the shadow of a party devoted to the interests of the farming community, and certainly the haphazard manner in which all legislation upon matters affecting the farming interest has been carried on, is a fact which reflects but small credit upon the farming community.

He appreciated that the isolation of the farmers and the difficulty of arranging frequent political meetings was partially responsible for their political apathy, but maintained that "political organization is the very thing above all others, that has been entirely neglected by the farmers, and yet there is really no insuperable obstacle in the way of a complete organization throughout the country, if the farmers could only be brought to take a sufficient interest in the matter".¹

Shortly after this, at a meeting held at Wheatlands on 24 July 1873 with S.B. Hobson in the chair, a resolution was carried favouring the formation of farmers' associations "throughout the country for the pur-

1. GRH, 19 July 1873.

pose of advancing the political as well as the pastoral and agricultural interests of the farming community, and that in order to render such associations thoroughly effective they should be formed in every district and neighbourhood where circumstances will allow". To put this resolution into practice it was decided to form a farmers' association, and a provisional committee which included S.B. Hobson, J.S. Parkes and J. Barnes was formed. That the establishment of a farmers' association at this particular time was not unconnected with the approaching elections to the Legislative Council may be gauged from the fact that at this meeting a decision was taken to support only those candidates who would work for a direct rail link with Port Elizabeth and also for the division of the colony into three provinces.¹ It is not clear how wide the support for this political programme was even in the field cornetcy of Buffelshoek, and in the election Te Water received 42 votes, Stretch 25, Godlonton 19 and Chase 17,² which did not express any real political unanimity.

Nothing further is known of this association which appears to have been stillborn, possibly as a result of declining interest once the elections had passed. This was almost certainly the case with the Midland Political Association established two months after this farmers' association. The Midland Political Association, which had its roots in the Assembly elections

1. GRH, 2 August 1873.

2. GRH, 29 November 1873.

of 1874, played a role in persuading certain Graaff-Reinet candidates to withdraw and so avoid a contest in which the Murraysburg candidate might succeed. This election and some activity in connection with the organisation of a railway conference¹ appears to have been the limit of its activities, and it quietly disappeared from the scene.

The desire for a farmers' association persisted among the English-speaking farmers in the southern parts of the Graaff-Reinet district, and at two meetings held in May 1878 to discuss measures for the protection of ostriches from thieves, steps were taken to establish the Midland Farmers' Association, based on the rules of the Albany Farmers' Association.² In October, office bearers were elected - these included people such as Richard and John Parkes, Henry Maasdrorp, J.W. Richardson, Walter Murray, Walter Rubidge, Hugh Evans, and Henry Sandford, editor of the Graaff-Reinet Advertiser.³ This association also enjoyed only a brief existence. It is, however, worthy of note as it is evidence of the continuing search among the English-speaking farmers for an organisation to promote their interests; a number of those whose names appeared on the committee were later to become leading figures in the Zwart Ruggens Farmers' Association.

1. GRH, 24 September, 1 October, 15 November 1873, 7 January 1874.
2. GRA, 14 May, 1, 4 June, 10 September 1878; GRH, 14 September 1878.
3. GRA, 12 October 1878.

There was at the same time in Graaff-Reinet some interest in forming a branch of the boeren beschermings vereeniging, in the establishment of which, in the western Cape, Hofmeyr and the Zuid-Afrikaan had been largely instrumental. The Zuid-Afrikaan saw what it thought was an opportunity to extend the movement to the east via Graaff-Reinet¹ but nothing came of this.² There was, however, much sympathy among the erfholders for the aims of the vereeniging; as vine-growers they fully approved of the attitude taken up with regard to Sprigg's intention of placing an excise tax on colonial brandy and in 1879 they attempted, unsuccessfully, to secure a candidate who would represent their interests.³

From at least 1873 English-speaking farmers had propagated the idea of a farmers' association with branches throughout the colony. The boeren beschermings vereeniging and the Afrikaner Bond with which it amalgamated in the early eighties realised this aim of a wide-ranging organisation. The inspiration for it, however, came from the Afrikaner farmers, and the tendency of the Afrikaner Bond to racial exclusivism made the great majority of English farmers fight shy of it, although insofar as it attempted to promote the welfare of the farming community, they were in agreement with much of its programme.

1. ZA, 5 October 1878.

2. The reason why "Hofmeyr apparently lost interest in this new body" (Davenport, p.19) is that such a body was in fact never established; a report in the ZA of 19 October 1878 referring to the establishment in Graaff-Reinet of the "Middenlandsche Boerenvereeniging" is misleading, for this report, taken from the GRA of 12 October 1878, refers to the election of office bearers of the Midland Farmers' Association, and the confusion obviously arose from the translation of this name into Dutch.

3. GRA, 14 January, 22 February 1879.

The dilemma of the English farmers is well illustrated by a meeting of the inhabitants of Voor Sneeuwberg in November 1882 to discuss the establishment of a branch of the Afrikaner Bond. Walter Murray agreed with the need for a change in the political life of the colony but said that the Afrikaner Bond had come under suspicion and that anything that was a possible cause of division between Englishman and Afrikaner should be avoided. He proposed the formation of an association to be called the South African Union, which proposal was lost by twelve votes to thirteen.¹

Sank, in her study of the origins of the Progressive party of the Cape, states that the English farmers' associations were attempts to counteract the influence of the Bond.² This generalisation is largely valid, but an examination of one of the most important of these associations, the Zwart Ruggens Farmers' Association (ZRFA), reveals a more complex system of relationships than simply an organisation to answer and oppose that of the Bond. Another attempt to establish a farmers' association among the English-speaking farmers along the southern borders of Graaff-Reinet arose from a circular of 1883 sent from the Upper Albany Farmers' Association to all known farmers' associations with a view to the holding of a congress.³ The ZRFA was established at a meeting held at the farm Rietfontein.

1. GRA, 11 November 1882.

2. Y.P. Sank, The Origin and Development of the Cape Progressive Party (1884-1898), pp. 10, 35.

3. GRA, 23 May 1898 (Brief history of farmers' associations in the east).

H. Hayes stated that the object of the association would be "the full discussion of all matters affecting the interests of farmers, whether political or otherwise, and the free interchange of ideas on the best methods employed in the various branches of farming in this colony". He went on to say that it was hoped that the association would "augment the efforts of already existing kindred societies, in bringing forward the many disabilities under which farmers at present rest, with a view to obtaining legislative relief". Here was envisaged not a society to oppose but rather to work in conjunction with similar organisations. Although this did not exclude co-operation with the Bond, and Hayes had undoubtedly spoken partly with the Bond in mind, the inspiration for the new association came from the Upper Albany Farmers' Association, which also provided the model for the rules of the ZRFA.¹

In an attempt to win the support of Afrikaners, particularly Bondsmen, the ZRFA decided that no discussion would be permitted on "subjects bearing upon any national differences which may exist between the various nationalities of which the farming community is made up".² At its first quarterly meeting in November 1883 the meeting passed a motion of confidence in F.K. te Water who was a candidate in the forthcoming Legislative Council elections,³ but this was the only occasion on which the ZRFA as a body ever gave its support to any political candidate.

1. GRA, 26 July, 30 October 1883.

2. GRA, 30 October 1883.

3. GRA, 8 November 1883.

In order to gain adherents among the Afrikaans farmers and to retain unity among its English-speaking members, the ZRFA was careful to avoid any discussion of party politics. The Advertiser approved of the ZRFA's spurning "barren politics" and its concentration on politics only insofar as they affected the farmers as farmers. It was hoped that the principle would be extended and that Bondsmen too would be able to find a home in the ZRFA.¹ The ZRFA was indeed expanding. By its annual meeting in July 1884 its membership stood at 53,² to reach 112 a year later.³ From 1884 branches of the ZRFA were formed in various parts of Graaff-Reinet and adjoining districts,⁴ and by the beginning of 1886 four farmers' associations had adopted the rules of the ZRFA.⁵ In its efforts to establish an organisation with branches everywhere, the ZRFA received the powerful support of Henry Sandford, editor of the Advertiser, who on occasion wrote personal letters to such associations suggesting that they become branches of the ZRFA.⁶ The attempt of the ZRFA to draw all these associations together came to nought, partly because of the lessening hostility between Bond and non-Bond from the middle eighties and partly because the English farmers did not form as homogeneous a group as

1. GRA, 30 July 1884.

2. GRA, 23 July 1884. In July 1885 it was stated that there had been fifty-eight members in 1884 (GRA, 17 July 1885).

3. GRA, 17 July 1885.

4. GRA, 23 July 1884, 31 July 1885.

5. GRA, 21 January 1886.

6. For one such letter to the Voor Sneeuwberg Farmers' Association see GRA, 5 February 1886.

did the Afrikaans farmers. It was a sufficiently difficult task to preserve the unity of the ZRFA, let alone the presentation of a united front among its various off-shoots.

The Advertiser, in commenting upon a proposal of the Cape Town branch of the Afrikaner Bond that closer links be forged between the Bond and the English-speaking farmers' associations of the east, thought that the plan was impracticable, that "the admission of questions of general politics into the proceedings of the farmers' associations would very soon split up and make an end of them".¹ A few months later Sandford advised some farmers who were in the process of establishing a farmers' association at New Bethesda to remain aloof from politics and warned that "any discussion of any questions but those of legislation touching the farmers as a class would soon bring the association to a final end".²

The tale of the ZRFA is one of a constant struggle to keep politics, in the sense of party politics, out of its discussions. The success with which it did this, even though it was at times forced to strange compromises, is in large measure responsible for the relative success of the association. Some of its members saw the ZRFA as a potential organisation to fight elections along the same lines as the Bond, while others were themselves English-speaking Bondsmen who wanted at all costs to avoid party politics and to encourage Afrikaner Bondsmen to join the ZRFA. Others again were

1. GRA, 6 January 1885.

2. GRA, 10 July 1885.

simply not interested in political questions as such, and wanted an organisation which would be a forum for the discussion of farming problems. There is much reason for believing that Sandford's assessment was correct, that the exclusion of politics was vital for the unity of the ZRFA. There can be little doubt that the ZRFA outlived other associations of English-speaking Graaff-Reineters for the very reason that it excluded political discussions.

Among the Afrikaner farmers of the district there had been indications of a stirring of political consciousness from at least 1867. This was at first evident primarily in the appearance, as parliamentary candidates, of farmers who had obtained a taste for politics through serving in the Divisional Council. Sole gives the Graaff Reinets Herald much of the credit for the increasing interest taken in public affairs.¹ While this may have spurred the English-speaking section of the community, it is unlikely that it had any effect on the Afrikaans farmers who almost certainly did not read the Herald or the Advertiser. Even in the town of Graaff-Reinet the Afrikaner erfholders were at times ignorant of public meetings which had been advertised exclusively in these papers.² It is more difficult to assess the influence of De Graaff-Reinets Courant which appeared in 1865, the political views of which were wedded to those of the Advertiser. The staple literature of Graaff-Reinet from the 1850's was

1. Sole, p.256 n.

2. See pp.225, 230.

the Zuid-Afrikaan,¹ and it is more likely that Hofmeyr's campaign from 1871 onwards to awaken Afrikaner consciousness was of greater effect.

As Graaff-Reinet, in common with other rural areas, became more used to representative institutions and elections and as people gained some experience in local bodies, much of their ignorance of and apathy to the workings of government and politics in general underwent a change. Communications within the division improved after the main roads came under the control of the Divisional Council after 1864. The effect of the establishment of villages in the fifties should not be overlooked as a factor in the growth of political consciousness. These villages became centres where farmers could gather, while the churches that were established there provided kerkraads and municipal boards where people could obtain an insight into the workings of local governing bodies.

If these were some of the reasons for the increasing interest taken by the Afrikaner farmers in politics, there were also special reasons why the town played such a dominant role in the political life of the district. Although politically minded Afrikaner farmers might gain experience in debate and in the functioning of public institutions, it was only in 1882

1. See for example the evidence of Ziervogel before the select committee on the first class school at Graaff-Reinet, 1858, and the statement of George Brenner to the Commercial Advertiser, reprinted in GRH, 27 February 1858.

that the use of Dutch in parliament was recognised. In the elections of 1869 it was necessary for Afrikaner farmer-candidates to give assurances that they were able to communicate in English, and even a Dutch townsman came under suspicion on this count. Thus certain people in the Legislative Council elections in 1869 attempted to disparage the candidature of F.K. te Water on the grounds that he was unable to speak English.¹ Although the allegation was entirely without foundation, it is interesting as an example of the suspicion which an Afrikaner candidate automatically aroused on this score. This language barrier favoured representation of the town, for not only were the majority of English-speaking persons concentrated there, but the Afrikaner business and professional men needed to speak English. Few rural Afrikaners went into the professions, and the Bond was later to be hard put in its attempts to secure the services of even one lawyer.²

The majority of Graaff-Reinet's educated Afrikaners were to reject the Afrikaner Bond. Part of the reason must be seen in the strength of their social relationships with their English-speaking friends and an unwillingness to break these relationships by joining an association which was anathema to most Englishmen. Most of these Afrikaners were townsmen who had more in common with English-speaking townsmen than with Afrikaner farmers or erfholders.

1. GRH, 23 January ("Fairplay"), 27 January ("Fairplay"), 3 February 1869.

2. See pp.565-567.

CHAPTER 13

ENTER THE AFRIKANER BOND, 1881-1889

(i) The Introduction of a New Spirit

The moving spirit behind the establishment of a branch of the Afrikaner Bond in Graaff-Reinet was R.P. Botha, a friend of Hofmeyr, who was also apparently responsible for the nickname "Onze Jan".¹ Botha had served Cradock in the House of Assembly from 1869 to 1878, and was later to achieve prominence in the Afrikaner Bond as chairman of the provincial bestuur from 1886 to 1892.²

The situation in the Transvaal provided the spur to action and Botha, in January 1881, organised a meeting to discuss various resolutions which had been sent up from Cape Town as part of a campaign to show solidarity with the Transvaal. The meeting was guided by Botha who was at pains to include the Afrikaner business community in the proceedings. Thus it was Botha who proposed that F.K. te Water, one of Graaff-Reinet's members in the Assembly, take the chair. Botha then proposed the first of the motions, and he did so in English; a second was placed in the hands of C.A. Nesor, another man representative of the business community of the town. This stated that "any attempt at enforcing

1. T.R.H. Davenport, The Afrikaner Bond; The History of a South African Political Party, 1880-1911, p.290.

2. Davenport, Appendix, p.397.

Her Majesty's rule by force of arms will simply tend to ruin the Transvaal and alienate, from that rule, the minds of many of Her Majesty's hitherto loyal subjects in South Africa". It was in the course of the discussion of this resolution that the first sign of division appeared, when T.N.G. Auret, an Afrikaner business man, objected to its "seditious spirit".¹

The attempt to include the mercantile community in these proceedings continued at a meeting later in the year at which it was decided to have a public dinner to celebrate the restoration of Transvaal independence. Botha again played a leading role, and both Nesor and Auret were made members of the committee. Nesor, who enjoyed great popularity in both town and district, was clearly already uneasy at the trend of events and he objected vigorously to the cries of "Dutch" that were heard when someone was speaking in English.²

There was a close connection between the events in the Transvaal and the awakening of the political consciousness of the Afrikaners. At a meeting of 2 August 1881, with Botha in the chair, the Rev Compaan gave an exposition of the principles of the Afrikaner Bond. Botha made an attempt to include the Afrikaners of the business community in the organisation by proposing Te Water and Nesor as members of the committee to revise the rules so as to make them applicable to Graaff-

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1. GRA, 11 January 1881. Te Water was later criticised for presiding at the meeting (GRA, 22 March 1881).
 2. GRA, 30 July 1881.

Reinet; Auret's opposition at every stage appears to have placed him beyond the pale.¹ A branch of the Afrikaner Bond was established on 8 October 1881.²

Despite Botha's efforts, Nesor, Te Water and the great majority of Afrikaners of the east end of town did not join the Bond. It was not the rules of the Bond which gave offence but rather the actions of certain Bondsmen who led the majority of English-orientated Afrikaner business men to reject the Bond in the belief that the organisation was responsible for driving a wedge between Englishman and Afrikaner. Antagonism between English and Dutch was not unknown in the years before 1881, but it came more into the open after that date. The cry of "Hollandsch" was heard at public meetings, particularly if it were an Afrikaner who was speaking in English.³ There was greater friction over language in the town council after 1881. At a council meeting on 26 January 1881

Councillor Weitz requested that the proceedings be carried on in Dutch. He did not understand English very well ... He believed that all the Councillors could speak Dutch. It was true the Mayor gave the substance of what was said in English, but that took up the time of the Council unnecessarily. Mr. Laurie was astonished at the request. This was an English town; the proceedings should be in English.

1. GRA, 6 August 1881.

2. ZA, 20 October 1881.

3. When C.H. Maasdorp, for example, spoke in English at a meeting in 1883 he was told that if an Afrikaner could not speak his own language he had better remain silent (GRA, 16 January 1883).

To Charles Geard the "idea of carrying on the proceedings of the Council in the language of a people to whom the country did not belong seemed to him a very strange one".¹ The proceedings continued to be conducted in English and Weitz's English did not apparently improve. At a council meeting early in 1883 he made the illuminating remark that "ik verstaat nix van julle Engels", and walked out.²

There could be little room for agreement between men like Botha and Henry Sandford, editor of the Advertiser. At the same time as Botha was speaking in favour of more representation for Afrikaners in parliament and looking forward to the introduction of Dutch into parliament and the courts,³ Sandford was expressing himself against the introduction of Dutch into parliament as this "would be almost certain to bring men into the Parliament who could contribute little or nothing to enlightened legislation".⁴ The Bond's definition of Afrikaner, which simply included a "South Africa first" tag, was perfectly acceptable to the Advertiser, which claimed to have been an old campaigner against British interference in South African affairs, but the Bond, as the Advertiser saw it, stirred up racial hatred.⁵ Botha felt that part of the hostility of the English towards the Bond was that:

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1. GRA, 29 January 1881 (Municipal meeting, 26 January).
 2. GRA, 11 January 1883 (Municipal meeting, 9 January).
 3. GRA, 20 September 1881 (Report of dinner to celebrate restoration of Transvaal independence).
 4. GRA, 13 September 1881.
 5. GRA, 6 August, 17 September 1881.

The Bond is a too purely Colonial institution; too jealous of the colonists rights, as opposed to those of the Imperial Government, to please those who speak of going 'home', when they go to England. This is one reason, and the difference of language is another. But the chief reason why English colonists cannot become members is because the leaders of the movement are the despised Dutch, and the English are as a nation too conceited to follow the leading of other nationalities.

Sandford did not argue along these lines, but remained adamant that it was "useless for the Bond to invite the English Colonist to come in, supposing the invitation to be given in sincerity. We are too well acquainted with the anti-English spirit of the Bond's organs and with the private utterances of its members to say anything else with sincerity. We are sorry we cannot say anything else".¹

One of these Bond organs referred to by Sandford was De Graaff Reinetter, which made its appearance in July 1881 under the editorship of J.E. McCusker.² Sandford had, from 1865, published De Graaff-Reinet Courant in Dutch. Its views were essentially those of the Advertiser.³ The appearance of De Graaff Reinetter to express the new spirit among the Afrikaners of the district appears to have been detrimental to the Courant.

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1. GRA, 14 March 1882 (R.P. Botha, and editorial).
 2. McCusker was only a young man; he had been born in Graaff-Reinet in 1858 (GRA, 14 June 1897, report of select committee on railway claims), and Sandford professed to believe that he lacked the ability to run the paper, that the real editor was the Rev Compaan, a situation denied by both these gentlemen (GRA, 23, 27 May 1882).
 3. GRA, 30 April 1881.

On 25 March 1882 Sandford said that the Courant was "part and parcel of the Advertiser and will not be separated from it while the proprietor is able to hold the pen",¹ but a few months later he announced that the Courant was to be discontinued. The reason given for this step was that the Advertiser was henceforth to be published thrice weekly instead of bi-weekly, but it was at the same time admitted that it was "not pleasant to be breathing the political atmosphere with which the 'Weegluizen' and 'Hoenderkoppen' of the day have encompassed themselves".²

The Graaff-Reinet branch of the Afrikaner Bond was soon to place itself firmly on the political map of the Cape colony. Hardly had the branch been established when it featured prominently in the headlines as a result of the visit to Graaff-Reinet of John X. Merriman, Commissioner of Crown Lands, on 25 October 1881. The local Bond presented Merriman with an address in which it was stated that the Bond aimed at ensuring that Dutch obtained "the same right in the legislation of the Colony as the English language, hoping by this means to be able to send better representatives to Parliament and to promote the welfare of the Dutch Colonists". After expressing the hope that their civil commissioners would in future be bilingual and that Dutch would "receive its just claim in schools", the address went on to say

1. GRA, 25 March 1882.

2. GRA, 4 July (Publisher's Notice), 11 July 1882.

that there are some colonists who look upon the Bond as a proof of dissatisfaction with British rule and having revolutionary intentions. Therefore we candidly make use of this public opportunity to cast indignantly from us such an accusation, as we do not intend anything else but to make use of those privileges which Her Majesty granted us in a free constitution, and to use for that purpose only such means as are constitutional.

Merriman in his written reply said that he regretted "that it should have been thought necessary in founding your Society to draw a distinction between the classes of which our population is composed, and to perpetuate the unhappy differences which have existed among us". He pointed out "some of the great and imminent dangers which, I believe, may result from the institution in this Colony of a political Society, based upon difference of race, and not of opinion". In the context of the political situation which existed in Scanlen's cabinet, this reply was to have significant repercussions as it precipitated a crisis in the cabinet and Hofmeyr's resignation therefrom.¹

Graaff-Reinet was also to play a role in the steps leading to the amalgamation of the Afrikaner Bond and boeren beschermings vereeniging. The first congress held to achieve this end resulted from an unsigned advertisement, dated from Graaff-Reinet, which appeared in the Patriot, inviting every town or district where

1. Davenport, pp.76-78; J.H. Hofmeyr, The Life of Jan Hendrik Hofmeyr (Onze Jan), pp.191-194; GRA, 29 October 1881. The quotations are taken from the report in the GRA.

there were branches of the Bond or vereeniging to send delegates to Graaff-Reinet. Although there is no direct evidence to link Botha with this advertisement, it seems possible that he was the moving force. When the congress met on 1 and 2 March 1882, Botha was elected chairman, and Graaff-Reinet's other delegate, G.F. Joubert, was elected vice-chairman. Only Bondsmen were present; two delegates represented the Albert and Steynsburg vereenigingen, but these were already united with the Bond. Although the other twenty or so delegates included men such as T.P. Theron of Britstown and W.F. Juhre of Albany, the majority represented Bond branches in Graaff-Reinet and adjoining divisions. The moderation of the discussions was reflected in the expression of full confidence in Hofmeyr, the avoidance of ideological discussions, the fighting shy of Du Toit's narrow neo-Calvinist Program van Beginsels, and the concentration on practical matters such as the language issue, Basuto policy, the franchise, education, and master and servant laws.¹ After further congresses at Cradock and two at Richmond, amalgamation between the two bodies was achieved in May 1883.

Within the first five months of its existence the Graaff-Reinet branch of the Afrikaner Bond provided the spark that fired a crisis in the cabinet, and held the first of the congresses which were to lead to a union of the emerging forces of Afrikaner nationalism in the Cape. Closer to home the local Bond embarked

1. Davenport, pp.54-57; GRA, 4, 7 March 1882.

upon a programme of promoting the Dutch language in schools. A public meeting at the end of 1881 appointed a committee to meet the Dutch Reformed Church authorities to decide upon the best means of establishing schools in which Dutch would be taught.¹ But the Bond was not to find a willing partner in the kerkraad and by 1883 the Bond and the Graaff Reinetter were engaged in a campaign to exclude English as a medium of instruction in the Dutch Reformed Church school. The school committee was adamant that the parents should be allowed to decide what language, if not both, was to be learnt by their children. The kerkschool had sixty-four pupils, of whom twenty-four received instruction in Dutch, the remainder being taught through the medium of English or both languages.² This is an interesting situation when it is appreciated that this school had been started to meet the needs particularly of poor erf-holders, who were almost exclusively Afrikaners.³

Early in 1883 the Bond requested the kerkraad to call a meeting of the congregation to discuss the question of whether or not Dutch should be made compulsory in the school. The kerkraad refused to accede to this request and decided to reply that as the Bond was a "politieke vereeniging ... de kerkeraad aan denzelven het regt niet toekennen kan om met zoodanig verzoek aangaande de Gemeente voor hem te komen".⁴ The Bond con-

1. GRA, 3 December 1881.

2. GRA, 10, 15 February, 1 March 1883.

3. See p.184 for the circumstances surrounding the establishment of this school.

4. G 6, 1/4: Ordinary meeting, 12 March 1883.

tinued its agitation, and at a meeting of the district bestuur in September 1883 a report was laid on the table recommending that the school committee be contacted again to see if an amicable arrangement could be reached. But the majority of the bestuur agreed with F. Joubert, whose statement as reported in the Advertiser reflects a general dissatisfaction with the manner in which church affairs were administered. As far as Joubert was concerned

there was no question of coming to an amicable arrangement, for that meant conceding something ... Mr. Joubert saw no use in entering into further correspondence; while the school committee was elected by the Kerkeraad and not by the congregation there would be no redress. There had been members on that committee for 15 or 16 years; and if any of them died out there was no possibility of getting men of other minds in their places.¹

There seems to have been some friction between the Bond and the church in this period. It is uncertain whether the F. Joubert mentioned in this connection was G.F. Joubert, vice-chairman of the Afrikaner Bond in the Cape during 1884-1886. G.F. Joubert, one of the most prominent Bondsmen in Graaff-Reinet, was in 1883-1884 at loggerheads with the kerkraad over a charge brought against him that he had been stirring up the young members of the church against the Rev Charles Murray. Although a church commission came to the conclusion "dat er geen bewys bestaat dat hy jongelieden tegen den

1. GRA, 6 September 1883.

Leeraar zou hebben aangespoord", Joubert remained dissatisfied with his treatment at the hands of the kerkraad.¹

(ii) The Bond Enters the Election Arena

The Graaff-Reinet Bond at the time of its establishment in October 1881 had no representatives in parliament. In J.A. Burger of Murraysburg they did have one Bondsman in the Legislative Council, but Burger was not considered a Graaff-Reinet man and his election in 1878 owed little to Graaff-Reinet where the bitterness aroused during the 1873 elections still persisted.² The divisions between Murraysburg and Graaff-Reinet were to be kept alive by a difference of opinion concerning the direction of the desired extension of the Graaff-Reinet railway line, with Graaff-Reinet fighting for an extension northwards to Middelburg, while Murraysburg generally gave its support to an extension via Richmond, which would include Murraysburg.

