

**Traces of forced labour – a history of black civilians in British concentration camps during
The South African War, 1899-1902.**

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**A dissertation submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History, University of the
Western Cape, October 2016.**

DECLARATION

I, Garth Conan Benneyworth, declare that ‘**Traces of forced labour – a history of black civilians in British concentration camps during the South African War, 1899-1902**’ is my own work, that it has not been submitted for any degree or examination in any other university, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

Garth Conan Benneyworth.

27 October 2016.



TABLE OF CONTENTS.

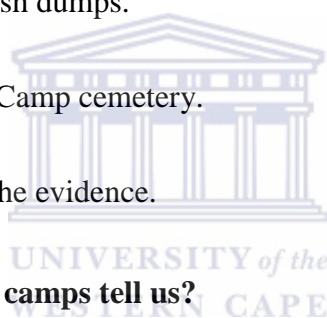
| | |
|---|----|
| Acknowledgements. | 5 |
| Abstract. | 9 |
| Introduction. | 10 |
| Chapter one. Brandfort, a history of two Native Refugee Camps. | 35 |
| 1.1. Legitimised Commemoration. | 36 |
| 1.2. Brandfort Native Refugee Camp. | 47 |
| 1.3. Beyond the commemoration of shared suffering. | 51 |
| Chapter two. Kimberley at War. | 53 |
| 2.1. Kimberley before the war. | 53 |
| 2.2. Outbreak of war. | 56 |
| 2.3. Siege of Kimberley, 14 October 1899- 15 February 1900. | 58 |
| 2.4. Relief of Kimberley. | 63 |
| 2.5. Total War, arson as a morale breaker, 1900. | 64 |
| 2.6. Emergence of Total War-June 1900-1902. | 68 |
| 2.7. Total War consolidated, November 1900-May 1902. | 69 |
| 2.8. Minerals, Capital and Native Refugee Camps. | 72 |
| 2.9. Destabilizing participation. | 76 |



| | |
|---|-----|
| Chapter three. The Kimberley Native Refugee Camps. | 78 |
| 3.1. Notes on the archives consulted. | 79 |
| 3.2. Section A. The formation of the Kimberley Native Refugee Camps at Blankenbergvlei, November 1900 – September 1901. | 81 |
| 3.3. No work no food. | 91 |
| 3.4. Formalisation of the Kimberley Native Refugee Camp(s). | 103 |
| 3.5. Section B, Klippiespan Native Refugee Camp. | 113 |
| 3.5.1. Notes on the archives consulted. | 113 |
| 3.5.2. Locating the camp. | 114 |
| 3.5.3. Key material identified. | 122 |
| 3.5.4. The graveyard. | 122 |
| 3.5.5. The living areas and rubbish dumps. | 124 |
| 3.5.6. A comment on numbers. | 140 |
| Chapter Four. Total war, scorched earth and displacement. Clearing out Boshof and Jacobsdal. | 141 |
| 4.1. Total War Boshof. | 141 |
| 4.2. Locating a trace of the Boshof Location. | 146 |
| 4.3. Total War Jacobsdal. | 149 |
| 4.4. The districts cleared into Kimberley. | 155 |



| | |
|---|-----|
| Chapter Five. Dry Harts Forced Labour Camp. | 159 |
| 5.1. Notes on the archives consulted. | 161 |
| 5.2. Why Dry Harts? | 161 |
| 5.3. Forming Dry Harts Forced Labour Camp. September to October 1901. | 169 |
| 5.4. The archive of Dry Harts camp. | 177 |
| 5.5. Oral traditions and memory of Dry Harts camp. | 185 |
| 5.6. The archaeological survey. | 190 |
| 5.6.1. Buildings, wells and rubbish dumps. | 192 |
| 5.6.2. Dry Harts Forced Labour Camp cemetery. | 196 |
| 5.6.3. Dry Harts – summing up the evidence. | 200 |
| Chapter Six. What do the other camps tell us? | 204 |
| 6.1. Notes on the archives consulted. | 205 |
| 6.2. Orange River Station Native Refugee Camp. | 206 |
| 6.3. Taung Native Refugee Camp. | 209 |
| 6.4. Vryburg refugee camp and Brussels Siding Forced Labour Camp. | 214 |
| 6.5. Forming Brussels Native Refugee camp. | 221 |
| 6.6. Land, labour and camps: Orange River Station, Taung, Vryburg and Brussels Siding. | 223 |
| Conclusion. Recovering a history of seven refugee and forced labour camps. | 226 |



| | |
|--|-----|
| APPENDIX A. | 232 |
| Ethics statement. | |
| APPENDIX B. | 233 |
| Dry Harts Forced Labour Camp Register. | |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY. | 310 |



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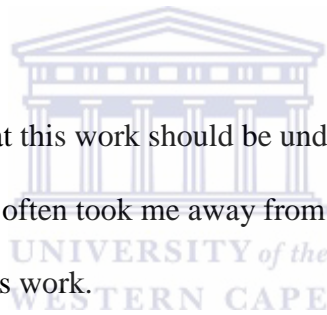
the Kimberley camps. He supported and permitted the field work and excavations which followed. What was uncovered will still form the subject of research for many years to follow.

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Abstract.

During the South African War of 1899-1902 captured civilians were directed by the British army into military controlled zones and into refugee camps which became known as concentration camps. Established near towns, mines and railway sidings these camps were separated along racial lines. The British forced black men, women and children through the violence of war into agricultural and military labour as a war resource, interning over 110,000 black civilians in concentration camps. Unlike Boer civilians who were not compelled to labour, the British forced black civilians into military labour through a policy of no work no food. According to recent scholarly work based only on the written archive, at least 20,000 black civilians died in these camps. This project uses these written archives together with archaeological surveys, excavations, and oral histories to uncover a history of seven such forced labour camps. This approach demonstrates that in constructing an understanding and a history of what happened in the forced labour camps, the written archive alone is limited. Through the work of archaeology which uncovers material evidence on the terrain and the remains of graves one can begin to envisage the scale and extent of the violence that characterized the experience of forced laborers in the 'black concentration camps' in the South African War.

Introduction.

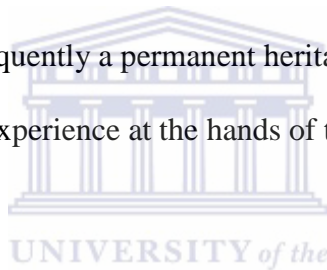
The research question for this thesis is to investigate the possibility of recovering a history of seven Native Refugee Camps from the South African War through a research process that relies not only on the written archive, yet draws upon the archive of the landscape of archaeology and memory. Its purpose is to provide the first written history of these seven camps of which at least three functioned as forced labour camps interning predominantly black women and children. The case studies for this thesis provides a history for the first time about these specific camps. Yet it is also a history that adds to overall history of the black camps during the conflict and involved recovering a history of each of these camps while including a profile of the people interned.

This research for this thesis resulted from a privately funded research project that I initiated in 2000 into the Native Refugee Camps. This process commenced with auditing the colonial and military archive and then site fieldwork to attempt to locate on the terrain a sample of camps. A single project that sought to locate the approximately eighty-nine sites which existed was considered impossible, given the limitations of private resources. Instead I focussed on locating those camps that had Kimberley as their epicentre and which were located in the former Cape Colony and Orange River Colony. My interest in this area was based upon a long term and continuing interest in the history of the Kimberley region.

One of my aims in embarking on this research was that I already had gained exposure and experience to the dynamics of commemoration of the conflict during 1998-2000. In 1998 I was appointed by the McGregor Museum in Kimberley to develop the exhibits for the Magersfontein Battlefield Museum and outdoor interpretative signage for five battlefields around Kimberley and various burial sites linked to these, which became branded by the local tourism authorities as the N12 Battlefields Route. In 1999 I was appointed to do the same at various sites in the Brandfort

area and this work, which in essence led to my interest in investigating the black camps further, is detailed in chapter one.

My observations at the time were that the historiography and heritage landscape of the South African War had no shortage of material, as it was apparent that a great deal has been written about the conflict. Yet the focus of much of the work tended to be anchored around topics such as the causes of war, battle strategies, the breadth of the campaign, military personalities and Boer concentration camps. The interpretation and understanding of the Boer experience during the conflict had been extensively archived and the terrain connected to the Boer concentration camps was well known. Every cemetery (and in some case living areas) had been memorialized. Graves were preserved and cared for either by local communities or cultural organizations and state agencies, past and present. Consequently a permanent heritage resource existed on the national landscape illuminating the Boer experience at the hands of the British army and their experience of British imperialism.



The centenary of the war in 1999-2002, saw various national institutions, provincial and local government organisations and civic society commemorate the centenary through exhibitions, commemorative services, research driven publications and tourism initiatives. Some sought to redress the neglected historical role of South Africa's black population and the impact of the war on them. However most commemorative events during the centenary remained focussed around the military actions, combatants and the Boer concentration camps. Very little effort went into researching and identifying the black camps, other than at Brandfort.

Yet at the time it was apparent that the same could not be said for landscapes pertaining to the sites of the 'black concentration camps.' For example at that time and this remains the case to date, not one black camp site has been declared a heritage site. Granted the South African government had begun attempting to change this. During the launch of the commemoration of the centenary of the

war by the South African Government in 1999, former President Thabo Mbeki unveiled a cenotaph at Brandfort. The cenotaph commemorates black casualties during the war and is erected in the immediate vicinity of the graves of black labourers who died while working in the nearby Brandfort Boer concentration camp, a site which I located in 1999. The South African War has subsequently been identified as one of various identified national Legacy Projects and remains one of the core conflicts to be articulated in Freedom Park outside of Tshwane (Pretoria).

More recently (since the late 1970s) works emerged on what is widely termed and is still being written about, namely 'black participation'. 'Participation' in the war is portrayed as that of interpreter, assistant, auxiliary, labourer, spy, combatant and victim. Since the late 1990s, Stowell Kessler started writing on the 'black concentration camps' following on from those initial works by Spies and Warwick during the 1970s and 80s. Other authors whose works I consulted as part of my literature review have since followed each other, all using the angle and theme of 'participation'.

Various definitions of the term 'participation' exist, mostly all similar, such as the action of taking part in something and making a contribution. I am uneasy with the category 'participation'. In the context of the centenary and writing which has evolved from it the term implies an addition, an add-on of black South African's to the main event, a war between an Imperial power and the two Boer Republics.

Drawing from Suttie's work at a Unisa conference in 1998, Witz, Minkley and Rassool make the point that, 'the attempts to recover Black participation and to gender the war, indeed to make it into a South African War' were completely overshadowed by an Anglo Boer war.¹ The categories of the 'participants remain racialized and gendered and unless destabilised and questioned the conflict

¹ L. Witz and G. Minkley and C. Rassool, 'No End of a [History] Lesson: Preparations for the Anglo Boer War Centenary Commemoration', *South African Historical Journal*. Vol. 41, (1999), 381-383.

will always remain a white man's war, while seeking to find in the margins, those who remain defined as 'other' to a 'central struggle'.² I am in agreement with this point as it was in this power struggle the black people 'participated' and were to be integrated into the historiography that remains dominated by the Boers and the empire. Participation is an add-on and this is true for works produced over the last 15 years about the 'black concentration camps'.

It would seem that the conflict and the direction of the commemorative gaze thereafter remains strongly fixed upon the military actions fought between the two main players and one that seeks ways of including black people as combatants. Thus it would seem that the main qualifier for involvement in a war such as the South African War and a person or a communities subsequent commemorative worth seems to be all about combat and ones participation in it.

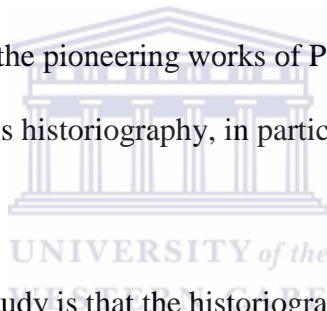
Therefore one key aim behind my research and that of this thesis will be to show the experience of black civilians in the 'concentration camps' as different to that of participation. The camps will be referred to as either refugee camps or forced labour camps, as there were two different types. The thesis also challenges the very terminology which regurgitates itself in the literature, particularly in this context the term 'concentration'.

That Boer camps are referred to as concentration camps is a widely accepted term. My view is that in the pursuance of 'participation' the experience of black civilians has been bundled together as that of concentration as a kind of smorgasbord of 'suffering'. In fact the camps and how they were established and functioned and the policy of civilian management (and mismanagement) by the military differed tremendously. This thesis will argue that black civilians from the Boer Republics were not 'participating' in the camp system. In their specific case and their experience, they stood alone in an experience unique from that of Boers civilians.

² In L, Witz, G. Minkley and C. Rassool, 'No End', 384.

By the end of the war the camp population was, according to archival records, approximately 110,000 black civilians controlled by a military operated department called the Native Refugee Department. This number excludes black civilians interned in refugee camps prior to the formation of the Department in July 1901. The thesis will distinguish between two phases of black camps. Phase One refers to refugee camps set up from December 1900 to July 1901, and Phase Two to forced labour camps established and operated by the Native Refugee Department until shortly after the end of the war in May 1902. The thesis will examine these two different systems of camps in relation to the sample area of study.

It must be noted that the historiography of the black camps is an area of research and study in which the utilisation only of primary archival sources has to date being undertaken by a limited number of scholars, starting with the pioneering works of Peter Warwick and Burrige Spies.³ Other scholars have built upon this historiography, in particular during the centenary of the conflict and during the period since.



One important rationale for this study is that the historiography of the black camps is limited as it was constructed through accessing only the written colonial and military archive generated during the conflict. Deficiencies exist when relying solely on this written archive and that additional archives are located in the historic terrain; namely the archaeological record and tangible physical traces which provide insights into the black civilian experience inside these camps, none of which have been used by scholars to date.

In examining what these different archives might constitute, Peter Robertshaw asserts that archaeologists and historians both study processes and events that are situated in time and space.⁴

³ P. Warwick, *Black People; B. Spies, Methods of Barbarism? Roberts and Kitchener and Civilians in the Boer Republics: January 1900 - May 1902*, Johannesburg, Johnathan Ball, (1977).

⁴ P. Robertshaw, *Sibling Rivalry? The Intersection of Archaeology and History*, San Bernardino, California State University, 3. <https://www.h-net.org/~africa/africaforum/Robertshaw.html>. Accessed on 31 August 2015.

He recognises that archaeologists also harness evidence from other disciplines, particularly the sciences and that archaeology can assist to explain and interpret certain aspects of the past, especially on migrations and material culture.⁵ This scenario would apply to the camps in question in that their internees were people who had been forcibly migrated through the violence of war and they left behind their material culture on the terrain.

James Deetz makes the point that ‘in spite of the richness and diversity of the historical record, there are things we want to know that are not discovered from it’.⁶ For example the everyday routine of life, ordinary people doing things. ‘Not the kinds of things anyone thought of noting. The documentary record and the archaeological record complement each other.’⁷ This is true of my research into the camps for this thesis. The archaeology enables the research to go beyond the limitations of the written record.

Collaborations are vital, asserts John Parkington as memories and written records thin out as we move back in time, and must be expanded by the material records of archaeological excavations.⁸ Although Parkington refers more specifically to the far distant time and era, there is relevance here in context to the camps. The written records of the camps were thinned out by the British and colonial authorities, so with a paucity of written material the material records of excavation become critical. Parkington views these three sources of history, oral, written and material as having different capacities of remembering the past. Nevertheless, ‘integration of their insights into a single historical thread is incumbent on all contributors for a holistic penetrative history’.⁹ The rationale and methodology to the research for this thesis was undertaken along this integrative approach.

⁵ P. Robertshaw, ‘Sibling Rivalry?’ 3-8.

⁶ J. Deetz, *Small Things Forgotten: An Archaeology of Early American Life*, Anchor Books, New York, (1977), 11.

⁷ J. Deetz, *Small Things Forgotten*, 11.

⁸ J. Parkington, *The SKA, The Sky and Karoo Hunter Gatherers*, Square Kilometre Array, In Press, 8.

⁹ J. Parkington, *The SKA*, 8.

During my research I reviewed as much of the available literature at the time to try and identify if any material existed on the camps in the sample area of my study. Most of the work was in my view that of a macro nature and general to the overall experience across South Africa and lacking in specifics. All that was available was fleeting references to six camps having existed at Orange River Station, Kimberley, Taung, Dry Harts, Brussels Siding and Vryburg.¹⁰ These references which were mere dots on a map was the only information available, and a single reference by Warwick to conditions in the Dry Harts camp, dated September 1901 by a missionary who visited the camp who described a place characterised by appalling conditions and a very high death rate. In reading this account the impression formed that given the high death rate there could still be tangible evidence on the terrain if this could be located.

They are in great poverty and misery and our visit was a comfort to them. Many are dying from day to day – what is to become of the survivors I cannot think. Between the Dutch and the English they have lost everything, and there being no political party interested in their destiny, they ‘go to the wall’ as the weakest are bound to do.¹¹

This reference is widely used in the contemporary literature consulted, yet to date it is the only account about Dry Harts camp. Other than this no other information or any historiography existed about these specific camps, and asides from this thesis, this remains the case to date. Two contemporary publications (2012) refer to these camps on the terrain using dots on a national map, and in the writings of Kessler and Nasson the dot representing Dry Harts is in the wrong locality altogether.¹²

Having identified from Warwick’s map a sample area of study that offered the possibility of identifying some if not all of the six camps represented, between 2003 and 2008, together with Elizabeth Voigt, I developed what we later termed the ‘Traces’ project to undertake this work. This

¹⁰ P. Warwick, *Black People and the South African War 1899-1902*, Johannesburg, Ravan Press Pty Ltd, (1983), 154.

¹¹ P. Warwick, *Black People*, 156.

¹² S. Kessler, *The Black Concentration Camps*, 12; B. Nasson, ‘Black People and the Camps’, in B. Nasson and A. Grundlingh (eds), *The War at Home*, Cape Town, Tafelberg, (2013).

would involve auditing the military and other archives through historical research, archaeological surveys and excavations and identifying oral histories associated with these camps.

With the passing of Voigt in 2010, I continued with the project until 2014. Independently of this project and concurrently to it I also located another six camps elsewhere in South Africa, namely at Brandfort (1999), Springs (2002), Witkop (2002), Meyerton (2003), Taaibosch (2003) and Greylingstad (2016). The insights gained from this, which are not directly referred to in this thesis other than Brandfort, did however help inform the research.

The research created three collections which constitute a foundational collection and which is housed in the McGregor Museum, Kimberley. The collection includes all the excavated materials with initial associated interpretation, copies of archival research undertaken in South Africa and the United Kingdom with associated interpretation and all field notes, maps, photographs, work diaries and sketches created through the project process. Additionally my personal experience of creating, initiating and implementing the 'Traces' project will be referred to. My own experience and insights gained since 1999, and throughout this process constitute an archive and will be incorporated into this work.

One of the first publications to emerge after the centenary was produced by the War Museum of the Boer Republics.¹³ Frik Jacobs writing on the 'black concentration camps' dated the first half of 1901 as the start date of these camps with the majority of internees originating from Boer farms. The reason for internment he points out was to deprive the Boer forces of food and information and to establish an adequate labour supply for the Army. Jacobs interpreted the foundational reasons for the system and does allude to coercion by the British as a tool of war as, 'the families of the men employed outside the camps could buy a 180 lb bag of maize at 7/6 instead of the price of 18

¹³ L. Changuion and F. Jacobs and P. Alberts, *Suffering of War A photographic portrayal of the suffering in the Anglo Boer War emphasising the universal elements of all wars*, (Brandfort, Kraal Publishers, 2003).

shillings that had to be paid by those ‘who objected to work’.¹⁴ But like many others Jacobs asserts that the refugees were permitted to grow crops for their own consumption in order to make the black camps self-sufficient. My initial research points to this assertion of self-sufficiency as having little validity.

As for the number of camps situated along the western railway line Jacobs states that camps were established between the Orange River Station to Taung. This would mean that only three camps existed when in fact the archival and archaeological research to date shows that north of Taung camps were also at Dry Harts, Brussels Siding and Vryburg. In fact Dry Harts was formed in 1901 with refugees from the camps at Orange River Station, Kimberley and Taung; and Brussels Siding was formed in 1902 from refugees at Vryburg. The total number of camps along this line was six according a British map which is widely referred to in the contemporary literature. However my research identified that there was at least one other camp at Kimberley bringing the total number of camps to seven.

Jacobs drew his source material from research undertaken by Stowell Kessler. In 1995, Jacobs as Director of the War Museum of the Boer Republics, had commissioned Kessler to undertake research into the ‘black concentration camps’. Kessler’s work has been and is referred to extensively by scholars interested in the ‘black concentration camps’ since the late 1990s and will continue so into the future.

However there appear to be some serious flaws in Kessler’s work. Kessler states that his study is based on primary documentary sources housed in South African and British archives and that he made no use of oral history, as no oral history resources existed.¹⁵ This is inaccurate in that he did not personally review the extensive oral history interviews made in the 1970s and 1980s with camp

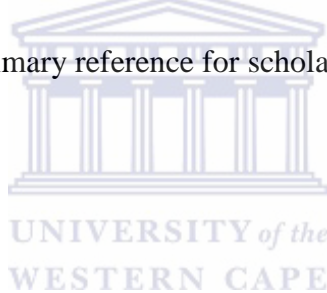
¹⁴ Changuion, Jacobs and Alberts, *Suffering of War*, 22.

¹⁵ S. Kessler, *The Black Concentration Camps*, 16.

survivors from Vryburg, Taung, Dry Harts and Taaibosch camps and which are housed at the Historical Papers Collection in the Cullen Library at the University of Witwatersrand. Rather he referred to some of this material which was used by Stanley Trapido and Charles Van Onselen in their publications.¹⁶

Kessler claimed that he consulted, 'within the domain of the mining companies during the war, every document in the record that describes the operations of the mining companies during the war'.¹⁷ But from his work it appears that he never consulted the De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives in Kimberley which are never referred to in his references.

Additionally Kessler undertook little if any field work nor commissioned any, and never located a single historic site on the terrain. His outcomes and conclusions he reached to support his hypothesis and which is now a primary reference for scholars and researchers, is based and drawn from only the written archive.



Ideologically, Kessler argues that,

It is necessary to recognise that the histories of both the black and white concentration camps are inextricably linked because they arose out of the same anti-guerrilla warfare master plan. As a result considerable primary source materials and careful analysis of these sources, regarding the white camps are an integral and essential part of the study. This inclusion of material on the white camps, are an integral part of the study. This inclusion of material on the white camps is, however, appropriately limited to those areas which in some significant way have a bearing on an understanding of the black camps and their history.¹⁸

Kessler advocated since the 1990s, that the paradigm to the black and Boer concentration camps should shift from one of sole martyrdom (the Boers) to that of mutual suffering and that the experience of both the black and Boer refugees and internees should be seen as a shared experience at the hands of a common enemy. This may not necessarily have been the case and from initial

¹⁶ S. Kessler, *The Black Concentration Camps*, 74.

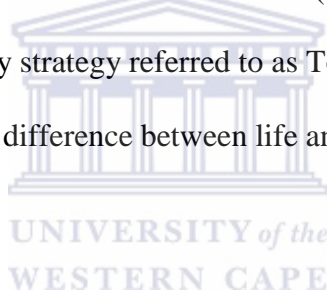
¹⁷ S. Kessler, *The Black Concentration Camps*, 15-16.

¹⁸ S. Kessler, *The Black Concentration Camps*, 15.

research it appears that the camps, which form the focus of this study, had absolutely no connection with the Boer camps at Orange River Station, Kimberley and Vryburg. Additionally camps for Boers never existed at Taung, Dry Harts and Brussels Siding, where black forced labour camps did.

In relation to Kessler's hypothesis, it is time to evaluate the black camps in their own right, to identify what their unique experience was and to separate their narrative from that of mutual suffering and to disentangle it from a narrative which originated during the era of apartheid and Afrikaner nationalism. That was an era where the focus was entirely upon the figure of the Afrikaner woman as one of mourning.

The research shows that race predetermined ones survival (or not) when experiencing the British military and its counter insurgency strategy referred to as Total War in this thesis. The research will demonstrate the fundamental difference between life and death was dependant on if one was a Boer or black civilian.



In their work on black camps, Van Zyl, Constantine and Pretorius state that, 'at the very least 21,000 black peoples died in the concentration camps between 1900 and 1903. Some historians place the total of black civilian deaths in the camps at a significantly higher level, at between 21,000 and 28,000. There is documentary verification for every one of the 21,000 deaths'.¹⁹ This figure relies again on the British written archive. And carries through into the permanent exhibition which opened in 2015 at the War Museum of the Boer Republics. Spaces of public culture such as this one relied heavily on research undertaken by Kessler. The origins of the black refugees are given as farm workers and tenants from Boer farms who were put into segregated camps during the first phase of the camp system.

¹⁹ J. Van Zyl, R. Constantine and T. Pretorius, *An Illustrated History of Black South Africans in the Anglo Boer War. A Forgotten History*, Bloemfontein, The War Museum of the Boer Republics, (2012), 287.

Van Zyl et al describe the two phases of camps which existed and that the first phase started in 1900 and lasted until 1901 which they describe as the ‘original camps’, a term originated by Kessler. They assert that records of deaths in these first camps were hardly kept and that these fatalities are not included in the total of 21,000. The origin of the 140,000 civilians in the black concentration camp system is described as being of two types; the majority being from Boer farms and a smaller group from designated ‘native locations’, mainly outside small towns destroyed by the British. But it also appears that as in the case of Boshof, Jacobsdal and Petrusburg these towns were not destroyed, yet their ‘locations’ were and their black inhabitants sent to initially to Kimberley and then later to Dry Harts.

As to the number of camps which existed Van Zyl et al present a map, which is identical to a map on display at the War Museum of the Boer Republics. This map carries the caption, ‘This list does not include temporary and transit camps’. The total is presented as 65 camps, yet this map excludes camps which existed before the creation of the Native Refugee Department, many of which were permanent. Secondly it does not include other camps such as Brussels Siding and Vryburg which were not temporary or transit camps and which were identified years before by Peter Warwick.²⁰ An identical map exists in Kessler’s PhD and subsequent publication, which the War Museum relied on to inform its displays.²¹

One final point about this map, relied upon by these authors, is that Warwick’s publication decades before and which Kessler et al refer to appears to be correct. Warwick’s work included a map which depicts Vryburg and Brussels Siding. His work is cited in most of the South African generated literature yet it appears that no one read his map correctly.

²⁰ P. Warwick, *Black People*, 154.

²¹ S. Kessler, *The Black Concentration Camps*, 12.

According to Giliomee and Mbenge the greatest human loss in the South African War was in what they term the segregated camps, where at least 20,000 black civilians are estimated to have died from epidemic diseases under atrocious conditions. They seem to be referring to the second phase Native Refugee Department camps and not what other scholars refer to as segregated camps, namely Phase One camps. The authors describe the concentration camp experience as amounting to a 'common trauma for black and Boer societies'. They acknowledge that black internees were compelled to provide labour for nearby British forces yet they are silent on what methods of compulsion were used. No mention is made of a dedicated military department, the Native Refugee Department running these second phase camps.²²

Their review states that from the start of the war black people had collaborated with the British forces in ever increasing numbers which functioned as a Boer morale breaker. They provide a figure of 100,000 black and Coloured men having served with the British forces as transport workers, camp labourers and servants, scouts, dispatch runners, spies and depot guards. Women undertook domestic work in camps and garrisons such as washing. The majority were volunteers with as many as 30,000 being armed.

This angle of collaboration one encounters across the literature. I place this under some scrutiny. It appears from my initial research that the labour provided by women, children and old men inside the Native Refugee Department camps was not collaborative labour. These forced military labourers who faced with a 'no work no food' policy (work or starve), took the obvious decision to try and save their lives.²³

In relation to male military labour Giliomee and Mbenge make the point that participation in military operations was a way to avoid rural poverty or to gain reward. Again this is a suggestion

²² H. Giliomee and B. Mbenge, *A New History of South Africa*, Cape Town, Tafelberg, (2007), 214-221.

²³ National Archives of South Africa, Military Governor Pretoria, Vol. 245, 27 May 1901.

of collaboration. Yet those men swept up with their families into the camps were also compelled to labour not only with the military but in the diamond mines, gold and coal mines. Their work makes no reference to the fact that the majority of these internees were from Boer farms; so why would they suddenly switch loyalties? It may relate to working and living conditions on farms but there is also a strong possibility that they did not switch voluntarily and were compelled to do so for reasons of survival. For example in serving with the British forces they received payment, a portion of which was deducted to pay for rations for their families inside the camps.

Giliomee and Mbenge's point about so called collaboration being a Boer morale breaker is worthy of further consideration. My thesis will assert that collaboration in itself was not a morale breaker. Rather it was the 'black concentration camps' that were positioned on Boer farms which acted as a morale breaker. From the perspective of the 'bittereinder' watching from afar it would have appeared that the British had not only destroyed their homes, livestock, crops and infrastructure and interned their families, they taken their farms from them and given them to the blacks.

Fransjohan Pretorius in his chapter 'Everyone's War: The Anglo Boer War (1899-1902) in *A History of South Africa From the Distant Past to the Present day* states that, 'from the second half of 1901 the British army began to put black civilians in concentration camps, of which about 66 existed'.²⁴ Pretorius says that the reason for these camps was that Kitchener wanted to prevent the Boer forces from receiving food and information from them (black people) and he wanted to employ the men as wartime workers. With their pay, these men could then financially support their families in the camps.

In mid-1901, the Native Refugee Department took over the control of the black camps from the superintendents of the Boer camps in an attempt to improve the conditions. A more important

²⁴ F. Pretorius, *A History of South Africa From the Distant Past to the Present Day*, Pretoria, Protea Bookhouse, (2014), 257.

reason for the change was that in the black camps black workers could be recruited for the British army; they could be used to replace the black mineworkers who in many cases had returned to the gold mines. The camp internees had to erect their own dwellings and were permitted to plant crops for their subsistence. Salt and milk was distributed free of charge. Those who worked and could afford it, could buy luxury articles such as sorghum, sugar, coffee, syrup, tea and tobacco.

According to Pretorius the death toll in the second half of 1901 took on 'grim proportions' with December being the worst month with 2,831 deaths recorded.²⁵ Pretorius like all other commentators on the camps relies solely on the written archive when describing fatalities.

This has several problems one of the main ones being that my research has uncovered evidence that the British camp authorities under recorded the number of deaths in their camps. In the case of Dry Harts forced labour camp the British statistics for deaths is approximately 500 internees but the archaeological research there identified a minimum of 2,000 graves. In these 2,000 individual grave mounds there could also be multiple burials, which is not unusual for the era and for behaviour under wartime conditions.

A 2003 excavation in Kimberley on a burial site containing paupers' graves into which bodies had been toppled without ceremony (the archaeology showed this from the eventual postures of falling corpses) – revealed up to 14 in a grave. Numbers varied from one grave to the next however support the conclusion was that the graves were probably dug - and closed up - at a constant rate (probably one daily), so that the numbers of interments in them varied according to the fluctuating daily death rate. Conditions inside the Native Refugee Camps, which also functioned as forced labour camps with outbreaks of infectious diseases, heat and a weakened physical condition of the grave diggers would have resulted in a similar scenario.

²⁵ F. Pretorius, *A History of South Africa*, 257.