In the House of Assembly neither of Graaff-Reinet's representatives became Bondsmen. One of these members, William Fleming, a carpet-bagger from Cape Town, had in the parliamentary session of 1881 failed to support an extension northwards³ despite a clear expression

1. G 6, 1/4: Ordinary meetings, 8 January, 12 March 1883, 3 March, 2 June 1884; G 6, 1/4: Combined church meeting, 3 September 1883, and extraordinary meeting, 7 July 1884.
2. See pp. 504-505.
3. GRA, 11, 14 June 1881 ("Observer").

from Graaff-Reinet in favour of such a line.¹ Graaff-Reineters of all shades of opinion were bitterly disappointed with his attitude and the local branch of the Bond within a month of its establishment called upon Fleming to resign. He refused, and expressed his "surprise at the presumption of a few individuals, arrogating to themselves the right of speaking on behalf and in the name of the constituency".²

But these "few individuals", as Fleming referred to them, were soon to have their first opportunity of testing their strength at the polls, not in an election to the Assembly, but in a Legislative Council bye-election. The Bond nominated R.P. Botha, while the independents put up C.A. Naser. Since the midlands circle embraced a number of electoral divisions, conflicting local interests often threatened to override party divisions in elections. It seemed as if the first trial of strength by the Bond in the midlands would develop into a fight between opposing local interests, with Beaufort West, Prince Albert, Willowmore, Victoria West and Hopetown joining together in an attempt to gain the election of a candidate who would advance their claims for railway extensions. In the event, any challenge of this nature was nullified by the apathy of the voters in Beaufort West and Victoria West, and the real contest was between the two Graaff-Reinet candidates.³ An at-

1. GRA, 28, 31 May 1881.

2. GRA, 1, 5, 8, 22 November 1881; ZA, 17 November, 17 December 1881.

3. GRA, 29 April, 9, 16 May 1882; ZA, 18 March, 13 May 1882.

tempt was made to win support for Botha in town by using local issues, and Hofmeyr appears to have taken a personal interest in the water question to secure the votes of the erfholders for Botha.¹ The effect of Hofmeyr's aid is uncertain, and Nesor topped the poll in town with 241 votes to Botha's 141. But when the votes of the whole circle were counted, Botha was elected with 863 votes and Nesor received 415 votes.²

This first election showed clearly that the strength of the Bond was in the country and not the town, and while almost 60% of Nesor's support came from town, Botha received less than 17% of his total number of votes from the town. This sharp distinction between town and country was confirmed by the Divisional Council elections for the three town seats a few months later, when Tom Auret, Henry Maasdrorp and Alfred Thornton defeated the two Bond candidates. The Coloured vote in favour of the independent candidates contributed materially to this result.³

In the Legislative Council elections at the end of 1883 and the elections to the House of Assembly early in 1884, the Afrikaner Bond gained control of representation in parliament. The strength of feeling over the water issue may be seen from the nomination by the Graaff-Reinet Bond of J.N. Rothman, leader of

1. See pp.274-276.

2. GRA, 16 May, 4 July 1882; ZA, 10 June 1882.

3. GRA, 12, 17 October 1882.

the opposition to the waterworks in the council, as one of the candidates for the Assembly. If the erfholders of Graaff-Reinet were unable to obtain a majority of seats in the town council, they could use the organisation of the Bond to elect a representative to continue the struggle against the town council in parliament. The other Bond nominee was J.A. van Heerden of Murraysburg, but Graaff-Reinet's endorsement of his candidature did not automatically ensure the support of Murraysburg for Rothman, and influential Murraysburgers such as J.A. Burger and A.J. Herholdt supported F.K. te Water, the sitting M.L.A.¹

Te Water had been in parliament since 1869, where until 1878 he served in the Legislative Council, and thereafter in the Assembly. The trend of events in the nomination for the Assembly warned him of trouble and he decided to stand as a candidate for the Council, where voting would be spread over a number of electoral divisions and the "anti-water" vote of Graaff-Reinet would be diluted. The three Bond candidates were Botha, Burger and W.A. Joubert of Montagu, and although the Zuid-Afrikaan felt that they had a good chance of winning, it did not believe that Te Water's election would mean that there would be "een anti-Afrikaansch en anti-koloniaal lid" in the Council.² The Patriot went further and actually hoped to see Te Water oust Joubert. The paper professed not to know "waarin meneer Te Water as Parlements lid sig di ondersteuning van di Afrikaners

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1. Te Water Papers, vol.4: A. Herholdt to F.K. te Water, 23 October 1883; GRA, 6 October 1883.
 2. ZA, 8 November 1883.

so onwaardig gemaak het, dat hy ni weer gekose sal worde ni".¹ However, they failed to appreciate the significance of the water question. The Graaff Reinetter commented that it had much respect for Te Water, who had "rendered great and meritorious services to the town and district". The paper also expressed its confidence in his politics which "were simply those of all true Bondsmen", but reminded him of his role in the waterworks question and gave voice to the fear that if he were elected he might oppose them in the same way.²

The election took place on 5 December 1883. Although Te Water, with the aid of the Coloured vote, topped the poll in town, it was the country votes which gave victory to all three Bond candidates. Te Water was defeated not so much in the Graaff-Reinet fiscal division, or even in the electoral division, where his 1 242 votes were second only to Botha's 1 466 votes. He owed his defeat to his not receiving a sufficiently large majority in the Graaff-Reinet electoral division to offset the Bond votes obtained by Joubert throughout the circle.³

All three Bond candidates were elected, but there was no harmony in the Bond camp. Before the election Burger, although he was the official Bond candidate, had felt that his return was in jeopardy.

1. Patriot, 2 November 1883.
2. GRA, 13, 15 November 1883 (Translated from GR).
3. C.O. 3417: Result of the election in the Graaff-Reinet electoral division; GRA, 6 December 1883.

Herholdt had written to Te Water promising to support his candidature for the Assembly and asking him whether he could not arrange for some of his votes in the approaching Legislative Council elections to be given to Burger. He expressed the fear that Te Water's expected share of the votes of the independent electors threatened Burger's chances. Herholdt wrote that it was "all very well for the Bond to say that they will support him {Burger} but we all know that (for what reason nobody seems to be able to find out) the Bonds people when it comes to a severe contest will throw him overboard".¹ This fear that Bond supporters would not distribute their votes equally among all three Bond candidates but would plump for their favourite candidate was a feature of most elections to the midland circle. Herholdt's fears appear to have been realised. The Graaff Reinetter maintained that the Bondsmen of Graaff-Reinet had distributed their votes equally until news had been received that voters in other parts of the circle were plumping for their own favourite candidate, whereupon Graaff-Reinet plumped for Botha who was behind in the voting. Thus did the Graaff Reinetter attempt to explain why Botha had received 1 466 votes to Burger's 762 votes in the Graaff-Reinet electoral division. The Advertiser however pointed out that before any news of the voting pattern in other parts of the circle had been received, Botha had 238 votes and Burger 126. The Advertiser concluded that the Bond had be-

1. Te Water Papers, vol.4: A. Herholdt to F.K. te Water, 23 October 1883.

trayed Burger.¹ Burger and his supporters shared this view of the situation.

A.J. Herholdt expressed himself in strong terms: "What now", he wrote, "was the meaning of all those solemn gatherings of delegates? Still more - what was the significance of that opening of Bond meetings with powerful prayer? Nothing but the most wicked blasphemy - when while invoking God's holy name a resolution to do a certain thing is taken with the intention to do the contrary". Herholdt posed the question whether it was "not time that everyone who has any respect for himself and his religion should withdraw from such an association? I say 'yes' and haste to have my name erased from the list of such an institution".² Shortly afterwards a decision was taken to dissolve the Murraysburg branch of the Afrikaner Bond as it had "done no good, but, on the contrary, has caused discord, dissension and suspicion".³ Burger said that the Bond had treated him "with such consummate treachery" that he was "convinced no honourable man can have anything to do with it".⁴

Most of these statements were made in the heat of the moment, and it was not long before the Murraysburg branch of the Bond was reconstituted. The suspicion and mistrust engendered, however, remained, and

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1. C.O. 3417: Election return, 5 December 1883; GRA, 8 December 1883.
 2. GRA, 13 December 1883.
 3. GRA, 18 December 1883.
 4. GRA, 17 January 1884.

Herholdt for one could never rid himself of the fear that Graaff-Reinet would desert any Murraysburg candidate in a close contest.¹ Graaff-Reinet for its part frequently regarded certain of the Murraysburg Bondsmen as suspect.

The Legislative Council elections at the end of 1883 were followed by elections to the House of Assembly early in 1884. Te Water, who had been defeated in his bid to enter the upper house, now decided to defend his seat in the Assembly. He received a well-signed requisition from Graaff-Reinet, and also a requisition from forty-one persons in Murraysburg, which last included the names of the ex-Bondsmen, Herholdt and Burger,² who were behind a move to run Te Water with J.A. van Heerden, one of the Bond nominees.³ In a letter to Burger, Te Water said he was at a loss to account for the fact that some of his constituents "allow themselves to withdraw their further support", particularly as there was no disagreement concerning politics. Of his failure to join the Bond he did not see how his "signature to any political paper" could make him "a more faithful Representative" in parliament than he had hitherto been.⁴ Te Water was quiet about his role in the waterworks, but there is little doubt that the real

1. See pp. 572, 592.

2. Te Water Papers, vol.4: Requisitions from Graaff-Reinet, New Bethesda and Murraysburg; GRA, 29 January 1884.

3. Te Water Papers, vol.4: J.A. Burgers {sic} to F.K. te Water, 8 January 1884 (incorrectly dated 1883).

4. Te Water Papers, vol.4: Draft letter, F.K. te Water to J.A. Burgers, 10 January 1884.

opposition to him sprang from this source. The Graaff Reinetter gave prominence to Te Water's criticism of the actions of certain Bondsmen and to the fact that he was not a member of the Bond,¹ but this was done mainly to influence Bondsmen outside the town against him. It was convenient for the Graaff Reinetter that Te Water was not a Bondsman, and the Advertiser was probably correct in its assessment that the majority of Bondsmen in Graaff-Reinet would not vote for him "if he became a member of fifty Bonds, on account of 'die waterkwessie'".²

Te Water had many supporters outside the electoral division, and Upington wrote to say that they could not afford to lose him,³ while the Zuid-Afrikaan declared that he was a superior candidate to Rothman.⁴ However, it was the electoral division which counted and, although Te Water topped the poll in town, he did so with only a slender majority of 275 votes to the 268 and 227 votes cast for Van Heerden and Rothman respectively. This slight lead was insufficient to offset the large majorities obtained by the two Bond candidates in the rest of the electoral division. The support of Burger and Herholdt for Te Water did not appear to have influenced the bulk of Murraysburg voters in his favour and, although Te Water received 48 votes to 26 cast in

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1. GRA, 9 February (Nomination day proceedings), 12 February 1884; see also GRA, 13 December 1883.
 2. GRA, 5 February 1884.
 3. Te Water Papers, vol.4: T. Upington to F.K. te Water, 10 January 1884.
 4. GRA, 5 February 1884.

favour of Rothman in the town, in the remainder of the Murraysburg fiscal division Te Water received only 14 votes to the 95 obtained by Rothman.¹ The Bond now added the two seats in the lower house to the three they had won in the upper house a few months earlier.

(iii) The Bond's First Members of Parliament in Action

After it had won all three midland seats in the 1883 Council elections, the Afrikaner Bond gained both the Graaff-Reinet lower house seats. It held them until 1910. The Bond was entirely responsible for the success of Van Heerden and Rothman. Van Heerden became an inarticulate member of the Assembly, although Dr Te Water later said that this was of less importance than the fact that he always voted the right way.² Rothman had rarely spoken during the campaign and even then, out of ignorance, he had departed from Bond policy by supporting the abandonment of the Transkei, for which he was later attacked in congress.³ He was absent, too, on nomination day and on polling day.⁴ The Advertiser had nothing but contempt for Rothman and made a shrewd guess that he would "not rise three times during the Session to address the House except on some petty questions within the compass of the meanest capacity".⁵ His Dutch did not get through to the parliamentary reporters in the Assembly who repeatedly reported him as

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1. C.O. 3451: Election return; GRA, 28 February, 11 March 1884.
 2. GRA, 1 November 1888 (Nomination day proceedings).
 3. GRA, 5 February, 15 March 1884. This was at the Bond congress in Graaff-Reinet.
 4. GRA, 9 February, 11 March 1884.
 5. GRA, 17 January 1884.

"inaudible" or "understood to be in favour of the Bill". Besides using parliament to promote the interests of the erfholder minority in the town council, Rothman occasionally contributed to debates on the pass law, education and the eradication of prickly pear. One of his longest reported speeches was an ill-timed plea for the establishment of a National Bank.¹

Rothman's contribution to parliamentary debates may not have been newsworthy, but he was to make the headlines in 1885 as a result of an excessive claim of £102.2.0 for travelling expenses from Graaff-Reinet to parliament. Van Heerden of Murraysburg had at the same time claimed £45. Rothman was by no means the only culprit,² but his case was kept in the news because of an unsuccessful attempt to bring a criminal charge against him in Cape Town.³ The incident was somewhat of a talking point in Graaff-Reinet, but the Graaff Reinetter said that Rothman had assured it "that the noise in Graaff-Reinet was greater than in Cape Town, where but little was known of the matter; and that the members of Parliament there had laughed much at the joke".⁴ To Bondsmen, who were great believers in re-trenchment, the situation was not amusing. Murraysburg reacted particularly strongly, calling upon Rothman to resign his seat. In an unedifying squabble about his

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1. Hansard Debates in the Assembly, 1885, p.416, 1886, pp.13, 171, 297-298, 408-409, 1887, pp.205, 294.
 2. GRA, 21, 28 July 1885 (Editorial and "Taxpayer").
 3. GRA, 4, 7, 21, 28 August 1885; GR, 30 July 1885.
 4. GRA, 14 August 1885 (translated from GR).

refusal to attend a meeting in Murraysburg, Rothman said that he was not concerned with the opinion of Murraysburg, where he had only received twenty-six votes in the town compared with the forty-eight obtained by Te Water.¹

Of more importance to Rothman was the opinion of Graaff-Reinet. Rothman, who was the champion of the erfholders in their attempts to prevent the completion of the waterworks, succeeded in bringing about the defeat of a private Bill which the town council had introduced to enable it to raise £15,000 for this purpose. Rothman's reputation was consequently high when the question of the travelling expenses erupted. A meeting in Graaff-Reinet in October 1885 disapproved of the system of paying travelling allowances but expressed the opinion that the outcry against Rothman had its roots in the frustration of those who had sponsored the Bill. Rothman was thanked for his aid in defeating the Bill and a vote of confidence in him was passed.² Rothman, however, was soon to discover that municipal issues were a double-edged sword.

In 1885 the three anti-Bond candidates, Auret, Maasdorp and Thornton, were elected with the help of the Coloured vote as the town's three Divisional Councillors. The Graaff Reinetter was not surprised that Auret had topped the poll as "dat was natuurlyk te verwachten, want waar het kombaars element sterk is, daar heeft hy de beste kans om in te komen".³ The failure

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1. GRA, 18 August 1885 ("Voter", Murraysburg), 9, 20 October 1885; GR, 6, 9, 13, 16, 20 October 1885.
 2. Rothman's activities in this sphere, and details of the resolution, are discussed further on pp.294-296.
 3. GR and GRA, 16 October 1885.

of the erfholders to gain a majority of seats on the town council was also put down to the "blanket" vote, and in 1886 Rothman piloted through parliament an Act to amend the Act of Incorporation of 1880 in such a way as to disfranchise many black voters. The defects of this amending Act were largely responsible for the collapse of municipal government at the end of 1886. Throughout 1887 there was no town council in Graaff-Reinet and the local branch of the Bond attempted to re-float the municipal barque by negotiating an amicable agreement with the east end of town. Rothman refused to co-operate. His attitude threatened to ruin any hope of restoring municipal government and cost him most of his support as he was regarded as being responsible for the defects of the 1886 Act. In the municipal elections which were eventually held, Rothman was rejected by both sides of town, and Graaff-Reinet's member in the House of Assembly failed to gain a seat on the town council.¹ F.K. te Water rose to prominence through the ranks of the municipal board but his share in the waterworks cost him his seat in parliament. So too did Rothman, whom municipal affairs had raised to the heights, find his political grave in municipal affairs.

Everyone now attempted to climb off the Rothman bandwagon. Even R.P. Botha found it necessary to defend himself for once having praised Rothman: "Mr. Rothman was popular then. But Mr. Rothman had now fallen somewhat in the estimation of his friends -

1. This crisis in municipal government is dealt with in detail in Chapters 8 and 9.

rightly or wrongly, Mr. Botha could not tell; and some people now so used his (Mr. Botha's) words in praise of Mr. Rothman as to make him responsible for all that had been done by Mr. Rothman".¹

By the time of the next elections to the Assembly in 1888, the Bond in Graaff-Reinet could look back on its achievements in the first seven years of its existence with some satisfaction but not with complete equanimity. It had helped to elect three Bond members to the midlands circle, two of whom came from the electoral division of Graaff-Reinet. However, in doing so, it had temporarily wrecked the Murraysburg branch of the Bond and left a legacy of suspicion between the two centres. The Bond had also captured the two seats in the Assembly, averted a possible split in its ranks over Rothman,² and intervened with some success in resolving the deadlock in municipal affairs, where the amicable arrangement arrived at was to have some measure of durability. In the Divisional Council it had enjoyed success in the country areas but had failed to make any impression on the town, where the three anti-Bond members continued to be a thorn in the flesh of the Bond-dominated Council. Its failure to make any impression on the Afrikaner business community deprived the Bond of some of the most talented men in the district and was partially responsible for the deterioration in the quality of the men who were sent to parliament. There

1. GRA, 5 March 1888; GR, 6 March 1888.

2. The threat of such a split was evident in the refusal of the district bestuur to interfere in the dispute between Rothman and the local Bond branch (see pp. 315-316).

were few candidates of any education, the lack of which was appreciated by people like Herholdt, who said that if the Bond did not send better men to parliament "the Africaner party will never be able to take the lead".¹ Alex Innes likewise, discussing a poor showing by one of Graaff-Reinet's parliamentarians, found some consolation in the thought that the next generation would be better educated, for "if we want to be strong and respected by others we must send men to Parliament who will command respect and have some common sense".² This problem worried many Bondsmen and, in the elections to the Assembly in 1894, the Commissie van Toezicht op Elekties made a conscious effort to secure the nomination of candidates of a higher calibre.³

(iv) Bond Unity and Elections, 1888-1889

While the quality of Graaff-Reinet's representatives in parliament sometimes left much to be desired, the advent of the Bond saw great competition for seats in parliament. Hofmeyr reported D.P. (Daantje) van den Heever as saying: "Elke verdomde boer wil nou naar di Parlement gaan",⁴ and many men, like Rothman, were anxious to use the organisation of the Bond to gain election. If the Bond remained united and none of the candidates who failed to gain the nomination stood

1. Te Water Papers, vol.56: A.J. Herholdt to T.N.G. te Water, 8 July 1889.
2. Te Water Papers, vol.56: A. Innes to T.N.G. te Water, 22 November 1889. For other remarks by Innes along the same lines, see p.551.
3. Davenport, pp.149-150.
4. Te Water Papers, vol.59: J.H. Hofmeyr to T.N.G. te Water, 19 December 1892.

against the official nominees, it was assured of victory in the elections to the Assembly. The real contest was frequently for the coveted nomination of the Bond. The nature of this contest, and the complexity of local jealousies and conflicting interests, made for considerable manoeuvre and was pregnant with possibilities for a split in the ranks of the Bond. The official candidates, when they emerged, were frequently compromise candidates.

There were a number of aspirant candidates for the elections to the lower house in 1888, including several from Murraysburg.¹ Herholdt expressed the fear which plagued the Bond at all elections: "Wat word van die zaak als er zoo velen te velde trekken? Als een van de Bondskandidaten gaan staan in weerwil van het besluit de Conferentie dan hebben anderen ook het regt en zullen dat ook doen".² There was considerable in-fighting at the Bond nomination conference on 31 August 1888 when Aberdeen, which had not yet had a representative of her own in parliament, made a bid to secure one of the two nominations. Murraysburg was determined to secure the nomination of J.A. van Heerden, the sitting M.L.A., but was prepared to support the claims of Aberdeen if this could be done at the expense of Graaff-Reinet. The dominant position of Graaff-Reinet in the electoral division was recognised in the voting procedure by which delegates voted first for a candidate to represent Graaff-Reinet and then for one to represent the rest of

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1. Te Water Papers, vol.56: A.J. Herholdt to T.N.G. te Water, 15 June, 21 July 1888, and W.F. Juhre to T.N.G. te Water, 18 August 1888.
 2. Te Water Papers, vol.56: A.J. Herholdt to T.N.G. te Water, 21 July 1888.

the electoral division. There was some resentment among the Murraysburg and Aberdeen delegates over the advantage enjoyed by Graaff-Reinet, and an attempt was made to neutralise the position by proposing Van Heerden of Murraysburg as the Graaff-Reinet nominee, which would have allowed Aberdeen to obtain the second nomination. This shrewd move did not succeed, and J.H. Smith was elected as the Bond nominee for Graaff-Reinet after R.P. Botha had made an unsuccessful bid for the honour. Van Heerden became the representative for the remainder of the electoral division.¹ Aberdeen was thus left without a man of her own, a circumstance which was to become increasingly irksome to that part of the electoral division.

The Assembly elections of 1888 were one of the most closely contested elections in the history of Graaff-Reinet. C.A. Nesor and T.N.G. Auret were nominated to oppose the Bond candidates.² Both were essentially men of the town, although Nesor had wide connections throughout the district and had in fact been mentioned as a candidate by certain Bondsmen.³ Both Nesor and Auret had played a leading part in advocating the new waterworks, and Dr Te Water, who officially nominated Van Heerden, reminded the erfholders of their role in this connection. Auret was officially nominated by Dr Te Water's father, F.K. te Water.⁴ Father and

1. GR, 4 September 1888.

2. GRA, 27 September 1888.

3. GR, 31 August 1888.

4. GRA, 1, 5 November 1888.

son thus appeared publicly on opposite sides. As a prominent Bondsman Dr Te Water had always been theoretically on the opposite side to his father, but in the elections of 1883-1884 the doctor had played an important role in his father's election campaign, a point which the Bond's opponents were not slow to exploit in 1888.¹

The two Bond candidates, Van Heerden and Smith, won the election amidst rumours that Nesor and Auret would try to upset the result on the grounds of undue influence brought to bear by Dr Te Water on patients who were in debt.² Nesor and Auret apparently lost little support on account of the water issue and had handsome majorities in town, which also enabled them to head the poll in the Graaff-Reinet fiscal division. The final tally gave Van Heerden and Smith 812 and 795 votes respectively but Nesor was not far behind with 722 votes, while Auret obtained 671 votes.³ Alex Innes attributed this close result not to the strength of the opposition but to the "immense popularity of Nesor amongst the farmers and being largely connected with them in business".⁴

So the Bond was again victorious, and Van Heerden, after an undistinguished first term of office, returned to Cape Town accompanied by Smith, who was destined to serve Graaff-Reinet for three terms. As a farmer his

1. GRA, 27 September, 11 October 1888.

2. Te Water Papers, vol.56: W.F. Juhre to T.N.G. te Water, 24 November 1888.

3. GRA, 29 November 1888.

4. Te Water Papers, vol.56: A. Innes to T.N.G. te Water, 28 November 1888.

contributions to the debates in the Assembly were mainly concerned with scab, fencing and labour problems. He was an expert on the eradication of prickly pear and seldom lost an opportunity of addressing the House on this subject. He was also capable of turning his attention to other matters, and Hansard on one occasion reported that he referred "to the treatment of lepers in olden times, and quoted from the Book of Leviticus and Kings, and from the New Testament".¹ Smith was more popular with the independents than Rothman had ever been, but there were few who spoke highly of his talents, and Graaff-Reinet had to await another election to obtain a man of calibre and talent.

In the midst of the election campaign for the House of Assembly, J.A. Burger, the eldest son of the founder of Murraysburg, Barend J.J. Burger (Barend Vleiplaas), died on 2 October 1888, shortly before his sixty-eighth birthday. Burger had been in parliament since 1869 when he had been elected alongside Ziervogel as one of Graaff-Reinet's members in the Assembly. From 1873 he had served in the Legislative Council.²

Burger had been a Murraysburg man, and the Murraysburg district bestuur gave its firm support to the candidature of A.J. Herholdt.³ His main rival

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1. Hansard Debates in the Assembly, 1889, pp.112, 148, 375, 1891, pp.179, 185, 252, 298, 351, 1892, pp.182, 287, 335, 1893, pp.215, 290, 295, 515-516.
 2. GRA, 15 October 1888 contains a resumé of his career. See also Te Water Papers, vol.56: A.Innes to T.N.G. te Water, 28 September 1888.
 3. GR, 22 November 1888.

appeared to be A.B. de Villiers of Paarl,¹ but at the circle meeting at Murraysburg on 5 December 1888, the delegates of Fraserburg, Victoria West, Beaufort West, Hopetown and Richmond, in a surprise move combined to secure the Bond nomination for H. van Zyl. In these sparsely populated northern districts which were particularly subject to droughts, the Scab Act was most unpopular, and Van Zyl's main claim to recognition appears to have been his opposition to a Scab Act of any kind, while the other candidates favoured a permissive Act. Herholdt was by no means unsympathetic towards the problems of these farmers and in later years he found much favour with them on account of his opposition to a general compulsory Act. He was, however, not given an opportunity to state his views at the circle meeting.²

The rejection of three men, Herholdt, Dr Smartt of Britstown and A.B. de Villiers, in favour of Van Zyl was unacceptable to many Bondsmen, and Van Zyl's behaviour in the recent Assembly elections in Richmond, where he had stood in opposition to the official Bond candidates and been defeated, provided an opportunity for opposing his candidature.³ Thomas Theron, one of the successful candidates in the Richmond election in which Van Zyl had been a candidate, wrote that he could not believe "dat zy van Zyl hadden verkozen, boven Herholdt of Dr Smartt". He regarded it as a "beleedig-

1. Te Water Papers, vol.56: A.J. Herholdt to T.N.G. te Water, 27 November 1888 and A. Innes to T.N.G. te Water, 28 November 1888.