In the case of the 2003 excavation the population profile (preponderantly young to early middle-aged black males) strongly indicated that these were migrant workers. Medical dressings and evidence of treatments suggested that these dead had come to the cemetery via the compound hospitals. Because they lay at the outer edge of a cemetery that was expanded in the late 1890s and then closed in 1900, the team were able to pin them to that limited age range, probably just prior to the South African War.²⁶

Other problems in Pretorius's history is the dating that 'black concentration camps' started forming from the second half of 1901. Much of the literature has the black camps being formed as early as December 1900. My initial research identified that the Kimberley camp started forming in November 1900, when black refugees from the Boshof magisterial district were directed by the army onto Blankenbergvlei farm which was owned by De Beers Consolidated Mines. Here a camp was formed and the internee numbers grew throughout 1901, until the formation of the Native Refugee Department, soon after which the internees were relocated to Dry Harts.

Despite Pretorius's claim my research shows that the Native Refugee Department did not take over control of the black camps from white superintendents to try and improve conditions. They took control in order to mass mobilise this civilian war resource as a part of a total war strategy by harnessing it into forced labour, be it military and economic in the case of men, and agricultural in the case of women, children and the elderly.

Again as with other writers, the goldmines feature in Pretorius's work, yet not the diamond mines around Kimberley and the coal mines at Vereeniging. Pretorius's statement that internees were, 'permitted to plant crops for their subsistence' needs to be questioned. Rather it appears that they

²⁶ A.E Van der Merwe, D. Morris, M. Steyn, and G.J.R Maat, 'The history and health of a nineteenth-century migrant mine-worker population from Kimberley, South Africa', *South African Archaeological Bulletin*, Vol. 65, (2010), 85-195.

were compelled through the work or starve policy to grow crops for the Native Refugee Department, who in turn supplied the army with a portion of their produce.

Regarding the gold mines and lack of reference to the diamond mines in the literature it must be remembered that the diamond mines in Kimberley predated the mines on the Rand. It was during the 1880s in Kimberley that the closed compound system was developed by De Beers Consolidated Mines.²⁷ This is extremely relevant to the PhD in that De Beers Consolidated Mines played a direct role in the Kimberley black camps and their eventual relocation to Dry Harts. Minutes and telegrams of the numerous discussions between Cecil John Rhodes, the De Beers Consolidated Mines Directors and British army officers representing the Military Governor Pretoria (who represented Lord Kitchener), and officers representing the Native Refugee Department, was uncovered during the research.

Lindsey Weiss presents a view that the conceptual framework and manifestation of labour compounds on the Kimberley diamond mines circa 1886 and the later concentration camps were 'structurally identical'. Both forms of 'wartime camps' and 'work-time' camps bring home the understanding, 'of the seamlessness with which the more visible sovereign violence of the camp has long intersected with a more dispersed, biopolitical mode of state and market-sanctioned Violence'. Weiss distinguishes between 'state killing' and the more amorphous condition of 'letting die', an angle which the PhD will explore.²⁸ Letting die as a direct result of forced labour, inadequate shelter, negligible food supplies and virtually non-existent medical attention was a core characteristic of the Phase One and Phase Two black camps.

Weiss sees the experience of internees in the Boer and black camps as fundamentally different to each other. Much like the mining compound system this 'forcible enclosure' resulted in two

²⁷ L.M. Weiss, 'Exceptional Space: Concentration Camps and Labor Compounds in Late Nineteenth-Century South Africa', in A. Myers and G. Moshenska, *Archaeologies of Internment*, New York Springer, (2011), 22.

²⁸ Weiss, *Exceptional Space*, 21-32.

completely separate experiences. Weiss argues that inside the Boer camps power was asserted through the controlled meting out of food and privacy, with priority afforded to those families thought to not be linked to Boer commandos. According to Weiss camps for black refugees were operated according to an entirely different vision. Internees had to build their own shelters; privacy, domesticity as well as food and basic medical care were methodologically neglected. The public veneer of protective custody in the instance of the black camps gave way to 'disciplined existence' and extractive labour according to the presumption that they would voluntarily or involuntarily have become complicit with the rural Boer guerrilla campaign. This strengthens the realisation that the concentration camps during the South African war should not be seen in isolation, but within a wider socio-economic and political paradigm of colonial expansionism and exploitation of human and natural resources on a grand scale.²⁹

Derrick Nault makes the point that the black camps were places of dehumanisation where, 'the conflation of progress with racial attributes in the latter decades of the 19th century provided an ideological template conducive to such dehumanisation in colonial Africa'.³⁰ Nault cites the 1897, statement by Britain's Colonial Secretary Joseph Chamberlain who framed the issue thusly:

You cannot have omelettes without breaking eggs; you cannot destroy the practices of barbarism, of slavery, of superstition, which for centuries have desolated the interior of Africa, without the use of force; but if you will fairly contrast the gain to humanity with the price which we are bound to pay for it, I think you may well rejoice in the result...³¹

Both the arguments of Weiss and Nault are very productive for my work. The black camps were one example of the high 'price' to be paid when colonialists engaged in 'breaking eggs' to create 'omelettes'. This is similar to a contemporary military viewpoint of collateral damage when civilians end up being targeted during military action. Nault asserts that the experience of black

²⁹ Weiss, *Exceptional Space*, 27.

³⁰ D. Nault, What signify these dark races to us? *Progress dehumanisation and Black Concentration Camps in early 20th Century Southern Africa*, (2011), 9.

³¹

[http://www.academia.edu/2189531/What signify these dark races to us Progress Dehumanization and Black Concentration Camps in Early Twentieth Century Southern Africa. 1 August 2015.](http://www.academia.edu/2189531/What_signify_these_dark_races_to_us_Progress_Dehumanization_and_Black_Concentration_Camps_in_Early_Twentieth_Century_Southern_Africa.1_August_2015)

civilians under the control of the British army was entirely different to that of the Boer civilians and that theirs was a standalone experience. Whereas Boer prisoners were not forced to work and received free rations, blacks kept in Boer camps had to serve their former employer's families and pay for their own food. The majority of black internees in the Native Refugee Department camps were forced to grow food for themselves and the Army Departments. Any work performed for the maintenance of either type of camp was paid at cheap 'native' rates to save on maintenance costs. Able-bodied black men were taken from their families in the camps and exploited as convenient and cheap labour by the military, mining companies, or private employers at the discretion of camp administrators.³²

Bill Nasson describes that both black farm tenants and that non-farm tenants with livestock entered the garrisoned towns to get out the way of the rural destruction. Nasson makes this distinction between tenants and non-tenants, as did Warwick. Nasson makes the distinction that camps for blacks and Boers were conceived of as entirely different entities with the former primarily farm and labour camps. But Nasson refers to the demands for gold mining labour, yet makes no reference to the diamond mines, one of the largest economies of scale in the Cape Colony and southern Africa at that time.

Nasson also points out that while the crops being produced by the elderly, women and children was for purposes of self-sufficiency, a third of the produce went to the army. 'In this way, the cultivated patches of camp land became small export farms that fed the Imperial army'.³³ In terms of inducing refugees to work Nasson uses the term 'manipulation' by threatening to withhold food. Nasson's points on these matters of refugees voluntarily entering the towns, forced agricultural

³² D. Nault, *What signify these dark races to us?*, 6.

³³ B. Nasson, 'Black People and the Camps', 176.

labour through food manipulation and the distinction between the Boer and black camps aligns with this thesis.

Hyslop examined the emergence of the concentration camp in the 20th century as a social phenomenon. His work on the concentration camps in Cuba, South Africa, German South West Africa and the Philippines during 1896 – 1907 is pertinent. He argues that these all emerged at approximately the same time, ‘when military professionalism, despite national differences, took instrumental rationality as a core value’.³⁴

Hyslop contends that that new cultures of military professionalism and organisational culture were crucial to the emergence of the concentration camp during this period. This produced a willingness by soldiers to take responsibility for organising civilians on a macro scale. In each of his four case studies Hyslop identifies that clearing the civilian population from the rural areas in a scorched earth response to guerrilla activity resulted in the development of concentration camps.³⁵ This response and phenomenon is accurately interpreted as in this thesis it fits within the paradigm of that the black camps and the Native Refugee Department were part of Total War.

Hyslop, as in the rest of the literature, has the camp internees as being, ‘Boer women and children and black tenants and farm labourers displaced by the scorched earth policy’.³⁶ Along with other authors of the literature reviewed, he describes the causes of death as a combination of polluted water, unhygienic habits and customs of the internees, inadequate administration and failure of enforce cleanliness and poor nutrition and inadequate medical administration.³⁷

John Scott refers to causes of death being attributed to a poor diet that results in malnutrition which increases ones susceptibility to diseases such as measles. Malnutrition produced lethargy and

³⁴ J. Hyslop, ‘The Invention of the Concentration Camp: Cuba, Southern Africa and the Philippines, 1896–1907’, *South African Historical Journal*, Vol. 63:2, (2011), 254.

³⁵ J. Hyslop, ‘The Invention of the Concentration Camp’, 251.

³⁶ J. Hyslop, ‘The Invention of the Concentration Camp’, 259.

³⁷ J. Hyslop, ‘The Invention of the Concentration Camp’, 259.

apathy and in turn lead to general starvation. As epidemics became more rampant, the poor level of health lowered resistance to disease, making internees susceptible to infections. The primary cause of death being the combination of malnutrition combined with epidemic diseases.³⁸

In the literature consulted this is the singular term identified where the word starvation as a cause of death in the black camps has been used. This is an angle which I will expand upon in the thesis. My initial research has found evidence of the combination of water borne diseases and starvation and 'let die' in the case of Dry Harts labour camp.

The experience of civilians in South Africa occurred as result of Kitchener's policies in which he displayed his open contempt for the notion of humanity in warfare.³⁹ Kitchener ignored the 1899 Hague Convention and its Martens Clause which stipulated that, 'populations and belligerents remain under the protection and empire of the principles of international law.'⁴⁰ Spies has argued that Kitchener's policies were in clear violation of the Martens Clause.⁴¹

Many of the arguments presented are very similar in nature. This narrative which echoes itself is based upon the same source materials, namely the written archive. In many cases especially of the post centenary literature the writers often mimic each other, drawing upon the work of Kessler. This singular interpretation and narrative in the literature requires re-evaluation as most of the existing literature deals with the overall camp system yet it does not provide specific case studies. The history recovered by the research for this thesis is specific to a specific experience for specific civilians in a specific place at a specific time and shows that it is possible to recover an insight into

³⁸ J.L. Scott, 'British Concentration Camps of the Second South African War (The Transvaal, 1900-1902)', Florida, Florida State University, (2007), 136.

<http://diginole.lib.fsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=4302&context=etd>. 25 August 2015.

³⁹ B. Nasson, 'Civilians in the Anglo-Boer War, 1899-1902', in J. Laband, *Civilians in Wartime Africa: From Slavery Days to Rwandan Genocide*, (Westport, Greenwood Press, 2007), 85-111.

⁴⁰ A. Eyffinger, 'The 1899 Hague Peace Conference: The Parliament of Man, the Federation of the World', The Hague: Kluwer Law International, (1999), 17.

⁴¹ B. Spies, 'The Hague Convention of 1899 and the Boer Republics', in F. Pretorius, *Scorched Earth*, Cape Town, Human and Rousseau, (2001), 168-177.

that historical past using the combined resources of the archive of written records, landscape and archaeology, and the memory of it which survives through oral history. It is a history of a standalone experience of land, labour, war and displacement, created through the violence of war.

In doing so this thesis will challenge certain established notions about the black camps and the experience of their internees. This is not a thesis on the entirety of this camp system nor the Boer concentration camps. The information uncovered by the research will be used to demonstrate that flaws exist within the established notions and historiography of the camps. What exactly are these flaws which the established literature takes for granted and which require challenge and scrutiny?

In the nomenclature of the time the black camps were referred to as Native Refugee Camps. For this thesis the view is that using the correct historical terminology is vital and it will therefore be used when discussing the historical context. This is because the current scholarly work consulted for the literature review all use the term 'black concentration camps'. This is viewed as problematic for at the time of the war this terminology was never used. Not only is this label 'black' disconnected from the historical past it is a term that is shaped by and grounded in the racist nomenclature generated during the segregationist and apartheid eras and which has continued post 1994.

The label 'concentration' was also never used in reference to the black camps during the historical era. It was only used in relation to the Boer camps at the time. The term refugee camps could imply that these camps were set up along humanitarian grounds to assist refugees in need. This thesis will demonstrate that any humanitarian notions behind the Native Refugee Camps is devoid of truth for these camps were part of the Total War strategy wielded by the Imperial army of Great Britain and its colonial allies.

The term 'participation' also stands as an oddity in the current literature and should be revisited.

The recent centenary of the war and the work produced during the centenary and afterwards has

been predominantly anchored around this notion of 'black participation'. The very term 'participation' conjures up imagery of some long lost character being included long after the drama is concluded as a bit playing performer in a much larger event, participating in 'everyone's war'. This thesis will show that in the camps under review this was certainly not the case and that this would have also been true for camps outside of the focussed area of this study. Consequently the term 'participation' is seen as being at odds with the historical record and is viewed as a contemporary ideological construct.

It is correct that the conditions inside the Boer camps were appalling and resulted in the deaths of approximately 28,000 civilians, predominantly women and children. However British policy in terms of managing Boer internees was to issue rations and provide medical support and shelter. Certainly this was inadequate yet the fundamental difference which this thesis will demonstrate is that Boer civilians were not compelled to work. They could in conditions of neglect and misery literally sit it out until the war ended.

For black civilians caught up by Total War and interned into the camp system, from the very outset it was expected and, indeed they were manipulated into providing labour to the military and the camp administrators. In the case of the Kimberley camps black men would also be coerced to labour in the diamond mines. As this thesis will show in the case of the Kimberley camp at Blankenbergvlei, at Klippiesspan and also the camp at Vryburg there existed a class of civilians who had the material means with which to support themselves, using either cash, stock or other resources that they brought in with them. They did not need to work. However this was not to be the case, in particular for those refugees interned at Kimberley who would be forced to labour through the manipulation of ration supply. Theirs was not a sit down participatory experience in an 'everyone's war'.

The research uncovered primary archival material that identified the collusion between diamond mining capital and the military. In chapter three the documents and minutes of meetings between the Directors of De Beers Consolidated Mines and Kitchener's military representative reveal that coerced labour resulted from a no work no food policy. Refugees unwilling to work would be allowed to starve to death. This again was in line with the colonial policy of 'let die', of doing as little as possible for indigenous civilians in the colonies of the British Empire. All black refugees were to be harnessed through this no work no food policy as a resource to underwrite the Total War strategy. Men would be coerced to work for the military and for the diamond mines. Women and children as agricultural labourers for the British army.

Rodger Chickering in his work concluded that total war is a useful concept if understood as involving the systematic and calculated incorporation of civilians as participants and that this reached unprecedented levels in the 20th century. With the emergence of the four concentration camps systems across the world (two cases in neighbouring southern African states) civilians were not just the casual victims of armies, they became subjected to unprecedented levels of systemised incarceration, conscription, forced labour, violence, mass killing and mass dying on a let die basis.⁴² This is true for the black camps that form the focus for this thesis and the policy of let die will be referred to throughout this work.

With regards to the Total War land clearances into the camp system, this thesis reconstructs a case study of the Boshof and Jacobsdal magisterial districts. Chapter four is titled Total war, scorched earth and displacement. Clearing out Boshof and Jacobsdal. This is the first instance that such a profile group of black civilians targeted by Total War has ever been written and which is then linked to their specific experience inside specific camps. This thesis shows that this is possible to

⁴² R. Chickering, 'Total War: The Use and Abuse of a Concept', in M.F Boemke and R. Chickering and S. Forster, *Anticipating Total War: The American and German Experiences 1871-1914*, Washington/ Cambridge: German Historical Institute, Cambridge University Press, (1994), 13-28.

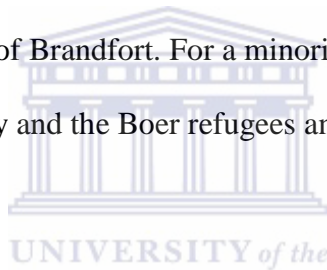
accomplish, despite the paucity of written archive. It is also pertinent for this thesis in that these civilians first ended up inside the Kimberley camps and, with the formation of the Native Refugee Department, they were then sent to Taung Native Refugee Camp. The research has identified that there they were held for approximately six weeks before finally ending up in Dry Harts Native Refugee Camp which functioned as a forced labour camp, along with civilians from other districts from the Western Transvaal.

Another objective is to show that oral history and memory are key resources when seeking to understand what happened. Chapters five and six which deal with the camps at Dry Harts, Vryburg, Taung and Brussels Siding highlights how the trauma of the camps has survived into the contemporary era through oral history and memory. The archaeological surveys and excavations that were undertaken and detailed in Chapters three, four, five and six, and Appendix B, show beyond doubt that this is a vital resource to recovering a history of the camps. Archaeology and oral history have their role, yet these resources remain absent from the literature on the ‘black concentration’ camps. This in turn demonstrates that a reliance only on archival documents in reconstructing histories of the camps is flawed, which is the case with the entirety of the literature on the camps.

Chapter one will show that in 1999 at Brandfort an archaeological survey ignored key findings for this did not fit with predetermined assumptions around oral history and the complexities of interpreting the evidence uncovered separate to that survey. Chapter one also introduces the centenary of the war and the various notions around ‘participation’ and ‘everyone’s war’ which this thesis questions.

Chapter one. Brandfort, a history of two Native Refugee Camps.

This chapter will show that the notion of black participation in everyone's war is flawed and merely a current ideological construct which emerged around the time of the centenary commemorations, which were launched in Brandfort. In recovering a history of the Native Refugee Camp and the forced labour camp at Brandfort the evidence shows that the internees were undergoing a fundamentally different experience to that of the Boers interned in a separate camp within their immediate vicinity. While the Boers were rationed, sheltered and provided with medical attention which did prove inadequate to them, the black refugees were managed along the let die basis. With the formalisation of the Phase One camp under the control of the Native Refugee Department these refugees were then coerced into forced wartime labour and relocated to Houtenbeck railway siding north of Brandfort. For a minority who remained they were put to work to service the needs of the military and the Boer refugees and their burial site is located on Keerom 148 farm.



This chapter also contextualises the beginning of my research in 1999 into the black concentration camp system which resulted in this thesis. This chapter details my role in the identification of a Native Labour Camp burial site near Brandfort and the subsequent unveiling of a cenotaph to black casualties of the war at the site during the South African War centenary commemorations. The politics which erupted around this project are discussed in so far as I witnessed them. Brandfort had at least two black internee camps during the South African War. The first, a Native Refugee Camp which was created by the British military on Nooitgedacht farm 337 and a subsequent second camp which is referred to as a Native Labour Camp. Also included is a history of the camp at Nooitgedacht in so far as the archival records that were identified in 1999.

1.1. Legitimised Commemoration.

In 1998 the South African Government started planning a series of events to commemorate the centenary of the South African War. This event was the result of the South African Government incorporating the South African War into The National Legacy Committee and adopting it as a National Legacy Project. The official name designated for the conflict was the Anglo Boer South African War, a compromise in terminology at best. The policymakers at the time motivated that the commemoration of the conflict be located in the Department of Arts Culture Science and Technology (DACST), and by doing so this would bestow legitimacy and authority on the more difficult aspects of commemorating the conflictual aspect of our history. In the process, the organisers would undertake to harmonise justice, reconciliation and symbolic reparation.⁴³

Brandfort formed part of a new myth in the making in that the shared experience of atrocities at the hands of a foreign Empire with its ruthless capitalists, generals and uncaring bureaucrats were pressed into service to promote a multicultural nationalism. The impending centenary would be an essential glue that the politicians would use to bind this process of myth into the national narrative, using the notion of a shared experience of suffering in the camps, one of mutual suffering.

Afrikaner and African leaders are able to use the shared experience of suffering in the camps to distract attention away from their own long struggle to come together in joint ceremonies that commemorate mutual suffering. If such an approach requires omission of inconvenient facts, there should be no surprise in that.⁴⁴

My other observation then was that the African National Congress led government saw an opportunity to use the commemorations for reconciliation and nation building. Their project entailed promoting popular interest in the war to achieve the political purpose of interracial

⁴³ G. Dominy, L. Callinicos, Is There Anything To Celebrate? Paradoxes of Policy: An Examination of the States Approach to Commemorating South Africa's Ambiguous Struggle: *South African History Journal, Centennial Perspectives*, Pretoria, University of South Africa, (2000) (p. 388).

⁴⁴ G. Cuthbertson, A. Jeeves, The Many-Sided Struggle for Southern Africa, 1899–1902, *South African Historical Journal*, (1999) 5.

harmony and national reconstruction.⁴⁵ One way to further this objective was to emphasise the shared suffering of Boer and black civilians in the war. This would be further espoused by scholars such as Kessler and others using this notion of shared suffering. Through an emphasis on mutual or shared suffering, the South African War becomes the crucible of a common identity. Everyone's war is transformed into a founding democratic myth for the new millennium. This thesis will not adopt this mutually shared suffering notion. Instead it will argue that the black refugee camps and in particular the forced labour camps were a unique experience.

The Brandfort initiative led by the DACST included erecting a cenotaph that would commemorate black wartime casualties. The memorial was constructed to honour those black civilians who perished in the camps across the country and in the two camps which existed in Brandfort, one which was in the immediate vicinity. Built on the slopes of a ridge, it overlooks the Boer camp cemetery and the terrain of this Boer concentration camp not far from it.⁴⁶

This initiative while still in the planning stages found itself assailed by voices claiming unique suffering. This voice had no interest in shared suffering. The resulting clamour saw the white community of Brandfort and the broader community of Boer descendants have one of their sacred sites, namely the Boer concentration camp terrain occupied for a few hours by State President Thabo Mbeki, and a member of the British Royal Family, during their ceremony which was associated with the newly erected cenotaph.

I observed these events with interest as I had located one of the burial sites, which contained the graves of black internees from a labour camp, and which lay adjacent to the site where this cenotaph was erected. Since wars seem to be commonly remembered by the commemorative mechanisms that are anchored around those visible points of what could be portrayed as suffering,

⁴⁵ G. Cuthbertson, A. Jeeves, The Many-Sided Struggle, *South African Historical Journal* 41 (1), (1999), 6.

⁴⁶ At the time of the conflict the official nomenclature for Boer concentration camps was Burgher Concentration Camps and then later during the conflict Burgher Concentration Camps.

the fight to acquire a space for a new heritage landscape revealed an interesting face. Revisiting the terrain before the ceremony, I observed site workers putting their finishing touches to some new graves, ones that they themselves had constructed. Their surreptitious whispers implied that their directive to do so had its point of origin from a member located within the South African government's cabinet.

The approximately 55-60 graves that I had located presumably did not in themselves convey an image of sufficient suffering to both the public and world media about to descend upon the site. Therefore, an increase may have been called for. If this was the case then those who had remained on the periphery of the camp discourses during the better part of ninety years appear to then have imbibed the notion of suffering. To reflect an image of greater suffering to the broader public may have therefore required the construction of additional more graves. Either way, my unexpected presence resulted in an immediate halt to this process, for the workers knew that they ran the risk of exposure, particularly once I started photographing their activity.

The centenary commemorative launch as planned for the Brandfort area initially envisaged the keynote event to include Allemans Siding where a burial site of 638 graves from the Allemans Siding Native Refugee Camp (a forced labour camp) had been previously identified. However this did not occur because the landowner refused to allow a memorial to be erected on his farm and denied access. During negotiations with the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology the farmer requested that the Department pay R5 million for "insurance" before allowing them access.

Musa Xulo, the department's Deputy Director General, who was involved in negotiations with the farmer stated that:

The farmer said he needed the insurance because the crowd to commemorate the launch of the declaration of the site would burn his farm. His attitude is that if you have a crowd of black people, they will be rowdy and destroy the place.⁴⁷

Consequently the plans changed. The three sites chosen for the commemorative launch were: the burial site at Karee Siding as this contained burials from each country of the former British Empire thus symbolic of the Commonwealth; the Boer concentration camp cemetery; and the main event and keynote speeches at the newly erected cenotaph.

My work at Brandfort prior to the centenary launch was to research and write the narrative for interpretive signage that would be developed and erected near the site of the Boer concentration camp cemetery and also at the Karee Siding cemetery. I was appointed to do this by the primary contractor, Spenkor (EDMS) BBK who was engaged to build pathways and entrance gates at these two places and other site works. I was at the time engaged by the McGregor Museum in Kimberley to develop interpretive signage at several battlefields and to install the exhibits at the Magersfontein Battlefield Museum, an appointment which started in January 1998. A consulting archaeologist, J. Dreyer was also appointed by the primary contractor, given that site works would be undertaken in archeologically sensitive areas.

During my visits to Brandfort I examined the terrain with the then landowner of the farm Louvain 286 on which she ran a guest house where I stayed. I subsequently located the burial site where the cenotaph was later erected on the farm Keerom 148. This burial site was pointed out to me by a former farm labourer and contained approximately 55 to 60 graves which appeared to date from the war. In the immediate vicinity and on some of the graves were British army ration tins. The graves had headstones or foot stones but no ornamentation. The lack of ornamentation or grave goods was pertinent in that it is a widely observed practice on the gravesites of farm labourers or

⁴⁷ P. Dube, Farmers face legal action over graves, 16 October 1999, <http://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/farmers-face-legal-action-over-graves-16342> Accessed, 29 December 2015.

communities connected to the deceased. This suggested that the graves could predate persons alive or living in the immediate area and who might be connected to these burials.

I asked the landowner and the former farmworker if they knew of anyone in the Brandfort Township who may have been old enough to have been a child during the war, or had parents or relatives who experienced the war. A week or so passed and I was contacted by the primary contractor that such a person had been found, namely Ms. Eliza Ncgane. E. Ncgane was brought to the farm where I initially interviewed her. E. Ncgane claimed to have been a child at the time and to have been in a camp at Brandfort.

Much of what E. Ncgane related was similar to other black survivor accounts, such as those created by an oral history project in 1970s and 1980s by the Institute for Advanced Social Science, University of Witwatersrand and which are housed in the Historical Papers collection at the University of the Witwatersrand. E. Ncgane related that she lived in the Glen district near Bloemfontein when the scorched earth policy commenced and that the children and her mother Mita and brother Mojake were brought to Brandfort, where they slept on animal skins and used sheep skins as coverings from the elements. She recalled the “gnawing hunger” and that the children would beg for food from the soldiers and wash their clothing. People attempting to escape were shot.⁴⁸

Ms. Ncgane was brought back a second time to Louvain farm on 30 August 1999 where I interviewed her again. Towards the very end of the interview Dreyer arrived, as did a *Volksblad* journalist and photographer who then interviewed her. The newspaper published an article on 2 September 1999 with the lead heading, “Women, 104 points out forgotten concentration camp and 150 graves”.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ G. Benneyworth, Interview with E. Ncgane, 4 August 1999, Louvain farm, Brandfort.

⁴⁹ Correspondent, *Volksblad*, 2 September 1999, *Vrou* (104) wys `verlore' Konsentrasiekamp en 150 grafte uit.

The heading, in true journalistic style was sensational, yet inaccurate. E. Ncgane did not point out the grave site nor were there 150 graves on the terrain. Nevertheless, this headline then became a primary fixation for a number of people, who selectively chose to ignore other elements of the story. What the article did state correctly was that,

Mr Garth Benneyworth, a private military researcher from Cape Town asked Ms Sarie Styger the owner of the farm where the camps were located and if she could find someone who knows the area well. She found Xolama who led them to Ncgane in the township. No one expected to find and meet a living survivor from the camp.⁵⁰

I interviewed E. Ncgane on a final occasion at her home in Sonderwater Street, Brandfort Township, together with a researcher / official from the National Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology. This interview took approximately two hours and left myself and the official in no doubt that what we witnessed and learned was a unique account from the personal experience of an eyewitness who had lived through this experience in 1901-1902.

Nevertheless Dreyer had the following to say about the second interview which I undertook in his report to the then National Monuments Council.

The questioning was performed in a rather subjective and unscientific manner. Leading questions to the respondents predicted their answers and clearly produced fabricated replies with deceptive and questionable allegations. The informants were thoroughly enjoying the special attention bestowed on them.⁵¹

The first point to make is that Dreyer refers to 'respondents' and 'informants' in the plural tense, when in fact it was the singular, only E. Ncgane was interviewed. Secondly he had no knowledge of what occurred or what was discussed in the first interview, most of the discussions during the

⁵⁰ Volksblad, 2 September 1999, "Mnr. G. Benneyworth, 'n private oorlogsnavorser van Kaapstad, het mev. Sarie Styger, eienaar van die plaas waarop die kampe geleë was, gevra om iemand te kry wat die omgewing goed ken. Sy het Xolama gekry wat hulle na Ncgane in die woonbuurt geneem het. Niemand het verwag om 'n oorlewende van die kamp in lewende lywe te ontmoet nie".

⁵¹ J. Dreyer, Anglo Boer War (1899-1902) Camps and Cemeteries at Brandfort Free State Second Report to the National Monuments Council, 29 February 2000.

second interview prior to the arrival of the journalists and himself and, in particular, the third interview, because in reality he was not present during all these discussions.

At no stage did E. Ncgane say that the graves were from the war. What Dreyer was also unaware of at that stage is archival information that I had already uncovered in the Free State Archives and which confirmed the provenance of the graves.

One of the documents located refers:

As the native camp is now being removed from Brandfort some arrangements must be made to ration the natives employed in the camp [Brandfort 'Boer concentration camp']. Will you kindly inform me whether any scheme has been devised to provide these natives and their families and if not whether you would allow me to draw some rations for the natives from the contractors. Unless some provision can be made for these boys and their families it will be necessary to pay them at a much higher rate than they are receiving. If you will allow me to draw rations for them I will form a small location solely for Natives employed.⁵²

This was approved. "Yes. Please draw rations of sorts from the contractors. I have arranged the matter with the Chief Superintendent Native Locations".⁵³

These graves originate from this labour camp which serviced the needs of the adjacent Brandfort Boer concentration camp. In my writing the narrative for the interpretive panels, the primary contractor engaged the services of Stowell Kessler, as consulting historian to proof read my work, given that the panels would be erected at this burial site and narrate it. Kessler did so and signed off on it.⁵⁴ Kessler had a copy of the same archival documents which he shared with one of the national advisors to the Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, a copy of his email to the advisor is in my possession. In it Kessler stated the same view that I had on the graves, namely that they were from labourers retained by the administrators of the Brandfort Boer concentration

⁵² Free State Provincial Archives Repository Bloemfontein (hereafter referred to as VAB), SRC, Vol. 12, Reference 4689/01.

⁵³ VAB, SRC, Vol. 12, Reference 4689/01.

⁵⁴ All copies of my correspondence about this with Kessler are in my possession.

camp when the majority of the internees in the Phase One camp on Nooitgedacht farm were relocated to Houtenbeck siding, north of Brandfort.

I had also located other documentation which clearly pointed to the existence of a Native Refugee Camp on the neighbouring Nooitgedacht farm, so I was aware of its existence. My work commitments in Brandfort and Kimberley did not enable the time to search for it. Dreyer subsequently obtained copies of this documentation from Kessler, which enabled him to find the site, on 10 September 1999, approximately one mile away from the Boer concentration camp.

He reported this to the primary contractor who then telephoned me and asked me to join Dreyer to verify this. Dreyer and I met and then went on to the site, which displayed all the surface evidence of an internment camp. While examining one of the graves which had a collapsed headstone facing down, we then turned it over. The stone was engraved, Elisa Monomoli 1890-1901. A second engraved stone was located, engraved with the name Pethi.

The conclusion was obvious to us both. This was the burial site of the Brandfort Native Refugee Camp, which existed prior to the formation of the Native Refugee Department, on 1 August 1901.

Dreyer's report continues:

This stone was considered as vital evidence to confirm the relationship of the graves with the Anglo Boer War. It was, therefore, handed over to the Commander at the Brandfort Police Station for safekeeping.⁵⁵

Dreyer was quoted in the media in 2000, around this gravestone of Elisa Monomoli.

When the archaeologist Cobus Dreyer discovered the tombstone of a black child who had died in the South African War, he decided the safest place to store it was in the office of the local police chief. Mr. Dreyer sees the inscribed headstone as his "trump card" - crucial evidence that he will use to try to prove that he has found the main cemetery of a wartime black concentration camp near here, in the Free State province. The land on which it sits is in a conservative area where right-wing, white Afrikaners see the restoration of black graveyards as a political ploy to turn the focus away from the suffering of Boers. Mr.

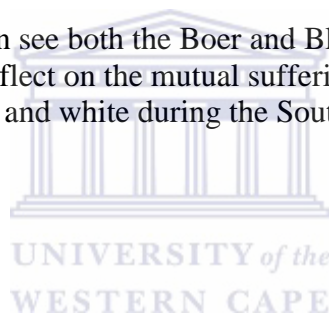
⁵⁵ J. Dreyer, *Anglo Boer War (1899-1902) Camps and Cemeteries at Brandfort Free State Second Report*, 29 February 2000.

Dreyer feared that as news of his discovery spread, people might vandalize or steal the tombstone.⁵⁶

Of interest is that this gravestone of E. Monomoli, is a heritage/archaeological object of a Victim of Conflict, as defined by the South African Heritage Resources Act, 1999. It is now an exhibit on display in the War Museum of the Boer Republics, Bloemfontein, in an exhibition which opened in 2015.

Work continued on the Cenotaph and it was ready for the launch of the commemorative programme on 10 October 1999, by State President Mbeki and His Royal Highness The Duke of Kent. Of interest in President Mbeki's speech at the cenotaph is that the theme of mutual suffering emerged and was clearly entrenched onto the landscape:

From Slangkop hill we can see both the Boer and Black cemeteries. From that vantage-point, the observer may reflect on the mutual suffering and interdependence, in spite of the inequalities, of both black and white during the South African War.⁵⁷



⁵⁶ L. Vergnani, *Rethinking the Boer War Historians prod post-apartheid South Africa to reconsider a bloody conflict 100 years ago*, 7 January 2000 <http://h-net.msu.edu/cgi-bin/logbrowse.pl?trx=vx&list=h-africa&month=0001&week=d&msg=yFrqk2oZYEjUOE/g/B%2B7uw&user=&pw=> accessed on 28 November 2015.

⁵⁷ Address of the President of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, at the official launch of the commemoration of the centenary of the Anglo-Boer/South African War, Issued by: Office of the President, Brandfort, 9 October 1999, <http://www.mbeki.org/2016/06/09/address-at-the-official-launch-of-the-commemoration-of-the-centenary-of-the-anglo-boersouth-african-war-brandfort-19991009/> accessed: 29 December 2016.



Figure 1, Google Earth. The general area of the three camps at Brandfort.

Mbeki's concluding remarks to his speech also spoke to humanity of those who perished in the labour camp at Brandfort and were buried within sight of his podium and also to the broader loss of life in the war.

What remains is that we continue to strive to do what we thought was the correct thing to do - to build a better world, free of the pain represented by the graves at this place, which are a bitter reminder of a bitter past. It may be that those who are interred here will, at last, rest in peace when they know that we too, who live, are no longer slaves to an uneasy peace. Surely, they will rejoice when they know that we rejoice in the peace and freedom which our compatriots who lie buried here, elsewhere in our country and abroad, sought and died for. Let all of us mark the Centenary of the Anglo-Boer War - the South African War - with all the honour and dignity due to those whose lives it consumed.⁵⁸

The conclusion of Mbeki's speech seems to have been wasted on Dreyer who continued making statements about these graves originating from the labour camp. He and other speakers at the International Conference on the South African War in Durban in 2000 stated publicly that the

⁵⁸ Address of the President of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, at the official launch of the commemoration of the centenary of the Anglo-Boer/South African War, Issued by: Office of the President, Brandfort, 9 October 1999, <http://www.mbeki.org/2016/06/09/address-at-the-official-launch-of-the-commemoration-of-the-centenary-of-the-anglo-boersouth-african-war-brandfort-19991009/> accessed: 19 October 2016.

cenotaph was erected at the wrong site, and that the correct site should have been on Nooitgedacht farm.⁵⁹

Dreyer stated in his 29 February 2000 report to the National Monuments Council that:

“The origin of the graves at the foot of Slangkop is still not clear. There are several leads to follow up if it’s still important to ascertain their origin”.⁶⁰ In his 22 July 2000, excursion paper Dreyer commented further on the cenotaph.

Based mainly on oral evidence obtained from two residents of the local Township the graves were identified as the Black Refugee camp cemetery dating from the Anglo Boer War. This assumption led to the erection of the monument to commemorate the involvement of Black people in the war at this particular spot.⁶¹

The cenotaph was not, as Dreyer alleged, erected where it stands on the basis of interviews with local residents. Nor were the graves identified, “as the Black Refugee camp cemetery dating from the Anglo Boer War”. The graves were identified as being linked to the labour camp established after the Native Refugee Camp on Nooitgedacht farm closed.

The archival document which described the creation of a labour camp to service the Boer concentration camp, and whose internees originated from the Native Refugee Camp at Nooitgedacht when the camp was relocated is clear and was established in 1999, prior to the cenotaph being built.⁶² On 13 September 1999, Kessler advised the National Minister’s advisor, in writing, of the provenance of these graves, citing the same archival document.⁶³

⁵⁹ I was a speaker at the same conference and attended a joint presentation by J. Loog and J. Dreyer on their collaborative works.

⁶⁰ J. Dreyer, *Anglo Boer War (1899-1902) Camps and Cemeteries at Brandfort Free State Second Report*, 29 February 2000.

⁶¹ J. Dreyer, *Archaeology and the Anglo Boer War (1899-1902) Brandfort Concentration and Refugee Camps, Excursion paper South African Archaeological Society Transgariep Branch Outing*, 22 July 2000.

⁶² VAB, SRC, Vol. 12, Reference 4689/01.

⁶³ E-mail by S. Kessler to the Minister’s advisor, 13 September 1999. A copy of which I am in possession of.

Some of the labourers and their families during the subsequent existence of the Boer concentration camp would have died from the same diseases that killed many Boer refugees in this camp. They had to be buried somewhere and to date no other burial site has been located.

The Brandfort experience of the 'new nation's' commemoration of the war saw a unique heritage opportunity embroil itself in the politics of the present and for that matter, the power wielded by the past. It occurred against the backdrop of right wing weapons thefts and murders when certain 'bittereinder' elements attempted to arm themselves. This came after the culmination of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission probing into whether Winnie Mandela had indeed remained under house arrest at Brandfort or had participated in the killing of Stompie Sepai in Soweto.

The terrain of South Africa's commemoration of the war held the potential to broaden itself, as a narrative of the black experience of the camp system might arise to the surface of contemporary consciousness. However, in spite of the fact that an ideological laager had been breached and the discourse held the potential to shift, this has not really occurred. However much of the recent work remains locked within the paradigm of participation and everyone's war where the historic past is renamed using contemporary nomenclature. The Native Refugee camps are now re-engineered into 'black camps' and the role of forced labour as a morale breaker and the horror of the black civilian experience of Total War is consumed into the overall wartime narrative as an add on experience.

1.2. Brandfort Native Refugee Camp.

During 1999 my research located archival documents that related to the Brandfort camps and these offer some insight into conditions in the camps. In the case of the labour camp which was subsequently formed from the initial refugee camp, the significance of the documents was ignored by those commentating on the history of the black camps and who were involved in the project at Brandfort in 1999. An analysis of these documents is provided as they offer similar insights into the camps that form the focus of this thesis.

The initial Native Refugee Camp at Brandfort existed on the farm Nooitgedacht 337, which was owned by Lucas Maree. He served with the forces of the Orange Free State Republic and surrendered during August 1900.⁶⁴ The camp itself was started in January 1901, and at its origin had 1,100 internees. On 15 April 1901, its numbers were 1,800 people.⁶⁵ By the end of August 1901, the camp population was 4,000 people, indicative of the intensity of scorched earth and civilian displacement. On 30 May 1901, Brandfort camp was described as having, “Wood abundant”.⁶⁶ The internees were supplied with firewood and water from Maree’s farm and when it shut the farm had been cleared of all its trees.

Lucas Maree submitted a claim for compensation for the damage to his farm, as the denuding of vegetation and the use of a large piece of ground for burial site, had reduced the value of the farm. His farm was also used to supply firewood to the neighbouring Burgher Refugee Camp, approximately one mile away. Maree claimed the following damages; £1200 for supplying the Native Refugee Camp and £600 for the Burgher Refugee Camp. Maree received a reply from the Superintendent Native Refugee Department stating that as the camp was formed as a military necessity he should direct his claim to the Military Compensation Board for the Bloemfontein District.⁶⁷

The discrepancy of the claim between the two camps is of interest in that the Native Refugee Camp used twice as much timber and was shut in August 1901, after 8 months of existence, whereas the Boer concentration camp only shut in 1903. This may be because the Boer refugees had tents provided to them and the black refugees not. Consequently, they did not use this volume of timber for firewood only, they also used it to build themselves dwellings.

⁶⁴ VAB, CO, Vol. 107, Reference 4442/02.

⁶⁵ VAB, SRC, Vol. 5, Reference 1304.

⁶⁶ VAB, CO, Vol. 36, Reference 348/01.

⁶⁷ VAB, CO, Vol. 107. Reference 4442/02.

This is borne out in a report of inspection on 15 April 1901, by a Dr Yule.

The huts are rather poor except some covered with...matting. 18 men act as constables for this large community and a native named Peter is virtually in charge. The weekly issue of rations is conducted by the superintendent's clerk. The more intelligent Natives assure the Superintendent that there is no exceptional sickness in this camp. Natives can consult the Doctor in the European camp. At present the inmates report to a wooded kloof a mile above the camp for purposes of nature. There is no smell at present but it does not seem advisable to make exceptions in dealing with natives and I should recommend that the trench system be installed without delay. This will require more provision for discipline.

The superintendent wishes...to try a European refugee at £5 per month and to retain Peter as his assistant. The superintendent himself has of course very little time to devote to supervision. The natives require some watching moreover in the matter of their drinking water. We were informed that this was not good but found an excellent spring almost as close to the camp as the sluit from which the inferior supply came.⁶⁸

Again, as with many of these reports the nomenclature seems casual in its description of the circumstances. If 1,800 people were using the kloof, as a dedicated latrine then it must have reeked. The other alternative is that, as the kloof was about a mile from the camp, they were not all using it, in which case the area surrounding area the camp would have been fouled. Hence when Yule inspected it there was no smell at that time. This further appears to the case, as alluded to in Yule's statement that, "the natives require some watching moreover in the matter of their drinking water." This implies the risk of contamination of drinking water which resulted in typhoid fever and other waterborne diseases.

Given that the trees on Nooitgedacht farm were being chopped down and timber supplied to the Boer and black camps, the area between the camp and the kloof would have been hazardous to traverse at night, given tree stumps, rocks and boulders; and the area around the kloof is very rocky. It is therefore most likely that it was not extensively used, particularly not at night, and that sickness in the camp would have been very high.

⁶⁸ VAB, SRC, Vol. 5, Reference 1304.

There is also another reason why this kloof would not have been used at night. The camp superintendent had no hesitation using violence to stamp his authority. He had a refugee shot who was out of camp after dark, and this resulted in a curfew policy of shooting dead anyone outside of the immediate vicinity of the camp between sunrise and sunset. This incident met with his superior's approval and a general order was issued to all camp commandants where there were refugee camps that, "to the effect that all Refugees out of Camp after 6pm and before 6 am will be shot. I only suggest these hours, as I believe the Comdt. at Brandfort has (after a single case) issued the above order".⁶⁹

Yule's point that, "the superintendent himself has of course very little time to devote to supervision" comes across as an exoneration for whatever tragedy of neglect was occurring in the camp. That an internee named Peter was virtually in charge suggests that the internees were following the lead of one of their elders and that the Superintendent was to all intents and purposes ineffective, which would have impacted on health and mortality. That the recommendation to appoint Peter as the superintendent's assistant seems to confirm this.

On 5 March 1901, in his correspondence with headquarters in Bloemfontein, Superintendent J. Smith advised that he did not require a Storekeeper and a Rations Issuer.⁷⁰ When one considers that the camp would have had nearly 1,800 internees, with new arrivals expected on a regular basis how was Smith managing to store, allocate and issue rations and supervise the camp all on his own?

Smith was advised on 8 March 1901, that, "I beg to point out that you may find the work may be too much for you; if it is let me know and I will send you an official".⁷¹ When read together with the previous point that, "the superintendent himself has of course very little time to devote to

⁶⁹ VAB, SRC, Vol 17. Reference 2653.

⁷⁰ VAB, SRC, Vol. 2, Reference 476.

⁷¹ VAB, SRC, Vol. 2, Reference 476.

supervision,” and the fact that was declining appointments of key staff who work with rations, implies ineffective management by Smith resulting in a mortality disaster in the making.⁷² Yule’s April 1901 recommendation for a latrine to be dug had still not been acted upon.⁷³

There were no tents for the internees and huts built with sacks and matting would not provide adequate shelter from the rain and cold. In April 1901, the superintendent of the neighbouring Burgher camp was issuing sacks to arriving heads of black families which would be used to line their huts. During August 1901, he was instructed, that tents being sent to Brandfort must on no account, “be given to Natives. They must be used entirely for the White camp.”⁷⁴ Much of what is described in these documents is identical to the oral history of E. Ncgane.

As for Peter, he was temporarily appointed at the rate of £5 per months, and thereafter died of disease.⁷⁵ He was a prominent person respected by the internees in the Refuge Camp. It is possible that the engraved gravestone, “Pethi” marks his grave.

1.3. Beyond the commemoration of shared suffering.

The evidence of archaeology and the written archive uncovered in 1999, demonstrates that three camps existed at Brandfort: The Native Refugee Camp on Nooitgedacht farm, the Labour Camp on Keerom farm, which in turn serviced the needs of the Boer concentration camp, and the Boer camp being the third.

Nevertheless, the notion of sole suffering, rooted within Afrikaner nationalist thought, sought to deny the black camps existence on the one hand, and undermine the launch event on the other.

Attempts to deny the existence of the labour camp by denigrating the evidence presented proved

⁷² Again this reveals that official reports on conditions inside the Native Refugee Camps need to be scrutinised carefully and can’t be accepted at face value. One of the key points in my thesis that needs to be underwritten is that the reliance on only the written archive, in order to construct histories of the Native refugee and forced labour camps, is risky and produces tenuous and, in certain cases, diluted histories.

⁷³ VAB, SRC, Vol. 7, Reference 1938A.

⁷⁴ VAB, SRC, Vol. 11, Reference 4118.

⁷⁵ VAB, SRC, Vol. 2, Reference 476.

unsuccessful. The cenotaph was built and unveiled. However, despite my intervention the graves from this camp were increased by the contractors, to make the notion of shared suffering more marketable for the event. The more graves, the greater the impact of the visual of shared suffering on the terrain. Shared suffering and legitimised commemoration formed a government aim to underwrite the notion of black participation in the conflict. However, participation is that of addition to the main historical event and is not indicative of an experience that was unique in its own right nor does it look at what the wartime experience entailed.

The historical record indicates that differing policies applied to displaced civilians, dependent on their race, and which carried through to their shelter, provisioning and medical care. This reflects through the archival record, the archaeology and even the oral history identified during the Brandfort project. Different values of life were attached to life, dependant on which race that life belonged to. Black refugees being on the bottom end of the scale. The Phase One Native Refugee Camp and subsequent Labour Camp at Brandfort are indicative of the experience of refugees who lived and died inside them; inadequate shelter, rationing and medical support being the key areas.

Through the violence of war black civilians were forcibly displaced from their land and into the camp system where a minimal intervention of care existed, based along the policy of let die. Should internees attempt escape they were summarily shot. In the case of the labour camp rations were provided only in return for work. This experience is unique from that of the Boer camps and not a participative one into the smorgasbord of mutually shared suffering. It stands alone and is an identical experience to the camps that form the focus for this thesis, the Native Refugee and Forced Labour Camps at Orange River Station, Kimberley, Taung, Dry Harts, Brussels Siding and Vryburg, which chapters three, four and five shall demonstrate, wherein archaeological evidence is a key to understanding what happened inside the camps.

Chapter two. Kimberley at War.

This chapter provides a macro view of Kimberley from its inception with the discovery of diamonds through to the end of the South African War, on 31 May 1902. Kimberley is synonymous with the emergence and consolidation of corporate capital, migrant labour and the closed compound systems which capital created on this landscape. With the outbreak of war in 1899 the suburbs, locations and compounds were already established. With compounds came a total control of the black workers' freedom of movement. The mines formed enclosed areas, with their compounds enclosed within the mining precincts, a prison of sorts within the enforced enclosures. The emergence of the refugee crisis in the closing months of 1900, brought about by the scorched earth and land clearances policy, introduced black and Boer refugees into Kimberley and their internment in refugee camps, separated along racial lines. Chapter Two will outline the dynamics of this spatial relationship from the macro perspective, and lay the framework for the subsequent chapters, which deal specifically with the functioning and experience of black refugees in Kimberley, and the other camps examined by this thesis, and whose fate was linked to Kimberley.

2.1. Kimberley before the war.

At the outbreak of war Kimberley consisted of two municipalities, Kimberley and Beaconsfield, and four of the richest diamond mines in the world. It was these diamond mines that formed the sole reason for these towns' existence and had developed in a space of 30 years. The discovery of diamonds ignited one of the most feverish and intense diamond rushes that the world has ever seen and was the spark for South Africa's mineral revolution. Initially known as New Rush, this sprawling mass of shacks, tents, bars and brothels, chaos, fortune seekers and migrant workers became officially named Kimberley, on 5 July 1873.

In 1888, the consolidation of international capital saw the foundation of De Beers Consolidated Mines. With ultimate power came ultimate control over land and labour. The Kimberley mines drew in migrant workers from across southern Africa. Through the power wielded by capital, this saw the beginning of two systems that would underwrite this wealth accumulation by capital: the migrant labour system and the closed compound system.

During these early days of chaos and greed around the Big Hole, there was no official policy of racial residential segregation in the mining camps. Many of the diggers accommodated both black and white mineworkers in their encampments of tents and sheds. However, the growth of regulated wages by the mining companies broke this close physical proximity between diggers and their labourers. The diggers compounds became the site of barrack type accommodation for black workers, while the white workers moved out into rented accommodation. This separation of a digger's work place from his residence developed the first meaningful shape to racial residential segregation in Kimberley. One of the earliest suburbs being Belgravia in 1875, followed by Gladstone in 1883, both exclusively white suburbs. The vacated compounds became exclusively used for accommodating black workers.⁷⁶

By the late 1870s, locations were established in Kimberley. In June 1879, the Cape Location Acts were applied to Griqualand West and the Kimberley Town Council started enforcing the Act in July 1879. Location Regulations published in September 1880 defined a location as, "any number of huts or dwellings exceeding five within an area of one square mile occupied by any of the native races".⁷⁷ In 1881, there were six locations in the Kimberley and Beaconsfield municipal areas, separate to the Malay Camp in which people designated as 'Malay', 'Indian', and 'Christian natives' and 'whites' were accommodated. These included Number 1 close to the former

⁷⁶ R.V. Turrel, *Capital and Labour on the Kimberley Diamond Fields 1871-1890*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, (1987), 94-95.

⁷⁷ R.V. Turrel, *Capital and Labour*, 100.

Transvaal Road, Number 2 which is today Galeshewe, Number 3 known as Meyer's and situated near the reservoir, Number 4 opposite of the reservoir to number 3, Number 5 was Flenter's (also known as Venters) on the western side of the Kimberley Cape railway line beyond the town, and Number 6 Mankurwane's Location, south of Blankenbergsvlei farm.⁷⁸ Mankurwane's Location would play a symbiotic relationship to the later Native Refugee Camp on Blankenbergsvlei farm which was owned by De Beers Consolidated Mines.

In 1884, De Beers secured convict labour from the Cape Colony Government, a system which proved ideal for the company.⁷⁹ Labour supply for a longer period than the standard two month migrant labour contracts could be ensured, be harshly disciplined and regulated, kept incarcerated, and strip searched, thus reducing diamond theft. The closed compound system for migrant labourers was modelled on the De Beers convict station. Once De Beers monopolised production it then segregated its surface and underground employees. Labour accommodation for black mineworkers with its associated incarceration was centralised on a grand scale.

By 1885, as part of this thrust for consolidation and control, the Kimberley mines saw the introduction of the closed compounds. Following the amalgamation of the diamond mines under De Beers Consolidated Mines in 1888, the closed compound system became compulsory for all black mineworkers. By 1889, all 10,000 of them in Kimberley were accommodated in closed compounds.⁸⁰ In 1896, De Beers had two mine compounds for over 4,000 workers and one washing floors compound for 1,000 men. Additionally there was a stable compound for 245 transport workers and a smaller workshops compound.

⁷⁸ S. Lunderstedt, *This is Frances Baard An Educational Course*, (Kimberley, S Lunderstedt, 2002), 195.

⁷⁹ R.V. Turrel, *Capital and Labour*, 157.

⁸⁰ Kimberley's demeaning closed compound system, *Mining Weekly*, 22 July 2011.

<http://www.miningweekly.com/article/the-introduction-of-the-closed-compound-system-2011-07-22>, as accessed on 22 February 2016.

Conditions in the early compounds were reflected in the death rate which for black workers was seldom less than double than that of the white death rate with lung diseases and pneumonia being the common cause. Having secured the accommodation or incarceration of workers inside compounds, the other primary issue that capital wished to finalise was an interrupted labour supply.

On the eve of war, the footprint of Kimberley was established. Founded on greed, the New Rush era had transformed into a segregated city divided along race and wealth and which was built on dispossessed land and one that was integrated into the colonial order. Controlled by corporate capital and its power as wielded by De Beers Consolidated Mines, the migrant labour system and the closed compound systems had integrated into the fabric of the colonial economic and political system. Unparalleled wealth poured from the mines into the De Beers bank accounts and those of the corporate's shareholders and global financiers.

Yet still to occur was full scale warfare between a global superpower and the Boer republics, brought about by capital. This conflict would draw in Kimberley from the outset, yet it would also see the emergence of refugee and forced labour camps linked to Kimberley and the convergence of military and capital interests in deciding the fate of black civilians caught up in the scorched earth policy and camp systems.

2.2. Outbreak of war.

Kimberley played a key role from the outbreak of war, when on 14 October 1899, the Republican (Boer) forces besieged the city, heralding in a 124-day siege. A scheme for Kimberley's defence was drawn up in 1896 and again in 1898 and 1899, which proposed defending Kimberley and Wesselton Mine, yet excluded Beaconsfield from the defence perimeter. With the arrival of Lt. Colonel R.G. Kekewich shortly before the outbreak of war he revised this plan. Kekewich decided to include both Beaconsfield and the outlying Kimberley suburb of Kenilworth within a defended

perimeter some 22 kilometres in length and containing approximately 50,000 residents. Wesselton Mine he decided to hold as an isolated strongpoint as it would provide the only adequate source of drinking water once the Boers cut the normal supply from the Vaal River 35 kilometres away.⁸¹ Despite there being two towns, the siege became known as the Siege of Kimberley.

The surrounding countryside for a radius of 100 kilometres was barren of trees, which had been hacked down for firewood to supply the mines. Kimberley and Beaconsfield were set on a relatively flat landscape with no prominent topographic features within the urban limits. The only hills were the debris dumps generated from the diamond mines. It was the mining infrastructure and the dumps around which all the defences were anchored. The defence line that was constructed consisted of redoubts, trenches, minefields and barbed wire entanglements all built by black compound workers supplied by De Beers to the military.⁸²

Before the outbreak of war, the Boer strategy hinged on surrounding three key towns, each for differing reasons. Ladysmith - given the high numbers of British troops concentrated in the area, Mafikeng - given the railway route into Bechuanaland and Southern Rhodesia - and Kimberley, for the economic role its diamond mines played in the economy of the Cape Colony. The immediate objective of this strategy was to lock up these garrisons which were viewed to pose an immediate threat to the security of the Republics, force their surrender and thus defeat British armies and dent imperial prestige.

This would then enable the Boer forces to initiate their secondary objective; sparking a rebellion amongst the predominantly Afrikaans speaking population of the Cape Colony. With rebellion flaming through British territory and behind the British logistic lines the Boer forces would then defeat the British relief columns and force the British government to the negotiating table. This

⁸¹ Colonel D.E. Peddle, LONG CECIL The Gun made in Kimberley during the Siege, *Military History Journal*, Vol 4 No 1 - June 1977, 2.

⁸² J. Weale, *Paper III Siege of Kimberley Report of the Royal Engineers*, (London, Royal Engineers, 1903), 70-77.

‘siege and settlement’ strategy would fulfil the political strategy, much as it had done eighteen years before during the Transvaal War of Independence, which culminated in the battle of Majuba. However, pursuing this strategy would prove disastrous to the Republican cause.⁸³

2.3. Siege of Kimberley, 14 October 1899- 15 February 1900.

The Boer force surrounding Kimberley dominated the battlefield with longer range artillery. Their fire dominance enabled them to shell Kimberley without fear of effective counter shelling. Nor were they selective about their targets. The Boers fired approximately 8,500 shells, the overwhelming majority aimed at residences and the business areas of the two towns.⁸⁴ This situation changed slightly when on 19 January 1900, a field gun with equal range and which was manufactured in the De Beers workshops returned fire. To counter this, the Boers brought down a heavier artillery piece from Pretoria which opened fire on the town on 7 February 1900, causing widespread civilian panic. On 11 February 1900, 3,000 white women and children were sent down the mines for safety where they remained throughout this last week of the siege.⁸⁵ No such safety existed for the black mineworkers locked inside their closed compounds.

Earlier during the siege on 31 October 1899, the De Beers Consolidated Mines Directors in Kimberley had smuggled a telegram through the Boer lines to Britain’s High Commissioner to South Africa Sir Alfred Milner in Cape Town, which hinted at all sorts of catastrophes for the British war effort, should military resources not be directed to their aid. This is important to note as this was not the last time that the company Directors attempted to manipulate the military to their advantage through using their political connections.

⁸³ G. Benneyworth, (2002), *Reinterpreting Military Landscape, MA Research Report*, Johannesburg, University of Witwatersrand, (2002), 43-48.

⁸⁴ Colonel D.E. Peddle, *LONG CECIL The Gun made in Kimberley during the Siege*, 6.

⁸⁵ Colonel D.E. Peddle, *LONG CECIL The Gun made in Kimberley during the Siege*, 16.

The Directors conveyed the possibility of an uprising among their black workers should the diamond workings remain closed due to a protracted siege and reported that food reserves were low. They suggested that food shortages would prove disastrous for the white civilians trapped in town. The Directors mentioned that the Boer forces positioned between Kimberley and Orange River Station numbered no more than three thousand men, which was more than just a hint that the military authorities should take them seriously in their request for action. Were they not to respond then the Directors implied that they would surrender the town.

We hope with the arrival of General Buller measures will be taken for the immediate relief of this place. Our information, which is reliable, gives not more than 2,000 to 3,000 Boers between this place and Orange River, and in our opinion we could already have been relieved without risk by the present force in Cape Colony. We have a very limited supply of coal, and when it is done we must close down the works, which will cause serious trouble amongst our 10,000 savages in our compounds, who are now kept quiet by being kept at work. If we discharge them, and send them home, they are sure to be driven back to the town by the Boers, which must lead to heavy loss of life. As to the question of food supply, though well provided with some things, we have only nine days tinned meat in case cattle are taken by the Boers, which of course, is probable. We do not know the reasons which have delayed our relief, but we think Your Excellency ought to weigh the risks caused by delay to this place with its 30,000 inhabitants, 10,000 of whom are raw savages. Now that the General has arrived we respectfully request to be informed as to the policy to be adopted regarding our relief, so as to enable us to take our own steps in case relief is refused. We are sending this by special messenger to Orange River, and will await your reply.⁸⁶

When Milner received the telegram he showed it to General Buller who commanded the South African Field Force, yet Milner appears to have sided with the Directors. Milner advised Buller to bear in mind that the black population attached immense importance to Kimberley. Should the city capitulate, this would damage British prestige and impact negatively on Anglo-African relations in South Africa. This appears to be an attempt to dictate policy to the military, in favour of De Beers Consolidated Mines.

⁸⁶ Maurice, F, Major General Sir, *History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902*, London, Hurst and Africanett Limited, Volume 1, , (1906), 65.

Buller immediately requested Lt. Colonel Kekewich in Kimberley to clarify the matter:

“Civilians in Kimberley representing situation there as serious. Have heard nothing about this from you. Send appreciation of the situation immediately”.⁸⁷

When Kekewich received this signal, smuggled through by a runner, on 9 November 1899, he realised that Rhodes and his cohorts had transmitted conflicting and alarmist information behind his back. He immediately responded, informing Buller that while the situation was not critical and that the city could stand a siege, the scenario could worsen should the Boers bring up heavy artillery.⁸⁸

Buller’s first instinct was to trust an army officer, for he mistrusted these capitalists, yet he could not ignore the power that they wielded. If he did not come to their aid then he feared the risk that they would undermine the defence of British interests and induce the surrender the town. They had no power to surrender Kimberley given that martial law prevailed, yet they could withhold key resources, making it difficult to defend the town. On the matter Buller later stated that,

I should have preferred to have diverted every possible man of my forces to Natal, for in Natal lay my true objective – the principle force of the enemy. But at the same time I felt it impossible to ignore Kimberley. That town represented to the native the symbol of British power and property in South Africa, and I feared the effect of its fall upon the native mind in general and upon the Basuto’s in particular.” Moreover, though I felt the fullest confidence in the military commandant, Colonel Kekewich, I did not trust the other powers within the city. Very reluctantly, therefore, I decided to divide my forces.⁸⁹

To deal with the Kimberley scenario, Buller ordered the 1st Infantry Division under Lt. General Lord Methuen to assemble at Orange River Station, located 120km south of Kimberley, and to then lift the siege. However, he seriously underestimated the task allocated to Methuen, as events later proved.

⁸⁷ W.A.J. O’Meara, (1926), *Lt-Colonel Kekewich in Kimberley*, as quoted in T. Pakenham, *The Boer War*, Johannesburg, Jonathan Ball Publishers (1978), 185.

⁸⁸ T. Pakenham, *The Boer War*, 185.

⁸⁹ Evidence to the Royal Commission, 17 February 1903.

At the start of the siege there were 11,106 black workers locked up inside the compounds.⁹⁰

Rhodes gave instructions that his compound manager, W.D. Fynn, remove as many of the workers as possible from Kimberley in order to reduce downtime labour costs resulting from the siege.⁹¹

Fynn was to lead the workers through the gauntlet beyond the Boer siege lines and leave them there to find their own way back to their homes. This would result in less mouths to feed enabling De Beers to slash their business overheads. Yet by ejecting these workers, De Beers knew exactly what risks they would face, given that they had highlighted this risk to Milner in their message only seven days before.