2. GR, 6, 10, 13 December 1888.

3. GR, 6 December 1888.

ing den Bond aangedaan om nu vir zulk een man te verkiezen". He went on to say that he had decided "hem niet tegen te werken - maar myne Bondsmannen te raden hem niet te ondersteunen met hunne stemmen als er oppositie komt".¹ Under the circumstances opposition appeared certain, and the Graaff Reinetter lost no time in declaring that Van Zyl should withdraw.² Alex Innes thought the paper was "rather severe on him" but agreed that "unless the Bond puts forward educated and enlightened men to represent this institution its days will be numbered".³

Botha, as chairman of the Bond and chairman of the circle committee, had a responsibility to prevent a split in the ranks of the Bond and also to act in accordance with its established procedures. He took the Graaff Reinetter to task for encouraging people to ignore the voice of the circle meeting. He said that although he had voted for Herholdt, "nogthans gevoel ik my zedelyk verplicht in de gedane keuze te berusten".⁴ Botha was, however, a lone voice. Herholdt expressed himself willing to stand if asked to do so by dissatisfied Bondsmen,⁵ and both Murraysburg and Graaff-Reinetter passed resolutions to the effect that they had earlier been ignorant of Van Zyl's actions in the Richmond election; they now felt that they could not support him

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1. Te Water Papers, vol.56: T.P. Theron to T.N.G. te Water, 10 December 1888.
 2. GR, 6, 10 December 1888.
 3. Te Water Papers, vol.56: A. Innes to T.N.G. te Water, 8 December 1888.
 4. GR, 17 December 1888 (R.P. Botha).
 5. Te Water Papers, vol.56: A.J. Herholdt to T.N.G. te Water, 14 December 1888.

and he should withdraw. They requested that Bondsmen be allowed to vote as if there had been no circle meeting, and at the same time they gave their full support to Herholdt's candidature. In the meantime the westernmost divisions continued working for the election of De Villiers, while Dr Smartt had also accepted a requisition.¹

In order to give Herholdt a better chance of victory, Dr Smartt withdrew from the contest and the struggle appeared to be developing into a straight fight between De Villiers and Herholdt, provided that Theron, who was capable of exerting tremendous influence in the northern divisions, did not throw his weight behind Van Zyl. Theron decided to remain neutral and gave an undertaking that he would "niet voor van Zyl stemmen of werken en geen invloed gebruiken, maar dit belooft ik uw, ik zal niet tegen Herholdt {sic} spreken, schrijven of doen, nog minder de Villiers".²

There was little doubt as to the outcome of the election and the real battle was won before ever the voters went to the polls. With the majority of Bondsmen, particularly those in the more densely populated southern part of the circle, prepared to support Herholdt, Van Zyl's chances were not good. With regard to De Villiers of Paarl, there had all along been some feeling that it was not necessary to go beyond the circle for a representative,³ and the Graaff Reinetter put this

1. GRA, 17 December 1888; GR, 17 December 1888, 3, 7 January 1889.

2. Te Water Papers, vol.56: T.P. Theron to T.N.G. te Water, 17 January 1889.

3. Te Water Papers, vol.56: A.J. Herholdt to T.N.G. te Water, 27 November 1888, and A.Innes to T.N.G. te Water, 28 November 1888.

view forward clearly when it said that both Herholdt and De Villiers were

wakkere en vertrouwbare Bondsmannen, doch de hr de Villiers kon niet verwachten dat de kiezers in deze streken voor iemand stemmen zullen die niets van onze belangen af weet en die liever de wynboeren en het Westen in het algemeen de voorkeur geven zal boven de wolboeren in het Oosten en de Middellanden. Dit is te verwachten, want al die belangen van dien heer zyn in het Westen.¹

Herholdt had a further advantage in that the independents regarded him as a moderate Bondsman, or even as a good candidate who had fallen into the bad company of the Bond. In the Graaff-Reinet district he had the solid support of all the voters, black and white alike.² Herholdt won comfortably and one Murraysburg man was replaced by another. This was the first occasion in which Bondsmen stood as candidates against the official candidate in the midlands circle. The unpopularity of Van Zyl, particularly in the southern parts of the circle, prevented a split in the ranks of the Bond, while there was no danger of the Bond losing the seat as all candidates were Bondsmen and the independents had failed to nominate a candidate.

(v) The Zwart Ruggens Farmers' Association and the Afrikaner Bond

If one of the reasons for the exclusion of politics from the discussions of the ZRFA was to encourage

1. GR, 24 January 1889.

2. GRA, 14 March 1889, 19 February 1891.

Bondsmen to join the association, this was a failure.¹ From as early as 1885 numbers of Afrikaners became members of the ZRFA, but very few of them were Bondsmen. The majority of Bondsmen regarded the ZRFA as an association which had been formed either to split the Bond or counteract its influence. The ZRFA, however, continued to hope that once this impression had been corrected and Bondsmen saw that it was not a political organisation, they would be more willing to join its ranks. In the meantime an increasing number of members of the ZRFA were drawn towards the Bond.

In the Cape colony as a whole from the middle eighties until the Jameson Raid at the beginning of 1896, there was a turn for the better in relations between the two white language groups and measures for closer co-operation found some support from both sides. The legacy of bitterness from the early eighties was, however, not easily forgotten and was to limit the scope of co-operation, as was the fact that the Afrikaner Bond was not merely a farmers' movement, but a vehicle for the furtherance of the cultural interests of the Afrikaner. At the same time there was much to draw Afrikaner and English farmers in the Cape together after 1886. The depression of the early eighties forced them to sink their differences in an attempt to deal with the problems that beset them. English-speaking farmers were still suspicious of the Bond because of its ties with the Orange Free State and Transvaal, but

1. The circumstances surrounding the establishment of the ZRFA in 1883 are discussed on pp. 513-518.

the depression made Afrikaners in the Cape more aware of their identity of interests with other farmers in the Cape as Kruger's efforts, after the discovery of the gold fields, to isolate the Transvaal made colonial Afrikaners conscious of the conflicting economic interests between the Cape and the Transvaal.

If by the late eighties the Afrikaner was overcoming his fear of British imperialism and English-speaking people were losing their fear of an exclusive Afrikaner nationalism, the Jameson Raid was to raise these old spectres with a vengeance.¹ However, as far as the ZRFA was concerned, the establishment of better relations with the Bond was destroyed before 1896 by the intrusion of local issues.

The English-speaking farmers' associations in the east had held an annual congress since 1883, and delegates of the ZRFA had attended these since 1884. When the congress met in Port Elizabeth in 1886 the term Eastern Province Farmers' Congress came into use.² It was at this congress that an approach from the Bond Congress for a closer association between the two bodies came under discussion. The Bond's proposal led to a decision by the two associations to co-operate and send delegates to each other's congresses; such delegates were allowed to speak but not to vote.³

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1. Davenport, pp.26-27, 95, 111-112, 140, 322-323.
 2. GRA, 23 May 1898 (Brief history of farmers' associations in the east).
 3. GRA, 23, 30 March 1886; see also Davenport, pp. 111-112.

This spirit of co-operation was reflected also in the ZRFA, where Walter Murray defeated Charles Lee at the annual meeting of the ZRFA in July 1886 to become president. Murray immediately embarked upon a campaign to forge closer links with the Bond. He stressed that the ZRFA had not been formed to oppose the Bond and saw no reason why people could not be members of both associations. He also expressed the view that "it would be well if some members of this association did join the Bond with a view to union". The reaction of some elements of the ZRFA to this statement forced Murray to explain that he had not meant union in the sense of amalgamation, but that, as many Afrikaners were ignorant about the ZRFA, members of the ZRFA could join the Bond "not as obstructionists but as honest and straightforward men, and attend their meetings with the view of assisting and showing them where they are in error".¹

Not all members of the ZRFA were happy with Murray's stance, and Lee bluntly stated that if Murray wished to build up the ZRFA he would "have to leave his Bond proclivities at home". He added that, while the Bond may in its own way be doing good work, "if the Bond element is introduced into the Zwarte Ruggens Farmers' Association, then you may bid the Association good-bye".² His remarks were attributed to disappointment at his not being elected president, which may contain an element of truth, for Lee himself was later to take a positive lead in trying to encourage Bondsmen to

1. GRA, 29 July, 2 August 1886 (W.E. Murray).

2. GRA, 28 August 1886 (C.F. Lee, snr).

to join the ZRFA.¹ The growing influence of the town of Graaff-Reinet bothered Lee most of all, and Murray indicated that Lee believed it was because the annual meeting was held in the town that he was not elected president.² It is true that the little association established by the farmers in and around the field cornetcy of Zwart Ruggens was being pulled further away from its home base. At one of the quarterly meetings in Aberdeen in 1885 an unsuccessful effort was made to change the name of the association to the Midland Farmers' Association.³ After his defeat by Murray, Lee pointed out that at the annual meeting in Graaff-Reinet of the fifty-two members present, only twelve of them had come from the Ruggens. The reasons for this, he believed, were distance and the fact "that the Graaff Reinet influence has become so strong, that the Zwarte Ruggens members feel hopeless of carrying any measure that does not happen to suit the ideas of the Graaff Reinet men". He suggested that the association be split into two, with one for those closer to Graaff-Reinet, which could then be called the Midland Farmers' Association.⁴ Lee's opposition to the growing dominance of the town in the ZRFA is also indicative of a cleavage of political opinion between the town and the country among the English-speaking community of the district. The division between the townsmen and the farmers was by no means confined to the Afrikaners. In a letter to Dr Te Water in 1890 Lee wrote that:

1. See p. 574.

2. GRA, 28 October 1886.

3. GRA, 17 April 1885.

4. GRA, 27 September 1886 (C.Lee).

Judging from what I read in the G.R. Advertiser, if you say you do not get on very happily, in Political matters, with a certain section in the Town of G.Reinet, then I could easily understand you, but I trust the Zwart Ruggens Farmers association is made up of Gentlemen, the majority of which, hold political views very different and somewhat broader than that of sections of the G.Reinet community. If it were not so, you would not find my name in the association's books.¹

That Lee's views had much support may be judged from the fact that at the next annual meeting in 1887 he defeated Murray to become president,² a position he retained in 1888 and 1889.³ If in 1886 Lee and those who agreed with him advocated the splitting of the association in order to escape from the dominant influence of the town, they succeeded in the next few years in limiting the influence of the town in the association to such an extent that in later years moves for the splitting of the association were to come from the townsmen who objected to the dominance of the farming element.⁴

There were many members of the ZRFA, particularly the townsmen, who wanted an organisation to fight elections along the same lines as the Bond. At the quarterly meeting of the ZRFA towards the end of 1888, there was some discussion on the advisability of forming a Midlands Political Association. Elections to the House of Assembly were in the offing, and as at every election,

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1. Te Water Papers, vol.56: C.Lee to T.N.G. te Water, 15 July 1890.
 2. GRA, 21 April 1887.
 3. GRA, 26 April 1888, 29 April 1889.
 4. See p.588.

the independents bemoaned the fact that they lacked an organisation to rival that of the Bond. The ZRFA decided to place nothing in the minutes, but at the conclusion of the meeting, another meeting was held at which a committee was appointed to draw up the rules for the Midlands Political Association.¹ So, although the membership of the two bodies was the same, the ZRFA as an association refused to assume paternity of a society which involved itself in politics.

At the next annual meeting of the ZRFA, when the business of the meeting had been completed, the meeting transformed itself into the Midlands Political Association of which G.H. Maasdorp was the president. There does not appear to have been unanimity about the aims of the Midlands Political Association. Certain of its members did not see it as an association which would automatically be opposed to the Bond but rather as a body where political views would be aired. Maasdorp had no such doubt. In his address he referred to a statement by one of the Lees that the object of the association was not to oppose the Bond: "As a direct reply to that I may say that the primary cause of the existence of this association was the necessity of an organised means of exercising a counteravailing influence to the Bond". Although Maasdorp felt that there was a tendency for all farmers' associations to become political bodies, he felt that the decision to form a separate political association had been a good

1. GRA, 4, 8 October 1888.

idea as it left "it free for any man of any political creed whatsoever to continue to be a member of the Association {ZRFA} without having his sentiments offended".¹

The ZRFA remained officially a non-political body. This was essentially a fiction, but it served one of its purposes, that of maintaining the unity of the ZRFA at a time when a number of its leading members were attracted to the Afrikaner Bond.

1. GRA, 18 April 1889.

CHAPTER 14

THE AFRIKANER BOND DIVIDED, 1888-1895

(i) The Graaff Reinetter, Botha, and the Bond

A crisis in the life of the Bond in the midlands was precipitated by De Graaff Reinetter, which had since 1881 been the spokesman of the Bond. The beginning of the paper's defection from the Bond's cause was evident in an article in the issue of 17 August 1888 which stated that it was time "dat wy het holle patriotisme van zekere leiders en prominente Bondsmannen voor het publiek brengen, en aan hunne landgenooten toonen dat zy niet zulke echte Bondsmannen zyn als zy het publiek willen doen gelooven". R.P. Botha was the first to come under attack as he had more than once resigned as a subscriber, which resignation the paper had refused to accept, "en hoewel hy slechts £1.2s.6d. per jaar in-teekening betaalt, was hy nogthans zoo edelmoedig om by de laatste betaling de halvekroon af te trekken, omdat de tyden zoo zwaar waren". The other members of the midlands circle in the Legislative Council, Joubert and Burger, were not subscribers at all, nor was Van Heerden, one of Graaff-Reinet's members in the Assembly. Only four branches of the Bond sent the paper their advertisements, and of sixty Bondsmen in the Graaff-Reinet branch, less than ten were subscribers. The Graaff Reinetter, it was maintained, did not have 100 Bond subscribers, but hundreds who were neutral or anti-Bond. McCusker noted that

Het zal misschien een bittere pil zyn voor die ultra-gezinden wanneer wy hen vertellen dat ware het niet door de anti-Bondsmannen, en hunne vrienden, dan zou de Bond heden geen Graaff Reinetter gehad hebben om hem tegen de vele aanvallen van den kant zyner vyanden, te verdedigen en aan te moediging. Als de hh. Nesor, Auret, en de lichamen waar zy directeuren en raadsheeren van zyn, met de kooplieden, en afslagers die hunne denkwyzen deelen, hunne ondersteuning ons ontnemen, dan kunnen wy onze deur maar toe sluiten en voortaan met het pampoens kweeken 'een bestaan' vinden.¹

It was no coincidence that the Graaff Reinetter singled out Botha for attack, and the struggle between that paper and the Bond was to revolve around the personality of Botha, so that the events which unfolded often assumed the aspect of a personal clash between Botha and McCusker. A fortnight later McCusker objected to the Graaff-Reineter branch of the Bond putting Botha forward as a candidate for the forthcoming elections to the Assembly.² The nomination of Van Zyl as a candidate for the midlands circle in December 1888 was the occasion of another clash between the two men, and Botha took the Graaff Reinetter to task for encouraging Bondsmen to ignore the decision of the circle committee.³ Botha at the same time told McCusker "dat gy en ook ander prominente Bondsmannen soms te gereed zyt om tot groot genoegen van de oppositie, de mannen uwer eigene party te kritisieren. Ik ben volstrekt niet tegen kritiek, maar laat het dan door de tegen party gedaan worden".⁴

1. GR, 17 August 1888.

2. GR, 31 August 1888.

3. See p.551.

4. GR, 17 December 1888 (R.P. Botha).

As chairman of the provincial bestuur of the Bond, Botha's actions could hardly hope to escape public notice, and he was to come increasingly into the lime-light in embarrassing situations. At the end of 1888 Nesor drew the attention of the Divisional Council to the fact that when Botha had been a member of the Council in 1882 he had been one of three Councillors who had signed a contract on behalf of the Council with Willem Liebenberg for the repair and maintenance of various roads. Nesor maintained that this was a violation of Act 14 of 1865 since he had been a partner of Liebenberg.¹ Despite the efforts of the Bond-dominated Council to prevent any action from being taken, the case came before the magistrate's court, where it appeared that Botha had encouraged Liebenberg to tender on the understanding that they would share the profits, and that Botha had supplied the labour for the contract. Botha pleaded guilty and was fined £25 for contravening the Divisional Councils Act.²

At a meeting of the district bestuur Botha refused to give any details concerning the issue on the grounds that the matter was sub judice pending an appeal against the decision of the magistrate.³ Hofmeyr felt that an appeal would serve no useful purpose as Botha was "technically" guilty, but he pointed out that it was "of the utmost importance to the Bond that his character should

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1. GRA, 17 December 1888 (D.C. meeting, 13 December); Liebenberg had tendered "for all the roads South of the town, and the first section of the Murraysburg Road to Smith's Hotel" for £1,200 {GRA, 18 February 1882 (D.C. meeting, 15 February)}.
 2. GRA, 6 May 1889 (Meeting of district bestuur of the Afrikaner Bond), 23 May 1889.
 3. GR and GRA 6 May '1889; see also GR, 7 September 1891.

be cleared, if it can be". Hofmeyr was of opinion that Botha should say he had been ignorant of the law, but he could hardly do this without Liebenberg's co-operation. Hofmeyr asked Dr Te Water to approach Liebenberg and suggested that if a favourable statement could be obtained from him, Botha should "appeal to some branch of the Bond (say to the Cape Town one, as being furthest removed from Gr Reinet and its personal animosities)", and to ask them to say whether his action "'has been such as to leave a stain on his character and whether he is, in consequence bound to resign as President of this provincial Bestuur?'" Should Liebenberg maintain that Botha was aware of the law, Onze Jan would advise Botha "to leave it as it is, and to act in the matter of his Presidency of the Bond in such manner as his own sense of the fitness of things may indicate".¹

Preliminary talks with Liebenberg were satisfactory,² but nothing appears to have come of Hofmeyr's suggested appeal to the Cape Town branch of the Bond. Botha did, however, follow Hofmeyr's advice not to appeal against his conviction. He remained on as chairman of the provincial bestuur, but the Liebenberg contract was a continual source of embarrassment to him as the Graaff Reinetter attacked him for his failure to give any further information on the issue, while the subject was liable to crop up at public meetings.³

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1. Te Water Papers, vol.59: J.H. Hofmeyr to T.N.G. te Water, 16 May 1889.
 2. Te Water Papers, vol.59: J.H. Hofmeyr to T.N.G. te Water, 27 May 1889.
 3. GR, 31 August, 7 September, 5 October 1891 (Public meeting at Aberdeen).

Dr Te Water, who at this time featured prominently as the protector of Botha, attempted to draw attention away from Botha's action by drawing a parallel between his case and that of Tom Auret, who let the rooms in which the Divisional Council held its meetings.¹ The Bond was determined to obtain legal opinion favouring steps against Auret,² but nothing came of this, and Auret disposed of the buildings in question.³ The Divisional Council was very much in the news over Botha's conviction and Auret's letting of rooms. Besides this, Auret was also involved in a bitter contest with the Bond over the revision of the Divisional Council voters' roll.⁴ In one of the most fiercely contested Council elections ever held in the town, Nesor and Auret were re-elected, but G.H. Maasdorp was rejected in favour of the Bond candidate, G.F. Joubert. The rejoicing of the Bond at their first success in town was however premature. Auret took the lead in successfully contesting the validity of certain votes, with the result that the election of Joubert was upset and Maasdorp was declared elected.⁵

Although Botha did not stand as a candidate in the Divisional Council elections, he was still able to exert an influence on Divisional Council affairs. In

1. GRA, 6 May 1889.
2. Te Water Papers, vol.59: J.H. Hofmeyr to T.N.G. te Water, 27 May 1889; GRA, 18 July 1889 (D.C. meeting, 10 July), 16 September 1889 (D.C. meeting, 11 September).
3. GRA, 13 February 1890 (D.C. meeting, 12 February), 27 March 1890 (Objection raised to certain votes).
4. GRA, 23, 30 December 1889, 10, 13, 17 February 1890.
5. GRA, 10, 27 March 1890.

1890 there were a number of applications for the vacancy of secretary to the Divisional Council,¹ but it was to be no selection on merit. The Bond had few educated men in Graaff-Reinet and while their opponents had a number of attorneys in their ranks, the Bond had none. Botha saw an opportunity of remedying the situation and prevailed upon the son of the Rev Dr Kotze to apply for the post, telling him "dat het ons niet te doen is om een secretaris die hebben wy meer dan genoeg, maar wy willen iemand die ook Afrikaner procureur kan zyn, bekwaam en gewillig waar nodig ons met raad en daat by te staan". Botha left it to Dr Te Water to use his influence with the Bond Councillors to see that Kotze was elected.² Kotze thus applied for the post on the understanding, in his own words, that he would "endeavour to further the interests of the Bond".³

Some of the difficulties in the way of obtaining men of education were illustrated by Kotze's case. With the aid of the Bond Councillors, Kotze was elected, not, however, without arousing the suspicions of the town that there was something behind it.⁴ These suspicions were reinforced when the Bond members of the Council carried a resolution permitting the secretary to undertake private work.⁵ But the Bond victory did not help them to realise their objective. Botha had

1. GRA, 16 June 1890.

2. Te Water Papers, vol.56: R.P. Botha to T.N.G. te Water, 3 June 1890.

3. Te Water Papers, vol.60: G.W. Kotze to T.N.G. te Water, n.d.

4. GRA, 16 June 1890.

5. GRA, 18 August 1890 (D.C. meeting).

advised Kotze to place himself under Dr Te Water's wing, "voorzigtig te zyn en uit de G.R. Club te blyven".¹ But by the beginning of September 1891 Botha was disillusioned with Kotze, as the Bond did not see him and he had fallen in with the opposition. Botha informed Te Water that, as he had another attorney in mind, they should try to rid themselves of Kotze, which Botha saw as an easy proposition if they reduced his salary.² Botha's suggestion was not taken up, and Kotze remained as secretary.

The inability of the Bond to obtain the services of even one attorney was indicative of its weakness in most spheres where men of education were required. This is illustrated by Dr Te Water's unsuccessful campaign from 1889 to 1891 to have the Zuid-Afrikaan and the Graaff Reinetter added to the list of newspapers subscribed to by the library. The Advertiser threatened to resign as a subscriber if that "half-treasonous print" (the Zuid-Afrikaan) was introduced, but the majority of Dr Te Water's opponents at the annual meeting of the library concentrated their objections on the numbers of Dutch books in the library that were never consulted. In 1890 the directors of the library invited Te Water to have the issue brought before a special meeting of subscribers. Since the Graaff Reinetter maintained that it did not have ten Bond subscribers in Graaff-Reinet, it is hardly surprising that Te Water was unable to obtain the signatures of the twelve subscribers

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1. Te Water Papers, vol.56: R.P. Botha to T.N.G. te Water, 12 June 1890.
 2. Te Water Papers, vol.56: R.P. Botha to T.N.G. te Water, 6 September 1891.

necessary to call such a special meeting, and nothing came of this. At the annual meeting of the library in 1891 Te Water's plea was supported by Botha, who had apparently become a subscriber on the day of the meeting.¹

In the Legislative Council elections early in 1891 Botha and Herholdt stood for re-election and the third Bond candidate was the Rev W.P. de Villiers of Carnarvon. There was an undercurrent of feeling against Botha, and J.H. Smith, writing from Cape Town, said that he noticed "dat er een soort van jaloesie in onzen kamp bestaan tegen den Heer Botha, and dat daar door zyn verkiesing in gevaar gebracht kan worden".² Part of the feeling seems to have been between Botha and Herholdt. In July 1889 Herholdt had told Dr Te Water that he got along fairly well with Botha, "only I think him awfully bigotted sometimes".³ At the same time as Smith wrote, Botha informed Te Water that "Het gevaarlyk's gift voor my en Bond is vriend Herholdt, maar hy hoef niet te weet dat ik hem kent".⁴ Herholdt denied that there was any rift between Botha and himself⁵ but Botha continued to warn Te Water against

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1. GRA, 25, 28 March 1889 (T.N.G. te Water), 17 March, 24 April, 8 May 1890, 9 March 1891; GR, 21 April 1890.
 2. Te Water Papers, vol.56: J.H. Smith to T.N.G. te Water, 27 July 1890.
 3. Te Water Papers, vol.56: A.J. Herholdt to T.N.G. te Water, 8 July 1889.
 4. Te Water Papers, vol.56: R.P. Botha to T.N.G. te Water, 31 July 1890.
 5. Te Water Papers, vol.56: A.J. Herholdt to T.N.G. te Water, 6 August 1890.

Herholdt.¹ This air of suspicion and mistrust continued to exhibit itself in the election campaign.

The Midlands Political Association² took the lead in inviting the Rev Dr Kotze of Cape Town, formerly of Richmond,³ to stand as an independent candidate, not as an official candidate of the Association which remained essentially a small body.⁴ The Advertiser bemoaned the fact that the association had made no attempt to spread its principles throughout the midland districts and that the independents had no organisation to rival that of the Bond,⁵ but it is difficult to see what it could have done. It is true that the Midlands Political Association had a membership virtually identical with that of the ZRFA, but the latter was itself, despite its early successes, not an organisation with numerous branches throughout the circle. Besides this, many of the members of the ZRFA were not from the electoral division of Graaff-Reinet or even the midlands circle. Apart from its committee in town, the Midlands Political Association could only meet when the ZRFA met, and the latter was in no mood to accommodate itself to the exigencies of a political association.

Botha reported that he had never seen Onze Jan so "opgewek en verontwaardig" as he was over Dr Kotze.⁶

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1. For evidence of antagonism between the two men, see Te Water Papers, vol.56: Letters to Te Water from Herholdt, 30, 31 January, 3 February 1891 and from Botha, 21 February 1891.
 2. The origins of this association are discussed on pp. 559-560.
 3. His son was secretary of the Divisional Council.
 4. GRA, 18 December 1890, 26 January 1891 (Address by Kotze).
 5. GRA, 12 February 1891.
 6. Te Water Papers, vol.60: R.P. Botha to T.N.G. te Water, 18 February 1891.

Kotze was unexceptionable as an Afrikaner, and the Richmond branch of the Bond had in fact proposed him as a candidate in 1887.¹ The strong feelings which Kotze's nomination aroused were not due so much to the fact that the Bond's opponents had a candidate who threatened the official Bond candidates, as that a man of whom the Bond approved should have stood for their opponents. The Graaff Reinetter expressed this when it said that people found it difficult to understand "dat een predikant, die altyd ondersteuning kreeg en zyn levensbestaan had van de Afrikaner bevolking, zich nu inwilligen wil om voor de bekrompenen, alles-wat-Hollandsch-is-hatende Advertiser kliek op te treden! Wy meenen dat ZEerw. de omstandigheden niet verstonde".² The paper maintained that he would lose, not because he was anti-Afrikaner or unfit, but because he had fallen into bad company.³ This was the same sort of argument which the Advertiser had used in connection with Herholdt, that in 1889 he had received the votes of the independents when he had been opposed only by other less popular Bond candidates, but that he now had no claim to such support.⁴ Herholdt, however, remained confident that he would split the independent vote, but in his attempts to do this he played a very independent electioneering role, which contributed to the suspicion with which he was regarded by Bondsmen like Botha. Herholdt

1. GRA, 23 February 1891 (J.J. Kotze).

2. GR, 19 January 1891.

3. GR, 29 December 1890.

4. GRA, 22 December 1890, 19 February 1891; see also GR, 18 December 1890, 19 February 1891.

said that the Bond must "give me a free hand and trust me", and he warned Te Water that "if you hamper me in any way and the independents flock together we will have a hard fight for it, but if I am allowed my own way we will win hands down".¹

Herholdt did most of the electioneering work as Botha was away on a government commission,² while De Villiers with an eye to his position in the church refused to campaign, to which the Graaff Reinetter reacted unfavourably, calling upon him to withdraw.³

It was probably this reaction by the paper which caused Theron to write that "ik woede ben van de zoogenaamde Bonds-gezinde bladen. Myn ondervinding is dat zy zoms de Bond en Bonds zaak meer kwaad doen, dan de vyandigste bladen".⁴ Theron was not the only one to question the views of the Graaff Reinetter, and Herholdt took strong exception to the tactics of the paper in its taunting the independents, fearing that if McCusker did "not stop his abominable foolish crowing all my labour to secure them will be lost".

1. Te Water Papers, vol.56: A.J. Herholdt to T.N.G. te Water, 19 December 1890, 9 January 1891.
2. Te Water Papers, vol.56: Letters to T.N.G. te Water from R.P. Botha, 10 December 1890 and A.J. Herholdt, 9 January 1891.
3. GR, 30 October 1890 (Editorial, and W.P. de Villiers to supporters).
4. Te Water Papers, vol.56: T.P. Theron to T.N.G. te Water, 6 November 1890; in connection with De Villiers's candidature see also Te Water Papers, vol.56: W.P. de Villiers to T.N.G. te Water, 30 October, 18 November, 22 December 1890, 1 January 1891 (De Villiers incorrectly dated the letter 1890).
5. Te Water Papers, vol.56: A.J. Herholdt to T.N.G. te Water, 23 January 1891.

The old Murraysburg fear that Graaff-Reinet would desert a Murraysburg candidate in favour of a local man in a close contest appears to have plagued Herholdt, and despite the fact that he hoped to obtain a large share of the independent vote, he was at first insistent that Bondsmen divide their votes equally among all three Bond candidates. It was only with reluctance that he later agreed that some change in the distribution of votes might become necessary. As a reason for his unwillingness in this regard he told Te Water that he felt it was important that people should not be given a chance of saying "that we have acted dishonestly towards one another".¹

In this air of mistrust and suspicion Botha took some last minute steps to secure his own election. In one of his few electioneering visits he went to Willowmore, where in the election he received 493 votes to 31 cast for Herholdt,² a circumstance which Herholdt regarded as sharp practice on the part of Botha, who had succeeded in persuading Willowmore that he was the weakest of the three Bond candidates.³

Although Kotze topped the poll in town,⁴ all three Bond candidates came in with comfortable majorities. Despite the air of suspicion which surrounded the Bond camp, the unity of that organisation had

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1. Te Water Papers, vol.56: A.J. Herholdt to T.N.G. te Water, 13 January 1891 and vol.60: 26 February 1891.
 2. GRA, 5 March 1891 (Election return).
 3. GRA, 6 April 1891.
 4. GRA, 5 March 1891.

emerged unimpaired. The ploy of the independents, and there can be little doubt that the nomination of Kotze was a ploy, failed. Kotze was politically speaking as unknown to the independents as he was to the Bond, and the only possible reason for putting him forward was the hope that he would draw enough votes away from the Bond, which added to the votes of the independents, would secure his return. The independents fought not so much for Kotze as against the Bond, and this was to be made abundantly clear in the next elections to the Assembly.

The nomination of Kotze appears to have been the last official act of the Midlands Political Association, and no more was heard of it apart from a passing reference to its demise at a meeting of the ZRFA in July 1892.¹ While the Midlands Political Association made a quiet exit from the arena, it was in its short life capable of seriously embarrassing the ZRFA in a series of events in which R.P. Botha was also to play a role. Early in 1890 G.M. Palmer, who at the time was vice-president of the ZRFA,² together with other English-speaking persons joined the Afrikaner Bond.³ At the annual meeting of the ZRFA in April 1890 Palmer was elected president of the association after Lee (snr) had declined to stand for re-election. C.G. Lee (jnr), who was also a Bondsman, was at the same time elected

1. GRA, 28 July 1892.

2. GRA, 29 April 1889 (ZRFA meeting); Palmer was from the farm Cranemere in the Somerset East district (see E.Palmer, The Plains of Camdeboo).

3. Te Water Papers, vol.56: A.Innes to T.N.G. te Water, 21 February 1890.

secretary.¹ Thus far the ZRFA had only two Bond members, but at the first quarterly meeting after Palmer's election to the presidency, of eighteen new members who joined the ZRFA a number were Bondsmen.²

With a Bond president and secretary, and an accession of Bond members, it appeared as if the ZRFA was on the verge of a major breakthrough. Lee (snr), who appears to have revised his earlier opinion about the introduction of the Bond element into the ZRFA,³ wrote to Dr Te Water with a view to the latter joining the ZRFA. The doctor apparently replied that he had given the matter serious consideration but was afraid that his admission "might introduce a discordant element into the association". Lee suggested that there was no difference between Te Water's political views and those of the majority of the members of the ZRFA, that the ZRFA did not discuss politics, "and if we did, I really have not yet learned wherein your Political views differ from that of the farmers throughout the Midland districts".⁴

Te Water did not accept this overture, and events in the next few months were to rule out any possibility of further bonds of co-operation between the Afrikaner Bond and the ZRFA. The Bond's exultation at Palmer's joining them was shortlived, for in a bye-election in Somerset East later in 1890 Palmer stood against the

1. GRA, 1, 5 May 1890.

2. GRA, 24 July, 30 October 1890.

3. See p.556.

4. Te Water Papers, vol.56: C.Lee to T.N.G. te Water, 15 July 1890.

official Bond candidate and defeated him.¹ Palmer immediately became a target for Bond abuse, and he was expelled from the Bond.² At the quarterly meeting of the ZRFA in October 1890 a number of parliamentarians were present, including candidates contesting the Legislative Council elections for the south east circle, invited there by Palmer to discuss politics. Although the meeting, mindful of its non-political image, first dealt with the business of the ZRFA before constituting a political meeting and electing a private member to preside over it, the Graaff Reinetter saw this meeting as evidence that the ZRFA had encouraged Bondsmen to join it under false pretences, that it was really a political organisation in which there was no place for Bondsmen. The paper admitted that the secretary of the ZRFA, C. Lee (jnr) was a Bondsman, but cast doubt on his credentials by adding that "hy is tevens een groote bewonderaar van den Bonds apostaat Palmer". The reputation of the ZRFA as a non-political body had been badly dented, although the Advertiser continued to insist that the ZRFA had kept to its rule of no politics, and that the political meeting had been separate.³

The further involvement of their president in arguments with the Bond, and in particular with Botha, did nothing for the ease of mind of the ZRFA. When the Eastern Province Farmers' Congress and the congress of

1. GRA, 6 October 1890.

2. GRA, 1 December 1890.

3. GR, 27 October 1890; GRA, 27 October (ZRFA meeting), 30 October, 3 November 1890 ("Independent").

the Afrikaner Bond arranged for delegates to attend each other's congresses, it was decided that such delegates would be allowed to speak but not to vote. According to W.H. Hockly, president of the Farmers' Congress, Botha had in 1888 asked the Farmers' Congress to allow the Bond delegate a vote, promising to extend the same privilege to the Farmers' Congress delegates. This had been done, but when Palmer, who had been chosen as the Farmers' Congress delegate before the trouble over the Somerset East election,¹ went to the Bond Congress after his expulsion from the Bond, Botha decided that Palmer should not be allowed to vote. Palmer believed that this step had been taken in order to insult him,² but Botha denied this, saying that the granting of a vote to such delegates had been an absurd arrangement and that the resolution of the Bond Congress to put a stop to it had been "simply to put an end to a ridiculous state of things".³ N.F. de Waal accepted responsibility for the resolution and pointed out that at the previous Bond Congress some resolutions, including that deciding to support the extension of the Graaff-Reinet railway, had been decided by the casting vote of the chairman (Botha), and that he was afraid "that it was just possible that a vote from the Farmers' Delegate would turn what was really a Bond majority into a Bond minority".⁴

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1. GRA, 30 April 1891 (W.H. Hockly).
 2. GRA, 13 April 1891 (G.M. Palmer).
 3. GRA, 16 April 1891 (R.P. Botha).
 4. GRA, 23 April 1891 (N.F. de Waal).

Botha could not help having a final dig at the Farmers' Congress and accused them of not treating the Bond delegates well, citing as an example the fact that at the Farmers' Congress in Graaff-Reinet in 1889 the Bond delegates had not been honoured with a toast at the dinner.¹ This was not the first time that Botha had thought fit to refer to this,² and Hockly pointed out that the Farmers' Congress had nothing to do with the dinner, which was in fact given to the Farmers' Congress by the town.³

At the same time friction between Botha and Palmer broke out over the controversial Somerset East election. In support of his contention that Botha had tried to prevent him from obtaining the Bond nomination, Palmer produced a translation of a letter written by Botha to a friend in Somerset East asking him to "spare no trouble to work with me to keep Palmer out. Truly one Rooinek, like Hockly,⁴ is quite enough ... and the Jingoos and Children of Ham are as one".⁵ When confronted with this letter, Botha said that it had been written "to a rather dull friend, who wanted strong stimulants to make him take the course which I deemed best for the interest of the political party to which I belong, and in such cases, especially when one is pressed

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1. GRA, 16 April 1891 (R.P. Botha).
 2. GRA, 6 May 1889 (Meeting of district bestuur of Afrikaner Bond).
 3. GRA, 30 April 1891 (W.H. Hockly).
 4. He had been a Bond nominee.
 5. GRA, 20 April 1891 (G.M. Palmer).

for time and has to be brief, exaggerated terms are often used". He went on to say that most Englishmen were not included in his definition of Jingo, that "The Jingo of this country, at least a great many of them are Africanders who ape the English in everything and wish to be considered as belonging to them, thinking a great deal of themselves, while only being despised for their trouble. Mr Palmer, for instance, is a good type of a Jingo".¹

The ZRFA, which had tried so hard to steer a conciliatory path and avoid conflict with the Bond, must have sighed with relief when Palmer declined to stand for re-election as president in 1891. The tortuous path of the ZRFA in trying to preserve its image of a non-political body had not succeeded with its Bondsman president, but had left its image somewhat tarnished in this respect. Despite this, while the fiction of two bodies side by side, one purely farming and the other political, did not allay the suspicions of Afrikaner Bondsmen, it did allow English-speaking farmers of different political persuasions to sit alongside each other without friction.

From at least 1888 the Graaff Reinetter had attacked certain Bond leaders, particularly Botha, and in an article of 17 August 1891 entitled "Is de Bond nog langer noodig", McCusker finally cast the die. The tenor of the article was that the Bond as it was being used did not further the true interests of the country but did more harm than good. In this and succeeding articles Botha was singled out for attack, both directly

1. GRA, 23 April 1891 (R.P. Botha).

and indirectly. Prominence was given to a clash between Botha and Daantje van den Heever, when Botha, contrary to a resolution of the Bond Congress, opposed the establishment of a National Bank. When challenged by Van den Heever to justify his stance, Botha was reported to have said that he led the Bond, but did not allow the Bond to lead him. This became a major source of embarrassment to Botha who made unconvincing attempts at public meetings to blame the Patriot for having twisted his words.¹

Besides his alleged disrespect for the resolutions of the Bond Congress, the Graaff Reinetter reminded its readers that Botha had not yet explained his share in the Liebenberg contract. His success in the recent Legislative Council elections in obtaining so many votes for himself at Willowmore and so few for the other Bond candidates was also the subject of veiled charges against him. The paper accused him of keeping back documents on the Adendorff Trekkers that were meant for the Bond Congress, while improper conduct was implied in the allegation that he had accepted a gift of a diamond from Rhodes.² This is but a sample of the charges levelled by the paper against Botha, and, although issues of policy were involved, it is clear that the attacks were motivated by a good deal of personal animosity. This is not to suggest that McCusker opposed the Bond and resigned therefrom because he disliked Botha; it was rather a case that his hatred of

1. GR, 17, 31 August, 3 September, 8 October 1891.

2. GR, 31 August 1891.

Botha was reinforced by his dislike of the policies that Botha espoused. Botha became a symbol of these policies.

On the grounds of policy it was primarily the official Bond attitude to the question of the Adendorff Trekkers that aroused the anger of McCusker. In the article "Is de Bond nog langer noodig?" it was maintained "Dat de Bondsmannen in het algemeen dan ook zeer ontevreden zyn met de verstandhouding, die er is met Rhodes en de Bondsleiders, in zake Mashonaland, en de Koloniale politiek van den dag".¹ This theme was developed in the issue of 27 August 1891, where the opinion was expressed that if the Bond

niet beter gebruikt wordt dan om private Engelsche compagnies te bevorderen, tot nadeel en op kosten van onze Transvaalsche landgenoten (de Trekkers), en als de Bondsleiders niet meer gezag voor elkander hebben, en ook voor de volksstem als op de Congressen uitgesproken, en zich niet boven verdenking houden door presenten en gunsten van hooggeplaatste, belangstellende Imperialisten te weigeren, dan is het land werkelyk beter zonder zulk een Bond. De hoofd oorzaak waarom wy nu voor den Bond bedankt hebben is omdat de Bond den hr. Rhodes ondersteunt in zake het Trekkers dispuut.²

After McCusker's resignation from the Bond, the opinions expressed by the Graaff Reinetter began to deviate from Bond policies in a number of spheres.³ In-

1. GR, 17 August 1891.

2. GR, 27 August 1891.

3. Te Water Papers, vol.59: J.H. Hofmeyr to T.N.G. te Water, 11 September 1891.

formal discussions concerning the establishment of another newspaper were soon under way,¹ and Dr Te Water and Botha canvassed for a new paper.² The Graaff-Reinet district bestuur on 1 September decided to establish "een Afrikaansche nieuwsblad", and in a circular gave prominence to McCusker's resignation from the Bond as a reason for this step. While the circular mentioned certain points where the Graaff Reinetter had deviated from Bond policy,³ nothing was said of the Adendorff Trekkers for the very good reason that Bondsmen were bitterly divided on the issue, and to have attacked the Graaff Reinetter on this subject could only have added to such divisions.

At a meeting which was defined as a public Bond meeting McCusker, as he was no longer a Bondsman, was denied the right to question Botha. However, there were many other Bondsmen willing to question Botha, whose answers failed to satisfy the meeting, and his plea for the establishment of another newspaper was not acclaimed with enthusiasm. A sign of future trouble was given by J.A. Smith of Aberdeen, who warned that unless the charges made against certain Bond leaders in the Graaff Reinetter could be disproved, Aberdeen would not subscribe to the newspaper.⁴

1. Te Water Papers, vol.59: J.H. Hofmeyr to T.N.G. te Water, 27 August 1891.

2. GR, 31 August 1891.

3. Te Water Papers, vol.102: Printed sheet, signed by G.F. Joubert.

4. GR, 3 September 1891.

Numbers of Graaff-Reinnetters attended a public meeting in Aberdeen early in October 1891, and McCusker was given an opportunity of putting his views concerning the Trekkers. Botha again found himself on the defence, while Dr Te Water in his appeal for support for another Bond organ, could make no progress in the face of considerable support for the Graaff Reinetter.¹ Some Bond branches passed resolutions withdrawing their support from the Graaff Reinetter, while others passed motions of confidence in the paper. The issue caused lively discussion in Murraysburg, while Aberdeen seemed firm in its support of McCusker.²

In the midst of all the passion generated by Botha's quarrel with Van den Heever, McCusker was active in organising a meeting in Graaff-Reinet between the two antagonists.³ Van den Heever agreed to come to Graaff-Reinet where they could "in de diepten der saken afdalen".⁴ Hofmeyr was apprehensive of the result of such a confrontation and Innes expressed the opinion that nothing would "tend more to injure the Bond as when members of the Bond stand up one against the other".⁵ The meeting in February 1892 was crowded, but to the surprise of most people, Van den Heever and Botha were,

1. GR, 8 October 1891.

2. Te Water Papers, vol.60: J.A. Smith to T.N.G. te Water, October 1891; GR, 22, 26, 29 October, 2 November 1891.

3. Te Water Papers, vol.59: J.H. Hofmeyr to T.N.G. te Water, 2 December 1891.

4. GR, 3 December 1891 (D.P. van den Heever).

5. Te Water Papers, vol.59: J.H. Hofmeyr to T.N.G. te Water, 2 December 1891, and A.Innes to T.N.G. te Water, 7 December 1891.

as Innes put it, "in perfect harmony". The result was a disappointment to McCusker and his friends, and was obviously due to manoeuvres behind the scenes. It seems likely that Innes's bestowal of the praise on Dr Te Water's "superior Generalship" was well placed.¹

In the face of the new Bond paper which was shortly to appear, there were signs that McCusker was becoming more conciliatory, and in October 1891 he stressed that it was simply the actions of the Bond leaders which had caused him to resign, and that he had not taken this step "omdat onze liefde voor die organisatie verminderd is of omdat wy bevonden hebben dat de Bond het volk verkeerd leidt".² A little later McCusker indicated to the Rev S.J. du Toit that he was again in full agreement with all Bond policies,³ and it was doubtless a fear of what the future possibly held for the Graaff Reinetter which caused McCusker in November 1891 to announce that:

Wegens de toenemende circulatie van ons blad, en als eene erkentenis voor de uitdrukkingen van vertrouwen door zoo vele Bondstakken in ons gepasseerd maken wy onze lezers bekend dat wy alle kennisgevingen van Vergaderingen van Wyksbesturen en Distriktsbesturen waar vroeger voor betaald werd als voor advertenties, van nu voortaan gratis zullen opnemen.⁴

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1. Te Water Papers, vol.60: A.Innes to T.N.G. te Water, 4 March 1892; GRA, 29 February 1892.
 2. GR, 19 October 1891.
 3. Te Water Papers, vol.59: S.J. du Toit to T.N.G. te Water, 18 November 1891.
 4. GR, 23 November 1891.

Hofmeyr suggested Onze Courant as the name of the new paper.¹ By the time the new paper appeared at the beginning of 1892 much of the heat of the Aberdeen meeting of October 1891 had died down. Tempers were already calmer by the time that Herholdt addressed Aberdeen on 5 December 1891. Awkward questions were dealt with in a civilised manner, and there was an all-round willingness to compromise. The opinion was expressed that the best policy would be to support both papers and to compare them.²

Although Botha and Dr Te Water tried to persuade people in Graaff-Reinet to invest in the new venture,³ and attempted to do the same at public meetings,⁴ it seemed likely that part of the money would have to be raised elsewhere. Hofmeyr asked Te Water to stop Botha from talking about loans from Rhodes or any Cape Town man. Hofmeyr, however, confirmed that "Cape Town men will take shares to the tune of five hundred pounds, if necessary".⁵ Where the subscribed capital of £865⁶ came from is uncertain, and the Graaff Reinetter on occasion bluntly stated that Rhodes had supplied the capital. R.W. Mohr, who acted as Onze Courant's first editor, suggested taking legal action against McCusker, hoping

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1. Te Water Papers, vol.59: J.H. Hofmeyr to T.N.G. te Water, 11 September 1891.
 2. GR, 10 December 1891.
 3. GR, 31 August 1891.
 4. See for example, Te Water Papers, vol.88: Manuscript minutes of meeting at New Bethesda, 3 September 1891.
 5. Te Water Papers, vol.59: J.H. Hofmeyr to T.N.G. te Water, 11 September 1891.
 6. Te Water Papers, vol.92: Statement on Onze Courant, 31 December 1892.

that if they obtained heavy damages they would put him out of business.¹ Hofmeyr rejected the idea, saying that the only way to fight McCusker was to produce "a good readable and legible newspaper".² Onze Courant opened in 1892 with Mohr as a non-resident editor who sent his material to Dr Te Water.³ The first resident editor, C.H.O. Marais, was appointed in 1894.

The aim of a new paper had all along been to put McCusker out of business. This was one of the reasons it had been thought necessary that Onze Courant should be established in Graaff-Reinet so that it could compete with McCusker for job printing.⁴ From the outset Onze Courant was involved in a bitter struggle with the Graaff Reinetter, and on at least one occasion Mohr even contacted a firm which advertised in the Graaff Reinetter, because he felt sure that they would "consent to withdraw their advertisement from our opponents columns".⁵ Mohr early discovered that although McCusker was impervious to abuse, he could not take Mohr's taunts. On the other side it did not take McCusker long to rile Mohr.⁶ McCusker remained a thorn in the side of the Bond. There is no reason for disbelieving McCusker's statement in 1888 that he had

1. Te Water Papers, vol.56: R.W. Mohr to T.N.G. te Water, 13 January 1892 (incorrectly written as 1891); see also GR, 11 January 1893.
2. Te Water Papers, vol.56: J.H. Hofmeyr to T.N.G. te Water, 18 January 1892.
3. See for example Te Water Papers, vol.56: R.W. Mohr to T.N.G. te Water, 1, 3, 5 February, 2 August 1892.
4. Te Water Papers, vol.59: J.H. Hofmeyr to T.N.G. te Water, 27 August 1891.
5. Te Water Papers, vol.60: R.W. Mohr to T.N.G. te Water, 12 January 1892.
6. Te Water Papers, vol.56: R.W. Mohr to T.N.G. te Water, 9 March 1892, and vol.60: Mohr to Te Water, 30 August 1893.

few Bond subscribers and that the paper paid its way through the support of non-Bondsmen. Now that the Graaff Reinetter was at loggerheads with certain sections of the Bond and was openly trying to encourage divisions within the ranks of that organisation, there was certainly no reason for the Bond's opponents to withdraw their support from McCusker. The Graaff Reinetter was to throw everything it had into the elections for the Assembly in 1894.

(ii) Elections for the House of Assembly, 1894

The Bond's opponents seemed destined to establish a new political association at virtually every election; once an election was over there was insufficient interest in political questions to maintain a political society. The ZRFA steadfastly refused to be used as a vehicle for an election campaign at a time when the English-speaking farmers' associations of the east were becoming increasingly politically orientated. In 1891 the Eastern Province Farmers' Congress took steps for the establishment of a Central Association which would attend to questions that arose after the congress had ended,¹ and the following year it was decided that no political matters would be excluded from the discussions of the Central Association. Although the ZRFA as a body expressed its "earnest dissatisfaction with the political action of the Congress in admitting political questions in its programme", it could not prevent its delegates to the congress from taking a leading role in

1. GRA, 27 April 1891 (ZRFA meeting).

this move. Thus one of its delegates, G.M. Palmer, became president of the Central Association and advocated a "combination of progressive party, or Farmers' Associations against strong non-progressive or Bond party".¹

The members of the ZRFA did differ in their political thinking, but apart from a number of English-speaking Bondsmen, there were few other Bondsmen whose feelings needed to be taken into account. Sandford's gentle prodding of the ZRFA is clear in his statement that when the ZRFA was started "its rules were framed as mild as new milk in the belief that Bondsmen would thereby be led to join it. The belief was a failure; and now the association must consider where it stands, after the position which the Congress has taken up".²

At the next quarterly meeting of the ZRFA there was a heated debate on the question of politics. The attitude of the majority was that politics, in the sense of Divisional Council and parliamentary elections, were not popular, which view they supported by pointing to the demise of the Midlands Political Association and the continued existence of the ZRFA. The minority however pointed out that, although the ZRFA had 130 to 140 members, there were never more than a quarter of this number present at any meeting, which they attributed to the exclusion of politics from its debates.³

1. GRA, 21 April, 2 and 5 May (ZRFA meeting), 23 May, 25 July 1892.

2. GRA, 23 May 1892.

3. GRA, 28 July 1892.

The attempt to persuade the ZRFA to lift its embargo on party politics failed, but the need for a political association to oppose the Bond continued to be felt among sections of the English-speaking community, particularly in the town. In preparation for the approaching elections, steps were taken in March 1893 to form a farmers' association with Graaff-Reinet as its centre.¹ Lee (snr), who had some seven years earlier himself suggested the formation of another farmers' association in Graaff-Reinet, now opposed the move as an attempt to undermine the ZRFA.² Lee's change of heart is interesting. In 1886 he had supported the idea because he had felt that the townsmen were taking over the ZRFA. His stance in 1893 is an indication of the success that he and others had enjoyed in preventing such a take over. This is obvious from the arguments of G.H. (Henry) Maasdorp and Walter Rubidge, two of the main figures behind the move for another association, that the town and district of Graaff-Reinet had special needs for which the ZRFA did not cater. It was at the same time denied that this was a move against the ZRFA, and much was made of the difficulty of farmers in areas such as the Sneeuwberge attending meetings of the ZRFA. Despite this denial the real reason for the establishment of another association must be seen in the light of its decision that politics would not be excluded from its debates.³

For some time attendance at the meetings of the ZRFA had been poor, and at the next annual meeting, held

1. GRA, 23 March 1893.

2. GRA, 30 March 1893 (C.Lee); see also GRA, 17 April 1893 (C.Lee).

3. GRA, 10 April 1893.

shortly after steps had been taken to set up a new association, only about twenty-one people were present. In an attempt to ward off the threat posed by the new association, the subject of the introduction of politics again came up for discussion but was defeated by nine votes to seven.¹ By the time the Graaff-Reinet Farmers' and Political Association (FAPA) adopted its rules in early May, it had ninety-five members.² The membership of the ZRFA does not seem to have been significantly affected by the establishment of the FAPA, but the attendance at its meetings certainly was adversely affected.³ While Graaff-Reinettters remained members of the ZRFA they obviously took no part in its activities, as may be deduced from the fact that early in 1895 the ZRFA passed Palmer's motion favouring the construction of a railway extension from Kendrew to Cookhouse,⁴ which would not have been passed had there been a majority from Graaff-Reinet.⁵

The Commissie van Toezicht op Elekties in this election made a concerted effort to improve the quality of Bond candidates.⁶ It seemed as if the possible nomination of Dr Te Water and A.J. Herholdt would result in a considerable elevation in the quality of Graaff-Reinet's representatives. But there were many obstacles along the road which led to the Bond nomination meeting of

1. GRA, 27 April, 1 May 1893.

2. GRA, 8 May 1893.

3. GRA, 20 July 1893, 1 February 1894.

4. GRA, 4 February 1895.

5. See pp.152-159 for details of Graaff-Reinet's railway hopes.

6. T.R.H. Davenport, The Afrikaner Bond; The History of a South African Political Party, 1880-1911, pp.149-150.

2 August 1893. For Te Water one of these obstacles was the nomination by the FAPA of his father, along with Walter Rubidge. F.K. te Water was at the time abroad, but C.A. Nesor said that before his departure he had informed Nesor that he was willing to stand if nominated. This was a serious embarrassment to Dr Te Water, who informed his father that he "should not like to be the opposing candidate" and would "stand back with pleasure in your favour". But the doctor also pointed out that "if the Bond have no internal dissensions and agree on their men the opposition has no chance. So even if I stand back your chances of election would not be improved thereby". Subsequent events were to prove that there was much truth in Tom te Water's assessment that the FAPA were using his father "to further their own ends".² Dr Te Water was far more likely to attract independent voters than any other candidate hitherto nominated by the Bond, and it seems probable that the FAPA nominated F.K. primarily with the object of keeping his son out of the contest. But this move failed.