On 7 November 1899, the company tried to force 3,700 Basotho workers to vacate the compounds and return to Basutoland (Lesotho). On Rhodes's instructions 1,700 workers from the De Beers mine compound and 2,000 from the Weselton compound were to go.⁹² The Boers were not about to allow this, as the more mouths to feed inside the town, the faster the food stockpiles would be eaten. The workers were turned back. In the weak light of dawn the garrison artillery opened fire on the workers. When Kekewich realised the error he permitted them back through the siege lines and into the compounds where they were locked up.⁹³

Undeterred by this additional attempts were made and over time the workforce was whittled down to about 4,500 men.⁹⁴ By 4 December 1899, all mining operations had ceased. Conditions in the compounds were dire. Due to starvation 1,700 workers still inside the De Beers mine compound tried to break out and had to be subdued at bayonet point by the army. W.D. Fynn later recorded

⁹⁰ Based on a military census undertaken by Kekewich at the outbreak of the war.

⁹¹ W.D. Fynn, unpublished manuscript, as quoted in S, Lunderstedt, *This is Frances Baard an Educational Course*, 188.

⁹² S, Lunderstedt, *This is Frances Baard*, 188.

⁹³ T. Pakenham, *The Boer War*, Johannesburg, Jonathan Ball Publishers (1979), 185.

⁹⁴ W.D. Fynn, unpublished manuscript, 9.

that 1,600 workers inside the compounds died from scurvy during the siege. He attributed this to the General Manager neglecting to provision the compounds adequately to withstand a siege.⁹⁵

On 20 December 1899, rationing was only seriously enforced when the military commandeered all foodstuffs in Kimberley. Again racial policy would prevail as to who received the best and the worst nutrition. People who were designated as 'white' or 'coloured' individually received daily 14 ounces of bread or 10 ounces of Boer miel and flour, two ounces of mealies or corn, two ounces of rice, two ounces of sugar, ¼ of tea and ½ an ounce of coffee. Meat was half a pound per day. Those determined to be Indians' received two ounces of mielie meal, four ounces of corn, eight ounces of rice and the same tea coffee and sugar allowance as whites. Those who were regarded as 'natives' received six ounces of mielie meal, four ounces of corn, two ounces of samp, and tea, coffee and sugar as per the others. It was the 'whites' who had the only access to meat. All mine workers were to continue being fed by the mining companies which was one tablespoonful of mielie meal per day.⁹⁶

The Boer artillery pounded away and, although they killed and wounded a minimal number of civilians and troops and damaged property, they failed to induce surrender. Total deaths recorded during the siege were 1,679.⁹⁷ Of this 1,648 were those classified as 'natives', the chief cause of death being scurvy, followed by infantile diarrhoea and pneumonia.⁹⁸ The death rate for black babies was 935 out of every 1,000.⁹⁹ W.D. Fynn recorded 1,600 deaths in the compounds alone.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁵ S. Lunderstedt, *This is Frances Baard*, 188.

⁹⁶ A.J. Beet and C.B. Harris, *Kimberley under Siege*, Kimberley, Diamond Fields Advertiser, (1950), 43.

⁹⁷ Africana Library, (Hereafter Africana), Kimberley Corporation Mayors Minute, Municipal Year ending 31 December 1899, 110-121; Kimberley Corporation Mayors Minute, Municipal Year ending 31 December 1900, 72-85.

⁹⁸ Africana, Kimberley Corporation Mayors Minute, Municipal Year ending (31 December 1899), 83.

⁹⁹ A.J. Beet and CB Harris, *Kimberley under Siege*, 61.

¹⁰⁰ W.D. Fynn, unpublished manuscript, as quoted in S, Lunderstedt, *This is Frances Baard*, 12.

Boer shellfire claimed the lives of nine civilians.¹⁰¹ The brunt fell on the mineworkers in the compounds who starved to death.

One final point on the Siege of Kimberley. In all the histories and sources I have read on the siege and the war, I have never read any argument that the shelling of civilians by the Boers would result in a retaliatory response. Particularly in the case of Kimberley where civilians were directly targeted by artillery fire. Most of the garrison's key defence works were built on the top of mine dumps, the only high points in the area. These forts made excellent artillery targets yet they were never shelled into destruction. My view is that because of this targeting of civilians, views hardened in the British high command and in the minds of soldiers who would later come into contact with Boer civilians.

2.4. Relief of Kimberley.

On 21 November 1899, Methuen's Relief Column left Orange River Station. Following the western railway line they drove the Boer forces from their defences at Belmont, Graspan and Modder River within a week. On 11 December 1899, Methuen blundered at Magersfontein and was defeated. Stalemate followed during which the British army reorganised and reinforced itself between Orange River Station and Modder River.

Field Marshal Lord Roberts arrived in South Africa to replace Buller during February 1900. Roberts set out to first invade the Orange Free State Republic while simultaneously lifting the Kimberley siege and to then invade the Transvaal Republic. On 15 February 1900, Roberts' Cavalry Division outflanked Magersfontein and ended the siege. On 13 March 1900, his forces captured Bloemfontein bringing to a close the Western Campaign.¹⁰²

¹⁰¹ Information supplied by the McGregor Museum, Kimberley in 1998.

¹⁰² G. Benneyworth, *Reinterpreting Military Landscape*, 51.

The lifting of the siege did not mean a sudden end to the impact of war and the displacement of civilians in the Kimberley area. Mining operations were severely hampered by the siege, and labour supplies disrupted. The issue of labour was not going to improve and would be a dogged issue for De Beers Consolidated Mines throughout the war. One of the primary causes of this was the very war itself. The British army had a voracious appetite for labour and were prepared to pay premium wages to recruit it. In particular black labour who initially could do the menial tasks thus releasing more fighting troops; and then later as the campaign dragged on, be recruited into combatant roles as a final Boer morale breaker.

After the invasion of the Boer republics in 1900, Boer civilians and property were targeted, looted and destroyed. By mid-year arson and destruction would become official policy. By year end the fighting landscape would see the emergence of a systematic scorched earth policy and the emergence of refugee camps, as the struggle took on its most brutal dimension where all republican civilians formed a military target.

2.5. Total War, arson as a morale breaker, 1900.

The broad understanding of the historiography of scorched earth and refugee camps and forced labour camps is anchored around the onset of the guerrilla war and British military reprisals against civilians, from mid-1900. The literature consulted for this thesis does not date this to the beginning of the war, other than Kessler, who described the impact of British military policy on black civilians trapped inside Mafeking in the siege during 13 October 1899 -17 May 1900. Kessler described this as the Mafeking Model and saw it as a harbinger of what lay ahead for black civilians during the war.¹⁰³

¹⁰³ G. Benneyworth, *Reinterpreting Military Landscape*, 27.

Inside Mafeking were a large number of black mineworkers who were not from the Cape Colony nor the Boer republics and who had left the Rand as war commenced. They exchanged their labour for rations and worked at great risk building defence works for the garrison, as did the compound workers in Kimberley. Rations for the approximately 7,500 black civilians were from the beginning of the siege of a lower nutritional standard than for the white inhabitants and had to be purchased by all who did not work. Their basic diet was oats (horse feed) which was further economised by the military who invented a process called “sowans stew”.¹⁰⁴ The flour from the oats was first extracted and used to bake bread for the white inhabitants through a process whereby the oats were winnowed, cleaned, kiln dried, ground and steamed, sieved twice and then baked. The husks were then sold to the black civilians.

This differing policy applied to the two groups based on race is exactly the same as the later camp rationing policies where Boer refugees did not have to purchase their rations with cash or labour. Black refugees in the Phase One Native Refugee Camps and the Phase Two forced labour camps whenever possible were required to pay for their food. Black men who had either civilian or military employment and whose families were living in the camps were forced to have two thirds of their wages deducted to pay for their family’s food.

Once the Mafeking defences were established the military implemented a leave or starve policy. The food issuing stores were closed and the black mineworker refugees were told to leave town, run the gauntlet through the Boer positions and head north to Kanye in Bechuanaland. There a refugee camp had been prepared by British forces. Kessler notes that this was the first ‘concentration camp’ of the war and demonstrates the colonial policy of refusing to aid indigenous populations even when they faced starvation. This was an adherence to the let die policy.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴ G. Benneyworth, *Reinterpreting Military Landscape*, 36.

¹⁰⁵ G. Benneyworth, *Reinterpreting Military Landscape*, 43.

My view is that it is critical to link the early events of 1899 and 1900 to the eventual camp system which developed at the close of 1900 and which came on strength in 1901. Besides from Kessler identifying the Mafeking Model, research which I undertook in the 1990s for my MA research report identified that arson as a weapon of war, in particularly that of a Boer morale breaker, occurred during the early stages of the war and not in mid-1900.

It is worth noting that, contrary to current interpretations of the scorched earth policy, Roberts was not the first British commander to follow such a path of action. His tactics were identical to those first used by Lord Methuen in 1899 and on the first day of the new century in 1900.

Methuen had served in South Africa during the Warren Expedition in late 1884/1885.¹⁰⁶ My hypothesis is, that based on his experience, he had realised the power of incendiarism as a morale breaker, particularly when applied to that symbol of Boer-ness, the wagon laager. After the battle of Belmont on 23 November 1899, Methuen's forces captured an intact Boer laager. After looting it, all the wagons and stores were set alight, on Methuen's instructions.¹⁰⁷ On 1 January 1900, Methuen's forces attacked a Boer laager of Cape Rebels at Sunnyside farm near Douglas, 40 kilometres away from Belmont. After disarming the prisoners and looting their laager, all the wagons were burnt.¹⁰⁸

Why these wagons were burnt when they might have been put into service by the British forces, when there was a critical shortage of wagons at the time, has never been answered. I believe that Methuen had realised the potent symbol that the wagon and the laager both held and represented for the Boer people and that these wagons were the private property of the burghers opposing him. Therefore when word of their destruction spread, the news would strike straight to the core and

¹⁰⁶ This was a British military expedition to Bechuanaland, to assert British sovereignty in the face of encroachments from Germany, the Transvaal and to suppress the Boer freebooter states of Stellaland and Goshen.

¹⁰⁷ P.S. Methuen, Lord, *Dispatch of Belmont Action*, 26 November 1899 in *The True History of the War Part II*, London, Harrison & Sons, (1899), p. 7.

¹⁰⁸ R.L. Wallace, *The Australians at the Boer War*, Canberra, Australian War Memorial, (1976), p. 81-84.

represent a loss of symbolic protective power, thus undermining Boer morale. Methuen followed this up in the Ramdam area of the Orange Free State Republic, in January 1900. On the pretext that several Boer farms positioned along his right flank formed supply bases for the commandos, Methuen ordered their destruction and set a precedent for methodologies synonymous with the South African War.¹⁰⁹ Therein is the evidence of arson as a morale breaker – captured livestock and horses were pressed into service, yet not the wagons.

On 5 May 1900, Roberts' army struck north for the Transvaal and crossed the Vaal River two weeks later. Brushing aside the conventional forces of the Boer Republics, his troops tramped northwards, seized Johannesburg on 31 May 1900, and occupied Pretoria on 5 June 1900. Having captured the capital cities and the Rand gold mines, Roberts initially believed that he could pacify the civilian population. Consequently he issued proclamations promising British protection for those burghers and their families who desisted from further military action, handed in their weapons and signed an oath of neutrality.

Robert's strategy for winning the war hinged on capturing the cities and towns, consolidating his supply lines around South Africa's railway network, reopening the mines, restoring food production, and mopping up any remaining military resistance.¹¹⁰ Yet he did not anticipate a protracted guerrilla war, which is exactly what exploded around his logistic routes. By mid-1900, Roberts maintained a tenuous grip on the Republican infrastructure for he failed to wrest control of the rural landscape from the Boer forces. Although his invasion represented a steamroller flattening the opposition, his army initially flattened little. Roberts became used to easy victories during his invasion where his forces greatly outnumbered the Republican forces on the conventional battlefield and was therefore ill prepared for the subsequent guerrilla war.

¹⁰⁹ G. Benneyworth, *Reinterpreting Military Landscape*, 56.

¹¹⁰ G. Benneyworth, *The Department of Native Refugee Camps: A Historical Overview*, August 2006, SA History Online, <http://www.sahistory.org.za/article/department-native-refugee-camps>, as accessed on 25 March 2016.

2.6. Emergence of Total War-June 1900-1902.

General C. de Wet's operations during June 1900, heralded the ignition of this new war – the guerrilla campaign. On 7 June 1900, his forces attacked and captured British supply depots along the railway line north of Kroonstad. They also attacked the garrisons guarding key points along this line and sabotaged railway infrastructure between Vereeniging and Kroonstad.¹¹¹ This isolated Roberts from his southern army and rear supply bases and temporarily cut his communications off from Britain.

Faced with an escalating guerrilla war Roberts retaliated. His response aimed itself against the Republican's Achilles' heel and took the form of a scorched earth policy, targeting those civilians who were deemed to be assisting the Boer forces. These 'collaborators' were defined as civilians residing close to points along the railway infrastructure that had been targeted by the Commandos. Retaliation involved the destruction of their homesteads, with most either being dynamited or burnt. However, incendiarism and looting failed to halt escalating Boer military activity.

From June 1900, farm burning became widespread British military practice and extended to all areas adjacent to the railway infrastructure and the rural countryside. British column commanders in many instances interpreted their orders more widely than the narrow definition of civilian collaboration and destroyed Boer properties regardless of whether these were located near the scene of the Boer guerrilla strikes or not. Livestock, the capital assets of the rural population, were seized or killed.

These reprisals hit both Boer and black families alike - left to fend for themselves on the veld, they faced a bitter winter during 1900. Some, driven by desperation handed themselves over to the

¹¹¹ National Archives of South Africa (hereafter referred to as NASA), Lord Roberts Papers, Vol. 6, various dispatches detailing the numerous Boer attacks on the lines of communication.

British forces or were interned inside camps being assembled near key towns or railway sidings towards the end of 1900.

In November 1900, Lord Kitchener succeeded Roberts as Commander in Chief. The war then entered an intensified and more brutal phase; one that was to leave its mark on South Africa.

Kitchener realised that to crush ongoing Boer resistance, it was fundamental that he wrest control of the rural landscape from his opponent, as the manipulation and control of the landscape was key to winning the war.

2.7. Total War consolidated, November 1900-May 1902.

Consequently, Kitchener immediately extended Roberts's retaliatory tactics by applying a systematic scorched earth policy throughout the Boer Republics and supported this with a military strategy similar to that used by General Weyler during the Cuban War of 1868-1878 and again during the insurrection of 1895-1898 when Weyler applied the Reconcentrado system.¹¹² The aim, to literally flush the Boer commandos from their hiding places by scouring the landscape and remove from the countryside all life sustaining means, including civilians.

In Army Circular 29 Kitchener spelled out how he intended to claim power of the terrain and how he was going to deal with enemy civilians.

Of the various methods suggested for the accomplishment of this object, one that has been strongly recommended, and has lately been successfully tried on a small scale, is the removal of all men, women and children and natives from the districts which the enemy persistently occupy. This course has been pointed out...as the most effective method of limiting the endurance of the Guerrillas.¹¹³

Unlike Roberts' retaliatory strikes Kitchener went further, implementing a three-pronged counter guerrilla warfare strategy to crush ongoing Boer military resistance:

¹¹² For information on Cuban Reconcentrado's see: S. Kessler, 'The African and Coloured Concentration Camps' published in Pretorius, F. (ed). (2001), *Scorched Earth*, Cape Town, Human and Rousseau.

¹¹³ NASA, MGP, Vol. 258 Army Circular 29, 21 December 1900.

- forced removals and land clearances and the destruction of rural infrastructure through the use of scorched earth and the incarceration of civilians into what became known as concentration camps
- securing the railway network by constructing at least 8,000 fortifications known as blockhouses and then extending these to 'fence' in the fighting terrain, thus contracting the Boer forces zones of influence and operational fluidity. This military grid reduced the Boer commando's mobility - the control of landscape being crucial to the outcome of military operations
- coordinated counter guerrilla warfare operations using superior numbers of troops, to engage and grind down the weakened Boer forces and through attrition losses, force their surrender or operational ineffectiveness.¹¹⁴

Once Kitchener's forces started to secure their grip over the military landscape, the civilian population then experienced the full brunt of his strategy, referred to in this thesis as Total War. They were forcibly removed, their homes, kraals and crops burnt and livestock seized or destroyed. Numerous towns and locations suffered the same fate, being either totally or partially destroyed.¹¹⁵ This strategy shattered the rural economy, reduced the taxation base for the commandos and governments still in the field and destroyed their economic and logistic means with which to resist Imperial subjugation.

The captured civilians swept up by the military columns were dropped into military controlled zones, already secured by British troops. The refugee camps, which became known as concentration camps, were established near towns, mines and railway sidings; the internees separated by the British along racial lines.

¹¹⁴ F. Maurice, Major General Sir., *History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902*, (London, Hurst and Africanett Limited, Volume 4), (1906) 570.

¹¹⁵ Bluebook: Cd 324. (1901), *Return on buildings burnt in each month, June 1900 to January 1901, including farm buildings, mills, cottages and hovels*, London, HMSO.

Prior to formation of the Native Refugee Department in July 1901, black civilians were interned into what this thesis terms Phase One Native Refugee Camps.¹¹⁶ These were usually located about one mile away from the Boer camps. However in Kimberley due to the position of the white suburbs, mines, compounds and locations, the distance between the Native Refugee Camp at Blankenbergvlei farm and the Burgher Refugee Camp near the reservoir were approximately three to four miles apart.

Official racial preference carried through into the British policy in their management of civilians. Boer civilians received a basic, and at times inadequate British army ration, medical assistance and shelter. Black refugees received a less nutritious diet, infrequent medical help and virtually no building materials with which to build shelters. This was in line with British policy, namely reducing the financial cost of the war, despite the unfolding humanitarian crisis. This policy fell within the paradigm of let die, whereby Total War involves the systematic and calculated incorporation of civilians as participants in the combat. Black civilians were not just the casual victims of armies, they became subjected to unprecedented levels of systemised incarceration, conscription, forced labour, violence, and mass dying on a let die basis.¹¹⁷

Refugee numbers increased as the ongoing fighting and Kitchener's scorched earth policy drove increasing numbers of destitute people into the camps. Inside the military zones, able bodied black women, men and children exchanged labour for food. Some refugees sought work with the British troops and the administrators of the Boer camps. Latrine cleaning and other camp works were rewarded with tinned meat, or discarded scraps. Death from infectious diseases, exposure and

¹¹⁶ S. Kessler and others who cite his work refer to these as the original camps.

¹¹⁷ R. Chickering, *Total War: The Use and Abuse of a Concept*, in M.F Boemke and R. Chickering and S. Forster, *Anticipating Total War: The American and German Experiences 1871-1914*, Washington/ Cambridge: German Historical Institute, Cambridge University Press, (1994), 13-28.

malnutrition in these Phase One Native Refugee Camps increased and by early 1901, many black refugees faced starvation.

2.8. Minerals, Capital and Native Refugee Camps.

The British political, military and business alliance had, as one of its objectives, restoring the gold, coal and diamond mining industries centred on the Witwatersrand and Kimberley. Milner believed that a resumption of gold mining would further demoralize Boer military resistance. The Witwatersrand Native Labour Association was created and permitted by the Minister for Native Affairs, to recruit mining labour from the Native Refugee Camps.

The first gold mine reopened on 4 May 1901, the opening ceremony attended by Kitchener himself, and by July 1901 seven shafts were back at work.¹¹⁸ There can be no co-incidence that these gold mines were brought back into production at the around same time that the formal structure for the existing Phase One Native Refugee Camps was being established, from which would emerge the Phase Two forced labour camps, operated by the newly formed Native Refugee Department, which fell under direct British military command. By July 1901, the Transvaal camps were brought under this institutional framework and by 1 August 1901, the Orange River Colony camps followed.¹¹⁹ All black refugees were to be administered by this department, which had as one of its aims underwriting the British war effort by reducing the financial cost of the war through coercion into forced labour.

While the interned Boers were not compelled to labour, the black refugees, due to widespread destitution and British military policy, were coerced into growing crops for the Native Refugee Department and to act as a labour reserve for the British army.¹²⁰ The black internees employed

¹¹⁸ H.W. Wilson, *After Pretoria: The Guerrilla War*, London, The Amalgamated Press Ltd, Vol. 2, (1902), p. 629.

¹¹⁹ P. Warwick, *African People*, p. 145.

¹²⁰ NASA, Transvaal Administration Reports, Final Report, p. 3.

and their families were allowed to purchase mealies at ½ d per pound or 7s 6d a bag.¹²¹ Those internees who refused to work had to pay double this amount. Simply put, the camps operated on a no work no food policy, which coerced the internees into the labour system. December 1901 saw over 6,000 workers channelled to the army, while some 13,000 camp internees were employed by the military.¹²²

After the siege, Kimberley had always remained a key military centre due to its diamond mines and its geographical position as a supply terminus for military columns operating in the nearby Orange River Colony and Transvaal. With the land clearances in the Boshof Magisterial District during the last quarter of 1900 and into 1901, refugees were dispatched to Kimberley. Boers were interned near Reservoir Road in an area which today is occupied partly by Newton suburb, the Virgin Active Gym and a rugby stadium.¹²³ Citizens of the Cape Colony who took up arms on the Boer side who assisted the Boer forces were known as Cape Rebels and they were incarcerated in a separate section of the camp. One of these rebels was J.A. Raubenheimer and his wife who were removed from their farm Vygeboomsvlakte at Dry Harts, where shortly a forced labour camp was going to be established.

Black refugees were directed by the military to Blankenbergvlei farm which was owned by De Beers Consolidated Mines. The first refugees arrived on 24 November 1900.¹²⁴ Numbers increased continually as other magisterial districts in the Orange River Colony and Vaal River districts of the Transvaal were cleared of civilians.

¹²¹ NASA, Transvaal Administration Reports, Final Report, p. 3.

¹²² VAB, CSO, Vol. 86, 358/02. Correspondence from De Lotbiniere to Major HJ Goold-Adams.

¹²³ This is local knowledge in Kimberley, particularly amongst the older residents and where the camp memorial and burial site is located in this area.

¹²⁴ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, GM Collection, F & E 1/1/1.



Figure 2, Google Earth. Contemporary Kimberley overlays the Boer camp, Blankenbergvlei and Mankurwane's Location.

Throughout the 1901 creation of this camp, De Beers Consolidated Mines demanded that the military remove these refugees from their property, though to no avail. The military, similar to the infighting during the Siege between Rhodes and Kekewich, were having none of it. As the counter guerrilla war strategy intensified, railway truck allocations for civilian supplies to Kimberley, Beaconsfield and the mining houses were to fall under direct military command, and be curtailed.¹²⁵

By August 1901, a second native refugee camp was established outside of Kimberly on New Klippiesspan Farm. The archival evidence shows that towards the end of September 1901, the refugees at Blankenbergvlei were railed to Dry Harts, and at some stage those at Klippiesspan

¹²⁵ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, GM Collection, F & E 1/1/1; Interview May 1900 with Major Armstrong.

joined them. Dry Harts then formed the ultimate destination for these two camps and also for the camps at Orange River Station and Taung which were relocated around the same time.

With the departure of the two native refugee camps in Kimberley, life continued much as did under wartime conditions. Civilians went about their business, black mineworkers remained locked inside the compounds and working the mines, while the Boers remained interned, rationed and sheltered, until after the cessation of hostilities on 31 May 1902.

What is important to note about the closed compounds of Kimberley (and those on the Witwatersrand) is that they formed the model on how black civilians would be treated during the guerrilla war. The conceptual framework and manifestation of closed compounds on the Kimberley mines and the later concentration camps were structurally identical. Both forms of ‘wartime camps’ and ‘work-time’ camps bring home the understanding, ‘of the seamless with which the more visible sovereign violence of the camp has long intersected with a more dispersed, bio political mode of state and market-sanctioned violence’.¹²⁶

Weiss distinguishes between ‘state killing’ and the more amorphous condition of ‘letting die’, an angle which this thesis covers in the remaining chapters.¹²⁷ Letting die as a direct result of forced labour, inadequate shelter, negligible food supplies and virtually non-existent medical attention was a core characteristic of the Phase One Native Refugee Camps and the Phase Two forced labour camps.¹²⁸

With the separation of internees in the Boer and black camps along racial lines the internee experiences were fundamentally different to each other. Much like the mining compound system versus white suburban Kimberley, this forcible enclosure resulted in two completely separate

¹²⁶ L.M. Weiss, *Exceptional Space*, 21-32.

¹²⁷ L.M. Weiss, *Exceptional Space*, 21-32.

¹²⁸ Note that this thesis refers to the Phase Two camps as forced labour camps. During the war the British authorities called them Native Refugee Camps and all other contemporary scholars repeat this descriptor or referred to them as black concentration camps.

experiences. Camps for black refugees were operated according to an entirely different vision than that of the Boer camps. Internees had to build their own shelters. Privacy, domesticity as well as food and basic medical care were methodologically neglected. The public veneer of protective custody in the instance of the black camps gave way to a disciplined existence and extractive labour according to the presumption that they would voluntarily or involuntarily have become complicit with the rural Boer guerrilla campaign.

This strengthens the realisation that the black camps during the South African War and those that this thesis will examine should not be seen in isolation, but within a wider socio-economic and political paradigm of colonial expansionism and exploitation of human and natural resources on a grand scale.¹²⁹

2.9. Destabilizing participation.

The differing experiences between black and Boer civilians had its roots in the compound systems developed in Kimberley. From rationing to shelter and medical care, right through to the life and death struggle inside the camps the experience was fundamentally different based on race.

Different values of life were attached to race and different policies developed and applied by both capital and the military along this principle.

Most commemorative events during the centenary though focussed around the military actions of combatants and Boer civilians interned in the Boer concentration camps.¹³⁰ Kessler advocated since the 1990s, that the paradigm to the black and Boer refugee camps should shift from one of sole martyrdom (the Boers) to that of mutual suffering and that the experience of both the black and Boer refugees and internees should be seen as a shared experience at the hands of a common

¹²⁹ L.M. Weiss, *Exceptional Space*, 27.

¹³⁰ L. Witz, G. Minkley and C. Rassool, 'No End of a [History] Lesson: Preparations for the Anglo Boer War Centenary Commemoration', *South African Historical Journal*. Vol. 41, (1999), 371.

enemy.¹³¹ While accurate that it was the British forces that applied Total War, the experiences were different and therefore certainly not a shared one.

The definitions of the term ‘participation’ have blacks performing the action of taking part in something and making a contribution. In the centenary context and subsequent scholarly writing ‘participation’ implies an addition of blacks to the main event. The categories of the ‘participants’ remain racialized and gendered and, unless destabilised and questioned, the conflict will always remain a white man’s war, while seeking to find in the margins, those who remain defined as ‘other’ to a ‘central struggle’.¹³²

So it was in this power struggle the blacks ‘participated’ and were required to be integrated into the historiography, one that remains dominated by the Boers and the Empire. Participation is an addition and this is true for works produced over the last 15 years about the ‘black concentration camps’. This thesis argues against this entire notion of participation. The roots of segregation are anchored in the Kimberley mines and compounds which set the template for the camps which followed during the war. The experience of blacks in the native refugee and forced labour camps was fundamentally different to that of the Boers. Theirs was not a participatory role. Theirs was a standalone experience of land, labour, war and displacement.

¹³¹ S. Kessler, *Shifting the paradigm*, 110-147.

¹³² L. Witz, G. Minkley and C. Rassool, ‘No End’, 384.

Chapter three. The Kimberley Native Refugee Camps.

This aim of this chapter is to narrate a history of two of the three camps at Kimberley while offering an insight on the experience of the internees inside these two camps. The focus falls on the Native Refugee Camps at Blankenbergvlei farm and on New Klippiesspan farm. During its existence the camp at Blankenbergvlei was called the Native Refugee Camp at Blankenbergvlei. The camp at Klippiesspan had no official name, hence it is referred to as Klippiesspan Camp.

The chapter is divided into two sections. Section A will describe the formation of and existence of the Native Refugee Camp at Blankenbergvlei and introduce the Klippiesspan Camp. Klippiesspan Camp is described in Section B and its history is primarily constructed from the archaeological evidence and the few archive sources that refer to it. The camp in Kimberley which interned Boer civilians, then known as the Burgher Refugee Camp and in current discourse as the Boer Concentration Camp is not part of this study, other than when references to black refugees were found in its archive.

The research methodology used archival records, terrain examinations and archaeological surveys to construct this narrative. To date no archaeological excavations have ever been undertaken in South Africa on Native Refugee camp terrains, so this material forms an original archive. No secondary literature exists that could be consulted as no written history about these two camps exist. The only publications to date about the Kimberley and Dry Harts camps are my own published work, namely one book chapter in 2016 and one seminar presentation in 2014, both delivered and published in France, a media release in 2001 on the BBC, and a publication on SA History Online in 2006.¹³³

¹³³ G. Benneyworth, *Le camp comme archive. Les populations civiles noires dans les camps de travail forcé de Kimberley et de Dry Harts pendant la guerre d'Afrique du Sud, 1899-1902.*(Actes Sud, Berberova, April 2016); G. Benneyworth, *Traces of enslavement - a forgotten history of indigenous civilians in British concentration camps during the South African War, 1899-1902.*(International symposium *The archaeology of violence: wartime violence, mass violence*, (Lens Louvre, 2014), <http://amenageurs.inrap.fr/preventive-archaeology/Events/The-archaeology-of->

3.1. Notes on the archives consulted.

The primary source material for constructing a history of the Kimberley Native Refugee Camp at Blankenbergvlei are records housed in the De Beers Consolidated Mines archives in Kimberley. This material included the General Managers Collection, a collection titled Native Camps and Natives Generally, the Board of Directors Meeting Minute Books, correspondence between the General Manager and the military, and the estate files for Blankenbergvlei estate.

It should be noted that in relation to work by Kessler and those citing his research is that Kessler claimed that he consulted, “within the domain of the mining companies during the war, every document in the record that describes the operations of the mining companies during the war was collected”.¹³⁴ Kessler’s work, according to his sources, made no use of the De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives which contain a wealth of information and insight into the experience of black refugees in Kimberley and the operations of this mining company during the war. Their archive would prove invaluable as a mining house record. Yet according to Kessler he consulted every document, yet again according to Kessler he was not allowed access to De Beer’s Consolidated Mines archive.¹³⁵ One wonders why not, amidst his discrepancies.

In 2008 I received permission to access these archives and again 2014. Were this access to specific records not enabled then the location and history of the Kimberley Native Refugee Camp at Blankenbergvlei would have been impossible to identify, as no other sources refer to the farm’s name. I acknowledge this crucial support from De Beers Consolidated Mines to enable my

[violence-wartime-violence-mass-violence/p-17863-1g1-Traces-of-enslavement-a-forgotten-history-of-indigenous-civilians-in-British-concentration-camps-during-the-South-African-War-1899-1902.htm](http://www.sahistory.org.za/article/department-native-refugee-camps), As accessed on 27 March 2016; Barnaby Phillips, *The place that time forgot*, (BBC, 29 November 2001), <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/1682972.stm>, As assessed on 27 March 2016; G. Benneyworth, *THE DEPARTMENT OF NATIVE REFUGEE CAMPS*, SA History Online, <http://www.sahistory.org.za/article/department-native-refugee-camps>, as assessed on 25 March 2016.

¹³⁴ S. Kessler, *The Black Concentration Camps*, 2012, 15-16.

¹³⁵ S. Kessler, *The Black Concentration Camps*, 2012, 13.

research for this thesis. Permission to access their records was not based on any prior bias in their favour on my part.

Additional material was also located in the Africana Library Kimberley, which included the Beaconsfield Municipality Minute Books 1900-1904, the Kimberley Medical Board of Health records, and the newspapers *Diamond Fields Advertiser* and *Weekly Free Press*. Other information was located in the archives of the Superintendent Refugee Camps (SRC) and Colonial Office (CO) held in the Free State Archives, the Military Governor Pretoria (MGP) collection housed at the National Archives of South Africa, and the Resident Magistrate Kimberley collection in the Western Cape Archives and Records Service.

The written archive for the Klippiespan Camp is virtually non-existent. The archive comprises of one map in the Colonial Office archives, a few references in the Superintendent Refugee Camps records and one media report in the *Weekly Free Press*. These combined sources point to a camp in the Orange River Colony, just beyond the border with the Cape Colony. The rest of the evidence formed an appraisal and interpretation of the archaeological evidence that was identified on the terrain during 2001-2008 and evidence uncovered during archaeological excavations undertaken during 2006-2008.

This again underwrites the point that the utilisation of written archival records alone, as is the case with all the authors consulted in the literature and, especially the work of Kessler that relying only on archival documents is limiting.

As mentioned previously the research for this thesis did not focus on the Kimberley Burgher Refugee Camp. During an archival audit in 2002, information about the Burgher camp was located in the Free State archives and copied. This in turn led to information about the Native Refugee camp because prior to the formalisation of the Native Refugee Camp at Blankenbergvlei, many of the Phase One Native Refugee Camps were managed by the Boer camp superintendents in terms of

control, rationing and medical arrangements. This research direction proved correct, as some references to the Native Refugee Camp were found in the Kimberley Burgher Refugee Camp archive.

3.2. Section A. The formation of the Kimberley Native Refugee Camps at Blankenbergvlei, November 1900 – September 1901.

This camp falls within the period of Phase One camps, which are broadly referred to in the literature reviewed for this thesis as ‘concentration camps’ and in the archives of the wartime period as Native Refugee Camps. The Kimberley Native Refugee Camp at Blankenbergvlei was not a forced labour camp, whereupon the Klippiesspan Camp may have started as one.

The profile of the Native Refugee Camp at Blankenbergvlei is similar to that of the Vryburg Native Refugee Camp. They both started as unofficial camps in late 1900. Many of the initial refugees trekked into Kimberley and Vryburg voluntarily to avoid the fighting that threatened their assets and brought with them livestock which meant they could initially sustain themselves. They also received support from residents in nearby ‘locations’; in the case of Kimberley from Mankurwane’s Location and Vlenters Location, and at Vryburg from the location there for which there is no identified name at the time in the archives. The area today is known as Huhudi.

On 24 November 1900, the De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives record the first arrival of black refugees from the Boshof Magisterial District in Kimberley. These refugees were directed to Kimberley by the military who were clearing out the farms in the Boshof district, or fled to Kimberley on their own accord to avoid the combat between the British forces and the Boshof Commando.¹³⁶

The De Beers estates inspector recorded:

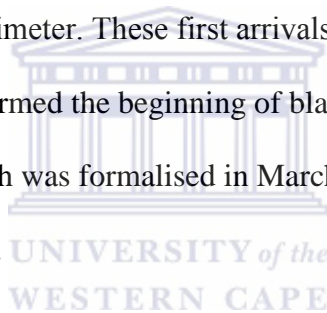
¹³⁶ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, GM Collection, F & E 1/1/1, 24 November 1900.

I find 9 native huts east of the old Anglo-Africaine heap, on the road to Ritchie's, occupied by natives who state, that they had been living on the farm Lowkop, (District of Boshof) but left about a week ago, being afraid of the Boers. They further state that they reported themselves, at some place in Kimberley and were told to put up their huts on this spot.

A further batch of 9 huts is near Amsterdam (Theunissen's) near Ritchie's homestead these natives came from farm Voruitzigt Piet Geldenhuys also in the district of Boshof, they...left for the same reason as the other. One of the natives being an old servant of Theunisson's.¹³⁷

On 26 November 1900, a notation added to this report instructed. "Clear them out – they will find some other place".¹³⁸

However, De Beers Consolidated Mines were not going to be able to institute this nor prevent any new arrivals from settling on Blankenbergvlei farm. Martial law overruled all civilian process and the refugees had military permission to outspan within the protective cordon offered by the Kimberley garrisons' defence perimeter. These first arrivals from farms Lowkop and Voruitzigt in the Boshof Magisterial District formed the beginning of black refugees settling in Kimberley in a military designated area and which was formalised in March 1901, under military control as the Kimberley Native Refugee Camp.



On 5 December 1900, the De Beers inspector reported back after meeting with these refugees:

I visited these natives' huts again this morning. Those near Blankenbergsvlei, have a note addressed to the Commissioner of Police, and signed by Capt. Fergusson, the Provost Marshal, stating that 16 natives (names given) have permission to stay near Blankenbergvlei. I told the holder of this note, to report himself to me on Tuesday afternoon for further orders. In reference to these near Theunissen's, the latter informs me that 2 huts will be removed as the natives occupying are going to Kimberley. 2 huts will be lifted over to Mr Hull's, the remainder he proposes to put on the plot registered in Marais's name, the rent for March he is paying.¹³⁹

De Beers sought clarity from the military as to why this settlement was permitted on their property.

After numerous requests for an explanation, on 20 December 1900, Captain Fergusson, the Provost

¹³⁷ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, Record No: 9054 Native Camps and Natives Generally [Box 2/1/36 Ref E], 24 November 1900.

¹³⁸ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, Record No: 9054 Native Camps and Natives Generally [Box 2/1/36 Ref E].

¹³⁹ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, Record No: 9054 Native Camps and Natives Generally [Box 2/1/36 Ref E]; De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, GM Collection, F & E 1/1/1.

Marshal reported to the Officer Commanding, Kimberley Garrison Major General Pretzman and to De Beers Consolidated Mines that the refugees settled at Blankenbergvlei were 18 in number and from the Boshof District.

They brought in their stock and were allowed to sell most of them to a Beaconsfield dealer. I then gave them a permit to reside on the Blankenberg location until it was safe in this [illegible] return to the farm...the natives found that they were living on the Blankenbergvlei and not in the location, as should I ordered them to move in at once to the best of my belief they have done so – the Secretary De Beers Consolidated Mines was notified to this effect.¹⁴⁰

This is the first reference to a location which was Mankurwane's Location, located a short distance away and bordering Blankenbergvlei farm. By 19 December 1900, more refugees arrived. De Beers requested that their estate manager ensure that these refugees be sent to 'Vlenter's Location' where 30 huts be built for them. The ratio applied in Kimberley at the time regards people and huts was approximately five to a hut, which indicates that these approximately 150 new arrivals were diverted to Vlenter's Location.¹⁴¹ From an initial core of approximately 50 refugees earlier in the month these 150 new arrivals is indicative of the escalating intensity of the guerrilla war being fought out in the Boshof magisterial district.

De Beers Consolidated Mines were experiencing a labour shortage which impacted heavily on their mining operations and reduced their mining output. The war had disrupted the migrant labour system and the military paid higher rates of pay to black men. In their annual report for the year ending 30 June 1901 the Directors reported that:

The native labour question has been most serious throughout the year, owing to the unsettled state of the country. Heretofore, our compounds were kept well filled with natives without the employment of labour agents. The natives all came of their own accord, and remained in the compounds from 6 to 12 months. In many cases large numbers of natives have remained at work for four and five years. It is now with great difficulty that the boys are induced to take out passes [contracts for work] for more than three months. This arrangement has been most unsatisfactory, for just as a boy has been trained to do good work, his pass expires and he leaves the compound. Agents have been employed in

¹⁴⁰ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, Record No: 9054 Native Camps and Natives Generally [Box 2/1/36 Ref E]

¹⁴¹ Africana Library, Kimberley Medical Board of Health, 5 March-28 March 1901, 11.

collecting labour in all parts of the Cape Colony, Basutoland, Rhodesia, Bechuanaland and such parts of the Transvaal as are free of the enemy. By this method a large number of floor boys and underground shovel boys have been obtained, but not the class of labour that can be trained for drilling. The scarcity of drill boys has greatly handicapped the output and the underground development work.¹⁴²

The scarcity of labour and the additional costs of having to hire labour touts to recruit, feed and transport labour to Kimberley was a concern to De Beers Consolidated Mines. Labour supply was erratic. It would have been extremely difficult and unsafe to traverse the countryside on foot to Kimberley due to the military operations underway and railway transport was problematic, as the military had first say over the use of the railway system. There was an obvious solution that could mitigate this and that was to acquire labour from the rapidly forming labour reservoir on their property by coercing all able bodied black male refugees to work on the mines.

If one analyses the language used in this report references to the refugees can be found. The report refers to the, “great difficulty that the boys are induced to take out passes [contracts for work] for more than three months. This arrangement has been most unsatisfactory, for just as a boy has been trained to do good work, his pass expires and he leaves the compound”. These men were from the rural areas and therefore, “not the class of labour that can be trained for drilling”.¹⁴³

The majority of the refugees were self-supporting, with their own stock, or cash in hand, and unwilling to leave their families to work on the mines. The Company Secretary wrote to the Kimberley Borough Council and the Chamber of Commerce to:

Draw their attention to the enormous influx of natives into Kimberley and Beaconsfield and to point out that although we still want labour for the mines it was a matter of very great difficulty to get any of these men to work, who apparently were able to live without doing any – such a state of things should not be tolerated in a mining centre such as this and to urge both the Council and Chamber to bring it to the notice of Government with a view to compel them to work.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴² De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, De Beers Consolidated Mines Annual Report 1901.

¹⁴³ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, De Beers Consolidated Mines Annual Report 1901.

¹⁴⁴ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, Directors Minute Book No. 4, 1901.

This term “compel to work” is the first evidence of a link that was starting to form between mining capital and the military in relation to the camps and how forced labour would be coerced.

On 23 January 1901, the General Manager of De Beers Consolidated Mines requested Major General Pretzman to advise the company when the military brought in refugees. The implication was that the military were settling refugees on Company estates without forewarning. On 20 February 1901, the General Manager of De Beers was advised that four more refugee huts were on Blankenbergvlei, an increase from 10 to 20.¹⁴⁵

On 8 February 1901, the Resident Magistrate Kimberley referred the question of responsibility for rationing black refugees to the Colonial Secretary, which he described as, “alien refugees from the Orange River Colony” and the Transvaal. Permission was granted to ration any foreign national who was a refugee and who the Resident Magistrate was satisfied was destitute.¹⁴⁶

The order was clear, only if destitute, which would be difficult to claim since De Beers Consolidated Mines and the military required labour and were actively advertising for labour. What this also reflects is the early emergence of the no work no food policy to coerce labour. This reference to “alien refugees” is extremely pertinent to later events when these Kimberley refugees were to be deported from Kimberley to Dry Harts.¹⁴⁷

Between January and March 1901 the issue of refugees not seeking work would be addressed by manipulating food supplies. The research identified that on 5 March 1901, a policy to curtail the freedom of movement for black refugees in Kimberley was first initiated, using the outbreak of bubonic plague in Cape Town as the reason.

¹⁴⁵ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, Record No: 9054 Native Camps and Natives Generally [Box 2/1/36 Ref E], 20 February 1901.

¹⁴⁶ Western Cape Archives and Records Service (hereafter referred to as KAB), Resident Magistrate Kimberley, 1/KIM, 5/2/1/3/17, 8 February 1901.

¹⁴⁷ This distinction around foreign nationals, as in persons who were not citizens of the Cape Colony, is a key point to my hypothesis which will be expanded upon as to why the Klippiesspan Camp was positioned where it was - outside of the Cape Colony's territory.

On that date during their weekly meeting the Beaconsfield Town Council raised the possibility of restricting blacks from travelling in order to prevent the spread of bubonic plague.¹⁴⁸ This appears disingenuous in that any risk of plague would be imported by people travelling up from the coast and not those already in camp or on route to the camp from rural areas where there was no plague. This forms the beginning of the consolidation process of ‘alien refugees’ into one centralised camp.

On that same date more refugees trekked into Kimberley with their wagons and outspanned on the west side of the Boshof Road near Mankurwane’s Location, with the intention of staying. The women refused to give any information to the De Beers Consolidated Mines’ estate inspector about the wagons, and no men were to be found. The residents of Mankurwane’s location reported that these refugees were from the Orange River Colony and were grazing their sheep near Blankenbergvlei. “These wagons form a little camp and are altogether distinct from the native refugee camp on the south east side of Blankenbergvlei.”¹⁴⁹ The De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives reflect that refugees were also living in Mankurwane’s Location.¹⁵⁰

The refugees outspanned with wagons at Mankurwane’s Location were ordered to move to Blankenbergvlei. On 13 March 1901, this move was in process as the, “first lot of wagons gone and the second have moved to the Refugee Camp.”¹⁵¹ This is first reference to the site being described as a refugee camp, until this date it had been an ad hoc settlement created by wartime displacement without a title.

The records show that not all the refugees in Mankurwane’s Location complied with the order to move to the refugee camp. On 15 March 1901, the Beaconsfield Town Council reported that it was

¹⁴⁸ Africana Library, Kimberley, Beaconsfield Minute Book 1900-1904

¹⁴⁹ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, Record No: 9054 Native Camps and Natives Generally [Box 2/1/36 Ref E] 20; Africana Library, Kimberley Medical Board of Health, 5 March-28 March 1901

¹⁵⁰ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, GM Collection, F & E 1/1/, 6 March 1901.

¹⁵¹ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, GM Collection, F & E 1/1/1, 13 March 1901.

difficult to maintain a satisfactory standard of sanitation in Mankurwane's Location due to the increase in population caused, "by the number of native refugees, and also the large number of natives now or previously employed on military work."¹⁵²

By 19 March 1901, it can be deduced that these refugees were forcibly relocated to the camp as the Beaconsfield Town Council together with the Board of Health reported that Mankurwane's Location was no longer a health hazard.¹⁵³ On 20 March 1901, De Beers Consolidated Mines records reflect that they had, "shifted the natives squatting near Theunisens place to Blankenbergvlei".¹⁵⁴ The process of consolidating all black refugees in Kimberley at this stage in time into this camp was underway.

The process of formalising control over the internees in camps administered by the Chief Superintendent Refugee Camps, Orange River Colony was occurring in Kimberley during March 1901. On the 8 March 1901, the Chief Superintendent Refugee Camps, Orange River Colony issued Circular No 7, which was an amended rations scale for all camps and reflects the provision of nutrition based on racial lines.¹⁵⁵

For White Refugees

½ lb fresh meat (or tinned when fresh unobtainable)

¾ lb either meal (or rice, samp, potatoes upon due notice being given)

1 oz coffee

1 oz salt

¹⁵² Africana Library, Kimberley Medical Board of Health, 15 March 1901.

¹⁵³ Africana Library, Kimberley, Beaconsfield Minute Book 1900-1904.

¹⁵⁴ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, Record No: 9054 Native Camps and Natives Generally [Box 2/1/36 Ref E], 20 March 1901.

¹⁵⁵ VAB, SRC, Vol. 2, Reference 4017 A.

2 oz sugar

1/12 part of tin condensed milk

Scale of Rations for Natives

Natives over 12 years of age

1 ½ lbs either mealies, K/corn, unspecified meal or

| | |
|---------------------------|-------------|
| Mealie meal | DAILY |
| ¼ oz salt | DAILY |
| 1 lb fresh or tinned meat | ONCE A WEEK |
| ½ oz coffee | ONCE A WEEK |
| 3 ozs sugar | ONCE A WEEK |



Natives under 12 years of age

1 lb either mealies, K/corn, unsifted meal or

| | |
|---------------------------|-------------|
| mealie meal | DAILY |
| ¼ oz salt | DAILY |
| ¾ lb fresh or tinned meat | ONCE A WEEK |
| ½ oz coffee | ONCE A WEEK |
| 2 oz sugar | ONCE A WEEK |

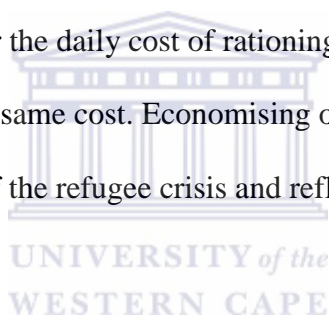
The contractor, Messrs Champion & Co, Rations supplied these rations to both the Boer and black refugees in the ORC camps at a cost of:

White rations per diem: -/9

Native adults per diem: -/4 ½

Native children per diem: -3 ¼¹⁵⁶

A comparison of this diet to that being supplied by De Beers to its convict workers reveals that Boer refugees were on a diet that contained less meat and vegetables than that of convict mine workers. However Boer refugees were not compelled into any form of extractive labour so this may have been a reason for this cost cutting exercise. The diet for black refugees was approximately comparable to that of longer term convicts in the Kimberley jails who received some meat each week.¹⁵⁷ An examination of the cost levied by Messrs Champion & Co for rationing refugees reflects that for the daily cost of rationing a single Boer refugee, a black adult and child could be rationed at the same cost. Economising on rations based on the race of a refugee was entrenched from the outset of the refugee crisis and reflects differing values attached to the life of a refugee based on race.



On 1 April 1901, the De Beers Consolidated Mines inspector reported that refugee numbers had increased to 60 huts with 14 wagons and carts of all description.¹⁵⁸ He suggested that occupation tickets for each hut enumerating the number of occupants or each individual male be issued.

“Several of the young men belonging to the people here are working in the compounds or with the military or with people in town”.¹⁵⁹ From this it would appear that the no work no food policy

¹⁵⁶ VAB, SRC, Vol. 3, Reference 719.

¹⁵⁷ R.V. Turrel, *Capital and Labour*, 157.

¹⁵⁸ When calculating internee numbers many of the documents consulted refer to hut numbers only. Therefore it is of interest to this thesis how the colonial authorities calculated their ratio of people to huts. For example the Kimberley municipality embarked upon a ‘social engineering’ project for the existing African settlements in Kimberley. Using the Public Works Act they applied for and received a loan for £30 000 from the Colonial Government to establish a, “Native Location outside of the Town, for the occupation of which rent will be charged.” 400 huts would be built costing £20 per hut to accommodate 7,000 African Kimberley residents with 5 people to a hut.²⁰ The African population over the past 15 months grew to 7,000 from the 3,000 in Kimberley for which the British army in December 1899 made allowance to ration once they lifted the siege of city.

¹⁵⁹ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, Record No: 9054 Native Camps and Natives Generally [Box 2/1/36 Ref E], 1 April 1901.

unless destitute was producing the desired effect as the men were now seeking employment.

Therefore their families were being fed, albeit on the longer term convict rations scale as used in the town's jails.

By the end of March 1901, the Kimberley Native Refugee Camp was brought under the control of Superintendent S.R. Schutte, the Kimberley Burgher Refugee Camp superintendent, despite the two sites being on the opposite ends of the town, approximately three miles apart from each other. The Burgher camp was divided into two sections; one section enclosed with a barbed wire fence and guarded by sentries, within which were interned 751 Cape colonial rebels. The rest of the camp was unenclosed and divided into sections according to the districts from which the Boer internees originated. These districts were Boshof, Fauresmith, Hoopstad, Petrusburg and Jacobsdal. A subsection of the camp contained Transvaal refugees numbering 1,535 persons, some of who originated from Christiana. Their places of origin correlate with the districts that the black refugees originated from. The Burgher Refugee Camp population was 3,768 with nine marques and 657 bell tents and had four doctors administering to the needs of the internees.¹⁶⁰ There is no evidence that the Native Refugee Camp had any tents and at that stage certainly received no medical support.

The first archival reference to Schutte managing both camps was on 9 April 1901 when he reported to the Chief Superintendent Refugee Camps, that he expected new arrivals from Hoopstad, via Warrenton. Of these about 500 were Boers and 160 were black civilians.¹⁶¹ Schutte reported that he would attempt to purchase tents locally, including a hospital marquee tent for the Burgher camp. Again, no mention is made of purchasing shelters for the Native Refugee Camp, in line with British military policy.¹⁶²

¹⁶⁰ VAB, SRC, Vol. 17, Reference 60139, Report by Dr Kendal Franks.

¹⁶¹ VAB, SRC, Vol. 4, Reference 972.

¹⁶² VAB, SRC, Vol. 4, Reference 1002.

The numbers of black refugees continued to increase. On 10 April 1901, the De Beers Consolidated Mines archives record for Blankenbergvlei that:

Some more natives arrived last Wednesday. There are now 71 huts, 15 wagons and 10 carts. As the natives have been uprooting the small bushes I have warned them to discontinue this, otherwise unpleasanties might be the result. Some distance away from here, on the main road to Boshof somewhere near Koppie Alleen I found a wagon, 9 males and 20 women and some 30 children. These natives came last week from Tweefontein and Kamel Pan District of Boshof. On nearing Kimberley they were overtaken by the Flying Column on arriving at this spot, they were told to outspan and remain here, their oxen, horses and other cattle taken from them. As far as I could find out no receipt for the cattle was given to them. I told these natives that they must go to the Native Refugee Camp near Blankenbergsvlei.¹⁶³

On 14 April 1901, Schutte reported that the Native Refugee Camp had 300 refugees. Based on the one to five hut ratio this meant there were at least 60 dwellings in the camp, which correlates with the De Beers archives report of 60 huts and 14 wagons and carts on 1 April 1901. Most of this wheeled transport would have doubled up as sleeping areas for refugees without shelters.

The next day the refugees from Koppie Alleen on the Boshof Road arrived in camp and the number dwellings increased to 93. As these refugees comprised 59 people they would have comprised approximately 11 of the new huts which had increased from 60 to 93 huts within a day. The additional 33 huts meant that approximately 165 additional refugees arrived, which reflects the ongoing intensity of the guerrilla war and intensification of the scorched earth policy in the surrounding districts. Totalling up the huts number indicates that there were approximately 465 refugees in the camp.

On 16 April 1901, De Beers Consolidated Mines reported to the Kimberley Board of Health that they had started quarantining all black workers entering their compounds from the town.¹⁶⁴ The quarantining of people from town is of interest as it refers to the bubonic plague measures, yet it

¹⁶³ De Beers Archives, Record No: 9054 Native Camps and Natives Generally [Box 2/1/36 Ref E], 10 April 1901.

¹⁶⁴ Africana Library, Kimberley Medical Board of Health, 16 April 1901.

could also refer to the emergence of contagious diseases such as smallpox which started to break out in the Burger Refugee Camp and elsewhere across the country.

It would be a logical measure for De Beers to prevent the spread of contagious diseases into its closed compounds where workers were isolated and unaffected by epidemics. Furthermore, given labour supply problems, an outbreak in the compounds would be devastating to mining operations. On the same day De Beers reported that in order to alleviate their labour shortages they had started using convict labour to work on the floors.¹⁶⁵ Clearly more stringent measures would have had to been enforced to ensure the success of the no work no food policy, as instructed by the Colonial Secretary to the Resident Magistrate.¹⁶⁶

Refugee numbers continued to increase. On 22 April 1901, the number of huts, including wagons used as sleeping places was 123, occupied by 338 adults and 210 children. However the De Beers estates inspector believed that he underestimated the total number.¹⁶⁷

The Beaconsfield Town Council discussed the refugee increase and minuted that they had discussed the matter with the military.

Read reply from the Secretary - Native Affairs Dept., stating that the Council's complaint re difficulties experienced by Natives desiring to leave the fields was receiving attention and that arrangements had been made with the military authorities by which it was hoped this matter would be facilitated in future.¹⁶⁸

This reference to natives, "desiring to leave the fields" refers to farm workers in the adjacent Boshof Magisterial District working on the various De Beers Consolidated Mines estates such as Rooifontein farm, who wished to remove themselves, their families and livestock from the battleground erupting around them.

¹⁶⁵ KAB, Resident Magistrate Kimberley, 1/KIM, D/1/1/1/4.

¹⁶⁶ KAB, Resident Magistrate Kimberley, 1/KIM, 5/2/1/3/17.

¹⁶⁷ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, Record No: 9054 Native Camps and Natives Generally [Box 2/1/36 Ref E] 43; Africana Library, Kimberley, *Beaconsfield Minute Book* 1900-1904, 30 April 1901.

¹⁶⁸ De Beers Archives, Record No: 9054 Native Camps and Natives Generally [Box 2/1/36 Ref E].

The issue of supplies of foodstuffs to Kimberley also emerges as concern. Ongoing disruptions to the railway network combined with military demands on the railway system resulted in Kimberley experiencing meat shortages. The disruption to the rural food producing economy around Kimberley exacerbated the already tenuous food supply. On 25 April 1901, the Kimberley Chamber of Commerce requested the De Beers Consolidated Mines Cold Storage Company to use their refrigeration trucks to rail up frozen meat from Cape Town to supply the butchers of Kimberley. De Beers agreed to do so, though their monthly truck allowance was to be determined by the military.¹⁶⁹

On 31 April 1901, the De Beers General Manager minuted that the company, “won’t charge the bona fide refugees rent. Anyone else was to be ‘charged 5/ per month’”. The rationing policy was based on feeding only refugees who were destitute and unable to work. Those that were considered bona fide refugees by the Company would have been families of men working in their mines who were already paying for the upkeep of their families. Manipulation of food combined with the need to earn cash in order to pay rent was a further tightening process to coerce labour. Additionally on 8 May 1901, De Beers requested the military that any black refugees who had arrived in Kimberley as employees of the Boer refugees and who were settled with them in the Boer camp should be relocated to Blankenbergvlei, thereby swelling the labour pool.¹⁷⁰

The process of consolidating black refugees from their various arrival points across Kimberley into Blankenbergvlei was concluded by the end of April 1901. The month of May 1901 would see the broader strategy develop around the ultimate control and harnessing of black refugees as a resource of Total War; further enabled by the onset of a bitterly cold winter.

¹⁶⁹ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, Board of Directors Meeting Minute Book 2/2/8, 1901.

¹⁷⁰ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives; GM Collection, F & E 1/1/1.

3.3. No work no food.

During May 1901, “the military authorities found the use of the railway for the conveyance of civil supplies between the coast ports and the inland towns of the several Colonies was so detrimental to their operations and to their own needs, that it became necessary to establish a department for the control of the carriage of civil supplies”.¹⁷¹ As for De Beers, they had placed demands on the railway before. In May 1900, just before Lord Roberts was about to commence his northward invasion, De Beers attempted to use its political influence to rail up a large number of recruited mine workers and supplies to Kimberley. Roberts told Lagden, the High Commissioner to Basutoland that this was most undesirable from a military point of view, “as a great deal of railway plant required for other purposes is taken up in providing food, coal, etc for the exiting Kimberley population”.¹⁷²

A year later in May 1901, Major O.C. Armstrong, the Financial Secretary to the Military Governor Pretoria, travelled from Pretoria with instructions from Lord Kitchener to personally ascertain the minimum allowance of railway trucks that would support Kimberley without De Beers having to close down some of their mines. Major Armstrong requested a breakdown from the Company of their tonnage requirements, as from 1 July 1901 the railway system would be brought under military control. The army would then decide on all tonnage allocations, with military considerations taking priority. These discussions would have a far reaching impact on the black refugees in Kimberley, as well as the mine workers and the provisioning of Kimberley and Beaconsfield.

On 23 May 1901, the De Beers Consolidated Mines Secretary presented his Board of Directors with a copy of the General Manager’s letter of 20 May 1901 to Major Armstrong giving the

¹⁷¹ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, De Beers Consolidated Mines Annual Report 1901.

¹⁷² NASA, A2404, Vol. 2C, 1439.

tonnage required by the Company per month. The Company provided a statement which was about 60% of its pre-war requirements, namely 600 ten ton trucks per month for coal alone and 171 trucks for general supplies. This excluded foodstuffs and other supplies purchased locally to provision the compounds, all forage, chaff and grain for the horses and mules and firewood which was imported from the north and railed on empty trucks doing their return leg.¹⁷³

The Secretary recorded that Major Armstrong had interviewed some of the Directors and laid it down that the Company would have to reduce its figures very considerably. As the matter was still under discussion, the Directors decided to await Major Armstrong's decision before taking action.¹⁷⁴

Throughout May 1901 the Company Directors' meeting minutes reflect the difficulty of railing up coal from the Eastern Cape mines near Indwe to Kimberley.¹⁷⁵ On 25 May 1901, Major Armstrong met with the following De Beers Directors; Colonel Harris, Charles Nind, Charles Rudd, the General Manager Gardner Williams and a Mr Hirschhorn. The agenda for their meeting was railway truck supply.¹⁷⁶

This discussion is key. It is the cornerstone of what transpired in terms of the unfolding policy and management of the black refugees in Kimberley, and the minutes are a crucial historical document that details what transpired.

Major Armstrong made it clear to the De Beers Directors that the railway truck allocation would be 600 trucks per month and that possibly three months later this might be readjusted.

¹⁷³ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, De Beers Consolidated Mines Annual Report 1901, year ending 30 June 1901.

¹⁷⁴ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, Board of Directors Meeting Minute Book 2/2/8.

¹⁷⁵ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, Board of Directors Meeting Minute Book 2/2/8.

¹⁷⁶ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, GM Collection, F & E 1/1/1/; Interview May 1900 with Major Armstrong.

The arrangement as to trucks will come into operation from 1st June. I don't care a bit what you bring up; you can get up what you like so long as you don't take over the 600 trucks per month.

The discussion then turned to the issue of black civilians.

Mr Nind: If you would only make the loafing kaffirs work you could reduce the population by several thousand.

Major Armstrong: I have been at this, but cannot tell you the outcome as I don't know. It is not my job to clear this up, but when you brought it to my notice I spoke about it.

Mr Nind: In addition to the large number of kaffirs and women in the locations, we have close upon 1 000 refugee natives at Blanckenberg's Vlei.

Mr Williams: I sent to them last week and not one would come; they are being fed and won't work.

Major Armstrong: Are you prepared to give these men in the Refugee Camps work?

Mr Williams: Yes, all kaffirs.

Major Armstrong: I will wire about this at once. I will do all I can as regards this labour question as I think it is all nonsense these boys loafing about.¹⁷⁷

Nind stated that there were 1,000 refugees at Blankenbergvlei in addition to large numbers of people in the locations who were clearly not from Kimberley.¹⁷⁸ This reference to the locations is of interest in that the locations were cleared out of refugees during April 1901 who were then sent to Blankenbergvlei. This implies that additional refugees arrived in Kimberley who, wishing to avoid being interned in the Kimberley Native Refugee Camp, sought shelter with relatives or friends in the locations.

Major Armstrong asked if De Beers Consolidated Mines were prepared to, "give all men in the camps work".¹⁷⁹ This reference in the plural tense "camps" implies that there was at this stage more than just the one Native Refugee Camp at Blankenbergvlei and that a second internment point or place existed for black refugees at this time in the vicinity of Kimberley. It is possible that they referred to black refugees at Orange River Station, though on balance this is unlikely, as other

¹⁷⁷ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, GM Collection, F & E 1/1/1/; Interview May 1900 with Major Armstrong.

¹⁷⁸ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, GM Collection, F & E 1/1/1/; Interview May 1900 with Major Armstrong.