Before his departure F.K. had told his daughter that he would not stand if Tom was nominated by the Bond, as he was "sure to be elected, and would be a splendid representative of the Gem".³ F.K. informed his son that he had no intention of contesting the election against him and that he had "distinctly said so over and over to Mr Nesor and also to McCusker, - except

1. GRA, 22, 26 June 1893.

2. Te Water Papers, vol.5: T.N.G. te Water to his parents, 26 June 1893.

3. Te Water Papers, vol.5: F.K. te Water to Hendrina, 14 June 1893.

when it could be arranged that you are the only one brought forward by the Bond and I by the independent party". F.K. said that he had written to Nesor "saying that he must have forgotten what I told him the day before leaving".¹ In a further letter of 20 July 1893 F.K. said that he had that day sent Nesor a cable, "Decline standing".²

When the Bond met to elect its two representatives on 2 August, Dr Te Water knew that his father would not contest the election, but Nesor had not yet made public the cable F.K. said he had sent him on 20 July, possibly because he hoped that by giving the impression F.K. was going to stand, he might upset the doctor's nomination. But the Bond nominated Dr Te Water on 2 August, and on 7 August in the Advertiser, Nesor informed the electors that F.K. had withdrawn.³

Dr Te Water was one of the Bond nominees, but there was considerable competition for the second nomination. As early as October 1892 Aberdeen hinted that it expected to obtain one of the nominations,⁴ and it was clear that there were going to be difficulties as a result of the profusion of candidates.⁵ Much embarrassment was caused by a strong challenge from the Rev Barend Pienaar, a missionary at Wynberg, formerly of

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1. Te Water Papers, vol.88: F.K. te Water to T.N.G. te Water, (date written in pencil is given as July 1893); see also Te Water Papers, vol.5: T.N.G. te Water to F.K. te Water, 3 July 1893.
 2. Te Water Papers, vol.88: F.K. te Water to T.N.G. te Water, 20 July 1893.
 3. GRA, 7 August 1893 (C.A. Nesor).
 4. Te Water Papers, vol.60: J.A.Smith to R.P.Botha, 22 October 1892.
 5. Te Water Papers, vol.59: J.H. Hofmeyr to T.N.G. te Water, 19 December 1892.

Murraysburg, who was regarded as a weak candidate by the more enlightened Bondsmen. Herholdt decided to give up his seat in the Legislative Council and attempt to gain the nomination in order to keep Pienaar out. It was only at the last minute that Herholdt finally decided to stand, and much of his indecision was the old Murraysburg fear that Graaff-Reinet would throw its weight behind local candidates. The substance of his apprehensions in this matter was that G.H. Maasdorp might decide to stand for the Bond's opponents, and Herholdt had visions of Graaff-Reinet deserting him and voting for Te Water and Maasdorp.¹

Herholdt gained the second nomination, but not without some dissatisfaction. Apart from Aberdeen's disappointment at again having been overlooked, there was dissatisfaction among the supporters of Pienaar and Alex Innes, two of the candidates who had fallen out at the nomination meeting. J.H. Smith, the sitting M.L.A. was another unsuccessful candidate. Onze Courant tried to soothe these ruffled feelings, but the Graaff Reinetter gave free reign to its reports of dissatisfaction among the defeated candidates.²

The first result of the nomination of Herholdt was a rift between him and Innes. Herholdt had persuaded Innes to stand, but the latter maintained that

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1. Te Water Papers, vol.56: Letters to T.N.G. te Water from B. Pienaar, 4, 29 July 1893, A.Innes, 25 July 1893 and R.P. Botha, 28 July 1893; Te Water Papers, vol.60: A.J. Herholdt to T.N.G. te Water, 10, 14 April 1893.
 2. OC and GRA, 3 August 1893; GR, 7, 10 August 1893.

Herholdt had despite this asked Dr Te Water and Gideon Smith to work for his own return. Further damage seemed likely from Innes's assertion that Herholdt had asked him to stand merely to oppose Pienaar.¹ The supporters of Innes did not appear to be numerous, but those of Pienaar were a more serious matter. Although Herholdt later cleared himself to his own satisfaction of the charges,² his immediate reaction to the split which appeared to be developing was to withdraw from the contest despite pressure from Hofmeyr not to do so.³

Meanwhile the divisions in the Bond camp continued with the Graaff Reinetter doing its best to keep them alive. It was clear that the Graaff Reinetter although badly hit by Onze Courant would not go under before the election. As Mohr pointed out, "our enemies will keep him going".⁴ If the enemies here referred to were the Bond's opponents, there were also enemies in the Bond camp who supplied McCusker with inside information concerning the conflict.⁵

Herholdt's withdrawal threatened to precipitate a new crisis in the Bond as a result of an agitation by J.F. du Toit, who had been elected as one of the

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1. Te Water Papers, vol.56: A.J. Herholdt to T.N.G. te Water; 4 August 1893, and telegram 5 August 1893; Te Water Papers, vol.60: Herholdt to Te Water, 6 August 1893.
 2. Te Water Papers, vol.56: A.J. Herholdt to T.N.G. te Water, 3 October 1893.
 3. Te Water Papers, vol.59: J.H. Hofmeyr to T.N.G. te Water, 18 August 1893.
 4. Te Water Papers, vol.60: R.W. Mohr to T.N.G. te Water, 30 August 1893.
 5. Te Water Papers, vol.56: A.J. Herholdt to T.N.G. te Water, 26 September 1893.

secundii at the conference of 2 August, to be declared the candidate.¹ The problem, however, was resolved,² and at a second nomination conference, J.H. Smith, the sitting M.L.A. was chosen as the second Bond candidate to run with Te Water.³

After F.K. te Water's withdrawal as the independent candidate, the FAPA made an approach to one of the Bond candidates who had fallen out at the Bond nomination conference of 2 August. The letter inviting him to stand for the independents stated that "als gy genomineerd wordt en het aanneemt dan moeten wy eene belofte van velen uwer Bondsondersteuners hebben dat zy voor de kandidaten door ons opgestoken zullen stemmen." The offer was rejected.⁴ This attempt to turn the divisions in the Bond to the advantage of the independents is further evidence of the tactics of the Bond's opponents, who were not so much concerned with who their candidates were, as with defeating the Bond. These same tactics had been evident in the nomination of Kotze in the Legislative Council elections,⁵ and it is an open question whether F.K. te Water would have been nominated had his son not been mentioned as a Bond candidate. Maasdorp eventually emerged as the second independent candidate to run with Rubidge.

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1. Hofmeyr Papers, vol.3: G.F. Smith to Commissie van Toezicht, 16 September 1893.
 2. Hofmeyr Papers, vol.3: Telegram, G.F. Smith to J.H. Hofmeyr, 20 September 1893.
 3. OC, 12 October 1893.
 4. OC, 22 January 1894.
 5. See pp. 569-573.

An interesting sidelight to this episode is that in the letter it was stated that the independents could have spoken to the proposed candidate before he left Graaff-Reinet after the Bond nomination conference of 2 August, had they at that time known that F.K. te Water would not stand.¹ As F.K. maintained that he had cabled Nesor on 20 July, apart from the possibility that the cable was delayed, it would seem that Nesor did not share his knowledge of Te Water's withdrawal with his fellow independents.

The outcome of the voting on 7 February 1894 was never seriously in doubt, but Dr Te Water took the precaution of soliciting the support of ministers of the Dutch Reformed Church.² In the town of Graaff-Reinet Maasdorp topped the poll with 351 votes, followed by Te Water with 330 votes. Rubidge polled 302 votes and Smith 248. This was a good showing by Te Water in the traditionally anti-Bond centre and, when all the results were counted, Te Water and Smith were returned with large majorities.³

At the time of the election the FAPA had a membership of 130, but its first annual meeting was held at the same time as the poll was declared and, in this atmosphere of gloom, there were only some twenty persons present.⁴ The next annual meeting was attended by forty persons,⁵ but by the end of 1896 the FAPA had been disbanded. Elections aroused enthusiasm, but it was

1. OC, 22 January 1894.

2. Te Water Papers, vol.60: A.A. Weich to T.N.G. te Water, 13 February 1894.

3. OC, 15 February 1894; GRA, 19 February 1894.

4. GRA, 19 February 1894.

5. GRA, 11 February 1895.

not easy to coax people to meetings to discuss the question of duty on imported food, as important an issue as it was, and after hardly anyone came to a meeting called for this purpose, Maasdorp presided over the death of the association, reflecting that Graaff-Reinet "was entirely dead to politics".¹

Once again the ZRFA was left as the only vehicle for the expression of the opinions of English-speaking farmers. The failure of the FAPA, like that of the Midlands Political Association before it, confirmed the ZRFA in its view that its exclusion of party politics was a successful formula, and there were no further major attempts from within the ZRFA to make the association participate in elections. A new challenge, however, came from the Central Association which in 1898 approved a proposal of the South African League that an electoral committee from the League and the Farmers' Congress be formed to resolve any disputes over candidates.² C.G. Lee (jnr), secretary of the ZRFA and a Bondsman, painted a picture of the Central Association's having virtually joined the South African League. He made a plea for the ZRFA to withdraw from the Central Association and, together with other associations which felt the same way, to form "the nucleus of a South African Farmers' Congress, wherein no political party would be recognised". Lee's plea must be seen in the

1. GRA, 26 November 1896.

2. GRA, 24 February 1898.

light of his own membership of the Bond and of other Bond members, ten of whom it was stated had joined the ZRFA in the past year.¹ These were all presumably English-speaking Bondsmen for at a meeting shortly afterwards it was stated that the ZRFA at present had no Afrikaner members.²

Lee's view that the Central Association had virtually joined the South African League was contradicted by W.H. Hockly, the president of the former, who said that the League had suggested that,

in case of any difficulty about electing a Progressive candidate, the two bodies should confer together to attain their object. In agreeing to do this I cannot see how that can be construed into our joining the League - it was to avoid what I think all true Progressives wish to avoid, that is, the Progressive vote being split up, and allowing a candidate not in sympathy with us obtaining the seat. As soon as that is over all connection ceases, and we are in no way connected with the League.³

The knowledge that his association was affiliated to an organisation which actively sought to elect Progressive candidates could hardly be expected to satisfy a Bondsman interested in the election of Bond candidates, but Lee's motion in favour of ending the connection between the Central Association and the ZRFA was defeated by sixteen votes to six.⁴ The ZRFA continued to abide

1. GRA, 2 May 1898.
2. GRA, 29 July 1898.
3. GRA, 29 July 1898.
4. GRA, 29 July 1898.

by its decision not to involve itself in party politics.

Vindication for the unwavering stand of the ZRFA finally came from the Central Congress at Somerset East in 1905. The ZRFA delegates to the congress reported that the Central Association had revised its constitution and rules "whereby it has become strictly non-political, and its extension to the uttermost districts of the Colony is now assured".¹

The membership of the ZRFA did not vary significantly over the years; at the end of 1909 its membership stood at 121² as against the 112 members on its books in 1885.³ It had, nevertheless, achieved some considerable recognition and a degree of acceptance in the midlands as may be seen in the Advertiser's suggestion in January 1909 that the name ZRFA was too parochial for an association which could "speak not on behalf of a Zwart Ruggens Ward but can show that it is broad-based on the districts of Graaff-Reinet, Jansenville, Aberdeen, and Murraysburg, the fringe of Middelburg, the northern confines of Uitenhage, and the western borders of Somerset East".⁴ Those who had consistently fought against the introduction of party politics into the association would have given the exclusion of politics as the reason the ZRFA had maintained itself while so many other organisations had enjoyed but a brief existence. The fate of the political associations

1. GRA, 3 May 1905.

2. GRA, 20 December 1909; the GRA, 25 January 1909 refers to over 150 members.

3. GRA, 17 July 1885.

4. GRA, 25 January 1909.

bears out this belief, and participation in party politics in an area dominated by the Bond, where the odds of contesting a successful election were minimal, made it impossible to sustain interest. By keeping out politics, the ZRFA succeeded in retaining the membership of English-speaking Bondsmen but the very fact that they were English-speaking reflects upon the failure of the ZRFA to capture the imagination of farmers of both races, so that it became no more than a debating forum for English-speaking farmers, who had much in common with Afrikaner farmers and their problems but who, for a variety of reasons, found no home within the Bond.

If the elections of 1894 and the establishment of the FAPA to contest them was the last attempt of the English-speaking community to turn its farming associations into political organisations, these elections were also a watershed for the Graaff Reinetter. McCusker had done his best to work on the divisions in the Bond, but to no effect. The influence of the Graaff Reinetter was on the wane and shortly after the 1894 elections, McCusker had plans of moving to Cradock, where the Afrikaner Bond had promised him support. In a confidential letter to Dr Te Water, a letter which he asked the doctor to destroy, appealing to him "as a friend to do so", McCusker outlined his future role in Graaff-Reinet: "I shall take a very passive part in politics here in future. I do not see why the two Dutch papers cannot exist on friendly terms here". He promised "to keep out all offensive letters" and to "publish an impartial, readable journal". Because of the support promised him in Cradock he intended joining that branch

of the Bond, and he told Te Water that: "As a Bondsman, I shall of course not espouse the anti Bond cause again. I have seen the error of my ways. This you may stigmatize as being the confession of a turn-coat. Do so, but I am in earnest, and am not ashamed to state what I feel".¹ McCusker's plans for a future in Cradock appear to have fallen through,² and the Graaff Reinetter continued in opposition to Onze Courant, which still regarded McCusker as the enemy; even the taking of one subscriber from the Graaff Reinetter was a subject worthy of mention.³ Early in 1898 McCusker was thinking of selling, but decided "not to dispose of my business, for I prognosticate, or rather contemplate, increased business in the immediate future, on a/c of our better railway facilities to the north".⁴ These "prognostications" do not seem to have been realised; the Graaff Reinetter suspended operations during the Anglo-Boer War and finally ceased publication towards the end of 1902.

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1. Te Water Papers, vol.57: J.E. McCusker to T.N.G. te Water, 8 June 1894.
 2. Te Water Papers, vol.57: C.H.O. Marais to T.N.G. te Water, 15 June 1894, and vol.59: Marais to Te Water, 6 July 1894.
 3. Te Water Papers, vol.57: C.H.O. Marais to T.N.G. te Water, 20 December 1897.
 4. Te Water Papers, vol.58: P.B. de Ville to T.N.G. te Water, 4 March 1898, and enclosure, J.E. McCusker to C. Moll, 24 February 1898.

CHAPTER 15

A RACIAL ALIGNMENT, 1896-1910

(i) The Jameson Raid and Aftermath

The Bond leaders' support for Rhodes in the early nineties had been one of the main points of difference between McCusker and the Bond. McCusker had not been alone in his mistrust of Rhodes, and there were others, like J.A. Smith of Aberdeen, who wrote to Botha in October 1892 expressing doubts as to whether Rhodes "het oprecht meen met ons", adding that "Het is tegen my bors om die Rooietjes te vertrouw".¹ These views were not shared by the majority of prominent Bondsmen in the years before the Jameson Raid. Dr Te Water in later years described Rhodes's share in the Jameson Raid as the "Grootste teleurstelling in myne politieke leven. Wy hadden volkomen vertrouwen in hem als Leidsman ... Hofmeyr had byna geen grooter invloed onder gelederen onzer party. Hy werd op gelyken voet gehuldigd. Geen Engelschman had ooit de liefde des Afrikaners zoo gewonnen". Te Water said that he was so sure of Rhodes that after Rhodes's resignation as premier, when Sir Gordon Sprigg invited Te Water to join his new ministry, he answered "dat daar Rhodes ontkend had zooals ik meende, er in betrokken te zyn myns inziens geene verandering in de ministerie moest plaatsvinden. Spoedig vond ik hoe kompleet ik bedrogen was. Geen tien minuten na myn aankomst aan die Kaap wist ik dat wy ons verschrikelyk hadden misgist!"²

1. Te Water Papers, vol.60: J.A.Smith to R.P. Botha, 22 October 1892.

2. Te Water Papers, vol.93: Undated notebook in Dr Te Water's hand.

The Jameson Raid may be seen as the beginning of a racial alignment of forces. It aroused the Afrikaners to a sense of the threat to their identity in a number of spheres. Early in 1897 there appears to have been a sudden realization of the encroachment of English on the Dutch Reformed Church. On 11 January representatives of the congregation armed with a memorial containing 328 signatures met the church council to express their concern at the invasion of the church by the English language. C.A. du Toit acted as the main spokesman of the deputation which requested that English services in the church be stopped and that the "Christian Endeavour Society", which permitted the use of both Dutch and English in its purely religious debates, be refused the use of the Opperzaal and asked to remove the English texts which it had placed on the walls. The church council agreed to these requests but refused to place a total ban on the English services. They agreed that on the occasion of nagmaal, when more people from outside town came to church, there would be no English services in the evening, but with an eye to the 200 young people who attended the English services during term, the council considered it of the utmost importance to continue with these services. It was "te welbekend dat waar onze jongelieden de Engelsche dienst by ons niet krygen kunnen, zy die elders gaan zoeken".¹ There, for the moment, the matter rested.

1. G 6, 1/5: 11 January 1897; Die Kerkbode, vol.XIV, No. 4, 28 January 1897, pp.53-54; other correspondence on this issue is contained in OC, 18 January, 1, 18, 22, 25 February, 4, 25 March 1897. It was also alleged that English classes had been introduced into the Sunday school, which was denied by the Rev Charles Murray.

The first elections held after the Jameson Raid were the Legislative Council elections of March 1898. In 1897 Botha had been elected Usher of the Black Rod¹ and was no longer politically active, but he was still capable of doing the Bond cause harm. C.H.O. Marais said he would have preferred Botha to remain in Cape Town rather than come up to Graaff-Reinet, "want hy geeft nu niet om wat hy zegt of wat hy doet".² Marais himself did not always choose his words carefully, and in the course of the election he defined as Afrikaners "allen die een Afrikaanschen naam draagt, en met liefde door hun vaderland bezielde zyn".³ When taken to task for this definition,⁴ he acknowledged that it had been an unfortunate expression and that he should rather have said "dat wy by Afrikaners bedoelen allen, van welke afkomst ook, die zich niet schamen den naam van Afrikaner te dragen".⁵

Indications of support for the Innes Liquor Bill, which aimed at restricting the sale of liquor to blacks, was a source of embarrassment to certain of Graaff-Reinet's parliamentarians and prospective parliamentarians since the wine growers of the town were against any restrictions on the sale of liquor. J.H. Smith was forced to admit that he had misread the Bill as it had

1. GRA, 3 June 1897.

2. Te Water Papers, vol.57: C.H.O. Marais to T.N.G. te Water, 15 June 1897.

3. OC, 4 October 1897.

4. GRA, 7 October 1897.

5. OC, 14 October 1897; see also GRA, 18 October 1897.

been published in English while J.F. du Toit confessed that he was "niet ten volle bekende met de bill".¹ This was, however, a minor issue and the Bond fought the election against the "Rhodes gezind".² G.H. Maasdorp, the independent candidate, accepted the challenge and, while he condemned Rhodes's part in the Jameson Raid as an error, said that: "There was a large section in the country which was determined that the services of Mr. Rhodes should not be forgotten - services rendered for the civilisation and prosperity of the country and for the expansion of the Empire".³

The movement of farmers during a bad drought made campaigning difficult for the Bond⁴ but in the independent camp there was much optimism. It was hoped that the introduction of the ballot, used for the first time, would make a substantial difference, since it was believed that many business men had in the past kept away from the polls for fear of offending customers. Throughout the circle, committees to elect Maasdorp were formed, and his election tour of the circle held out much promise that by plumping for him the independents would be able to secure his return.⁵ Maasdorp was well-known throughout the circle, and as a farmer of some note, he had an advantage which earlier independent candidates, mainly townsmen, had not enjoyed. Also to his advantage was

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1. OC, 20 December 1897; GRA, 23 December 1897.
 2. OC, 4 October 1897; GRA, 7 October 1897.
 3. GRA, 15 November 1897.
 4. Hofmeyr Papers, vol.2: H.J.H. Claassens to J.H. Hofmeyr, 17 November 1897; Te Water Papers, vol.60: J.F. du Toit to T.N.G. te Water, 7 January 1898.
 5. GRA, 14 October, 6, 13 December 1897.

the fact that the racial division which had developed since the Jameson Raid had welded the English elements in the circle into a compact unit. Rhodes had become identified in the minds of many Englishmen with the British Empire against the forces of Afrikaner nationalism, and this issue was made all the more pointed by the visit of Sir Alfred Milner to Graaff-Reinet for the official opening of the railway extension from Graaff-Reinet to Middelburg Road some two weeks before the election.

The Afrikaner Bond decided to present the Governor with an address of their own, apart from the address from the town and district as a whole.¹ The Bond address was signed by the district bestuur of Graaff-Reinet,² but its composition may possibly have been the work of Dr Te Water. C.H.O. Marais, who had experienced some difficulty in obtaining "de regte bewoording", asked Te Water "to draft me a copy in pencil so that we can have the right thing - of course everything will be kept private".³

The support and sympathy of the Bondsmen of the Cape colony for Kruger, and their aversion to the policy of the Imperial government towards the Transvaal, brought upon them charges of disloyalty. Destiny appears to have delegated to the Graaff-Reinet Bond the task of attempting to refute such allegations on important occasions.

1. Te Water Papers, vol.58: C.H.O. Marais to T.N.G. te Water, 13 February 1898.
2. GRA, 10 March 1898.
3. Te Water Papers, vol.58: C.H.O. Marais to T.N.G. te Water, 13 February 1898.

In 1881 the local Bond were reproved by John X. Merriman after they had presented him with an address. The local branches of the Bond once again achieved prominence, not so much because of their address to Milner, but as a result of his reply. The address referred to the charges of disloyalty and wished "with the greatest indignation and contempt to repudiate the insulting and mendacious accusations brought against us by the mischief-makers". Milner's reply attracted attention far beyond the confines of the Graaff-Reinet district. Having listed the advantages of life in the Cape under British protection and laws, he went on to say that what gave

the sting to the charge of disloyalty in this case, what makes it stick, and what makes people wince under it is the fact that the political controversies of this country at present unfortunately turn largely upon ... the relations of her Majesty's Government to the South African Republic, and that whenever there is any prospect of any difference between them a number of people in the colony at once vehemently, and without even the semblance of impartiality, espouse the side of the Republic.¹

Among the loyalists of Graaff-Reinet, Milner's best-remembered words were: "Well, gentlemen, of course you are loyal. It would be monstrous if you were not". The Advertiser approved of Milner's reply, which it

1. C. Headlam, ed., The Milner Papers, I, Chapter IX, The Graaff-Reinet Speech - Parliamentary Crisis at the Cape. Milner's speech is to be found on pp. 243-246.

headlined, "Sir Alfred's Mailed Fist". As Graaff-Reinet, like the rest of the colony, became increasingly divided, the Advertiser was not averse to taunting the Bond with Milner's words when British policy was criticised and expressions in favour of the republics were made.¹

The lines had thus been clearly drawn by the time the midlands went to the polls in March 1898. For the first time since its establishment in the midlands, the Bond suffered a reverse and the independents obtained a representative in parliament. It was perhaps not surprising that Maasdorp should have headed the poll in the town of Graaff-Reinet and even in the electoral division, but what was surprising was that he obtained the majority of votes in every electoral division in the circle.²

(ii) Dr Te Water and his Constituents

When Dr Te Water was elected to parliament in 1894, Sir Gordon Sprigg wrote to Te Water senior to congratulate him on his son's election, adding that "if he follows in the footsteps of his Father I know I shall have in him a political and personal friend".³ It was a prophetic statement as the association between the two men was to last a lifetime. When Sprigg's family thanked Dr Te Water for acting as a pallbearer at Sir Gordon's funeral in 1913, they said that it had been

1. See for example, GRA, 25 October 1899.

2. GRA, 17, 24, 28 March 1898.

3. Te Water Papers, vol.5: J. Gordon Sprigg to F.K. te Water, 16 February 1894.

their "special wish" that he be a pallbearer, "knowing in what esteem you were ever held by him".¹ Their association began when Sir Gordon Sprigg formed a new government after Rhodes's resignation and included Dr Te Water in his cabinet as Colonial Secretary.²

Although their association may have lasted on a personal level, politically it did not. From 1897 Te Water's position as a member of Sprigg's cabinet became somewhat of an embarrassment to him. To the majority of Bondsmen Rhodes was the arch enemy, the great foe of Afrikaner nationalism. At about the same time as the Graaff-Reinet district bestuur deplored the demonstrations in favour of Rhodes who was en route to appear before a British Select Committee to answer for his part in the Jameson Raid,³ Te Water was reported to have gone up to Rhodes and given him "een hartelyk handdruk". This was given prominence by the Graaff Reinetter to the serious embarrassment of Onze Courant, and Marais was accused of hiding Te Water's faults by not publishing the incident. Marais said that Te Water would address his constituents at the end of the parliamentary session, but he warned the doctor that he would have to come pre-

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1. Te Water Papers, vol.58: W.P. Sprigg to T.N.G. te Water, 13 February 1913.
 2. Te Water Papers, vol.57: Telegrams, Sir Gordon Sprigg to T.N.G. te Water, 10, 11 January 1896, and Te Water's draft reply (the first of these telegrams incorrectly puts the date as 1895); Sprigg wanted Te Water to become minister of Agriculture, but the latter was strongly opposed to this course.
 3. OC, 18 January 1897.

pared "om reguit te 'praat'".¹ The dissatisfaction with Te Water which appeared to be taking root² went deeper than a mere handshake with Rhodes and was clearly linked to Te Water's presence in the cabinet, which was dubbed by leading Bondsmen as a Rhodes ministry. Various Bondsmen wrote to Te Water expressing their regret that he continued to work with Sprigg.³ The actual substance of the grievance against him was not easily pinpointed, but J.P. van Heerden told the doctor, "people seem to have an idea that you inwardly favour Rhodes".⁴

When Te Water addressed his constituents in September 1897 he said that Rhodes would not regain his confidence, at least not for a long time. While he admitted that he by no means agreed with all that was done by the ministry, he asked his constituents to have sufficient confidence in him to believe that if the Sprigg ministry did things that were to the detriment of the country, he would resign.⁵

Te Water's resignation from the cabinet in May 1898 over the question of redistribution was welcomed by his supporters, and the relief of Onze Courant, which had come under increasing attack for shielding him, is

1. Te Water Papers, vol.57: Telegram, C.H.O. Marais to T.N.G. te Water, 1 May 1897, and Marais to Te Water, 18 May 1897.
2. Te Water Papers, vol.57: C.H.O. Marais to T.N.G. te Water, 15 June 1897.
3. Te Water Papers, vol.57: Letters to T.N.G. te Water from G. van Heerden, 8 August 1897, W.P. de Villiers, 6 September 1897, D.P. van den Heever, 16 September 1897.
4. Te Water Papers, vol.60: J.P. van Heerden to T.N.G. te Water, 13 August 1897.
5. OC and GRA, 23 September 1897.

obvious in the statement that: "Het is lang sedert wy zulk goed nieuws gehad hebben".¹ Te Water's resignation from the cabinet, and his full identification with the Afrikaner point of view in an address shortly afterwards,² reinstated him in the eyes of his constituents. Where the issue in the approaching elections was redistribution, it was perhaps natural that Te Water who had resigned from the ministry on this issue, should again have received the Bond nomination. Smith was also nominated again.³ The independents nominated Neser, but it was only a token opposition, and the two Bond candidates were returned with overwhelming majorities.⁴