¹⁷⁹ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, GM Collection, F & E 1/1/1/; Interview May 1900 with Major Armstrong.

places beyond Kimberley were irrelevant to the immediate needs of the Company. The discussion could have not referred to the Kimberley Boer camp as internees in this camp were not compelled to work. Given the De Beers labour supply issues and the policy that Boer refugees did not have to provide labour while interned and the statement that De Beers would give all men in the camps work, is the first archival indicator of another camp near Kimberley, separate to the one at Blankenbergvlei.

Major Armstrong agreed with the Directors that the men should be compelled to work and that he would do all he could to see this happen.¹⁸⁰ The next day Major Armstrong telegraphed his report of the discussions to the Military Governor Pretoria, who replied on 27 May 1901.

Your 26th of May 25th has been seen by Chief [Kitchener] he is very pleased with the success you have so far had. Stop. Regarding the five to seven thousand kaffirs who will not work who feeds them. No food should be brought up for kaffirs able to who will not work. I have wired to Deputy Commissariat and will let you know the result but the principle should be no work no food, this Chief thinks this matter should be put on a proper footing. Regarding dynamite, Chief thinks 100 tons for Rhodesia and Kimberley excessive. Please ascertain and report regards consumption, stock in hand these places, monthly consumption what precautions are taken for safeguarding it and who is responsible for its issue. Chief thinks this may be cut down to 25 tons for each place at least. The Chief wishes you to remain at Kimberley until the whole affair is in working order.¹⁸¹

This is the first archival document identified of the formalisation of a no work no food policy, which was the cornerstone of how black refugees would be managed and manipulated by the military authorities. The issue of food, refugees and coerced labour were being synthesised into a single policy that would soon be applied to the black refugees in Kimberley.

Major Armstrong's report to the Military Governor Pretoria which was read by Lord Kitchener would have been one of many sent from other officers around the country. It was read days before Army Headquarters in Pretoria issued Circular Memorandum No 44 on 1 July 1901. This Memorandum had as its object, the management of black refugees being brought in by military

¹⁸⁰ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, GM Collection, F & E 1/1/1; Interview May 1900 with Major Armstrong.

¹⁸¹ NASA, MGP, Vol. 245, 27 May 1901.

columns or those refugees already interned inside the existing camps. In continuation of Army Order No 3, dated 18th May 1901:

The Commandants of military stations were to take responsibility for natives brought in by the columns to prevent their escape and until such time as the Officer Commanding the Army Labour Depot had sent someone around for labour recruitment purposes. With respect to established camps the Commandants were to give the OC, Army Labour Depot, Johannesburg, every assistance in their power to enable him to form native refugee camps in the most suitable localities where natives are required for supplying the Departments of the Army with labour.¹⁸²

This Circular Memorandum shows that one of the core purposes of the formation and positioning of Native Refugee Camps was to facilitate the provision of labour to the Army firstly, and also to capital.

Major Armstrong kept Major General Pretzman abreast of his discussions with De Beers Consolidated Mines. Armstrong put forward certain suggestions on the coercive legislation that would force refugees to work which Pretzman agreed to do. Armstrong reported to the Military Governor Pretoria that he hoped that this, “burning question here, will be definitely be settled,” and that, “the labour question and idle kaffirs has been legislated for by Major General Pretzman”.¹⁸³

On 27 May 1901, Major General Pretzman issued a Public Notice, which was the start of coercing labour and removing black refugees who would not work from Kimberley.¹⁸⁴ All black civilians in Kimberley who wished to return home by rail were encouraged to do so at their own expense and warned that this opportunity would cease to exist after 21 June 1901. The Notice encouraged the large number of black refugees residing in Kimberley with no means of subsistence to leave Kimberley. One way permits would be issued to those who accepted the offer to return home by rail at their own expense. Travel permits could be obtained at the Native Permit Office and no return permits would be issued. “Any native now out of employment, and wishing to avoid

¹⁸² VAB, SRC, Vol. 10. Reference 2422.

¹⁸³ NASA, MGP, Vol.106, Reference 833IB/01.

¹⁸⁴ Africana Library, *Diamond Fields Advertiser*, 27 May 1901.

deportation,” could gain employment by applying to the OC Army Service Corps, Transport Lines in Belgravia. “On and after the 22nd June 1901, any native found in Kimberley, and unable to show that he is earning his living in suitable employment, will be deported from the Kimberley District”.¹⁸⁵

On 30 May 1901, Major General Pretzman followed up this Notice with a more detailed Public Notice, in English, isiXhosa and seSotho which was published in the *Diamond Fields Advertiser*.¹⁸⁶ This Notice provided the following context as a justification for the military’s intended actions and reveals the finalisation of their strategy of control over black refugees by means of food manipulation and restriction of freedom of movement.

There are a large number of Natives residing within a radius of five miles from the Town Hall of Kimberley who are without any visible means of subsistence and who refuse to accept the suitable employment which is open to them. Consequently employers of Native labour are compelled to import a large number of Natives for their needs. The number of trucks at present available for the transport of supplies from the Coast is not sufficient to allow of the support of these unemployed Natives who constitute an idle and useless portion of the community. With this in view the following regulations will obtain on and after the 22nd June 1901.¹⁸⁷

Freedom of movement would be restricted through a pass system. All blacks in employment had to be in possession of a “servants contract ticket” signed by the Registrar of Natives or Army Book 41 and be able to produce this on demand, failing which they would be arrested. These contract tickets would be renewed monthly. Wives and their children under 12 years of age would have to be in possession of this pass. Blacks not in possession of such a ticket or pass would not be permitted to enter the within the said radius of five miles from the Town Hall of Kimberley.

Only black civilians in possession of this pass could obtain food. “No person, either through himself, his agent or his servant, shall sell, supply, barter or give goods of any description

¹⁸⁵ Africana Library, *Diamond Fields Advertiser*, 27 May 1901.

¹⁸⁶ Africana Library, *Diamond Fields Advertiser*, 30 May 1901.

¹⁸⁷ Africana Library, *Diamond Fields Advertiser*, 27 May 1901.

whatsoever to any native, male or female”.¹⁸⁸ Any merchant, storekeeper or shopkeeper infringing this public notice would be either excluded from obtaining permits to import goods or would have their business shut down; the exception being chemists duly licensed by the Cape Colony.

Major General Pretzman’s notices are the first occurrence of the term deportation used by the military in reference to persons who were not citizens of the Cape Colony and who were refugees in Kimberley and unwilling to work. According to the military, hardship could not be claimed, as employment was always obtainable through the Army Service Corps, “under the liberal scale of wage laid down by the Imperial Government,” and with the mines.¹⁸⁹ The authorities claimed that as there was available work; refugees not willing to work could not claim destitution. The army would no longer ration refugees claiming destitution. No work, no food.

This Notice only applied to persons who could return home by rail and purchase their passage and therefore excluded refugees swept into Kimberley by the military from the Orange River Colony and Transvaal who had no rail link to return to. It also excluded the elderly and infirm and women and particularly children who could not gain work with the Army Service Corps or the mines. The military authorities were literally flushing out of Kimberley all possible black non-residents first, and once done, would then turn their attention to the refugees interned in the Native Refugee Camp at Blankenbergvlei. This camp was located within the five mile radius from the Kimberley town hall, so it can be deduced that at the time of drafting this notice, the intention was to relocate this camp in the near future.

The edge of this five mile radius swung itself beyond the perimeter of Kimberley and Beaconsfield. To the east it crossed just over the border with the Orange River Colony meaning that any future refugee coming in from that direction would be unable to get anywhere near the

¹⁸⁸ Africana Library, *Diamond Fields Advertiser*, 27 May 1901.

¹⁸⁹ Africana Library, *Diamond Fields Advertiser*, 27 May 1901.

precincts of Kimberley or Beaconsfield, let alone enter the Cape Colony. The five mile radius fell within the areas that were patrolled by mounted troops, the full extent of their patrolling range being an approximate seven mile radius around Kimberley.

The term camps (plural) was used. An important point in this regard in respect of enforcing the radius rule on black civilians who became refugees after the 22 June 1901 is that they wouldn't be permitted to within a five mile radius of the town hall. Given this five mile radius, this meant that any new arrivals would be interned somewhere beyond the five mile mark and that would position the site of the second native refugee camp at New Klippiespan farm which was located in the Orange River Colony.

On 29 May 1901, 20 African refugees arrived from the Boshof District. "Some are going to erect huts, others are going to Premier Mine Compounds".¹⁹⁰ It appears from this that the policy of no work no food was understood by these new arrivals, with the men immediately seeking work at Premier (Wesselton Mine) in order to earn cash to feed their families who were busy erecting dwellings.¹⁹¹

The month of May 1901 records the first references in the written archive of fatalities in the Native Refugee Camp. The De Beers inspector reported on 13 May 1901 that, "there is a large increase in the mortality of children here. They are buried at the Native Cemetery near Vlenters".¹⁹² This was the Bultfontein Native Cemetery. The impact on children is reflected again with the arrival of more refugees on 4 June 1901. The inspector reported that, "The number of huts of all description now amount to 183. Several natives erected corrugated iron shantys. They said that they were unable to

¹⁹⁰ De Beers Archives, Record No: 9054 Native Camps and Natives Generally [Box 2/1/36 Ref E].

¹⁹¹ Wesselton Mine was s referred to as Premier Mine, this being before the establishment of Premier Mine at Cullinan in later years.

¹⁹² De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, Record No: 9054 Native Camps and Natives Generally [Box 2/1/36 Ref E].

obtain sticks used in building the ordinary huts and therefore had to buy timber and iron, as their children were exposed too much to the weather. I think the total population now over 1 000".¹⁹³

This would be a correct assessment using the one to five hut ratio – 183 huts would approximate to 915 people. The fact that some of these refugees had cash to buy timber and iron to construct their dwellings is indicative of people who had assets to be redeemed or cash in pocket.

On 1 June 1901, the military took control of the delivery of goods from the coast to Kimberley and the northern line from the town running through Bechuanaland to Southern Rhodesia.¹⁹⁴

Subsequent meetings followed throughout June 1901 between Major Armstrong, De Beers Consolidated Mines and the Chamber of Commerce. They were not always amicable. Major Armstrong described it as a tough fight. Rhodes and his Directors attempted to pressurise the military and threatened to shut the mines unless the military provided them with labour and, if their interests were not met, the company would bring political pressure to bear by protesting to the Cape Colony Government.

This was not the first time they had tried this tactic with the military authorities during the war.

During the Kimberley siege infighting between Rhodes and Lt. Colonel Kekewich was a common factor. In numerous arguments Rhodes tried to coerce the military into serving his interests, without success. Rhodes had a particular view of the military, one which he expressed during the Siege. "You damned soldiers are so loyal to one another that I verily believe if God Almighty even was in a fix you would refuse to get him out of it should it interfere with your damned military situation".¹⁹⁵

¹⁹³ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, Record No: 9054 Native Camps and Natives Generally [Box 2/1/36 Ref E]. De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, Board of Directors Meeting Minute Book 2/2/8.

¹⁹⁴ Africana Library, *Weekly Free Press*, 1 June 1901.

¹⁹⁵ Garth Benneyworth, *Reinterpreting Military Landscape*, 44.

Major Armstrong and his superiors, such as the Military Governor Pretoria and Lord Kitchener, would have known of this prior issue during the siege when mining capital attempted to manipulate the military. Major Armstrong shrugged off these threats and reported that, “On the whole the matter has gone through fairly satisfactory and with absolutely no friction on any side. I am glad to say. De Beers are protesting to the Cape Govt but I fancy this is per forma”.¹⁹⁶ The Major knew his instructions and that the no work no food policy being developed by Kitchener, as communicated to him on 27 May 1901, was soon to be promulgated.

On 6 June 1901, the De Beers Directors read Major Armstrong’s letter acknowledging their protest regarding the monthly truck allocation and stated that in reviewing their submission every consideration was given to their claims and every point possible stretched in their favour”.¹⁹⁷

Major Armstrong informed De Beers Consolidated Mines that they would be allocated 600 trucks per month that if they could not cope with this logistical restriction then they should stop production.¹⁹⁸ On 7 June 1901, De Beers Consolidated Mines scaled back their mining operations to accommodate this due to reduced coal and food supplies.¹⁹⁹

3.4. Formalisation of the Kimberley Native Refugee Camp(s).

The continued arrival of refugees into Kimberley continued to place demands on the Kimberley garrison. With regards to the Boer refugees the military investigated the option of opening another Boer refugee camp at Modder River Station, 30 kilometres south of Kimberley. While not directly relevant to the Native Refugee Camps in the focus of study it is worth commenting on the military considerations that informed this process. The military were about to clear the Jacobsdal

¹⁹⁶ NASA, MGP, Vol. 106, Reference 833IB / 01, 2 July 1901.

¹⁹⁷ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, Board of Directors Meeting Minute Book 2/2/8.

¹⁹⁸ NASA, MGP, Vol. 106, Reference 833IB/01, 2 July 1901.

¹⁹⁹ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archive, De Beers Consolidated Mines Annual Report 1901, year ending 30 June 1901.

Magisterial District of all civilians and Modder River Station would form the terminus to where this district's refugees would be routed.

A report dated 7 June 1901, from a Lieutenant with the South African Constabulary (SAC) based in Jacobsdal described his evaluation of the possibilities. He inspected the terrain at Modder River Station and identified a suitable site 1 ½ miles east of Modder River Station which is:

Far enough off the camp (military) and garrison to be out of the way; yet it is near enough to be to a certain degree controlled by the garrison; besides the camp would act as sort of protection on the east of the town, as it is hardly likely that the Boers would draw fire onto their families by attacking from that side. The ground slopes very gradually towards the river and the station; the ground behind the site rises at the same sort of gradient to Magersfontein.²⁰⁰

In other words the terrain was open and flat, unbroken by hills or rises and in easy view of the controlling garrison. As for water resources the river would be within 200 yards of the proposed camp along with three existing wells, located within 80 yards of where the camp would be.²⁰¹

However this camp at Modder River never materialised. Yet this proposal is valuable in that it shows the military thinking that civilians could be used to screen a military garrison from attack.

On 8 June 1901 approximately 200 to 250 natives arrived at Blankenbergvlei being brought in by a military column.²⁰² On 11 June 1901, the Provost Marshal requested De Beers Consolidated Mines to supply a list of all married black employees in the company's compounds with wives residing in Kimberley or in any of the locations within a five mile radius of the town hall.²⁰³ The military were preparing for the expiry of the proclamation. These lists would indicate how many people they could expect to take on the books as refugees. It also enabled them to link paid mineworkers to their families and secure salary deductions to underwrite the cost of rationing their families.

²⁰⁰ VAB, SRC, Vol. 17.

²⁰¹ VAB, SRC, Vol. 17.

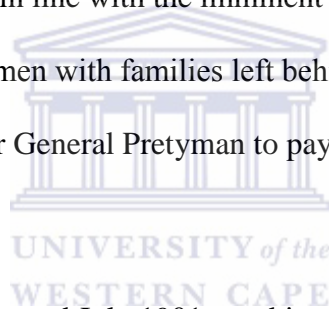
²⁰² De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, Record No: 9054 Native Camps and Natives Generally [Box 2/1/36 Ref E]. De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, Board 2/2/9 Minute book, 30 Sept 1901.

²⁰³ De Beers Archives, Record No: 9054 Native Camps and Natives Generally [Box 2/1/36 Ref E].

Formalisation of military control over the Blankenbergvlei Native Refugee Camp is dated to approximately 19 June 1901, when Major General Pretzman requested that Superintendent Schutte,

Make arrangements for the proper supervision and control of the native refugees, which on that day roughly counted about 900, the majority of them are women and children, from the districts of Boshof, Jacobsdal and Petrusburg, the former districts furnishing the greatest number.²⁰⁴

The explanation given to Superintendent Schutte was that there were large numbers of refugees in Kimberley and that stringent regulations pertained to regulating ‘natives’ in Kimberley existed. These regulations refer to Major General Pretzman’s proclamation about to come into effect. The fact that at this stage the lack of men in the camp was due to them seeking employment in Kimberley and Beaconsfield was in line with the imminent enactment of Major General Pretzman’s proclamation. Those men with families left behind in the camp were forced by Superintendent Schutte and Major General Pretzman to pay £1 per month to support their families.²⁰⁵



The weather in Kimberley for June and July 1901 was bitterly cold with snowfalls.²⁰⁶ On 23 June 1901, it was anticipated that within the next few days another 700 to 800 black refugees from Orange River Station would arrive.²⁰⁷

In strengthening the military defences and clearing the surrounding countryside of anyone who could assist the Boer forces, on 17 June 1901, the Commissioner of Police District No. 2 requested that two Orange River Colony customs officials based at Rietpan and Tolpan customs posts be brought into the Burgher Refugee camp and the posts closed. He suspected them of communicating with the Boers. Asides from which under martial law the military authorities checked all goods

²⁰⁴ VAB, SRC, Vol. 9. Reference 2979.

²⁰⁵ VAB, SRC, Vol 9. Reference 223/4.

²⁰⁶ NASA, MGP, Vol. 106, Reference 833IB / 01.

²⁰⁷ NASA, FK, Vol. 1806.

leaving and entering the town, and their presence on the border was considered as undesirable from a military perspective.²⁰⁸ The removal of these customs officials allegedly harbouring Boer sympathies is no coincidence in terms of the timing of it. They were within the seven mile defence cordon around the city and within close proximity to New Klippiespan farm where refugees were going to be assembled or were already being.

On 22 June 1901, Major General Pretzman's proclamation came into effect and by 29 June 1901, due to deportation and coerced employment, "native loiterers were becoming a rarity on the streets" of Kimberley.²⁰⁹ It is worth noting that on 22 June 1901, contributors to the *Weekly Free Press* suggested that industrial farms be established to alleviate the shortage of agricultural produce.²¹⁰ This is of interest in that with the imminent formation of the Native Refugee Department, this is exactly how their camps would be operated.

On 23 June 1901, Superintendent Schutte reported to the Chief Superintendent, Refugee Camps in Bloemfontein that he had:

Made provision for the shelter, feeding and supervision of these people; the majority of them are women and children, and are drawn from the districts of Boshof, Jacobsdal and Petrusburg, the former districts furnishing the greatest number.²¹¹

This the first archival document uncovered that describes the internees in the Native Refugee Camp as being from areas other than Boshof, namely the Jacobsdal and Petrusburg districts. They would have been farm occupants initially swept in by military operations, yet the main brunt of land clearances was yet to occur in these districts, when the Jacobsdal Location and surrounding farms were soon to be cleared. On 27 June 1901, 240 African refugees arrived from Windsorton Road.²¹² This is the first recorded case of Transvaal refugees being interned in Kimberley.

²⁰⁸ VAB, SRC, Vol. 9, Reference 2979.

²⁰⁹ Africana Library, Kimberley, *Weekly Free Press*, 29 June 1901.

²¹⁰ Africana Library, Kimberley, *Weekly Free Press*, 22 June 1901.

²¹¹ Copy of original in author's possession which was copied from the VAB, SRC collection.

²¹² NASA, FK, Vol. 1803.

On 27 June 1901, Superintendent Schutte made his first staff appointments to manage the Native Refugee Camp at Blankenbergvlei. He appointed Mr Johnson as Camp Superintendent, a Mr Fourie was appointed as storekeeper and rations issuer with three black assistants. However medical arrangements remained problematic. Major General Pretzman endeavoured to persuade the Principle Medical Officer to lend this camp a medical officer to see to the medical requirements of the black refugees but this proved unsuccessful.²¹³ More importantly what this meant is that it appears no medical arrangements had been in place to attend to black refugees since the camp started forming in the closing months of 1900.

In July 1901 pneumonia and pleuro pneumonia was a primary cause of death amongst the compound mineworkers.²¹⁴ On 20 July 1901, influenza and pneumonia and the weekly death rate were described as almost being beyond the comprehension of the average mortal. Seventy two burials occurred at both West End and Gladstone cemeteries of which 42 were African residents of Kimberley. The next week 43 Africans and three whites were buried in these two cemeteries.²¹⁵ To combat pneumonia amongst the African mine workers on 25 July 1901 the De Beers Directors authorised their General Manager to serve half a pint of soup to the workers at the mines when they finished their shifts.²¹⁶

On 1 July 1901 it was bitterly cold with a snowstorm.²¹⁷ One can only imagine the appalling living and medical conditions in the Native Refugee Camp at Blankenbergvlei. This would be borne out in a rising death toll, which archival research for this thesis confirmed.

²¹³ VAB, SRC, Vol. 9, Reference 2979.

²¹⁴ KAB, Resident Magistrate Kimberley, 1/KIM, D/1/1/1/4 90; De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, Record No: 9054 Native Camps and Natives Generally [Box 2/1/36 Ref E]. Date?

²¹⁵ Africana Library, Kimberley, *Weekly Free Press*, 20 July 1901.

²¹⁶ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, Board of Directors Meeting Minute Book 2/2/8.

²¹⁷ NASA, MGP, Vol. 106, Reference 833IB / 01.

Up until this stage, African camp fatalities were buried in the Bultfontein Native Cemetery located near Vlenters Location and which was managed by the Beaconsfield Town Council. However with a rising death rate the military objected to the charges levied by Beaconsfield Town Council for burials. Consequently the military started a burial ground, “about 400 yards away from this camp. 3 boys have been buried here till now”.²¹⁸ For the military to object to rising costs is indicative that the death rate in the Native Refugee Camp was rising steeply. Costs were saved when it came to coffins. The Chief Superintendent Refugee Camps, Orange River Colony, had issued Circular No 8 earlier that year in March 1901. The Circular specified that funeral expenses such as coffins were to be charged to the relative or friends of the deceased. Only paupers would be provided with free coffins.²¹⁹

On 3 July 1901, the De Beers Consolidated Mines Company Secretary wrote to Major General Pretzman objecting to this and described the burying of dead on their property as a “temporary measure” and requested that alternatives be found. On 6 July 1901, the Provost Marshal replied to them stating that, “Strict orders have already been issued that all bodies are to be properly interred, and I will have these orders repeated and I trust there will be no cause for complaint”.²²⁰

It appears from the archival records that by August 1901 the military reverted to burying at Bultfontein Cemetery and continued to do so until the internees were deported to Dry Harts. The Bultfontein Cemetery Register which lists in meticulous detail the names, ages and causes of death of all burials.²²¹ The register indicates that the first burial took place on 1 August 1898 and the final burial on 30 April 1905. During this cemetery’s almost six years of existence, nearly half this period was during wartime conditions, including the Kimberley siege, and that of the refugee crisis

²¹⁸ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, Record No: 9054 Native Camps and Natives Generally [Box 2/1/36 Ref E]; De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, GM Collection, F & E 1/1/1, 2 July 1901.

²¹⁹ VAB, SRC, Vol. 2, Reference 4017 A.

²²⁰ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives; GM Collection, F & E 1/1/1, 31 July 1901.

²²¹ Africana Library, Kimberley, *Bultfontein Cemetery Register*, 1898-1905.

in 1901. Bultfontein Cemetery was only used for the burial of black people and was a separate cemetery to what was designated officially as ‘the European Cemetery’ at Dutoitspan.

A press release in the Beaconsfield Municipal Minute Book about this cemetery refers:

Cemeteries

The European Cemetery at Dutoitspan and the Native Cemetery at Bultfontein continues to be kept in good order, and free from any cause of comment. The question of extending the former will have to be considered during the forthcoming year, and the advisability of erecting a windmill pump should also be discussed. Heavy mortality amongst natives at the refugee camp has greatly increased the number of burials at the Bultfontein cemetery, and owing to the difficulty to getting suitable boys to dig graves in the hard shale bed, the work was let out by contract and the large number of both adults and children’s graves have now been excavated.²²²

Again this press release emphasises a key point, that the internees at the Native Refugee Camp suffered a higher than normal death rate, adults and children alike. They were dying at such a fast and high rate that grave digging was outsourced.

It is worth noting that Kessler and others citing his work claim that Kessler compiled a death toll of black civilians to an approximation of 21,000 deaths in the ‘black concentration camps’ Kessler never consulted this register and his work makes no reference to it.²²³ Thus his toll and others who accept it is far from complete.

On 18 July 1901, Major General Pretymann wrote to Goold Adams, the Deputy Administrator of the Orange River Colony, that the inflow of refugees into Kimberley was stretching his military resources, so he sought alternative areas to settle them such as at Orange River Station.

The Kimberley garrison has become very large, and is already as quite as much as we can well cope with. The garrison of Kimberley is ridiculously small for the [illegible] and piquet’s necessary for the huge perimeter of the place, and the Commandant has great difficulty in finding even the most slender lands for the large refugee camp which is gradually stretching way beyond our outposts. I am much averse to increasing this camp

²²² Africana Library, Kimberley, *Beaconsfield Minute Book* 1900-1904, 20 August 1901.

²²³ J. Van Zyl, R. Constantine and T. Pretorius, *An Illustrated History of Black South Africans in the Anglo Boer War. A Forgotten History*, (Bloemfontein, The War Museum of the Boer Republics, 2012), 10.

more than can be possibly be helped, though I foresee many more refugees will be sent here shortly, or from time to time from districts N and NE of Kimberley.

Now at Orange River Station the garrison will shortly be increased and we could easily guard a large refugee camp there. As you probably know, one exists there already, under military arrangements...From a sanitary and disciplinary point of view I consider such an arrangement would be most suitable.²²⁴

Major General Pretzman described the refugee situation in Kimberley as:

There are already nearly 4 000 persons in the Refugee Camp Kimberley, exclusive of 1 000 Natives in the Native Refugee Camp. These numbers are constantly increasing. For sanitary reasons as well as the matter of guarding them, I do not consider it desirable that this number be increased to any considerable extent. I should be very glad therefore if you could arrange to form an additional Refugee Camp at Orange River Station under the Civil Administration of the Orange River Colony. Orange River Station is a suitable situation for a Refugee Camp and I am able to provide the necessary protection.²²⁵

Major General Pretzman's statement offers a valuable clue to existence of a second Native Refugee Camp in that,

The Commandant has great difficulty in finding even the most slender lands for the large refugee camp which is gradually stretching way beyond our outposts. I am much averse to increasing this camp more than can be possibly be helped, though I foresee many more refugees will be sent here shortly". For the camp to be referred to as gradually stretching way beyond the outposts means that there were African refugees at least seven miles from town on the edge of the outpost cordon of the city.²²⁶

Clearly this does not refer to either the Native Refugee Camp at Blankenbergvlei, which was relocated to Dry Harts in late September 1901, or the Burgher Refugee Camp at Newton, both of which were within the fringes of Kimberley and Beaconsfield. What this meant is that in July 1901 a second camp was situated inside the garrison perimeter line which extended to seven miles beyond the city. The outer garrison piquet line or outposts to the east included the Oliphantsrug ridges directly overlooking New Klippiesspan farm, which meant that the farm fell within this cordon. Nor could this camp have been positioned within five miles of the city, given Major

²²⁴ VAB, SRC, Vol. 10, Reference 3933.

²²⁵ VAB, SRC, Vol. 10, Reference 3933.

²²⁶ VAB, SRC, Vol. 10, Reference 3933.

General Pretzman's radius rule, which had come into effect. This meant that the camp was located in the Orange River Colony.



Figure 3, Google Earth, The top red horizontal line indicates that Klippiespan is exactly seven miles from Kimberley Station which was the centre of the garrison and four miles from Premier Mine which formed the eastern perimeter of the garrison.

The locality of a second Native Refugee Camp at Klippiespan is further reinforced by a 10 August 1901 report in the *Weekly Free Press* that,

The Native Refugee Camp, which is wisely situated some distance out of town beyond the Premier Mine, is presided over by Dr Hauptflesch, (who like the majority of the educated Germans in the Transvaal) is a refugee himself.²²⁷

Blankenbergsvlei was located within the Kimberley perimeter, so this account does not refer to that Native Refugee Camp. Klippiespan farm is visible from the top of the Premier Mines' headgear

²²⁷ Africana Library, Kimberley, *Weekly Free Press*, 10 August 1901. Premier Mine is currently called Wesselton Mine.

and also from the surrounding dumps which would have enabled observation and communication by heliograph with the camp if required.

Another clue as to the existence of a camp in the Orange River Colony is a map clearly depicting that the Kimberley Native Refugee Camp, which fell under the control of the Native Refugee Department when this map was drawn, was located east of Kimberley and in the Orange River Colony.²²⁸ Blankenbergvlei was within the town precincts and not near the border with the Orange River Colony.

The circular indicators depicting the camps on the map are not to scale, and therefore considered as indicative positions. However, a study of the map suggests that their geographical positioning is probably accurate in certain cases, in that the cartographer at least tried to indicate where they were located on the landscape – east, west, north or south of a certain fixed position, such as a town or railway siding.

When I searched the terrain to locate this second camp I looked only east of Kimberley as depicted on this map and located it, together with Elizabeth Voigt, on 30 December 2001, on New Klippiespan farm. Due to the absence of any official name in the archives it is referred to in this thesis as Klippiespan Camp or Klippiespan Native Refugee Camp. However yet again this again highlights the flaws in recent scholarly work (by Kessler et al) who relied only on the written archive to construct a history of the camps. In none of the source material that they used is there any reference to any camp at Klippiespan, as the only references to it which this research located exists in collections which they never consulted. This also shows that besides from Klippiespan there may have been many other camps which existed that remain unknown.

²²⁸ VAB, CO, Vol. 56, Reference 3481/01.

3.5. Section B, Klippiespan Native Refugee Camp.

Section B is a history of the Klippiespan Native Refugee Camp using the archaeological record and the fraction of what has survived in the written archive. Section B will illustrate some of the finds from the fieldwork and excavations undertaken during 2001-2008.²²⁹ Photographs of some of the key material excavated or identified are included. These provide an interpretation which the written archive cannot do, while offering insights into the camp and addressing the original research question of investigating the possibility of recovering a history of seven black refugee and forced labour camps from the South African War using not just the written archive, but also the archive of archaeological landscape and memory.

3.5.1. Notes on the archives consulted.

Two archival sources were located that determined the direction where this camp existed, namely east of Kimberley in the Orange River Colony. On 10 August 1901 a report in the *Weekly Free Press* recorded that, “The Native Refugee Camp, which is wisely situated some distance out of town beyond the Premier Mine”.²³⁰ A map compiled by the Native Refugee Department positions the camp to the east and also across the border from the Cape Colony.²³¹ Neither of these two sources were referring to the Native Refugee Camp at Blankenbergvlei. Consequently east just over the Free State border determined the search area.

²²⁹ Section B is not an archaeological report. Such a report on the work undertaken at Klippiespan is an ongoing project separate to this thesis.

²³⁰ Africana Library, Kimberley, *Weekly Free Press*, 10 August 1901.

²³¹ VAB, CO, Vol. 56, Reference 3481/01.

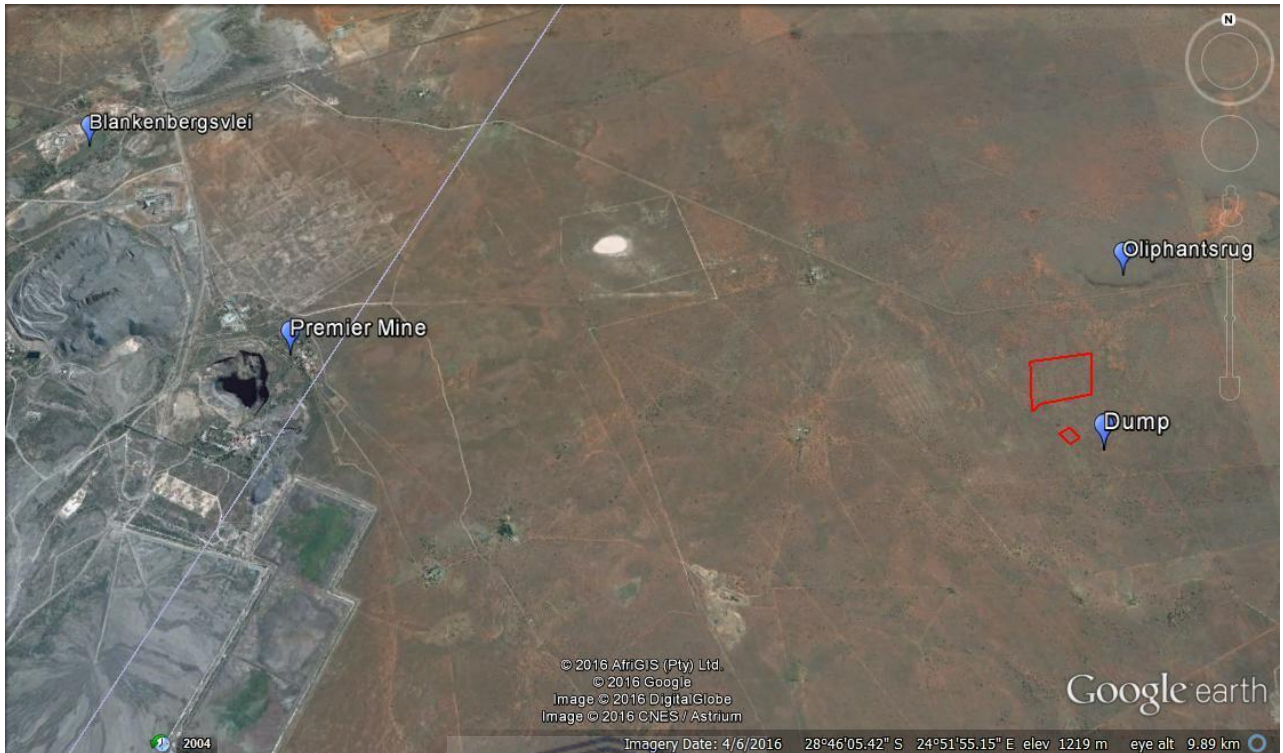


Figure 4, Klippiespan Native Refugee Camp indicated in red, 6 500 metres from Premier Mine.

3.5.2. Locating the camp.

In 2001 E. Voigt, former Director of the McGregor Museum, and I started to search the farms in that area. The farmers all related that they knew of no graves or any identifying features on their property, with the exception of one, W. Goldblatt who owned New Klippiespan farm. He related that he was intrigued by broken glass in the veld which was dark black and therefore certainly not dated from the recent era and the leg of a three legged iron cooking pot (potjie pot) which he had found in the middle of nowhere on his farm. This held promise and on 31 December 2001, Goldblatt took us to the general area where he recollected that he saw these items and left us to our search.

We walked for some hours before locating a champagne bottle and then a beer bottle both of thick black dark glass dating from the Victorian era which, given the context where they were found, seemed bizarre. Nevertheless a nearby ridge reminded me of the terrain in Brandfort when walking

on the camp terrain at Nooitgedacht. It was about a mile away from these two bottles. The area felt right as to where a camp might have been.

The first find was the graveyard and then in its immediate vicinity the living areas which included upper and lower grinding stones, tins, glass, ration tins and porcelain. The days following identified more living areas and in 2003 an initial survey of the area was undertaken. In 2006 the area was surveyed with a GPS to plot all the surface finds.

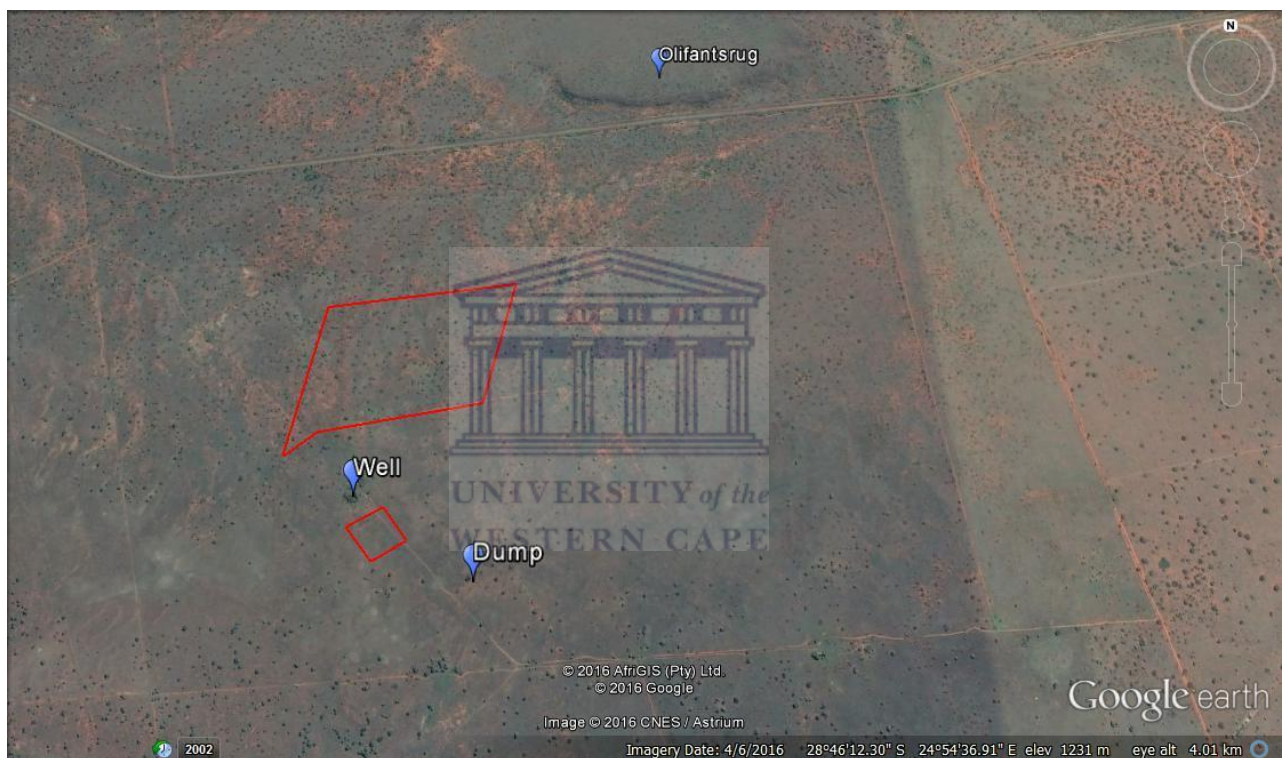


Figure 5, Google Earth. Klippiespan Native Refugee Camp. The road beneath Olifantsrug is the current dirt road to Boshof. The original road ran just above the camp.

Regarding the archaeological research, permits were applied for to the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) in terms of Section 35(4) of the National Heritage Resources Act, Act No. 25 of 1999. This was to undertake a limited excavation to supplement the surface survey information of areas which include six living areas of camp inhabitants and three of British guard

posts; excavation of up to six camp dumps and three probable British dumps and the plotting of grave mounds.

Permits were received in October 2007. Field work started in November 2007, using a field team which had worked with E. Voigt for four years. In addition, learners were involved from a local high school in January 2008. They were given an opportunity to spend two days on site. The field work at Klippiesspan extended from November 2007 until mid-April 2008 with a break for six weeks in December-January. The final season occurred in June 2008.

Two parallel lines of investigation were followed. While the excavations were underway, walking surveys continued using the GPS to plot any related material into areas further away from the main site. This included Olifantsrug, the ridge on Tolpan farm on the northern side of the search area and which overlooked the camp. The necessary evidence such as ration tins were found indicating that the ridge was the position of the day-time piquet's monitoring the camp.²³² At least 500 waypoints were eventually plotted on the GPS master map, separate to the evidence uncovered by the excavations.

²³² Piquets were mounted troops who formed the very outer sentry cordon for a garrison.



*Grass does not grow in right angles and straight lines unless on disturbed ground.*²³³

A botanist employed by the McGregor Museum examined the terrain as it was observed that where there were living areas as evidenced by the grinding stones and cultural material, changes in vegetation occurred. The interpretation was that human impact on the ground could still be seen by the changes in grasses.

Two grass species were found to be dominant on the hard surfaces with less vegetation cover and little diversity in general when compared to the surrounding veld. The grasses were Kalahari sour grass *Schmidtia cf. kalahariensis* and eight day grass *Enneapogon desvauxii*. These are both

²³³ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.

pioneer grasses which grow in unfavourable conditions such as on hard crusted surfaces and disturbed veld.

The fact that the hard surface areas had a lower plant diversity and are mainly covered by pioneer grasses indicated that these areas had been impacted upon in the past to result in hard, compacted soil surfaces.²³⁴ Consequently some of these areas were excavated and the cultural material which was uncovered confirmed this hypothesis.



*Right angled shelters built from corrugated iron.*²³⁵

²³⁴ Information supplied by T. Anderson of the McGregor Museum, Kimberley.

²³⁵ National Museum of Military History, Johannesburg, South Africa.

Taken in 1901 in the Orange River Colony this photograph depicts a Royal Army Medical Corps doctor during a medical inspection inside an unidentified camp. Only women and children are present. Note that on the roof of the dwelling are visible an indigenous pottery pot, bucket and other receptacles used to capture rainwater and the empty grain bag in front of the children. In the living areas and food preparation areas excavated at Klippiesspan indigenous pottery shards were uncovered and on the terrain where the camp once stood numerous rusted buckets such as the one in the photograph were to be found.

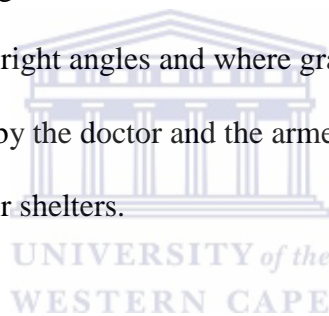


Medical inspection by a Royal Army Medical Corps doctor in an unidentified camp, Orange River Colony 1901. This was the same doctor inside the same camp as per the previous photograph.²³⁶

²³⁶ National Museum of Military History, Johannesburg, South Africa.

Photographs that depict interaction between camp internees and the military inside the forced labour camps are virtually non-existent, as are photographs depicting this depth of detail. The children's stomachs are being inspected for malnutrition. The toddler in the centre appears to have a ruptured umbilicus. The child to the right of the doctor is biting their nails, reflective of the fear and horror of the situation. To the left is an armed male working with either the military or the camp administration as evidenced by his tunic with military issue brass buttons. His rifle, a .303 Lee Enfield British army issue weapon. The background shows shelters built from clay and clods (immediate left) thatch (centre and behind the doctor), and corrugated iron (far right). Note the compacted ground.

During the surveys and archaeological excavations sections of corrugated iron were found in areas where the compacted ground had right angles and where grass does not grow. Two British army tunic buttons such as those worn by the doctor and the armed male were found on the surface in an area where refugees had built their shelters.





A living area as evidenced by vegetation variations prior to excavation.²³⁷



A living area after excavation which revealed 11 upper and lower grinding stones.²³⁸

²³⁷ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.

²³⁸ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.

3.5.3. Key material identified.

Three main areas on the terrain formed the focus of the survey. The graveyard, the living areas and the general terrain between these two fixed points which included the rubbish dumps.

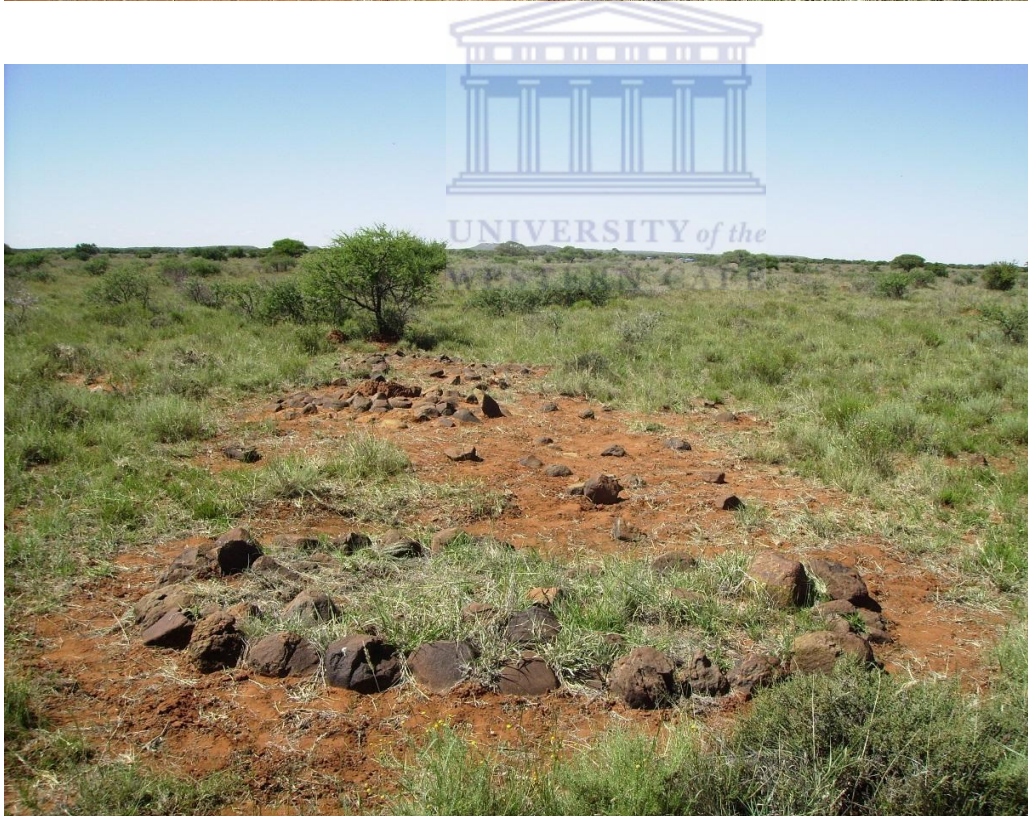
3.5.4. The graveyard.

One burial site was identified containing under twenty burials, the graves being packed with rock cairns. An exception being a woman's grave. This difference was identified by a smooth broken lower grinding stone on the grave, which was matched with its other half in a living area approximately 100 metres away. This woman's grinding stone was broken on her death, the one part being left in her dwelling and the second placed on her grave.



One broken half at the original dwelling. The grave is a scatter of rocks in the centre of which is the second half of the lower grinding stone.²³⁹

²³⁹ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.



*General view of the graveyard.*²⁴⁰

²⁴⁰ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.



General view of the graveyard.²⁴¹

3.5.5. The living areas and rubbish dumps.

Living areas were identified using the following criteria:

- Impacted ground as evidenced by vegetation variations.
- Dense surface scatters of cultural material which included upper and lower grinding stones, broken beer and wine bottle glass, indigenous clay pottery, porcelain, ration tins and metal strapping from wooden crates and wooden barrels.

The grinding stones were key to this process as certain lower stones were extremely large and heavy. This meant that they were brought in on wheeled transport, placed where the dwelling existed and remained in situ when abandoned by the refugees when they were moved and, by

²⁴¹ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.

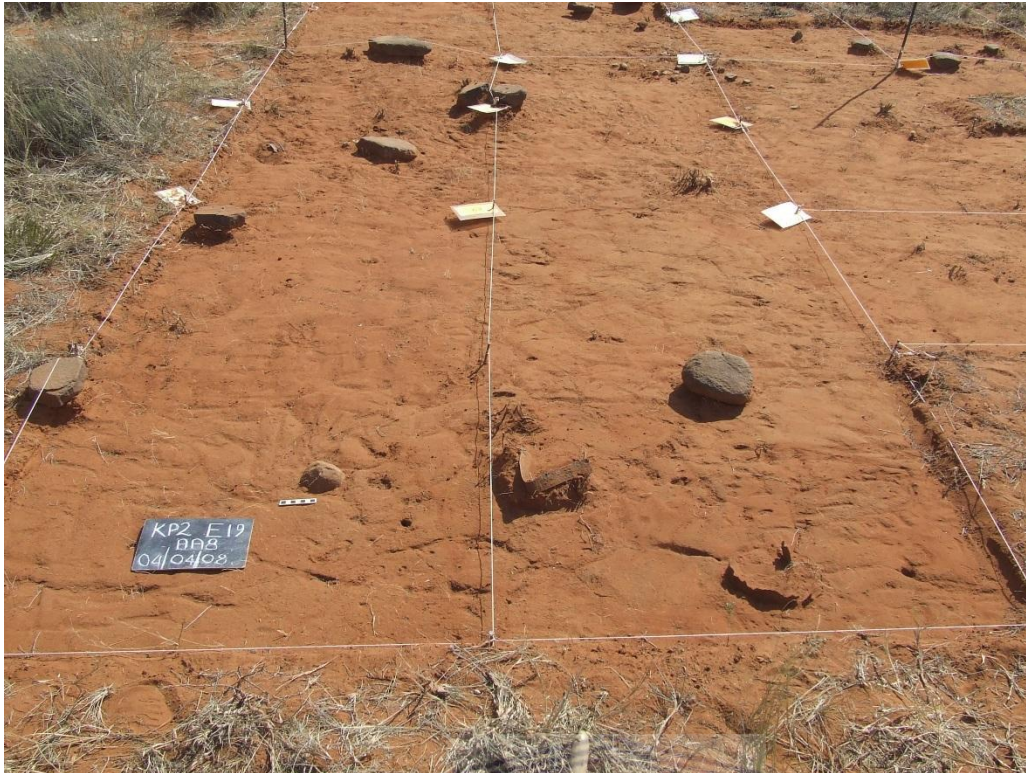
which point, they had their transport appropriated by the military. The evidence of grinding stones also conclusively established that this area was occupied by black women and their families.

Excavations identified that many of the grinding stones not only demarcated the living areas, they also were directly positioned where food preparation had occurred. The evidence for this was the assortment of other items such as ration tins, sheep, bovine, Blesbok buck and springhare bones, ostrich egg shells, fruit pips, barrel hoops which were used as fireplaces and which contained the ash deposits.

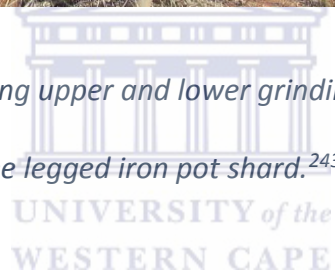


An excavated section containing a lower grinding stone and the base of a black beer bottle dating from the Victorian era.²⁴²

²⁴² Photograph, G. Benneyworth.



An excavated living area containing upper and lower grinding stones, a bent piece of steel strapping from a crate and a three legged iron pot shard.²⁴³



²⁴³ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.



Evidence of mixed rations: sheep bones and a sardine tin were found in E5.²⁴⁴



Condensed milk tin.²⁴⁵

²⁴⁴ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.

²⁴⁵ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.



*The only example where an upper grinding stone was found still in its original position on the lower grinding stone.*²⁴⁶

²⁴⁶ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.



Hoe blade excavated in Square E12.²⁴⁷



The hoe blade is worn out as in there was no sharp edge left on it. Square E12 produced various items to a depth of 12cm. These included the remains of a wound copper bangle and a piece of slate. This slate piece has two flat faces, a bevelled edge and faint lines across it and appeared to be part of a school writing slate. Six lower grinding stones and three upper grinders, the base of a black beer bottle and one piece of indigenous pottery were also uncovered. A complete phalanx of a sheep laying near the hoe was found and was not the only example of sheep bones during the excavations.

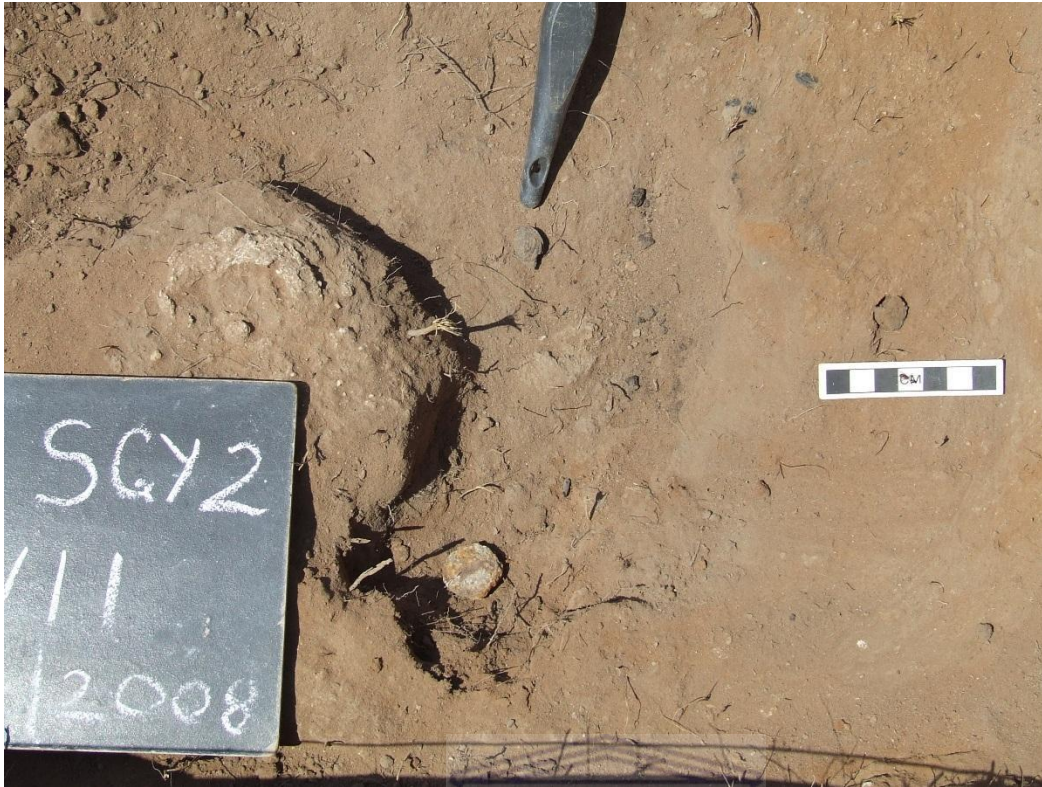
²⁴⁷ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.



Barrel hoop used as fireplace to prepare food.²⁴⁸

The interior of the hoop contained a very fine grey ash and small pieces of charcoal. No ash was found outside of the loop, which when in use was set into a hole in the ground with the fire being made in the hole. The hoop would have been at ground level and used to stand cooking equipment on its frame. A number of these examples were found.

²⁴⁸ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.



Three peach pips one beneath the paintbrush handle point, the other by the measure ruler.²⁴⁹



²⁴⁹ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.



*Square V11, fireplace, made from a barrel hoop.*²⁵⁰

The square produced ration tin fragments. The ash within the hoop produced the following finds:

- Small charcoal fragments.
- A series of five buttons in a row, indicative that the material that they were attached to was thrown into the fire. A second larger button was found.
- Small groups of thin eggshell, one piece was standing vertically suggesting that it was dropped into the soft ash.
- Burnt small peach pips as well as very small grape pips.

The evidence of pips is significant as this suggests that the people were eating dried peaches which they brought in with them and large raisins. It is accepted fact that the Native Refugee Department did not issue fruit to its forced labourers. This is borne out in the archival record of rations scale

²⁵⁰ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.

allocations and the prevalence of scurvy in the camps. Therefore the pips were in fruit carried on to the site by refugees who had access to orchards prior to their forcible removal from the farms or towns.



*Journey to a camp.*²⁵¹

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This photograph depicts women carrying foodstuffs and in two cases buckets on their heads. Given the thick blankets it appears to be winter. To the right of the central group on the horizon is a mounted British soldier. The provenance of the photograph is that it was taken by a member of the South Wales Borderers regiment in the Orange River Colony in 1901. This regiment operated in the Boshof area during this period, so it could depict women being taken to Kimberley. The survey at Klippiesspan located buckets identical to those in the photograph as well as a section of a wrist bangle which is identical to the one worn by the woman in the centre of the photograph.

²⁵¹ Royal Regiment of Wales archives Brecon, Wales.



Bucket example, Klippiespan camp.²⁵²



Square A12 produced a .577 Snider–Enfield bullet adjacent to a fireplace. Note the lower grinding stones in the lower edge of the picture. The bullet was found in the centre of a curve of three stones, two of which are visible.²⁵³

²⁵² Photograph, G. Benneyworth.

²⁵³ Photograph, G. Benneyworth. The .577 Snider-Enfield breech loading rifle was adopted by the British Army in 1866 and used until 1874.

In addition to this bullet, cartridge case fragments were also found in areas where there were fireplaces. This is significant in that any refugees possessing firearms would have had these confiscated when rounded up for internment. However ammunition is easy to conceal on one's person or amongst possessions. Over the last 26 years I have found ammunition at numerous South African War British army camp sites. Where soldier's food preparation areas were located cartridge cases without bullet heads are found, or the bullet heads found separately and nearby. The cases have been crimped and still contain propellant, in some cases or are usually found empty of propellant. The hypothesis formed is that cartridge cases stored propellant which was used as firelighters. When required the propellant was poured into the kindling and ignited thus lighting the fire. Discarded bullets are also in evidence.

Consequently the hypothesis in this instance is that this bullet was discarded from a fire lighter after use. It is also evidence of firearm ownership prior to forcible removal and internment. In addition to this find, another bullet was also found in Square A11, as well as three gunpowder flasks elsewhere on the terrain. Based on their type and when they were manufactured all this ammunition and firearm accessories predate the war by some time, yet are found inside a refugee camp. The ammunition was smuggled in and after being used as firelighters then discarded in the food preparation areas.

The surface survey and excavations of the living areas uncovered jewellery and a dolls head fragment, along with other items such as safety pins, needles, crocheted hooks and thimbles. It also says something of their wealth and social standing when viewed against the finds of the black board slate. The possibility is that this property belonged to people who were not farm labourers and originated from a wealthier class of urban residents such as the residents of the Boshof location.



Gold pendant top left. Top right a brass buckle stamped Paris which appears to be a brassiere buckle. Bottom left a tear drop earring. Below a porcelain doll's head fragment.²⁵⁴

²⁵⁴ Photographs, G. Benneyworth.



The military trace: a regimental button from the Royal York and Lancaster Regiment.²⁵⁵

Personal items directly linked to British troops were found. Two regimental buttons and a bridle were located just beyond the perimeter of the living areas, indicating the relationship between the military and the civilians. No military items were found inside the living areas, besides from ration tins which would have been issued. The button is from the York and Lancaster Regiment. Soldiers from this regiment who served in the Kimberley region were British army reservists and were used to secure the railway lines of communication and to guard garrison towns. Therefore it would not

²⁵⁵ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.

be out of place to find that reservists were used to guard or supply this camp and who would have been based in Kimberley.²⁵⁶

The archaeology speaks to the military connection; regimental buttons and ration tins identical to those in use by the British forces, and military outposts on the adjacent ridge. The mutton bones were not the best cuts of meat, for example jaw bones in the cooking areas. An analysis of the bones revealed that they had been butchered with cleavers and the hypothesis is that this mutton was issued.²⁵⁷ There is no possibility that refugees would have been eating their own stock as these were, as per policy confiscated or destroyed. Aerial photography for the area shows very old tracks leading from Premier Mine to Klippiesspan and this would have been the nearest point of a permanent military presence.

Between Premier Mine and Klippiesspan there exists a rubbish dump dating from this era and which was rubbish discarded by the mine, its village and its compound. The camp terrain is strewn with beer and wine bottle glass. These bottles had to come from somewhere and the hypothesis is that they were used as water bottles, and were scavenged from the rubbish dump. The main dump site of the camp is located beyond the perimeter of the camp, very much in line with the layout of British military camps were laid out. These were not random civilians camping here for a short period of time, given the organisation of their living environment as evidenced by the position of the dumps.

This site is characterised by the trace of black woman and children by the sheer volume of their material culture which was located and identified. Jewellery, personal affects, writing slates, toys and importantly grinding stones and traditional pottery. These stones were transported in and when

²⁵⁶ National Archives United Kingdom, South African Field Force Casualty Roll. This deduction is based on a survey of the casualty roll which lists fatalities from this regiment occurring only in garrisoned centres due to disease.

²⁵⁷ Discussions with E. Voigt a specialist in bones and who examined these bones in the McGregor Museum laboratory.

the site was abandoned they were too, due to a lack of transport. Each stone marked a household and clusters of stones demarcated communal cooking areas. No evidence of tents was found due to the absence of tent pegs. Sail cloth brass rings were found as were pieces of galvanised iron, meaning that shelter was rudimentary and improvised. Nutrition from tinned food and occasional mutton was insufficient, hence foraging and hunting occurred, hence the ostrich egg shells and springhare and aardvark bones. Some fruit was carried in.

The low number of graves indicates three possibilities, a low number of people, a short period of occupation, or strong health. The hypothesis is a combination of all three. As will be shown in the next chapter many came from the Boshof Location which was established in the 1840s along with the town. The residents traded with the diamond mines, raised their own crops, orchards and stock. Over time they accumulated wealth, as evidenced in the personalised archaeology at Klippiespan. They were not poor in the material sense and were an emerging if not established middle class in good health and standing at that point of tragedy when their homes were flattened and they were forcibly removed to then be manipulated into a Total War resource

Carrying with them what they could they were dumped at Klippiespan. How long they stayed there is unknown. However it could have not been for too long given the absence of evidence of a prolonged occupation, be this through material culture or graves or both. Their settlement was a holding area and not a formalised camp administered by the Native Refugee Department, as there is no reference to this site in the surviving departmental records.

Then they were moved again, the logical direction being to Dry Harts forced labour camp. There they found a very different situation to their experience of scorched earth. Coerced into forced labour there they remained until the camp closed after the war in 1902, and repatriation occurred; their material record left behind them.

3.5.6. A comment on numbers.

A final key point on the two Kimberley Native Refugee Camps, one which is critical to the analysis of archival resources and the work of others who rely only on the archive, is that the Native Refugee Department took control of the Kimberley camps and those at Orange River Station and Taung on 1 August 1901. However, they kept no statistical records of deaths in these camps until November 1901, when records for Dry Harts camp first started, meaning that a hole of three months exists in the archive. As for Klippiesspan Camp no record was ever created. For the period that black refugees were interned in the Kimberley camps the research for this thesis identified that no military records were created about these camps.²⁵⁸

The only records created for the Blankenbergvlei Native Refugee Camp were those of De Beers Consolidated Mines. Other than a few fleeting references about refugees on a farm nearby in the Orange River Colony, no records have survived about Klippiesspan Camp. In the case of Klippiesspan camp, archaeology offered the tools to gain an insight and to recover and reconstruct a history of this formerly unknown camp, together with a fragmentary written record. No written record has survived – the only tangible evidence is the artefacts that mark the spot.

To uncover a history of this specific camp at Klippiesspan using only archival records would have proved impossible.

²⁵⁸ If records were created then they have been destroyed.

Chapter four. Total war, scorched earth and displacement. Clearing out Boshof and Jacobsdal.

The literature review identified that scholars refer to the land clearances yet they do not give specific examples of what this entailed for a specific black community at a specific time. The literature is generic on this experience, which supposedly was a shared experience at the hands of a common enemy, in which black people were participating. In the case of Boshof and Jacobsdal, two magisterial farming districts each with their own towns it is possible to reconstruct a history of the land clearances. This chapter will show what this entailed, namely forced removals resulting from a land clearance policy, destruction of property, seizing of stock and assets, internment in the Kimberley Native Refugee Camps and coercion into forced wartime labour.