As the war drew near, the whispering campaign against Te Water was renewed. Part of the reason for this was the increasing Bond disenchantment with the Schreiner ministry. Much of the dissatisfaction in Graaff-Reinet was focussed on Te Water who was minister without portfolio. On the eve of the outbreak of war, Marais told Te Water that he had recently been to Aberdeen and Murraysburg, and had been surprised "om de gevoelens tegen u te vernemen. Zelfs hier in ons distrikt wordt gy beschouwd als een echt 'Rhodesman'". The bestuur of the Graaff-Reinet Bond privately requested Te Water to come and address the electors as soon as possible. Even the directors of Onze Courant were concerned, and it appeared that many farmers no

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1. OC, 18 May 1898; see also Te Water Papers, vol.58: Letters to T.N.G. te Water from W.P. de Villiers, 6 June 1898 and H.J. Marais, 17 June 1898.
 2. GRA, 6 July 1898.
 3. OC, 18 July 1898.
 4. GRA, 24 August 1898.

longer wished to subscribe to Onze Courant "want zy verkeer onder de indruk dat 'Onze Courant' al uwe fouten toe maakt".¹

After the outbreak of the Anglo-Boer War, Te Water's image underwent a change. The first invasion of the Cape colony in 1899 produced few rebels from Graaff-Reinet, but the district was to be drawn into the conflict over the treatment of those Boers from the occupied districts of the Cape who had joined the republicans. The Schreiner ministry won in its demands that the rebels should be handed over to the civil authorities for trial. Although Te Water was opposed to Chamberlain's suggestion of trial by special commission, he agreed to support this if the principle of amnesty for all rebels except the leaders was accepted. Chamberlain, however, proposed dividing the rebels into six classes according to the seriousness of their acts, and said that even those who had been forced to rebel should be punished by disfranchisement. Schreiner thought that they should give in to the wishes of the Imperial government, and Solomon and A.J. Herholdt of Murraysburg agreed with him. But to Merriman, Sauer and Te Water, it was not merely a question of the punishment of rebels, but the fact that the Imperial government could tell a self-governing colony how it should treat its subjects. Te Water exhorted Schreiner to stand firm, even if it meant seeing their constitutional rights violated by imperial legislation. Schreiner

1. Te Water Papers, vol.58: C.H.O. Marais to T.N.G. te Water, 11 September 1899.

tried to secure cabinet solidarity by dividing rebels into two classes, leaders and others, the former to be tried by special commission, and the latter to lose their voting rights for five years; those who had acted under compulsion were to go free. Te Water, Merriman and Sauer would not agree to this, and Schreiner made an appeal to his parliamentary supporters. They decided against him by twenty-nine votes to eight, and Schreiner resigned on 13 June 1900.¹

When Herholdt, minister for Agriculture, met his constituents shortly after this, he was censured for having failed to support Te Water in denying the right of the British government to dictate to a self-governing colony.² Te Water's reputation among the Bondsmen was enhanced by his stand, and this was added to by fiery speeches delivered in July and December 1900,³ which were not without consequence. One of the men of Lotter's commando, Piet Wolfaardt, towards the end of September 1901 made a deposition that he had subscribed to Onze Courant and had read the speeches of Te Water, saying that "but for these speeches I would never have been influenced to throw in my lot with the Republics".⁴ As part of a conscious campaign to indict the doctor for treasonable activities, an attempt was also made to

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1. C.J. Scheepers Strydom, Kaapland en die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog, pp.65-72; G.H.L. le May, British Supremacy in South Africa, 1899-1907, pp.59-70; Headlam II, pp.92-131; E.A. Walker, W.P. Schreiner: A South African, pp.108-118.
 2. OC, 16 July 1900.
 3. OC, 9 July, 6 December 1900.
 4. GRA, 27 September 1901.

persuade P.W. Michau, chairman of the Cradock district bestuur, to make statements against Te Water.¹ Such charges referred also to his activities before the outbreak of war, when towards the end of May 1899 he had sent President Steyn the private telegraphic code of the cabinet, writing that it was "quite possible that you will have to communicate with us, and the telegraph service is not entirely to be trusted".²

Te Water spent the last part of the war in England. In the middle of 1902 he was given a permit to return to South Africa, but was at the same time informed that "according to information received from the Governor of the Cape Colony there are several affidavits against you and that your arrest on your arrival is quite possible. The matter is, however, still under the consideration of the Attorney General of the Cape Government".³ The thought that their member of parliament was returning appalled the Advertiser, which hoped that he would be arrested when he disembarked:

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1. J.X. Merriman Papers, vol.58: Affidavit by P.W. Michau, 26 August 1902. I owe this reference to Prof., T.R.H. Davenport of Rhodes University.
 2. Headlam I, pp.395-396: Te Water to Steyn, 27 May 1899.
 3. Te Water Papers, vol.58: Manuscript in pencil and carbon copy, relating his difficulties in obtaining permission to return to South Africa; Te Water Papers, vol.59: Under Secretary of State, Colonial Office, to T.N.G. te Water, 1 August 1902, and vol. 60: Permit issued to Te Water to return.

We cannot but regard it as a calamity of the worst kind that this man, a quondam Minister of the Crown, who has violated his oath of allegiance, who has intrigued with the Republics for the overthrow of British supremacy in South Africa, who on public platforms raised the flag of rebellion, and by his crusade of anti-British hatred has driven men into the crime of rebellion, of which they had to bear the consequences, while he sought refuge far from the sounds of the guns, should be allowed to return.¹

Te Water arrived back in Cape Town on 26 August 1902, but nothing came of the charges against him. His political career was, however, at an end, for shortly after his return he suffered a stroke. At the end of October 1902 he went to England to recuperate, and although he returned to Cape Town before the next parliamentary elections, he declined to stand.²

(iii) The Anglo-Boer War, 1899-1902

In the months before the outbreak of the Anglo-Boer War the Graaff-Reinet community was sharply divided into two opposing camps. On one side, an address of welcome was signed when Rhodes returned to the colony, and a petition, circulated throughout the Cape, approving of Milner's policy towards the Transvaal received some 400 signatures in Graaff-Reinet.³ On the other side, at a public meeting of the Bond on 22 July 1899 a reso-

1. GRA, 13 August 1902.

2. Further details regarding his withdrawal as a parliamentary candidate are on p.636. Te Water retired to Wynberg, and later served on the Tuberculosis Commission of 1913. He died in 1926.

3. GRA, 23 May, 30 June, 3, 26 July 1899; see also OC, 25 May, 31 July 1899.

lution was passed expressing satisfaction with the latest franchise proposals of the South African Republic. The meeting was firmly convinced "dat indien er geene bemoeiing in de inwendige zaken van Zuid Afrika zoude plaats vinden, de goede en vriendschappelyke verstandhouding tusschen de verschillende deelen van de bevolking grootelyks bevorderd zal worden, en de bloei en vooruitgang van Zuid Afrika niet gedurig gestremd zal worden".¹

In the first invasion of the colony in 1899, the commandos did not advance much beyond Colesberg in the direction of Graaff-Reinet, and the number of rebels from Graaff-Reinet was negligible. Because of Te Water's position in the cabinet and the whole question of the treatment of rebels, Graaff-Reinet was vitally interested in the fate of their fellow burghers in the districts further north. Among all sections of the Afrikaners there was strong sympathy for the republics. The Advertiser and Onze Courant attacked each other frequently. The Advertiser harped on the supposed disloyalty of the Afrikaners with their support of the republics and obvious pleasure at the victories of the Boers. It maintained that many Afrikaners were ignorant concerning the conduct of the war and that they were willing to believe the wildest rumours.² The Courant in turn accused the Advertiser of withholding war news which it found unpalatable, and denied that their dislike of Chamberlain's policy was disloyal.³

1. OC, 24 July 1899.

2. GRA, 20, 22, 27 November 1899.

3. OC, 14 September, 30 October, 7 December 1899.

Graaff-Reinet chose sides largely along racial lines but there were Englishmen who rejected British policy,¹ and Afrikaners like Nesor, Auret and Maasdorp, who blamed the war on Kruger and supported the British war effort. Where people were forced to come down unequivocally on one side or the other, there was no place for moderate men. For those Afrikaners, like F.K. te Water, who had always been more at home politically with their English-speaking business associates than with the mass of Afrikaners in the rural areas, support for the republican cause alienated them from some of their closest associates.

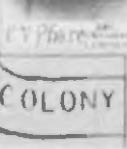
The sympathies of the inhabitants were reflected in the support given to their respective causes. Hardly a week after the declaration of war, collection lists for "Weduwen, Weezen en Gewonden in de Transvaal" were lying at the offices of Onze Courant.² Early in 1900 plans were afoot for a collection for republican prisoners of war, the initiative for which came from the local Afrikaner women.³ Later in the year, at a meeting of Afrikaner women at which there were some bitter expressions of alleged uncivilised warfare on the part of the British, it was decided to help Orange Free State women and children whom the military had sent to Port Elizabeth.⁴ On the other side, G.H. Maasdorp and Walter

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1. They were particularly in evidence before the outbreak of hostilities; see for example, OC, 14 September 1899 ("A True Britisher"), 2 October 1899 ("Jack Englishman" and "Englishman").
 2. OC, 19 October 1899.
 3. OC, 5 March 1900.
 4. GRA, 2 November 1900; see also Te Water Papers, vol. 96: Cissie (Dr Te Water's sister, who was married to the Rev W.P. Rousseau of Pietermaritzburg) to T.N.G. te Water, 26 November 1900.

REPRESENTATIVE MEN OF GRAAFFREINET



JJ Christie



CAPE COLONY

SOUTH AFRICA

A J Krull

W Lamm

J C Hart

C Hoop

J J Smil



Rubidge were active in obtaining volunteers for service, and by the middle of December 1899 some thirty men had joined Brabant's Horse. They were seen off from Graaff-Reinet by a large crowd, many of them had Union Jacks and the band played "Rule Britannia" and "God save the Queen".¹ The Coloured congregation of the London Mission Church sent edibles to the front.² By June 1900 there was a branch of the Loyal Women's Guild in Graaff-Reinet, with 126 members.³

Feelings ran high and the possibility of a racial clash was never far below the surface. The English community in town, who as business men were to a large extent dependent for their livelihood on the patronage of Afrikaners, were usually careful to avoid giving offence. There was no celebration in Graaff-Reinet to mark the relief of Kimberley, mainly it would seem because of a fear by the loyalists that the Afrikaners would not approve.⁴ The news of the relief of Ladysmith was, however, the occasion of much excitement in the town, particularly among the Coloureds who gathered at the offices of the Advertiser to discuss the news. The Courant wrote that: "De gansche menigte bestond meestal uit alle klassen van den naturellen, en 't was wel te begrypen dat er niet alleen juichkreten waren, maar meer dan een beleediging werd geworpen tegen de dappere burgers van de republieken, te onvergenoeging van alle rechtgezinde personen". In the afternoon the Coloured

1. GRA, 15 December 1899.

2. GRA, 5 January 1900.

3. GRA, 13 June 1900.

4. GRA, 21 February 1900.

brass band led a procession through the streets, which procession the Courant stated was composed almost entirely of blacks, with a few whites following at the end. A sudden dust storm, which blanketed the town and was followed by rain, effectively ended the demonstration. While the Courant did not actually state that divine intervention had stopped the procession, this was implied in its report of these natural phenomena. It wrote that "zoo iets was ongehoor te Graaff Reinet; oude inwoners verklaarden dat zy nooit zoo iets tevoren gezien hebben".

On the following evening the white loyalists arranged a fireworks display on Magazine Hill to commemorate the British victory. During the day a rumour, completely without foundation, was circulated that effigies of Kruger and Steyn would be burnt, and some 150 Afrikaners appeared on the hill armed with sticks and, according to the Advertiser, "with bludgeons and axes". The assembling of Afrikaners on the hill led the loyalists to fear that their fireworks display was to be interrupted and they duly appeared "ready for emergencies". The organisers of the display received police protection, but were angered when the police, mainly Afrikaners, refused to intervene to prevent the Afrikaner contingent from singing the Transvaal Volkslied. The fireworks display, which Onze Courant described as "op een zeer kleine schaal", went off successfully but as everyone moved back to town some stone-throwing occurred. Onze Courant laid the blame for this squarely on the blacks, nine of whom were arrested and appeared before the magistrate, who cautioned and discharged

them. The loyalists again questioned the impartiality of the police for not having arrested any whites.¹ The details of the incident are of less significance than the illustration of tensions, which could have resulted in a serious racial clash.

In the town many of the Afrikaner children wore the Transvaal and Free State colours, which was not calculated to win friends among the loyalists, who were further aroused when the traveller of Messrs Birch and Co. of Grahamstown visited Graaff-Reinet and was reported to have sold ties and hat bands bearing the Transvaal colours. The firm repudiated the allegation, but nevertheless decided to give the proceeds of the traveller's sales in Graaff-Reinet to the British Soldiers' Sick and Wounded Fund.²

The subject of English services in the Dutch Reformed Church again came to the fore. Early in 1900 a church council which included a number of prominent Bondsmen decided that: "Aangezien er in de laatste jaren veel ontevredenheid in deze Gemeente bestaat door diensten in onze Holl. Geref. Kerk toe te laten in eene andere dan onze moedertaal, zoo besluit de Kerkeraad dat voort aan alle godsdienstoefening zoowel in den avond als in den voor en namiddag in de Kerk zal worden in de Hollandsche taal verrigt". The voice of toleration and moderation found no place in war, and the Rev Charles Murray who was forced to accept this verdict, said that

1. GRA and OC, 5 March 1900.

2. GRA, 21, 30 March 1900.

he "had meer dan 40 jaren in een en ander kerkeraad gediend maar nog nimmer uit Zyne hand eene beker moeten nemen zoo bitter als deze".¹

The loyalists resented the rousing welcome given to those arriving in Graaff-Reinet to face charges of high treason and, much to the disgust of the Englishmen of the town, those who were on parole in Graaff-Reinet were treated as heroes.²

Both sides held meetings. In April 1900 at a strongly supported meeting the chairman's (Neser) table was draped with a Union Jack and Maasdorp proposed a resolution that after the war the republics should forfeit their independence. At the same time a Vigilance Committee was formed.³ On the other side, on 31 May 1900, a Volks Congress, attended by between 600 and "ruim over de 2,000" was held in Graaff-Reinet as part of the Reconciliation Committee campaign, the chief propagandist for which was the British journalist, E.T. Hargrove, who visited Graaff-Reinet to make arrangements for the congress. The congress was attended by representatives from all over the colony, and resolutions were passed blaming the war on the interference of the Imperial government in the internal affairs of the South African Republic, attacking the "Jingo" press for making false statements about South Africa and considering means of

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1. G 6, 1/6: 8 January, 5 March 1900; De Kerkbode, vol. XVII, No.11, 15 March 1900, p.158.
 2. GRA, 27 June, 3 September 1900.
 3. GRA, 4 April 1900.

getting the true state of affairs through to the British people. Support was also pledged for the restoration of the republics should they be annexed.¹

Immediately after the Volks Congres a meeting was held and a resolution taken expressing the view that the Afrikaners should act independently in business and that Afrikaner businesses should be supported to the fullest possible extent.² A Handels Maatschappy was soon opened in Aberdeen, where Dr Te Water in referring to the movement said that it "was geen boycotting, zoo als men zeide, maar eenvoudig het elkander helpen van de Afrikaners".³ Plans were also afoot to establish a similar institution in Graaff-Reinet.⁴

With the second invasion of the colony from the end of 1900, relations between the various groups of the Graaff-Reinet community worsened. The arrival of troops in Graaff-Reinet on Old Year's Night, 1900, forestalled any possible occupation of the town by the roving commandos. Surrounding towns fared less well and Murraysburg was occupied on several occasions. When Gideon Scheepers and his commando entered Murraysburg in July 1901, they were not content with burning down the public buildings, but razed the house of Alex Innes, one of the prominent Bondsmen of the eighties and nineties, whose three sons were fighting on the British side.

1. OC, 2 June 1900; GRA, 1, 6 June 1900; Strydom, pp.76-80.

2. GRA, 8 June 1900.

3. OC, 6 December 1900.

4. OC, 28 June 1900 {Prospectus van De Graaff-Reinet Handels Maatschappy (Beperkt)}.

It was frequently Afrikaners or pro-Afrikaners who were the greatest sufferers. A.J. Herholdt, who spent his time quietly on his farm and used his influence with the military to obtain the release of Murraysburgers detained under martial law,¹ himself became a victim of the passions aroused by the war, when the Scheepers commando forced him to witness the burning of his own home, the historic farmhouse on Vleiplaas, built by B.J.J. Burger in 1822. Herholdt wrote that what aggravated the situation was that "amongst those who assisted in perpetrating the outrage, there were those whom I have personally befriended and tried to guide on the right course".²

With the second invasion of the colony, martial law was extended in progressive proclamations from 20 December 1900 onwards, and by 17 January 1901 the whole of the colony, with the exception of the ports and the Transkei, was under martial law. The war, which until this time had been far removed from Graaff-Reinet, now became very real. The martial law regulations were not severe but gave much latitude for the individual humour of officers.³ Some people were hardly affected by the administration of martial law, and E. du Toit told Dr Te Water that apart from having to

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1. W.P. Schreiner Papers: A.J. Herholdt to W.P. Schreiner, 1 June 1901. I am indebted to Professor T.R.H. Davenport for this reference.
 2. GRA, 10, 22 July 1901 (A.J. Herholdt).
 3. J.H. Snyman, Rebelle-Verhoor in Kaapland gedurende die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog met Spesiale Verwysing na die Militêre Howe, 1899-1902, p.30; Strydom, p.125.

be indoors by nine o'clock, martial law was no inconvenience.¹ Many loyalists obviously welcomed its introduction. In the latter part of 1901, a petition emanating from Graaff-Reinet was circulated throughout the colony in a campaign to have martial law proclaimed at the sea-ports. The petition stated that in "the districts in which it has been in operation it has had the most admirable results; the disaffected section of the Dutch population, who under Civil Rule openly flouted their disloyalty, has been silenced".² For the Graaff-Reinet loyalists martial law meant that they no longer had to be affronted by groups of Afrikaners singing the Volkslied or wearing republican colours. Some of them were also able to make things as awkward as possible for their Afrikaner fellows.

For the Afrikaners who sympathised with the republics the situation was different. The Rev C.H.Radloff wrote in general terms of the situation, but as a prisoner in Graaff-Reinet, where he had been sent from Pearston in March 1901, having been arrested after the occupation of Pearston by a Boer commando,³ his experiences of martial law were obtained in Graaff-Reinet, and what he says should be seen as reflecting conditions there, although the circumstances were applicable to most of the colony. He said that each town had its "Intelligence Department"

1. Te Water Papers, vol.58: E. du Toit to T.N.G. te Water, 15 February 1901.

2. GRA, 2 October 1901.

3. GRA, 18 March 1901.

een lichaam ten volle toegerust om uit te vinden, wie in elke plaats veel gedaan had voor de Burgers in de twee Staten, wie Congressen had bijgewoond waar men zijne afkeuring van den oorlog, en de gewelddaden gepleegd, openlijk had uitgesproken, wie de getrouwe lezers waren van de 'South African News' en 'Ons Land'. Dit Departement had zijne handlangers, onder welke helaas ook ontrouw geworden Afrikaanders gevonden werden, die om vuil gewin, of om zichzelf te redden, hunne landgenooten verkochten, of het een of ander tot nadeel van hunne stadgenooten vertelden.

Those who spoke in praise of the Boers or said anything detrimental concerning the "khakis" were arrested or ordered out of the district.¹

A few months after the end of the war, G.H. Maasdorp, who had supported the British war effort and had lost one of his sons fighting for the British, strongly condemned the manner in which martial law had been administered in Graaff-Reinet: "Men there were afraid to open their mouths for fear of spies, the most innocent remarks being distorted by the vilest of humanity - a set of spies recruited from the most discredited section of the community".²

The case of F.R. Davel and his family, of the farm Afrikanerskloof, Bethesda Road, while not unique, will suffice to show many of the reactions and experiences of a Boer in Graaff-Reinet under martial law. It is not clear why Davel fell foul of the authorities, nor were his own efforts to find out successful. On

1. C.H. Radloff, Gevangenisstemmen Toespraken en Preeken Gehouden te Graaff-Reinet in de maanden Maart, April en Mei van 1901 door den Gevangene C.H. Radloff, Predikant van Pearston, p.91.

2. GRA, 17 September 1902.

18 January 1901, without any reasons being given, he was lodged in prison in Graaff-Reinet. He was released ten days later, but on 18 February he was called from his farm to Graaff-Reinet, where he was ordered to remain for the duration of the war. He lived in his house in Graaff-Reinet until 9 April 1901 when he was again sent to gaol, remaining there until 13 June 1901. Having deposited £500 in cash and given a guarantee for a further £1,000, he was allowed to remain in his house in Graaff-Reinet, which he did until after the end of the war. He was allowed no visitors unless a permit had been obtained and such permits were frequently refused. All his requests to be brought to trial were ignored. In August 1901 his brother and all the other whites on the farm were sent to Graaff-Reinet. No sooner had they left, said Davel, than an African military scout entered the houses on the farm "en stal een menigte goederen, die hy met myn eigen wagen naar Blaauwater, zynde het militaire kamp, vervoerde". Amongst these effects was an old gun, used for shooting baboons, and for which a permit, attached to the gun, had been obtained. Despite the testimony of five whites to this effect, the scout said there had been no permit attached to the gun. Davel's brother, and here was the rub, "op de verklaring van een enkel kaffer (en bovenop een dief)", was found guilty of possessing a gun without a permit and fined £500. Two days later his brother was sent to Port Alfred as an "undesirable". All Davel's efforts to visit his farm or obtain someone else to try and save some of his possessions were of no avail. The family lost over 1 400 small stock. Many of their

other effects had been destroyed by the time they were allowed to return to the farm, and "zelfs ons zeeppotten werden niet gespaard, maar ook die werd met klippen aan stukken gegooid".¹

The situation in which the Davel family found themselves was not unique, and J.F. du Toit, M.L.C., received so many complaints from his constituents "over grieven en schade onder krygswet geleden" that he was unable to answer them all personally and had to reassure the complainants through the columns of Onze Courant that their cases were receiving his attention.²

According to Radloff, the testimony of witnesses against supporters of the republics was invariably believed. If, however, no witnesses appeared, those who were believed to be less than enthusiastic supporters of the British were sent away. Most of these so-called "undesirables" were sent to Port Alfred, where there was soon, including children, a community of over 200.³ Such "undesirables" included Radloff, the prominent Bondsman G.F. Joubert, C.H.O. Marais, editor of Onze Courant, and Dr Te Water's sister, Cissie.⁴

The aura of suspicion was all-pervasive. One of Graaff-Reinet's members in the Assembly, J.H. Smith, when he was later confronted by the fact that he had

1. OC, 17 August 1903 (F.R. Davel).

2. OC, 20 July 1903 (J.F. du Toit).

3. Radloff, pp.91-92.

4. GRA, 28 June 1901, 24 March 1902; Radloff, pp.91-96.

signed the petition in favour of the suspension of the constitution, said that he had done so because he had heard that he was under suspicion and had been led to believe that by signing the petition he would be safe from gaol.¹ The mayor, F.K. te Water, from the beginning of the war identified himself with the mass of Afrikaners, rather than with the loyalists, with which group he had always had his social and political affiliations. His attitude reinstated him in the eyes of Bondsmen, who had long regarded him with suspicion. He was essentially a cautious man, of moderate views, which was his main reason for not joining the Bond. In municipal affairs he had, from the mid-seventies, invariably sided with the business community. These men who had in the period 1869-1884 supported his candidature and election to parliament were mostly loyalists, and his attitude alienated him from these former supporters. Te Water was not outspoken in his views, but many of his actions must have been anathema to his former friends. He was among the first to donate £25 for aid for Boer widows and orphans in the Transvaal.² Radloff was full of praise for Te Water's attentions to himself and other prisoners in the gaol. He writes that:

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1. GRA, 19 September 1902; the Advertiser rejected Smith's statement, claiming that he had in fact canvassed for signatures.
 2. OC, 19 October 1899.

Alles wat wij noodig hadden werd ons door familiebetrekkingen en vrienden toegezonden uit de stad ... In den vruchtentijd hadden wij overvloed van druiven. Mevrouw W.P. Rousseau, de echtgenoot van den Leeraar van Pietermaritzburg, en hare zeer geachte Vader de Burgemeester van Graaff Reinets zorgden op vorstelijke wijze voor den gevangen predikant. Bij alles wat zij zonden, kwam er altijd een fraaie ruiker bloemen zeer smaakvol gerangschikt. Nu eens waren het rozen van verschillende soorten, dan weër eene groote verscheidenheid van asters, en dan weër lelies met verschillende grassoorten.¹

Radloff's appreciation of Te Water's kindness was reflected in the gift of a walking stick fashioned by him in Port Alfred, which he sent to Te Water in memory of "zoo vele blyken van Christelyke vriendschap", and also as a wedding anniversary present.²

The situation under martial law was also not without its effect upon municipal representation. The east end were virtually unopposed, as councillors whose conduct suggested they were not wholehearted supporters of the British were sent to Port Alfred, so that none except loyalists were prepared to place themselves in the public eye and serve on the council.³

(iv) A Fluid State, 1902-1910

The Anglo-Boer War tore Graaff-Reinets society asunder, alienating life-long friends, dividing even

1. Radloff, p.10.

2. Te Water Papers, vol.5: C.H. Radloff to F.K. te Water, 16 April 1902.

3. See pp.322-323 for a discussion on municipal politics at this time.

families. The strong passions aroused did not dissolve immediately after the war. The same indications of support for the former republics, as had been practised before the proclamation of martial law at the end of 1900, were again seen. Several people were fined for whistling or singing the Volkslied when welcoming back "undesirables" from Port Alfred, or for wearing "their hats turned up, with white bands round them and a tuft of ostrich feathers stuck in them in imitation of Commandant Scheepers", a practice which continued into 1903. The coronation celebrations in August 1902 passed almost unnoticed in the back-streets, and early in 1903 the Advertiser complained of "the ostentatious putting on hats whenever the National anthem is played".¹

There were people like W.E. Murray, who, as early as 1903, felt that it was "high time that the inhabitants of South Africa should try and forget the past and hold out the hand of fellowship to all and let us live as we did in the olden times".² This appeal caused F.R. Davel to detail his sufferings under martial law, and to write that: "Er leeft niemand die ik niet zal groeten, of weldoen wanneer de gelegenheid zich voordoet, maar indien ik die smaad, belediging, vernedering en schade my onschuldig aangedaan, moet vergeten dan ben ik geen mensch, dan moet ik iets levenloos zyn, want iemand, waar leven in is en die een denk vermogen heeft, kan het niet vergeten".³

1. GRA, 21 July, 11 August, 3, 10 October 1902,
2 February 1903.

2. GRA, 10 August 1903 (W.E. Murray).

3. OC, 17 August 1903.

The feelings aroused by the war continued to find expression in such matters as the erection of a monument to those executed in Graaff-Reinet during the war. The difficulties experienced by the monument committee in obtaining a site for the erection of the monument is at the same time evidence of a genuine desire not to allow the issue to divide the community and an attempt to heal the breaches of the past. The kerkraad's initial permission for the erection of a monument in the church enclosure, was withdrawn when it appeared "dat er een sterk gevoel in de gemeente gewekt is, door de mogelijkheid van 't Monument binnen de Ring muur der Kerk geplaatst te hebben".¹ A town council which consisted entirely of Afrikaners, the majority of them candidates of the local Bond, likewise refused to make available a site on church square for the erection of the monument. Only one councillor, H.J. Marais, opposed the decision, although the mayor, C.P. Liebenberg,² was also chairman of the monument committee. The monument committee was forced to fall back on the offer of J.H. Laubscher for a piece of his erf at the corner of Donkin and Somerset Streets for the monument.

At the same time there was a desire to accommodate the monument committee. The church provided a free plot in the cemetery for the reinterment of the

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1. G 6, 1/6: Ordinary meetings, 15 July, 2 September 1907, and special meeting, 21 September 1907; see also G 6, 1/4a: Congregation meeting, 21 September 1907; OC and GRA, 23 September 1907.
 2. GRA, 9 December 1907, 9 March 1908; OC, 9 March 1908.

bodies of seven of the men executed in Graaff-Reinet, and the government gave the committee a discount of £75 in railage and customs dues for bringing the monument to Graaff-Reinet where it arrived towards the end of 1907.¹ On 1 December 1908 the bodies of seven of the men executed were laid to rest in the cemetery in proceedings attended by some 2 600 people. Although the monument is familiarly known to posterity as the Scheepers Memorial, the body of Scheepers, which could not be located, was not interred with the others.² The unveiling of the monument took place on 2 December 1908, and although it was almost entirely ignored by the Advertiser,³ it was an event of some moment in Graaff-Reinet.

There was more fluidity in the parliamentary elections of this period than there had been in those of the two previous decades in Graaff-Reinet. Opposing parties were not so sharply divided in their support of the rival candidates; Bond candidates won more support from their opponents, while there was at the same time greater division within the ranks of the Bond itself. These tendencies were most clearly discerned in the Legislative Council elections towards the end of 1903 and the Assembly elections early in 1904, and they revolved around the person of Gysbert Henry Maasdorp.

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1. Pamphlet published by Onze Courant: "Onthulling van Monument te Graaff-Reinet op Woensdag, 2 Desember, 1908"; GRA, 9 December 1907.
 2. For the controversy surrounding Scheepers, see G.S. Preller, Scheepers se Dagboek en die Stryd in Kaapland.
 3. For its only comment on the proceedings, see GRA, 4 December 1908.

The loyalists of Graaff-Reinet had been in the forefront of the agitation for the suspension of the constitution. The Vigilance Committee had in May 1901 addressed a petition in favour of the suspension of the constitution to the Governor. It was essentially the attempt of a frustrated minority in Graaff-Reinet to escape from the dominance that the Bond had exercised on the political life of the district, as is clear from their definition of the past political life of the colony as one "not of principles, but of races". The object of the petitioners was to ensure that the settlement at the end of the war would secure the future "from the rancour and race feeling which has permeated the political life of the country for years past, and from the danger of another attempt to subvert British rule in South Africa".¹ Maasdorp had been an active supporter of the British war effort and a member of the Vigilance Committee, but he opposed the suspension of the constitution. At a meeting in July 1902, on the occasion of the visit to Graaff-Reinet of Dr Smartt who was leading the campaign for suspension, Maasdorp found himself opposed in public by the Progressives who had elected him to the Legislative Council in 1898 and supported by the Afrikaner Bond.²

In the parliamentary sessions of 1902 and 1903 Maasdorp voted with the South African Party on all

1. GRA, 10 May 1901.

2. Te Water Papers, vol.96: F.K. to T.N.G. te Water, 19 July 1902; GRA, 2, 4 July 1902 ("Confiding Democrat"), 14, 16 July 1902.

important issues. While he was still popular with the Progressives in his personal capacity, Maasdorp found the Advertiser encouraging the Progressives to reject him in the Legislative Council elections in 1903. The Progressives stood little chance of electing a man to the Assembly, but by plumping there was a reasonable chance of securing the return of their own candidate to the Legislative Council. The Advertiser reasoned that the Progressives should try to gain the election of a Progressive to the Council, because Maasdorp would, with the aid of the Bond, obtain a seat in the Assembly.¹

In putting up P.D. de Villiers, a farmer and elder of the Dutch Reformed Church of Beaufort West,² the Progressives ensured support from all sections of Beaufort West, which had for twenty years not had a local man in the council.³ Maasdorp stood as an independent candidate; as an outsider it was not expected that he would secure one of the three Bond nominations, and the circle committee nominated only J.F. du Toit of Graaff-Reinet and H.J.H. Claassens of Victoria West, clearly with the idea that Maasdorp would secure the third seat.⁴ The Commissie van Toezicht decided they would not interfere with this decision, but they would later make a strong recommendation in the newspapers "om

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1. GRA, 21 September 1903.
 2. GRA, 28 October 1903.
 3. GRA, 28 September 1903.
 4. Hofmeyr Papers, vol.2: A.J. de Villiers to F.S.Malan, 16 September 1903 and enclosure: Minutes of the Circle Committee meeting and De Villiers to Malan, 18 September 1903.

Maasdorp zoo ver mogelyk als derde kandidaat te ondersteunen".¹ They also intended recommending Maasdorp in the circulars which the Bond usually distributed before elections. Maasdorp feared that this would create an impression that he was "an official candidate of the Bond", whereas he had been calling himself an independent candidate. He felt that the South African Party should adopt the line "that the Progressive candidate is to be kept out at all costs, and with that object in view the independent candidate should be assisted".²

The Bond's first duty was to secure the election of the two official Bond candidates. Only Bond supporters in the Graaff-Reinet electoral division were to be instructed to give one of their votes to Maasdorp. Hofmeyr felt that this was the greatest help that could be given Maasdorp, although by his own calculations he did not expect that this would be sufficient to secure Maasdorp's election. F.S. Malan disagreed, believing that Maasdorp might obtain as much as a third of the Progressive vote in Graaff-Reinet.³

Maasdorp was popular among the Progressives, but the anti-Bond feeling ran deep, and the Bond circular recommending that Bondsmen in Graaff-Reinet give one of their votes to Maasdorp enabled the Advertiser to make a strong and effective appeal

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1. Hofmeyr Papers, vol.2: J.H. Hofmeyr to T.P. Theron, 22 September 1903, Theron to Hofmeyr, 24 September 1903, and Hofmeyr to J.M. Hoffman, 28 September 1903.
 2. Hofmeyr Papers, vol.2: J.H. Hofmeyr to G.H.Maasdorp, 2 October 1903, and G.H.Maasdorp to F.S.Malan, 11 October 1903.
 3. Hofmeyr Papers, vol.2: Hofmeyr, 19 October 1903; J.H. Smith also believed that Maasdorp would receive few Progressive votes {Hofmeyr Papers, vol.2: J.H.Smith to (Hofmeyr), 7 October 1903}.

to that numerous section of the community who are halting between two opinions. They agree with the Progressive programme in the main, but their hearts are with Mr Maasdorp. They readily admit the sterling qualities of Mr De Villiers ... But he has come as a stranger amongst us, and in a small community like Graaff-Reinet personal esteem and the acquaintance of a life-time mean infinitely much. To such electors - and we know there are many - we ask the plain question:- Are you going to vote at the dictation of the Africander Bond?¹

In the election of 10 November 1903 Maasdorp received a total of only 3 162 votes to totals of over 5 000 obtained by the three successful candidates. Of the independent and Progressive voters, Maasdorp had 76 plumpers, while 300 voters plumped for De Villiers. Of interest was the manner in which Bondsmen disregarded the instructions of the Commissie van Toezicht. In the Graaff-Reinet electoral division 712 voters distributed their votes between Maasdorp and the two official Bond candidates, but a further 309 voters divided their votes between the two official Bond candidates,² which also gives some indication of the opposition to Maasdorp in the ranks of the Bond. That there was some opposition to him is less surprising than that he received Bond votes eighteen months after the end of the war.

If these results indicated some opposition in the Bond to Maasdorp, this was confirmed in the Assembly elections early in 1904. J.H. Smith who had served Graaff-Reinet since 1888 ended his political career

1. GRA, 6 November 1903.

2. GRA, 16, 20 November 1903.

under strained relations with the Bond and declined to stand for re-election.¹ Most Bond branches had instructed their delegates to the nomination meetings when Dr Te Water, who had suffered a stroke in 1902, for reasons of health withdrew from the contest. At the same time, Maasdorp, who had failed at the Legislative Council elections and who had since joined the South African Party, made himself available for election. There was insufficient time for all Bond branches to reconsider their votes in the light of the new situation, and Hofmeyr unsuccessfully tried to persuade Te Water to re-view his decision.²

At the nomination meeting F.R. Davel (374) and Maasdorp (371) were elected as the two Bond candidates.³ Objections about the votes of certain branches⁴ led to three branches being ordered to make new nominations,⁵ and C.A. du Toit (335) replaced Maasdorp (334) as the

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1. He believed he had been ignored at the opening of the railway extension in 1898, and blamed Dr Te Water for this; he worked against Te Water's election to the School Board in 1906 {OC, 24 September 1903 (J.H. Smith); GRA, 14 February 1906}. His estrangement may also have been connected with his signing of the suspension petition. He died in 1908 (OC, 26 November 1908).
 2. Hofmeyr Papers, vol.5: J.H. Hofmeyr to T.N.G. te Water, 20 November 1903; OC, 12, 30 November 1903; GRA, 13 November 1903.
 3. Hofmeyr Papers, vol.5; OC, 10, 17 December 1903.
 4. Hofmeyr Papers, vol.5: particularly A.J. de Villiers to Commissie van Toezicht, 15 December 1903, and Bylaag A, showing the voting on 9 December 1903 and copy of telegram Hofmeyr to Dr Hoffman, 25 December 1903.
 5. OC, 7 January 1904.

second Bond candidate to run with Davel. The Commissie urged Du Toit in view of the special circumstances surrounding the issue "om terug te trekken ten gunste van zyn secundus {Maasdorp}, zou het hem voorkomen dat laatstgenoemde eene betere kans heeft om die overwinning voor onze party te krygen. De Commissie zelve gevoelt zich niet geschikt om een gebiedend gevoel uit te drukken over de betrekkelyke populariteit van de Kandidaten".¹ Du Toit refused to withdraw,² and A.J. de Villiers reminded the Commissie that the Bond constitution was explicit on the subject of Bondsmen who worked against the official candidates. He appealed to the Commissie to forbid Bondsmen to work for Maasdorp, saying that no matter how great was the wish to see Maasdorp in parliament, "ons organisatie behoort ons toch veel meer waard te zijn anders is ons bondmanschap geen pijp tabak waard!"³ The Commissie however refused to intervene, and Onze Courant refused to express a preference.⁴

If Bondsmen were divided, there was no such division among the Progressives, who saw it as their duty to reject the worst of the three candidates. They were united in agreeing that C.A. du Toit was the worst, and the Advertiser reminded its readers of his role in the movement to abolish the English services in the Dutch Reformed Church.⁵ Maasdorp and Davel were elected

1. OC, 11 January 1904.

2. Hofmeyr Papers, vol.5: C.A. du Toit to J.H. Hofmeyr, 9 January 1904.

3. Hofmeyr Papers, vol.5: A.J. de Villiers to J.H. Hofmeyr, 18 January 1904.

4. OC, 8 February 1904.

5. GRA, 20 January 1904; see also p.602.

with comfortable majorities, in an election which was unusual in that over a third of the voters used only one of their two votes, from a fear of harming their favourite candidate.¹

The Legislative Council elections of 1908, the last before Union, provide further evidence of the blurring of the rigid political divisions of the past.

The Advertiser gave its cautious approval to C.G.Joubert and P.J.Weeber, two of the Bond candidates.²

De Villiers whom the Progressives had elected in 1903 stood as an independent, but in the new climate he was no longer automatically assured of the full support of those who had in the past voted against the Bond. The new mood was reflected by the Advertiser which said that "seeing that politics are in a state of re-formation and trans-formation just at present, and that matters are entirely different to what they were four years ago", it was desirable for candidates to meet as many electors as possible in areas where they were not well known, and that this was particularly true of the present instance, where Joubert had "independent of this matter of Party - a lifelong record of freedom from racial bias, and as an upright, honourable man is as much respected in the district of Graaff Reinet as is Mr. De Villiers himself in his own district of Beaufort West".³ This clearly reflected the views of many of the Bond's former opponents, and all three Bond candidates were returned, having received over 7 000 votes to the 3 867 votes obtained by De Villiers.⁴

1. OC and GRA, 15 February 1904.

2. GRA, 2, 16, 25 October 1907.

3. GRA, 9 December 1907.

4. OC, 23, 27, 30 January 1908; GRA, 24, 29 January 1908.

In the Assembly elections of 1908 Maasdorp and Davel were returned unopposed in the first uncontested election since the advent of the Bond.¹ Under the single member constituencies after Union, Maasdorp continued to serve Graaff-Reinet in the Assembly until his retirement in 1915.

There were a number of able men in Graaff-Reinet; in 1904 Walter Rubidge obtained a seat in the Assembly for Vryburg² and in 1908 A.H. Murray was elected as a member of the South African Party to represent Victoria East.³ He, like Maasdorp, was a moderate of the type that was finding increasing support from the anti-Bondsmen of former days and helping to soften the rigid political lines of the past.

(v) Graaff-Reinet and the Unification of South Africa

Among all sections of the Graaff-Reinet community there had always been substantial support for the idea of a union or a federation of the South African states, and the movement which culminated in the establishment of Union in 1910 had the support of the majority of Graaff-Reinetters. Graaff-Reinet had a special interest in the National Convention of 1908-1909, since G.H. Maasdorp, one of her members in the Assembly, was among the twelve Cape delegates to the Convention. Maasdorp's role in the proceedings of the National Convention appears to have been a quiet one, and such evidence as exists, indicates that he did not often give

1. OC, 17 February 1908; GRA, 21 February 1908.

2. GRA, 7 February 1906.

3. GRA, 6 April 1908.

expression to his views.¹ Although there had been a movement by Graaff-Reinet to secure the capital for itself, Maasdorp had held himself aloof from it,² and had remained a firm supporter of the claims of Cape Town, informing the National Convention that "he regarded it as humiliating to the Cape Colony to expect that she should relinquish her whole past, and this on behalf of Pretoria".³ Maasdorp also expressed an aversion to the proposed Provincial Councils.⁴ When he addressed a public meeting in Graaff-Reinet on 4 March 1909, he expanded on this by advocating the extension of the Divisional Council system, believing that "True local government could only be carried on in very small areas". At the time Maasdorp made these remarks, under the proposed system of proportional representation with constituencies returning three or four members to the Assembly, constituencies were to be extremely large, and since membership of the Provincial Councils was to be the same as for the Assembly, Maasdorp maintained that

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1. The proceedings of the National Convention were kept secret, and no official record of the speeches delivered was kept. The official minutes {Minutes of Proceedings with Annexures (Selected) of the South African National Convention, ed. by G.R. Hofmeyr} contain only the motions and the results of the divisions. Our information on the discussions comes from two of the Cape delegates who kept private records of the debates (F.S. Malan, Die Konvensie-Dagboek van sy Edelagbare Francois Stephanus Malan 1908-1909, and E.H. Walton, The Inner History of the National Convention of South Africa).
 2. GRA, 8 March 1909.
 3. Malan, pp.210-211.
 4. Malan, pp.117-119.

provincial councillors would not be able to keep in touch with the public.¹ The rejection of proportional representation and the creation of single member constituencies at the Bloemfontein session of the National Convention did, to a certain extent, blunt the force of Maasdorp's objections, although the constituencies were still to be considerably larger than the areas from which Divisional Councillors were elected.

Maasdorp's views on the Cape franchise were probably his most important statements in the National Convention, and since he was a representative of a rural area in the eastern part of the colony, his statements were listened to with much attention. Maasdorp said that people "feared the Native franchise and if possible they would like to go back". Maasdorp's own views did not emerge clearly, and there is some contradiction between his views as expressed in the National Convention and as stated at a public meeting in Graaff-Reinet on 4 March 1909. In the National Convention Maasdorp said that he "did not fear for the future of the white races in S.A. as he fancied that he noticed a deterioration in the black races - morally as well as physically".² On this account he felt that "it was improper for them to be placed on the same level as the white man in respect to the vote", and he favoured separate representation of the blacks, possibly along the lines suggested by the South African Native Affairs Commission of 1903-1905.³ These statements were made with the knowledge

1. GRA, 8 March 1909.

2. Malan, pp.56-57.

3. Walton, p.141.

that the discussions of the National Convention were secret. In his public address he defended black political rights and said that "he thought the northern policy was a bit illiberal as regards the natives", and he "did not think that there ever would be a desire to take away the franchise from the natives. The country was progressing, and the natives were progressing. The Cape's policy in the past had not been a failure ... He believed that as the country advanced, liberal ideas would spread, and would spread to the other Colonies, too".¹

When the draft South African Act was made public in February 1909, Graaff-Reinet approved the draft as a whole, although in common with most of the Cape, some people jibbed at the Cape's under-representation in the Assembly with only 51 out of 121 seats.² The Advertiser was the spokesman of the urban population of Graaff-Reinet, which had lacked the numerical strength to contest Assembly elections successfully. The paper gave its full approval to the principle of equal constituencies and "one vote one value", which diminished the advantage the rural areas of the Cape had enjoyed in the matter of representation. The system of proportional representation and the single transferable vote was firmly supported by the Advertiser, as it seemed likely that the system would ensure that the voice of the Graaff-Reinet urban community would be heard in parliament.³

1. GRA, 8 March 1909.

2. GRA, 15 February 1909.

3. GRA, 17, 19, 22 February 1909.

But Hofmeyr and the Cape Town branch of the Afrikaner Bond did not see matters in the same light, and of all their objections to the draft constitution the one which was to cause the most trouble in achieving the compromise that was Union was the objection to proportional representation, and the demand that in "sparsely populated areas" electoral divisions should be single member constituencies.¹

This dissatisfaction does not appear to have found an echo in Graaff-Reinet by 4 March 1909 when Maasdorp addressed a gathering of some 500 persons and urged Graaff-Reinet to approve the draft constitution without suggesting amendments. He stressed that the draft was "a compromise of very conflicting views and very conflicting interests", and "he did not think it was possible to suggest any amendment that had not been thoroughly discussed in the Convention, and upon which it had not been found possible to come to any other arrangement but a compromise". His appeal was successful, and a unanimous resolution was passed instructing Graaff-Reinet's representatives to support the draft constitution. It was an unusual meeting that found Afrikaner farmers and English business men in complete agreement, Bond and non-Bond on the same side.²

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1. L.M. Thompson, The Unification of South Africa 1902-1910, pp.317-319; T.R.H. Davenport, The Afrikaner Bond; The History of a South African Political Party, 1880-1911, pp.284-286.
 2. Maasdorp's address appears in GRA, 5, 8 March 1909, while further details of the meeting are in GRA, 1 June 1909.

The agitation against "one vote one value" and equal constituencies gained the adherence of many Bondsmen, who were used to a delimitation which favoured the rural areas and who feared loss of support in terms of the draft constitution. In the special session of the Cape parliament in 1909 amendments were passed which resulted in the elimination of proportional representation, and in the Bloemfontein session of the National Convention from 3 to 11 May 1909 single member constituencies were created.¹

In Graaff-Reinet there appeared to be no reaction to this agitation. It was only after Hofmeyr had used his influence to secure the adoption, by the district bestuur of the Cape Town Bond, of a resolution criticising the revised draft, that Graaff-Reinet acted. At a public meeting on 27 May 1909, C.H.O. Marais, editor of Onze Courant, moved a resolution which reflected the Cape Town district bestuur's criticisms of the revised draft of the constitution. The resolution received little attention since it was brought forward by Marais at a poorly attended meeting which had been called primarily to discuss excise problems. The resolution was largely ignored, and it had no repercussions.²

Graaff-Reinet played no significant role in the further events leading up to Union, except in the movement to retain the High Commissioner, Lord Selborne, as the first Governor General of South Africa. Meetings

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1. Thompson, particularly pp.309-327, 336-348, 362-375, and Davenport, pp.283-290 contain details of the reaction in the Cape to the draft constitution.
 2. GRA, 28 May, 1 June 1909.

in this connection were held and enthusiastically supported.¹ For the rest, Graaff-Reinet's main interest in Union was to retain as far as possible the electoral division of Graaff-Reinet unchanged. The number of registered voters in the electoral division in 1909 was 2 591, well within the quota laid down. It was assumed by Graaff-Reinet that it would retain its identity as an electoral division, if for no reason other than the historical importance of the area. Graaff-Reinet was not disappointed. Three field cornetcies in the district of Aberdeen were cut off from the Graaff-Reinet electoral division and placed under the electoral division of Jansenville. The field cornetcy of Rhenosterberg in the Middelburg district was added to the Graaff-Reinet electoral division, which comprised 2 503 voters, the bulk of whom came from Graaff-Reinet and Murraysburg.²

Union Day passed quietly. On account of the death of King Edward VII on 6 May, the celebrations to mark Union on 31 May 1910 were subdued throughout the country. In Graaff-Reinet the occasion was marked by a large gathering on church square, in which the leading role was played by ministers of the various denominations in Graaff-Reinet. An address in Dutch was delivered by the Rev P.K. Albertyn and in English by the Rev H.E. Rowley. Both addresses breathed a confidence that the advent of Union would herald a new venture in racial co-operation among the whites of South Africa, that it spelt the death and burial of racialism.³

1. GRA, 10, 15, 19 November, 3 December 1909.

2. GRA, 8 September 1909, 18 February, 3, 6 June 1910.

3. GRA, 1 June 1910.

So it was that Graaff-Reinet, in common with the rest of South Africa, entered the Union full of hope for a new era in racial relationships, a hope which was bolstered by the unanimity that had marked the events leading up to Union.

CONCLUSION

Graaff-Reinet has a special niché in South African history because it is associated with an important era in the formation of the attitudes and habits of thought of white South Africa.

The significance of the first line of separation between Africans and whites established by Van Plettenberg in 1778 in an area which would shortly be included in the new district of Graaff-Reinet readily suggests itself. Graaff-Reinet was the frontier district, its town the only centre of civilisation between Swellendam and Stellenbosch. It was there that black and white frontiersmen first made meaningful contact and set the pattern for trading, employment and conflict which was to continue long after Graaff-Reinet was cut off from the direct impact of events on the frontier. It was in Graaff-Reinet that white South Africans first grappled with the insoluble problem of securing themselves against black competitors by advocating separation while, at the same time, relying increasingly on black labour. It was not in Cape Town, but in the interior of the Cape colony, and in particular in Graaff-Reinet, that white attitudes to the numerically superior blacks in their midst, were formed, attitudes which were to persist long after the frontier situation which had given rise to them had disappeared.

Graaff-Reinet played a leading role in the formation of white attitudes and prejudices concerning colour. The relative isolation of the district from the new influences reaching Cape Town from the outside world

allowed the Graaff-Reineters to nurture their attitudes and to arrange matters between themselves and their servants with a minimum of interference from distant authorities. When the philanthropic ideas of Europe, which found an echo in Cape Town, eventually reached Graaff-Reinet, the reaction of the white frontiersmen to the government's attempts to regulate relations between them and their black servants was violent. Although the frontiersmen rejected the ideas of Europe in their philanthropic guise, the revolutionary democratic theories of Europe provided them with the philosophical justification for opposing a government which did not represent the volkstem.

Graaff-Reinet was also the scene of the first serious clashes between the farmers and various religious bodies, particularly the London Missionary Society, over the place of the black man in society, a clash which still manifests itself in various forms in present day South Africa. It was the trekboers of Graaff-Reinet, who, after the elimination of the Bushman threat on the northern frontier, led the expansion movement northwards and, when the pressures of government control with its philanthropic leanings bore ever more heavily on the eastern districts, Graaff-Reinet was closely associated with the Great Trek, whereby white Afrikaners drew further into isolation to safeguard their values, and much later, after 1910, were in a position to reindoctrinate the Cape, where the new ideas of the nineteenth century had made some progress.

By 1837 Graaff-Reinet was no longer a frontier district, and she had lost her leading role in the for-

mative influences that went towards the making of South Africa. Graaff-Reinet was, however, the leading district in the midlands. The period between the Great Trek and the opening up of the diamond fields was, with the exception of the severe drought of the sixties, a time of considerable prosperity, and Graaff-Reinet was cast in a new role as a wealthy midland district. Graaff-Reinet enjoyed the reputation of a leading producer of wool, and the town became a business centre of some importance, while the introduction of large numbers of black and white new comers to the town and district altered the population structure.

Graaff-Reinet's golden era was, however, short-lived, and the decline of the wool industry from the early seventies, the opening up of the diamond fields at the same time, and the discovery of the Witwatersrand gold fields in the following decade, witnessed the beginning of the relative and actual decline of Graaff-Reinet, and although there were brief periods of prosperity, such as that brought about by ostrich farming, Graaff-Reinet did not again attain a position of influence and importance.

An examination of the issues which occupied the attention of Graaff-Reinettters in the early 1970's reveals considerable continuity with matters which aroused public interest in the period before 1910. The building of the Van Ryneveld's Pass dam in the twenties provided an adequate water supply for the town, and when water from this source was supplemented by borehole water, Graaff-Reinet was able to survive a serious drought without the necessity for the severe water restrictions imposed in surrounding towns.

Costs had soared since 1875 when the municipal board invoked the wrath of certain ratepayers in its efforts to raise a loan of £12,000 for the improvement of the town's water supply. In 1970 the council negotiated a loan of R865 000 for the installation of a waterborne sewerage system and there is a close parallel between the demands of the ratepayers in 1875 that their approval be sought for the board's scheme and similar demands made by the property owners in 1970. Nor was the outcome of meetings held to discuss the subject very different. In 1875 at a meeting of ratepayers the board's efforts were approved only by the casting vote of F.K. te Water, while in 1970 the voting was 63 to 61 in favour of the town council's plans.¹

Municipal elections in the 1970's could on occasion be fought with all the bitterness so evident in elections in the 1880's. The breakdown of municipal government at the end of 1886 marked the height of antagonism in municipal affairs. The truce which was arranged in 1888 paved the way for a genuine attempt after the Anglo-Boer War to conduct municipal affairs with a minimum of reference to party politics. This attempt had already met with some success by 1910, and by 1972 a tradition of non-party representation on the council had been built up. An attempt in that year to reintroduce party politics into municipal elections and secure the removal of English-speaking councillors failed dismally.²

1. GRA, 12 February, 12 March, 12 November 1970.

2. GRA, 28, 31 August, 4, 7 September 1972.

In the early 1970's the black locations still occupied much of the council's attention, and there was a greater willingness to improve the amenities and facilities of the locations, while a new element was the large income from the beer hall, some R1940,80 in December 1969.¹ The complaints of the farmers in connection with the availability and quality of labour had not changed significantly over the years, although the situation had become more complicated by government policy which restricted the use of African labour and required that preference be given to Coloured labour. Farmers had to compete not only with railway construction, as in the nineteenth century, but with much larger state schemes such as the Orange River project. Motor transport and tarred roads had also introduced a fresh element into the old situation, and farmers from the Lange Kloof on occasion recruited fruit pickers in Graaff-Reinet on a large scale. Although there were complaints about the difficulty of obtaining and retaining good labourers, there was in 1970 no overall shortage of black labour, and there was a high rate of unemployment among the blacks of the town.

Although there is a similarity between the preoccupations of Graaff-Reinettters in 1970 and in the period before 1910, there was a fundamental difference between the Graaff-Reinet of 1870 and 1970. In 1870, although the Graaff-Reinettters did not know it, Graaff-Reinet stood at the end of an era of importance, and was about to enter a period of steady decline. In 1970

1. GRA, 2 February 1970.

Graaff-Reineters were well aware of the change in their fortunes, although they had not lost their determination, if not to regain their former glory, at least to put an end to the declining status of Graaff-Reinet.

The decline of Graaff-Reinet was part of a pattern of decline in the Cape midlands and karroo.¹ When the Cape Colony expanded eastwards and there was a great demand for more land, Graaff-Reinet was able to meet the demand. The eastern districts were particularly good sheep country, and were later in a position to take full advantage of the increasing international demand for wool. Wool became the most valuable South African export, and the midlands and karroo prospered. But with the opening up of the diamond and gold fields, which coincided with a period of actual decline in the wool industry, Graaff-Reinet and the midlands in general, with no apparent exploitable mineral resources, were forced to accept a minor economic role, as significant economic growth took place elsewhere. Lacking adequate water supplies and large areas of good agricultural land, the midlands and karroo were not in a position to avail themselves of the opportunities provided by the new markets in the expanding centres of economic activity. They did not enjoy the same locational advantage which enabled Port Elizabeth to capitalise on the demand for goods from abroad. Blumenfeld suggests "that

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1. For the general situation obtaining in the Cape midlands and karroo as a whole, see Survey of the Cape Midlands and Karroo Regions, vol.2: G.P. Cook, Towns of the Cape Midlands and Eastern Karroo, vol.3: M.L. Truu, Human Resources in the Cape Midlands, vol.4: J.P. Blumenfeld, The Economic Structure.

the initial and most important cause of the economic decline of the once-prosperous districts of the Cape Midlands and Karroo region was their displacement from a relatively central to a relatively peripheral location vis-à-vis the main centres of settlement and economic activities in Southern Africa".¹

Graaff-Reinet's political decline is reflected in the increased size of the Graaff-Reinet electoral division, which in 1910 comprised the districts of Graaff-Reinet and Murraysburg, and parts of the Aberdeen and Middelburg districts. After the 1965 delimitation the electoral division included the magisterial districts of Graaff-Reinet, Murraysburg, Aberdeen, Willowmore, Steytlerville, and parts of the Beaufort West and Jansenville districts. The 1973 Delimitation Commission's provisional delimitation foreshadowed the inclusion of further voters from Somerset East, Colesberg, Uitenhage and Humansdorp in the Graaff-Reinet electoral division.

Economic growth in Graaff-Reinet was hampered by the heavy dependence upon wool. Apart from the ever-present threat of natural disasters, this commodity was subject to the vagaries of international demand, and was, after the Second World War, also affected by the production of artificial fibres. The decline in the fortunes of the wool industry was to some extent mirrored in the declining white population of the district. In 1911 the white population of the district (2 692 square miles in extent), excluding the urban centres of Graaff-Reinet, Adendorp and New Bethesda, was 2 886. By 1961 the num-

1. Blumenfeld, p.7.

ber of whites in the rural areas of the district (which had been contracted slightly to 2 620 square miles), was 795. By 1970 the white population had decreased still further to 638. What is also of some significance is that while the whites of the district (excluding the urban areas) in 1911 comprised almost 29% of the total rural population, they made up less than 8% of this population in 1970.

The unstable nature of the wool market was not the only factor in the process of rural depopulation; the exodus from the rural areas was a world-wide phenomenon, and was beneficial to the extent that it was part of a process of modernization of farming and farming methods, which witnessed the disappearance of uneconomic farming units and the creation of larger entities. But what was disquieting about the situation in Graaff-Reinet was that the total population in the rural areas continued to grow, and that it was mainly the whites, who in the South African context were "the main source of both capital and expertise",¹ who had left the rural areas. The lack of diversity in the economy and the absence of secondary industries meant that such whites were not absorbed into other sectors of the economy, but left the region altogether. This was reflected in the virtually static number of whites in the town of Graaff-Reinet, where they increased marginally from 3 904 in 1911 to 5 047 in 1960, decreasing to 4 752 in 1970. At the same time many of the Africans and Coloureds displaced in the rural areas moved to the town, where the black population in the period 1911-1970 increased from 4 225

1. Blumenfeld, p.50.

to 17 313. The same situation obtained throughout the midlands and karroo, and Blumenfeld, in a study of twenty-one magisterial districts in the region, points out that "Since the Whites are the main generators of employment opportunities in the urban areas, no less than in the rural areas, the question ... arises whether the region's towns are able to carry the additional burden arising from the rapid increase of non-White population whilst the White population is all but stagnant".¹

As Graaff-Reinet was forced to accept a minor role in national affairs, the struggle for a place in the sun shifted to the Cape midlands and karroo region itself, where Graaff-Reinet, in common with other centres was busy carving a special niché for itself. Graaff-Reinet's most serious rival in this respect was Cradock. One of the first setbacks suffered by Graaff-Reinet in the battle for dominance was in the early 1880's when the main railway line from Port Elizabeth to the interior passed through Cradock, while Graaff-Reinet had to wait until 1898 before being linked by rail to the north. Even then, the Cradock line continued to be the main one into the interior, and Cradock enjoyed the benefit of greater traffic, storage facilities and general railway expenditure. Efforts to introduce field crops and fruit production on an extensive scale in the region were unsuccessful as a result of the inadequate and erratic rainfall, while the Great Fish and Sundays Rivers were unable to support irrigation farming on a large scale. The decision of the government in the early 1960's to

1. Blumenfeld, p.50.

divert water from the Orange River into the Fish and Sundays Rivers held out much promise, but by 1973 it appeared as if Cradock had once again obtained a lead over Graaff-Reinet. It was to receive water from the Orange River project, while Graaff-Reinet's hopes in this respect were fading fast as a result of what was considered the prohibitive cost of constructing a tunnel through the Wapadsberg.

There was little trade and interaction between the various centres in the midlands and karroo. With the possible exception of Grahamstown and its educational facilities, there was no specialisation and the various urban centres provided the same services and facilities. Apart from this, while the various towns were on the main rail and road links between the coast and the interior, access between these centres was poor. There was, for example, no direct road between Graaff-Reinet and Cradock, while both towns were directly linked to Port Elizabeth by road and rail. These towns were consequently orientated more towards Port Elizabeth than towards each other. With the improvement of roads, an increasing number of people made occasional shopping trips to Port Elizabeth, while there was also a tendency for building contractors and others to buy direct from suppliers in Port Elizabeth. Farmers who obtained general dealers licences to cater for the needs of labourers on their farms, purchased all their requirements from wholesale establishments in the metropolis. Another threat to local traders in the region was the appearance of the chain store, although many people ap-

preciated that the advent of such stores might be of long term benefit and reduce the need for journeys to Port Elizabeth. Graaff-Reinet met the challenge from Port Elizabeth with the establishment of an efficient co-operative and the first supermarket in the rural areas of the Eastern Province.

Graaff-Reinet had many titles in its chequered career. In 1970 its claim to be the "Capital of the Midlands" was not unchallenged by Cradock, but it was set fair to make a bid for recognition as an educational centre of some note. What the town had lost by way of reliance upon the farming community was to a certain extent made up by its educational establishments, which were of vital importance to the town. But Graaff-Reinet in 1970 was staking yet another claim to be recognised as a tourist centre, and the Advertiser noted that: "The closing of the schools for the long summer vacation has ... not had such a depressing effect on business as it had in the past. More and more tourists, travelling from the north to the sea, have come to give preference to the Graaff-Reinet roads".¹ Besides monuments in town and district, Reinet House, and the restored cottages in Stretch Court, a consortium of local farmers and business men had built a modern hotel likely to attract tourists, while plans for the beautifying of the area in the vicinity of Magazine Hill were being mentioned, as was the tourist value of the Valley of Desolation. In April 1974 it was announced that a

1. GRA, 19 January 1970.

decision in principle had been taken to establish a nature reserve in Graaff-Reinet. It is clear that the Graaff-Reineters of 1970 had not quietly accepted their fate, although the role in which they sought to cast their town was a somewhat humbler one than in the days when Graaff-Reinet was one of four towns in the Cape colony.

SOURCE LIST

I. UNPUBLISHED OFFICIAL MANUSCRIPT RECORDS AND PRIVATE PAPERS

A. Government Archives, Cape Town(i) Council of Policy (C)

- 93, Resolutions (August-October 1791).
 98-99, " (August-December 1792).
 197, Annexures to Resolutions (April 1792).
 200, " " " (July 1792).
 204, " " " (November 1792).
 208, " " " (March 1793).
 212, " " " (October-December 1793).
 214, Documents from Holland and Batavia (January 1794).
 215, " " " " " (March-April 1794).
 218, " " " " " (October-December 1794).

(ii) Graaff-Reinet (G.R.)

- 1/1 - 1/4, Minutes of meetings of Landdrost and Heemraden (1786-1827).
 1/6 - 1/8, Annexures to Minutes (1787-1827).
 1/9, Minutes of Krygsraad and annexures.
 3/1, 3/6 - 3/15, Duplicates of records of proceedings of Commission of Circuit (1811-1827).
 8/2, Letters from Colonial Office (1811-1853).
 8/5 - 8/7, Letters from Colonial Office (1812-1818).
 8/44 - 8/45, Letters from Colonial Office (1883-1907).
 9/10, Letters from Fiscal (1799-1825).

- 9/57, Superintendent of Education and other education officials (1852-1907).
- 9/68, Military papers, letters and documents received (1787-1850).
- 14/15 - 14/17, Land records, lists of loan farms.
- 14/103 - 14/116a, Opgaaf and population returns (1787-1826).
- 15/17, Contracts of Service, returns, miscellaneous papers, Bushmen and Native Apprentices (1792-1848).
- 15/43 - 15/46, 15/48 - 15/49, 15/54, 15/57, 15/61, Contracts of Service: Hottentots or Free Persons of Colour (1786-1888).
- 15/72 - 15/78, Indentures of Apprenticeship (1813-1889).

(iii) Receiver of Land Revenue (R.L.R.)

- 20-37, Oude Wildschutte Boeke (1767-1793).
- 41-43a, Alphabetic register of persons names in Wildschutte Boeke.
- 78-78a, Register of loan farms and alphabetical list of occupiers.
- 110, Grootboeke (1793-1800).
- 113, " (1817-1822).
- 115-116, Journals (1792-1800).
- 122, " (1822-1825).
- 128-129, Diary of paid recognition fees for loan farms (1818-1828).
- 138-139, Yearly statement of recognition fees (1793-1822).
- 142, Register of converted loan farms (1814-1824).
- 143-144, Register of costs of inspection and survey of land (1813-1827).
- 146-147, "Ordonnantien" (1763-1816).

(iv) Moodie, Afschriften, vol.5

(v) Opgaafrolle

137 - 141, Graaff-Reinet (1834-1838).

(vi) Verbatim Copies (V.C.)

65 - 68, Letters and annexures, A.J. Sluysken (1793-1795).

(vii) First British Occupation (B.O.)

21, Letters from Stellenbosch (1795-1797).

24, Letters from Swellendam (1795-1802).

26, Disturbances in the interior of the Colony (1795-1802).

27-28, Letters from Graaff-Reinet (1796-1798, 1802).

(viii) Leibbrandt's Manuscript Precs (L.M.)

30, Annual returns (1688-1792), Extract Resolutions of the Council of Policy (1786-1792).

36, Minutes of Landdrost and Heemraden (1786-1827).

37, First letters to Landdrost and Heemraden (1785-1825).

38a, Letters received from Governor and Council (1812-1827).

41, Extract Resolutions of the Council of Policy (1786-1794).

(ix) Lieutenant Governor (L.G.)

219-227, Letters received from the Civil Commissioner of Graaff-Reinet (August 1836-March 1860).

(x) Colonial Office (C.O.)

78, 84, 95, 107, 126, 148-149, 170, Letters received from the Court of Justice (1816-1822).

2473-2482, Index of papers and letters received (1836-1848).

2722, Letters received from Civil Commissioner of Graaff-Reinet (1830).

2764, 2772, 2787, 2795, 2803, 2808, 2813, 2820, 2826, 2833, 2842, 2850, 2853, 2864, 2875, 2881, 2889, Letters received from Civil Commissioner of Graaff-Reinet (1836-1853).

- 3327, 3352, 3383, 3417, 3451, Letters received from Civil Commissioner of Graaff-Reinet (1880-1884).
- 5959-5962, Index to Acts, Proclamations and Government Notices (1803-1881).
- 5972, The Blue Book of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope (1829).
- 5978, The Blue Book of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope (1836).

(xi) Clerk of the House of Assembly (H.A.)

- 83, Annexures 80-171 (1870).
- 86, Annexures 101-165 (1871).
- 103, Annexures 171-304 (1874).

(xii) Map Collection

- 1/1819 - 1/1820, Copy of Public Record Office, London, map MPG 27, CO.48/294 showing district boundaries between Graaff-Reinet and Colesberg, after February 1837.
- 2/450 - 2/451, showing boundaries of sub-divisions of New Hantam, Agter Suurberg, Lower Sea Cow River and part of Middenveld (J.L. Leeb 1825).
- 3/39, General plan of the field cornetcy of Voor Sneeuwberg.
- 3/152, Plan of the division of Graaff-Reinet (1900).

(xiii) Te Water Papers, Accession 467

F.K. te Water

- 1-8, Letters received (1854-1913).
- 24-27, Miscellaneous business papers (1844-1909).
- 28, Miscellaneous advertisements and notices (1857-1865).
- 29-42, Financial papers (1847-1912).
- 43-46, Papers re Municipalities and Divisional Councils (1845-1906).

- 47-50, Letter Books (1860-1912).
 51, Church and financial matters (1844-1911).
 52, Hospital correspondence (1875-1879).
 53, Papers re Midland Agency and Trust Company (1875-1912).
 54-55, Miscellaneous papers (1859-1906).

T.N.G. te Water

- 56-64, Letters received (1875-1913); 56-60 deal mainly with political matters, 61-64 are largely business papers, and letters from patients.
 87, College notes and papers (1870-1894).
 88, Letters to editors, newspaper cuttings, draft speeches, examination papers, circulars.
 90, Papers re education (1883-1899).
 91, Scrap book (1888-1905).
 92, Miscellaneous (1888-1917).
 93, Memoranda, drafts and financial papers (1896-1914).
 95, Telegram books and miscellaneous papers.

Te Water Family

- 96-97, Family correspondence (1851-1918).
 98, Letters received by Mrs M. te Water (1880-1916).
 100, Letter Book of J.C. te Water (1870-1873).
 101-103, Miscellaneous (1841-1914).
 104, Letters received and other papers (1842-1891).
 105, Notebooks of revenue and expenditure (1840-1890).
 106, Papers re Graaff-Reinet Bible Society (1847-1874).
 108-109, Ledgers (1841-1855).

(xiv) B.J. Barnard Collection (BJB), Accession 609

- 1-10, Draft Minutes and annexures of meetings of Municipal Board and Town Council of Graaff-Reinet (1845-1887).

- 11, Letter Book of Municipal Commissioners (1851-1865).
- 14-17, Assessment Rolls (1875-1891).
- 18, Valuation List, Night Police rate (1873-1875).
- 20, Minute Book of Celebration Committee and Arbour Day Committee (1886-1887).

(xv) Southey Papers, Accession 611

Private Papers:

- 1-3, Letters received (1842-1899).
- 4, Drafts and copies of letters and other papers written by Richard Southey (1847-1862, and undated).

(xvi) Minutes of the meetings of the Graaff-Reinet College Council (College Minutes), Accession 552

B. Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk Argief, Cape Town

(i) N.G.K. Graaff-Reinet (G6)

- 1/1a, Draft Minutes of Kerkraad (1824-1864).
- 1/3-1/7, Kerkraad Minutes (1842-1922).
- 1/4a, Meetings of the Congregation (1885-1907).
- 2/1, Incoming letters (1803-1925).
- 5/1 - 5/4, Membership Books (1792-1887).
- 10/1, Cash Book (1797-1866).
- 22/1, "Inrigting vir Behoeftige Seuns".

(ii) Free Protestant Church, Graaff-Reinet (G49)

- 2/1, Incoming and outgoing letters, and annual reports.
- 3/1 - 3/2, Letter Books (1875-1886).
- 4/1, Financial statements (1876-1940).
- 5/1, Copies of baptismal certificates and rules and regulations.

- 6/1, Baptismal register (1869-1899).
- 6/2, List of members (1871-1884).
- 6/3, Marriage register (1870-1884).

C. South African Library, Cape Town

Map Collection

- (i) Chas. E. Goad, Plan of Graaff-Reinet, October 1895.

Manuscript Collection

- (i) Herholdt Family
- (ii) Hofmeyr Papers

Section A: Z.A. Bondspartij

- 2, General elections, Midland Province (1891, 1898, 1903, 1908).
- 3, General election, Graaff-Reinet (1894).
- 4, General election, Graaff-Reinet (1898).
- 5, General election, Graaff-Reinet (1904).
- (iii) Murray Family: Typescript notes on Murray family centenary, 1922.
- (iv) Rubidge, Charles: Correspondence concerning merinos.

D. Reinet House Museum, Graaff-Reinet

- (i) Notes on the Essex and Rabone Families: Compiled for the Graaff-Reinet Museum by A. Rabone.
- (ii) Indexes to the Graaff Reinet Herald, compiled by A. Rabone. By January 1972 Mr Rabone had compiled an index to the Herald for the period August 1852 - December 1858. The first volume of this has been published (see under General Literature).

E. Town Offices, Graaff-Reinet

Minutes of the meetings of the Municipal Board of Commissioners and Town Council (various years, but particularly 1845-1853).

F. Other(i) The Letters of Alfred Essex and Harriet Rabone

Transcribed and edited by A. Rabone. This is a more complete version of the letters published in Records of a Pioneer Family (see Published Collections of Documents).

(ii) The letters of the Southey clan from 1820-1848.

These letters are on roneod sheets, and Mr A.E. de la Harpe of the Graaff-Reinet district kindly allowed me to borrow his copy.

(iii) Notes on the Maasdorp Family

Made available to me by Dr P. de V. Maasdorp of Grahamstown.

(iv) Public Library, Graaff-Reinet

Translated copies of documents relating to the founding of Graaff-Reinet, prepared by H.C.V. Leibbrandt.

(v) Cory Library for Historical Research

Parkes' Family Papers

Venter, P.J. Government Departments of the Cape of Good Hope, 1806-1910, Cape Town, 1933, Microfilm consulted.

Plan of the town of Graaff-Reinet, J.L. Leeb, 1843.

II. PUBLISHED DOCUMENTARY RECORDS

A. Official Publications(i) British Parliamentary Papers

No.50 of 1835: Papers Relative to the Condition and Treatment of the Native Inhabitants of Southern Africa within the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope, or beyond the Frontier of that Colony, Part I: Hottentots and Bosjesmen; Caffres; Griquas.

No.1362 of 1851: Further Papers Relative to the Establishment of a Representative Assembly at the Cape of Good Hope.

(ii) Kaapsche Stads Courant (1804)(iii) The Cape Town Gazette, and African Advertiser
(1806-1818)(iv) The Cape of Good Hope Government Gazette (1845-1910)(v) The Blue Book of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope (1851-1885)

The Cape Archives copy of the Blue Book for the years 1851-1860 was consulted, and references to these copies are throughout this work prefixed with the relevant C.O. numbers (C.O. 5993 - C.O. 6002).

(vi) Statistical Register of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope (1886-1899)(vii) Cape Hansard; Debates in the House of Assembly
(1884-1909)

(viii) Cape of Good Hope; Annexures and Appendices to
the Votes and Proceedings of Parliament

A systematic search for material relating to Graaff-Reinet in the period after 1854 was made, of which the following is a selection:

Statistical Returns

G 42 - 1857	G 48 - 1891
A 68 - 1865	G 6 - 1892
A 72 - 1865	A 12 - 1896
G 20 - 1866	G 8 - 1898
G 42 - 1876	G 19 - 1905

Railways

A 32 - 1858	G 27 - 1890
G 32 - 1878	G 33 - 1890
A 58 - 1879	G 39 - 1891
G 43 - 1880	G 51 - 1892
G 64 - 1881	G 43 - 1893
A 28 - 1882	G 15 - 1894
A 29 - 1882	G 11 - 1895
G 91 - 1883	A 19 - 1895
G 47 - 1884	G 13 - 1896
G 38 - 1885	G 21 - 1897
G 38 - 1886	G 20 - 1898
C 3 - 1888	G 5 - 1899
G 31 - 1888	G 20 - 1899
G 27 - 1889	

Land

G 26 - 1868	G 30 - 1876
C 7 - 1873	G 29 - 1879
C 1 - 1874	G 1 - 1887

G 37 - 1888
G 31 - 1889
G 23 - 1891
G 29 - 1892
G 25 - 1893
G 25 - 1894

G 6 - 1895
G 8 - 1896
G 11 - 1897
G 15 - 1898
G 13 - 1899

Private Locations

G 8 - 1883
A 1 - 1890

Labour

C 1 - 1892
G 3 - 1894
G 7 - 1895
G 7 - 1897
G 24 - 1908

Crime

C 1 - 1884
G 3 - 1884
G 2 - 1885

Irrigation

A 4 - 1885
A 3 - 1890
A 4 - 1890

Postal Matters

A 66 - 1862
A 104 - 1865

Rebels

A 6 - 1902

Midland Hospital

G 34 - 1878

G 37 - 1881

Library

G 26 - 1878

G 27 - 1878

Separation

C 11 - 1861

C 13 - 1861

Botanic Gardens

G 35 - 1875

Aberdeen

A 21 - 1879

Rinderpest

G 72 - 1898

Scab

G 24 - 1893

G 1 - 1894

G 24E - 1893

G 61 - 1896

G 57 - 1893

G 61 - 1897

Circuit Court

C 15 - 1859

Electoral Divisions and Voters

A 12 - 1896

G 8 - 1898

Reports of Civil Commissioners and Resident Magistrates

G 91 - 1883

G 3 - 1884

G 2 - 1885

Waterworks Loan

A 50 - 1882

Education

G 30 - 1861

G 9 - 1886

G 25 - 1862

G 16 - 1886

G 14 - 1863

G 4 - 1887

G 13 - 1865

G 5 - 1888

G 3 - 1866

G 8 - 1889

G 9 - 1871

G 8 - 1891

G 9 - 1872

G 9 - 1891

G 5 - 1873

G 3 - 1892

G 14 - 1874

G 29 - 1883

G 21 - 1878

G 7 - 1895

G 6 - 1885

C 1 - 1896

G 25 - 1885

G 10 - 1897

Divisional Council

G 2 - 1894 (Report of the Controller and Auditor General
for 1892-1893).

Health

G 35 - 1904

Rainfall Areas

G 27 - 1896

(ix) Cape of Good Hope; Annexures and Appendices to
Votes and Proceedings of Parliament: Reports of
Select Committees

- 1857, The first class school at Graaff-Reinet
 1857, Railways
 A 19 - 1865: Petition of George Bremner
 A 5 - 1875: Graaff-Reinet Water Supply Bill
 A 8 - 1879: Irrigation Act
 A 22 - 1879: Graaff-Reinet Municipal Bill
 A 15 - 1880: To consider dividing fences
 A 5 - 1884: Scab Bill
 A 25 - 1885: Graaff-Reinet Municipality Loan Bill
 A 13 - 1886: Graaff-Reinet Municipality Act Amendment
 Bill
 A 3 - 1889: Masters and Servants Acts
 A 4 - 1892: Irrigation
 A 9 - 1893: Local Self-Government
 C 1 - 1896: Education
 A 11 - 1896: Working of the Irrigation Acts
 C 1 - 1898: Divisional Councils
 A 5 - 1884: Scab Bill
 A 21 - 1898: Scab Act

(x) Index of Government Proclamations and Notices
from 1803 to 1881

(xi) Index to Principal Proclamations and Notices Ap-
pearing in the Government Gazettes of the Cape
of Good Hope between 1 July 1881 and 30 June 1891

(xii) Index to the Annexures and Printed Papers of the
House of Assembly 1854-1897

(xiii) Eastern Province of the Cape of Good Hope; Docu-
ments Relative to the Question of a Separate
Government for the Eastern Districts of the Cape
Colony, Grahamstown, 1847

- (xiv) Cape of Good Hope; Legislative Council Minutes and Proceedings ... Law of Master and Servant, 1848
 - (xv) Cape of Good Hope; Proceedings of, and Evidence taken by, the Commission on Native Affairs, Grahamstown, 1865
 - (xvi) Cape of Good Hope; Report of a Commission Appointed by His Excellency the Governor to Inquire into and Report upon the Question of Federation, Cape Town, 1872
 - (xvii) Cape of Good Hope; Report of a Commission Appointed to Enquire into and Report upon the Working of the Education Acts in Force in this Colony 1879, Cape Town, 1880
 - (xviii) Cape of Good Hope; List of Persons Convicted of and Sentenced for High Treason by (1) Commission under Act 6 of 1900 (2) Special Court under Act 6 of 1900 (3) Ordinary High Courts of the Colony
 - (xix) Cape of Good Hope; List of Persons Residing in the Electoral Division of Graaff-Reinet, whose Names have been Registered in the year 1872, as Qualified to Vote in the Election of Members for the Parliament of this Colony (Ibid for the years 1874-1909)
 - (xx) Publications of the South African Government
- Census Reports: 1911 (U.G. 32 - 1912), 1921, 1936, 1951, 1960, 1970 (No. 02 - 05 - 01)
- Union of South Africa; Minutes of Proceedings with Annexures (Selected) of the South African National Convention, 1908-1909, ed. G.R. Hofmeyr, Cape Town, 1911
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- Survey of the Cape Midlands and Karroo Regions, vol.2: G.P. Cook, Towns of the Cape Midlands and Eastern Karroo, vol.3: M.L.Truu, Human Resources in the Cape Midlands, vol.4: J.P.Blumenfeld, The Economic Structure (Reports by a subsidiary committee of the Planning Advisory Council, Department of Planning, 1971, 1973)

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