An aim of this chapter is that in identifying a specific area and its inhabitant's experience of Total War it is also possible to identify where the internees for the two Kimberley camps originated from and what their unique circumstances were during their specific targeting by the scorched earth policy and forcible displacement into the Kimberley camps. These land clearances that they experienced will be very detailed as this history has never been retrieved and narrated before. The case studies of the Boshof and Jacobsdal magisterial districts will be used. This detail is submitted as not only is this first retrieval of this period of time in these two districts' history, it is intended that future scholars writing on the history of these districts could use this information.

4.1. Total War Boshof.

In the case of the Kimberley camps, the refugees originated from Boshof, Jacobsdal, Petrusburg, Hoopstad and other areas of the Transvaal. The Boshof and Jacobsdal magisterial districts were only two of many districts that were hammered by the Total War strategy, which forcibly removed civilians into the camp system, creating a coerced labour pool which was then exploited by both

the army and the mines. Research for this thesis uncovered much information about this experience of the civilians from these districts.

A core component of the refugees in the Native Refugee Camps at Blankenbergvlei, Dry Harts and in all likelihood Klippiëspan is that they originated from the Boshof Magisterial District, which included the farms and the town itself. Research for this thesis into Boshof was undertaken in the War Office Files held in the National Archives, United Kingdom, Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives Kings College London, National Archives South Africa, Free State Archives and the De Beers Consolidated Mines archives. The aim was to identify as much information as possible on those refugees from Boshof who passed through these three refugee and forced labour camps.

The records from the Resident Magistrate Boshof archives only refer to military activities and the Boer population. Using January 1901 as a baseline, given that is when the scorched earth and land clearances intensified the following information refers.

The research identified that towards the close of 1900, the scorched earth policy and land clearances was underway in this magisterial district. The earliest arrival of black refugees in Kimberley from the district is recorded on 24 November 1900.²⁵⁹ Approximately 90 refugees from the farms Lowkop and Voruitzigt erected huts on the outskirts of Kimberley and formed the beginning of what would become the Native Refugee Camp at Blankenbergvlei.²⁶⁰

By 19 December 1900, 150 new arrivals joined this nucleus and throughout the year there were continual arrivals from the Boshof district until the Native Refugee Camps in Kimberley were relocated to Dry Harts. Many of these refugees brought with them livestock and owned wagons and carts.

²⁵⁹ VAB, SRC, Vol. 9, Reference 3175.

²⁶⁰ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, GM Collection, F & E 1/1/1, 24 November 1901.

Boshof was one of many rural towns that were soon occupied by the British forces during their invasion of the Orange Free State Republic in February 1900. By January 1901, the Boshof Boer Commando were far from defeated and actively engaged the British forces in the area.

Communications with Kimberley and Jacobsdal were increasingly difficult as the Boers it was claimed, “shoot without mercy any native captured with dispatches”.²⁶¹ On 7 January 1901, the Boers raided some cattle close to the town but artillery fire wounded some of them who were carried away. On 8 January 1901, the Boers seized an ambulance on route from Kimberley claiming it was being used to carry in supplies. On 20 January 1901, a supply convoy from Kimberley to Boshof returned to Kimberley transporting several ‘undesirable’ families the Resident Magistrate wished to remove from the town. A running battle ensued between the convoy and the Boshof Commando which attacked the convoy.

British military operations were confined to capturing farmers who rendered assistance to the commandos. The raids on farms were limited due to the lack of mounted troops and that the Boer forces outnumbered the Boshof garrison. Nevertheless all captured Boer stock was sold to raise revenue.²⁶² This selling of war loot to raise revenue is of interest in that this also occurred in the Jacobsdal district and reflects on the principle of Total War in harnessing all the enemy resources.

During August 1901 refugees from the district were sent to Warrenton. On 14 August 1901, 500 black refugees, mostly women and arrived by train in Kimberley at night from Warrenton Station. They detrained west and close by Mankurwane’s location between Ritchees Nek post, the Dynamite siding and the Company’s connection tram line. The records reflect they had no tents nor was any food given to them.²⁶³

²⁶¹ VAB, CO, Vol. 8, Ref 50/01.

²⁶² VAB, CO, Vol. 8, Reference 50/01.

²⁶³ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, Record No: 9054 Native Camps and Natives Generally [Box 2/1/36 Ref E], 14 August 1901.

Tax collection of outstanding dog taxes was another method of harnessing resources. In early September 1901, the Resident Magistrate in Boshof indicated that, "there are a certain number of Natives about Boshof that might pay".²⁶⁴ The reply he received when he enquired if blacks employed by the military on transport or other duties were exempt from this tax illustrates the thinking amongst the higher command; he should collect as, "as they are the ones best able to pay".²⁶⁵

In November 1901, the military authorities forcibly removed the entire Boer population from Boshof to the Kimberley Burgher Refugee Camp. On 26 November 1901, Major General Pretzman enquired of the Deputy Administrator in Bloemfontein if there would be any objection to him removing this population which numbered fifteen families - about fifty people. All stores would be closed and supplies handed over to the military as required. The reasons were twofold, "The information going out to enemy and difficulty of feeding." Consequently, Boshof would become a purely military post.²⁶⁶

"The steps were taken on military grounds entirely and was therefore no concern of this administration which merely stipulated for the retention of the Resident Magistrate." Once in Kimberley, the civilians were required to report to the Provost Marshal fortnightly and they petitioned against this restriction. When reporting they were, "interviewed...on issues arising out of their removal." Pretzman suggested that only those persons considered loyal by the Boshof Resident Magistrate prior to their removal should have this restriction removed.²⁶⁷

When the civilians were removed to Kimberley, all stores were closed and all provisions handed over to the garrison.²⁶⁸ The fragmentary written archive referred to a refugee camp beyond Premier

²⁶⁴ VAB, CO, Vol. 31, Reference 3011/01.

²⁶⁵ VAB, CO, Vol. 31, Reference 3011/01.

²⁶⁶ VAB, CO, Vol. 57, Reference 4291/01.

²⁶⁷ VAB, CO, Vol. 55, Reference 439/02.

²⁶⁸ VAB, CO, Vol. 52, Reference 22/02.

Mine just across the border between the Cape Colony and Orange River Colony, separate to the Native Refugee Camp at Blankenbergvlei. The hypothesis is that this second camp was at that time a holding centre for refugees swept up during the land clearances. Prior to the removal of refugees from Blankenbergvlei to Dry Harts the military investigated the possibility of using the De Beers estates to the east inside Orange River Colony.²⁶⁹ Two months after Blankenbergvlei camp was shifted to Dry Harts, the Boer civilian population of Boshof were forcibly moved into the Boer Refugee camp at Kimberley.²⁷⁰ Although black people are not referred to in this move the archive also reflects that the Boshof location was destroyed for military exigencies.

The hypothesis is that these black residents were taken to Kimberley as this is the most logical possibility. However they could not enter the town itself, given Major General Pretymann's proclamations and the radius rule on non-Cape Colony citizens. They were not permitted to cross the border and enter the Cape Colony and Kimberley and Beaconsfield's outskirts. However any able bodied men would have gained work on the mines and their wages used to support their families. As the emptying out of Boshof happened in November 1901 the black refugees were settled in the vicinity and this was on Klippiesspan farm, where it is possible that the second camp had existed, or still did.

The research identified that the black refugees from the Boshof Magisterial District originated from two main places, the Boshof Location (which the War Office files describe as being destroyed for military exigencies), and the farms in the district for which the research identified the farm and refugee names.²⁷¹

²⁶⁹ VAB, CO, Vol. 29, Reference 2770/01 (General Manager De Beers Consolidated Mines to Goold Adams).

²⁷⁰ VAB, CO, Vol. 57, Reference 4291/01.

²⁷¹ NAUK, WO 148. 40.

4.2. Locating a trace of the Boshof Location.

The fieldwork approach to locating the site of the Boshof Location involved first identifying the positions of the British fortifications securing the town in order to establish the perimeter, and then examining the terrain within or adjacent to the perimeter for the site of the location and its burial sites and then corroborating this information from local sources. The British forts were the clue to understanding where the location was, given that it was destroyed due to “military exigencies”. Perhaps it was in the way of a clear field of fire for the perimeter forts.

The post war files for claims lodged by residents of Boshof in which some personal information about the Native Location resident’s compensation claims was found, also revealed the extent that other structures just beyond the town were levelled which could compromise the defence line. For example a stone wall which surrounded the Boshof Lawn Tennis Club court was pulled down. This claim was disallowed, citing that the damage was done for defensive purposes. Similarly the same with a store room on the courts and a perimeter wall around the cemetery which were levelled.²⁷²

The field work found the remains of five fortifications, including two artillery positions on the ridges surrounding the town. I then located the original site of the Boshof Location which is situated adjacent to the tarred road as one exits Boshof towards Dealsville.²⁷³ The original site has the remains of collapsed mud brick buildings and is located one kilometre from the Kareehof settlement, where some of the descendants of the original Boshof Location reside.

Four cemeteries were located. One of these is on the eastern side of the tarred road to Dealsville, immediately behind the roadside fence. It contains perhaps between 500 and 1,000 graves.

Engraved headstones include details of the birth and death dates. Of interest is that many of the engraved headstones reflect dates of birth for the 19th century from the 1840s through to the 1880s,

²⁷² VAB, LBO, Vol. ADD2/2/1.

²⁷³ Located at Latitude: 28°32'29.00"S and Longitude: 25°15'12.46"E.

which meant that these people were adults during the South African War. Some of them would have passed through the Native Refugee Camps in Kimberley and ended up in the Dry Harts. Other cemeteries in the immediate vicinity all appear to have been post war burials.



BGY 3. Kareehof visible in the distance. The open ground was the site of the Boshof Location.²⁷⁴

I then visited the municipal offices and enquired of a municipal employee if their offices had grave registers or maps of the old ‘location’ I was referred to a Mr Bram, a long term municipal employee who took me out in his vehicle and indicated the grave sites and area of the former location.

Mr Bram pointed out all the cemeteries I had located and stated that there were no other graves to his knowledge. He indicated that the open ground between the burial sites and Kareehof, a formal settlement about a kilometre away, was where the old ‘location’ had stood, which confirmed my field research. This he said was occupied by ‘coloured’ people who resided in huts made from clay. In 1988, heavy rains and flooding collapsed these huts. The municipality then built permanent

²⁷⁴ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.

housing around the old United Reformed Church and the area today is known as Kareehof. We then drove into Kareehof. Mr Bram pointed out an area of collapsed huts beneath and around some very old trees adjacent and roughly east of Kareehof. He mentioned that there had been wells in the settlement.

This discussion proved significant. I then visited the church, which is directly associated with the Boshof Location residents and their experience of scorched earth and the Kimberley and Dry Harts camps. After the war the residents filed compensation claims to the colonial government for war losses and were paid 10 % of their claims in 1905.²⁷⁵ In 1906 construction on the church started. My hypothesis, without conducting an oral history project with the members of the church, is that they used their compensation claim payments to fund the construction of their church. The cornerstone records that it was laid on “Dingaans Day 1906”, by Rev AP Smit.



*United Reformed Church, Kareehof, Boshof.*²⁷⁶

²⁷⁵ VAB, LBO, ADD/2/3/1/2 Boshof Black compensation claimants; VAB, ABO, Vol 6. List of native claimants; and NAUK, WO, Vol. 148. 40.

²⁷⁶ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.

4.3. Total War Jacobsdal.

Jacobsdal was the first Orange Free State Republic town occupied by British forces on 15 February 1900, during military operations associated with the Relief of Kimberly and the invasion of the Republic. The military clearance of civilians and their livestock from the Jacobsdal district, during July and August 1901, illustrates the impact of the scorched earth policy and how the military used this to profit from the spoils of war. The Boer civilians in Jacobsdal and the inhabitants of the surrounding farms, (black and Boer) with their stock were first cleared out, and finally the settlement known as the Jacobsdal Location. Mobile military columns undertook the clearances, rounding up the civilians and stock, destroying the farm buildings and infrastructure before trekking the captives into Jacobsdal where the fortified garrison rerouted them to the nearest garrisoned railway terminus at Modder River Station, 30 km to the west.

The military objective was to remove the civilians from Jacobsdal town as they required food supplies which had to be transported from Modder River Station. Boer civilians and certainly some black civilians had relatives serving with the Jacobsdal Commando, thus making them enemy colluders. Captured stock would be used by the military and the black males forced to the Kimberley mines or the military as labour. Their families would be financially supported by these working men, yet the families would also be used as an agricultural war resource as part of the Total War strategy. They would be interned into the forced labour camps which would come into effect in the Orange River Colony when the Department of Native Refugees started on 1 August 1901. Boer civilians would be interned in the Kimberley and Orange River Station refugee camps. Additionally profit could be realised by the sale of captured resources and military control consolidated over the neighbouring landscape.

These land clearances were enacted in line with Kitchener's policies. Circular Memorandum 31, dated 15 March 1901 specified that:

All natives living on farms should be collected and sent to the railway; if possible household natives should be permitted to accompany families or sent to the same station. Supplies found on the farms should be sent in with the natives to feed them until their arrival at the railway. Additional supplies should be taken by the supply officers and the remainder destroyed. All standing crops are to be destroyed either by turning cattle into them or by burning. All forage is to be destroyed.²⁷⁷

The clearance of civilians and their stock from Jacobsdal town and the surrounding district was an immediate retaliation after resurgent activity by the Jacobsdal Commando. On 3 July 1901 the Jacobsdal Commando raided the government farm at Magersfontein seizing 700 horses and 30 cattle. They followed this up with an attack against the communications infrastructure on 7 July 1901, knocking down four telegraph poles nearby at Scoltznek.²⁷⁸

On 4 July 1901, Kitchener had ordered that all, “Dutch families in Jacobsdal to be sent to Kimberley as soon as possible”.²⁷⁹ To prepare against any possible retaliatory attacks against the garrison once these clearances started, the garrison first overhauled and strengthened their defences.²⁸⁰ All other structures beyond the perimeter were levelled as they would impeded a clear field of fire, for example, a stone wall which surrounded the cemetery was flattened.²⁸¹

The clearances commenced on 9 July 1901. Twelve Boer families from the town (55 persons) were sent to Modder River for routing to Kimberley. On 11 July 1901, another 40 Boer civilians were railed from Modder River to Orange River Station and another 50 to Kimberley. On 16 July 1901, 103 refugees from Jacobsdal were railed to Kimberley with another 10 cleared from the Modder River vicinity.²⁸² On 16 July 1901, the total refugees in the Native Refugee Camp at Blankenbergvlei were 1,048 (increase of 8). “I am informed that about 600 natives are expected to

²⁷⁷ VAB, CO, Vol. 52.

²⁷⁸ NASA, FK, Vol. 1816.

²⁷⁹ NASA, FK, Vol. 1816.

²⁸⁰ The garrison was attacked on 25 October 1900, the Jacobsdal Commando, assisted by local Jacobsdal residents, shot up the Cape Town Highlanders and Cape Artillery garrisoning the town, inflicting numerous casualties. See: <http://www.angloboerwar.com/unit-information/south-african-units/311-cape-townhighlanders>. As assessed 10 January 2015.

²⁸¹ VAB, CO, Vol. 185, Ref 4658/03.

²⁸² NASA, FK, Vol. 1817.

arrive here soon”.²⁸³ These people would in all likelihood have been from Jacobsdal as the following day several families were removed from the area between the Riet and Modder Rivers.²⁸⁴

On 19 July 1901, the first captured stock was herded from Modder River Station to Kimberley. Forty two refugees with their wagons were sent to Modder River. The next day 112 refugees arrived from Jacobsdal at Modder River, with 17,000 sheep herded in to Modder River the following day.²⁸⁵

On 1 August 1901, the Orange River Colony’s Native Refugee Department was formed.²⁸⁶ That day Major General Pretzman reported to Goold Adams, that the handover to the civilian administration of Orange River Station camp occurs ‘today’ (the Burgher Camp) and that as no new admissions were permitted in Kimberley, the population was increasing at Orange River Station camp.²⁸⁷ The land clearances in the Jacobsdal district resulted in an unknown number of black refugees being sent to Kimberley on 17 August 1901.²⁸⁸

During August 1901 the clearance of the Jacobsdal district intensified. Although the July 1901 records do not specify the removal of black civilians, during August 1901 they were cleared out with their stock. It appears that at this stage, Black farmworkers were initially targeted as the Jacobsdal Location was cleared only in September 1901, after the farms in the district were first emptied. On 2 August 1901, the first of many captured stock auctions in Kimberley by the military authorities commenced, 5,000 ewes were sold in the first batch with no reserve price asked.²⁸⁹

²⁸³ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, Record No: 9054 Native Camps and Natives Generally [Box 2/1/36 Ref E].

²⁸⁴ NASA, FK, Vol. 1817.

²⁸⁵ NASA, FK, Vol. 1817.

²⁸⁶ NASA, SNA 1902, Vol. 13, Captain De Lotbiniere to Sir Godfrey Lagden, Commissioner for Native Affairs, Johannesburg, (13 January 1902).

²⁸⁷ VAB, SRC, Vol. 10 Ref 3933.

²⁸⁸ NASA, FK, Vol. 1816.

²⁸⁹ Africana Library, Kimberley, *Diamond Fields Advertiser*, 2 August 1901.

On 3 August 1901, 20,000 sheep and 460 head of cattle were sent to Kimberley. The next day 50 Jacobsdal refugees were sent to Modder River for Orange River Station.²⁹⁰ On 6 August 1901, a number of woman and children, which included Boer and black civilians, were brought to Jacobsdal from the surrounding farms.²⁹¹ On 7 August 1901, the military auctioned without reserve another 5,000 ewes in Kimberley, followed by 5,000 prime sheep including some fine slaughter stock, two days later.

On 6 August 1901, the Resident Magistrate of Jacobsdal informed the Secretary, Orange River Colony Administration that:

Numbers of woman and children including natives ORC continually being brought to Jacobsdal from surrounding farms. Commandant here is of opinion that I should ration them instead of military authorities. Please wire instructions.²⁹²

On 12 August 1901, some new arrivals in Blankenbergvlei Native Refugee Camp brought the total number of refugees to 1,268.²⁹³ On the same day approximately 200 cattle and 1,100 sheep were herded to Modder River from Jacobsdal by General Plummer's column.²⁹⁴ Two days later the same column dropped 11 black refugees and 150 Boer refugees at Orange River Station.²⁹⁵ These refugees may have been swept up in the Jacobsdal district and the 11 black refugees retained by the column for labour while trekking to Orange River Station.

On 14 August 1901, approximately 200 cattle and 1,100 sheep were sent to Modder River by General Plummer's column, engaged with the farm clearances.²⁹⁶ Another 5,000 sheep and 200 young horses were auctioned by the military in Kimberley.²⁹⁷ The Officer Commanding Jacobsdal

²⁹⁰ NASA, FK, Vol. 1817; and NASA, FK Vol. 1816.

²⁹¹ VAB, SRC, Vol 10. 3934/01.

²⁹² VAB, SRC, Vol 10. 3934/01.

²⁹³ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, Record No: 9054 Native Camps and Natives Generally [Box 2/1/36 Ref E].

²⁹⁴ NASA, FK, Vol. 1816.

²⁹⁵ NASA, FK, Vol. 1812.

²⁹⁶ NASA, FK, Vol. 1816.

²⁹⁷ Africana Library, Kimberley, *Diamond Fields Advertiser*, (August 1901).

rode over to confer with the Officer Commanding Modder River Station about refugee stock in the district. The sheer volume of stock clearances necessitated a holding farm in the vicinity of the Modder River garrison, prior to sending the herds to Kimberley.²⁹⁸ On 17 August 1901, an unknown number of black refugees cleared from the farms were routed from Modder River Station to Kimberley.²⁹⁹

On 20 August 1901, the Officer Commanding Jacobsdal again conferred with his counterpart at Modder River Station about obtaining grazing veld for captured refugee stock and arranged for another 500 black refugees from the Jacobsdal district to proceed to Modder River Station for routing to Kimberley. During the week of 21-27 August 1901, the Chief Staff Officer, Kimberley ordered that the additional herds of 15,000 sheep and black refugee cattle seized by the columns be sent to Modder River Station for stockpiling on a farm located west of the railway under military control.³⁰⁰

On 27 August 1901, 19 Boers from Koffyfontein were sent to Modder River for routing to Orange River Station.³⁰¹ On 30 August 1901, the military auctioned another 200 heifers and 200 young oxen in Kimberley.³⁰² The surviving records are not exact, yet reflect these stock seizures in Jacobsdal district during the period under review:

Sheep 53,100

Cattle 660

The military auctioned in Kimberley:

Sheep: 20,000

²⁹⁸ NASA, FK, Vol. 1817.

²⁹⁹ NASA, FK, Vol. 1816; and NASA, FK, Vol. 1817.

³⁰⁰ NASA, FK, Vol. 1822.

³⁰¹ NASA, FK, Vol. 1822.

³⁰² Africana Library, Kimberley, *Diamond Fields Advertiser*, (August 1901).

| | |
|-------------|--------|
| Ewes: | 10,000 |
| Heifers: | 200 |
| Young oxen: | 200 |
| Horses: | 200 |

Regarding the auction sales it is very likely that stock seized through military action in other areas separate to Jacobsdal during the same period was also routed to Kimberley. Earlier in June 1901, the *Weekly Free Press* reported that was very difficult to obtain slaughter cattle in the Kimberley district, and that De Beers Consolidated Mines would introduce frozen meat railed up from the Imperial Cold Storage Company in Cape Town.³⁰³ Given that the Company had a reduced truck allowance imposed on them, it is unlikely that they would have used refrigeration trucks to transport meat from Cape Town. Rather they would have prioritised coal and other essential mining equipment and provisions to focus on their core business. The immediate solution was the spoils of war. Another objective behind selling these vast herds seized from both the Boer and black refugees in the Jacobsdal district (and other districts) was to raise cash for the military from looted spoils, while also supplying the military forces and Kimberley residents with protein.

Who herded these vast numbers of sheep and cattle into Modder River Station and then looked after them on the holding farms? One possibility was the black shepherds and children whose lifestyle prior to the clearances was supervising stock on the farms. No record has been identified as to the number of mules, poultry, crops and forage that was captured or destroyed.

By the end of August 1901, the Jacobsdal district was cleared of civilians and stock. Boer refugees were routed to Kimberley and Orange River Station and the black refugees to Kimberley. All that remained in Jacobsdal was the location and the garrison.

³⁰³ Africana Library, *Weekly Free Press*, (15 June 1901).

On 9 September 1901, Jacobsdal's Resident Magistrate received instructions to claim outstanding poll and dog taxes due for 1901 from, "all bona fide natives belonging to ORC except those, who incapacitated from work or can prove that owing to the war they have been unable to earn. This rule (was) to apply also to natives who are in Military employment if they are not aliens".³⁰⁴ These instructions were transmitted to the Resident Magistrates of Bloemfontein, Bethulie, Boshof, Bethlehem, Harrismith, Heilbron, Jacobsdal, Kroonstad, Ladybrand, Winburg and the Acting Resident Magistrates in Edenburg, Koffyfontein and Thabanchu.³⁰⁵

On 11 September 1901, the Resident Magistrate reported that 70-80 residents with their families were in the Jacobsdal Location and that he would attempt to collect outstanding poll and dog taxes, overdue since 1900. He reported that there were no other black civilians left in the district as some had been already removed to different camps while, "others were allowed to obtain employment in the Kimberley mines".³⁰⁶

Having flushed out any residual cash in Jacobsdal's Location on 21 September 1901, the soldiers forcibly those inhabitants who were of no further value as a war resource to the military garrison. Fifty one black refugees were sent to the Kimberley Native Refugee Camp via Modder River Station.³⁰⁷ How many remained is estimated by deducting 51 from the 80 estimated by the Resident Magistrate; approximately 30 men (and possibly some women) for use as military workers by the garrison.

4.5. The districts cleared into Kimberley.

Which refugee camp these refugees were routed to in Kimberley is unclear, given that by this stage the Native Refugee Camp at Blankenbergvlei existed, along with Klippiesspan Camp. They could

³⁰⁴ VAB, CO, Vol. 31, Reference 3011/01.

³⁰⁵ VAB, CO, Vol. 31, Reference 3011/01.

³⁰⁶ VAB, CO, Vol. 31, Reference 3011/01.

³⁰⁷ NASA, FK, Vol. 1822.

not have all gone to Blankenbergvlei where overcrowding and infectious diseases had strained the garrison's resources, resulting in a high death toll. Given that Major General Pretymann's 22 June 1901 public notice had, as one of its objectives the removal of all black civilians who were not citizens of the Cape Colony and unwilling to work, many of these black refugees from the Jacobsdal district would have been kept outside the Cape Colony at Klippiesspan Camp in the Orange River Colony. Additionally the five mile radius rule would have applied, making it impossible for them to enter the Cape Colony.

An appraisal of these military records in order to calculate the number of black refugees sent to Kimberley from the Jacobsdal district resulting from these clearances arrived at the following:

- 10 July 1901-De Beers Consolidated Mines expected 600 refugees from Jacobsdal.³⁰⁸
- 17 August 1901-an unknown number of refugees routed to Kimberley.³⁰⁹
- 20 August 1901-500 refugees routed to Kimberley.³¹⁰
- 21 September 1901-51 refugees routed to Kimberley.³¹¹

A total 1,151 which does not include the unknown number referred to on 17 August 1901. Nor does this include those refugees who had arrived in Kimberley from the period November 1900 until this point in time, which meant that the total number was higher than 1,151. The scorched earth policy and land clearances were not only limited to Jacobsdal during this period. On 5 August 1901, Superintendent Schutte reported that, due to the columns working up the Vaal River, he expected them to bring in many more refugees and that the following day he expected some 250 Orange River Colony refugees from Warrenton, 130 from Orange River Station and 100 from

³⁰⁸ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, Record No: 9054 Native Camps and Natives Generally [Box 2/1/36 Ref E].

³⁰⁹ NASA, FK, Vol. 1816.

³¹⁰ NASA, FK, Vol. 1822.

³¹¹ Africana Library, Kimberley, *Weekly Free Press* (31 August 1901).

Jacobsdal. This would increase the Burgher Refugee Camp and the camp at Blankenbergsvlei population to 4,800, including the ‘natives’.

On 17 August 1901, the military raided Mankurwane’s Location, arresting over 200 without passes.³¹² It is presumed that they would have been interned in the Blanckenberg Native Refugee Camp, given its proximity. On the same day a number of families were brought in and cast on the veld near Mankurwane’s location and apparently forgotten by the military. These people were entrained at Hebron and on arrival in Kimberley received no food from the military.³¹³

Hebron is located approximately 114 kilometres from Kimberley and 25 kilometres from Bloemfontein. The fact that these refugees from the Hebron district were railed to Kimberley and not Bloemfontein, which is closer, shows that the planning (or lack of) behind the forced removals from the farms which paid no regard to the human impact. Additionally they were not provided with rations and were dumped by the military in the veld at Kimberley illustrates an aspect of Total War.

In adding the Jacobsdal total of 1,151 people to these new arrivals this totals to 1,851 people, excluding other unknown numbers of arrivals. During the same period, as these land clearances occurred the Blankenbergsvlei Native Refugee Camp population increased from 1,048 on 16 July 1901 to 1,537 on 18 September 1901, an increase of 489 people. Granted there would have been deaths however in terms of the camp’s demographic woman and children would have formed the majority as given the no work no food policy their menfolk would have been coerced into military or mine labour. The hypothesis is that the additional refugees brought into Kimberley during this land clearance process and other clearances at a later date, were sent to Klippiesspan Camp. Having

³¹²De Beers Archives, Record No: 9054 Native Camps and Natives Generally [Box 2/1/36 Ref E].

³¹³De Beers Archives, Record No: 9054 Native Camps and Natives Generally [Box 2/1/36 Ref E].

been displaced from their land through the violence of war they were thus positioned to provide labour to support both the military and capital.



Chapter Five. Dry Harts Forced Labour Camp.

This chapter is a history of the Native Refugee Camp at Dry Harts which functioned as a forced labour camp during the entire period of its existence from November 1901 until December 1902. As with the history that this thesis narrates of the Native Refugee camps at Orange River Station, Kimberley and Taung, this is the first history ever compiled of the camp at Dry Harts.

What the research for this thesis demonstrates that as with Dry Harts camp it is possible to move beyond the generic statements about Native Refugee Camps which are made in the literature consulted in which in all of that body of work there is only the one same reference that Warwick first quoted in the 1980s; that of the observations of a church minister who wrote of the appalling conditions of neglect and the death toll at Dry Harts.³¹⁴ However what none of the scholars who use this reference realise is that when the minister visited these refugees in either late August 1901 or the first week of September 1901, this was at least three months before the camp was formed.

This chapter will demonstrate that it is entirely possible to recover a history of a specific camp such as Dry Harts even if there are currently people residing in the area who have, through their land usage, altered the terrain from the historic past. The chapter will show that oral history and memory are the very resources that are required to gain insight into the past and, combined with archaeology, can go where the written archive cannot and that a combination of these three resources leads to a fuller understanding of what transpired.

Additionally that when reviewing only the written archive extreme caution is advised, as in this particular case, the fragmentary records are only about the interactions between the camp authorities and the Boer farmers and are thus grounded firmly in the colonial lens and not about the black internees per se. It will also be shown that when relying only on the written archive to

³¹⁴ P. Warwick, *Black People*, 156.

compile fatality numbers, this is problematic as at Dry Harts the camp administrators fabricated the reality by under reporting and for a period of time not reporting on the death numbers.

This chapter will describe the research audit undertaken during 2001-2008, and describe the archaeological fieldwork undertaken during the same period. Inventories of some of the key material that was excavated or identified will be included, along with photographs of the items that were used to provide the insights into the camp and the conclusions formed.

5.1. Notes on the archives consulted.

The research process into the Dry Harts camp utilised three primary sources; the written archive, archaeological examinations and discussions with local residents which uncovered surviving memory about what transpired at the camp. These three sources constitute the archive for this camp.

Archival collections assessed included: the Western Cape Archives and Records Service collections including the Resident Magistrate Vryburg and The Attorney General Office files (AG). The Free State Archive collections included the Colonial Office (CO) and Superintendent Refugee Camps (SRC) archives. The CO collection contains the camp's registers, which consists of statistical information supplied by the camp's administration to headquarters in Bloemfontein. For the 12 months that the camp existed returns were only located for seven of those months.

The National Archives provided the Superintendent Native Affairs (SNA) and the FK Collection. The War Museum of the Boer Republics provided a publication which contained a reference to refugees being sent to Dry Harts. The Vryburg Deeds Office provided farm information and the through a web search I identified relevant philatelic information about the establishment of camp communications infrastructure.

One key point to make about the Colonial Office files is that they only survived destruction as they involved disputes around money, in the compensation claims by Mr J.A. Raubenheimer and Mrs T. Schoombie and a claim by a Medical Assistant to the camp, Mr L.M. Gleeson. Nevertheless, they offer key insights into conditions inside the camp on various levels, which are detailed in this chapter. A key point to note is that this is the only archival information uncovered by the research that offers these insights. Had these compensation claims never been made, we would know nothing about some of the conditions inside the camp, other than through interpretations from the archaeology and oral history. Another key point is that the majority of files contain information about the camp after the end of the war in May 1902 until it finally closed in December 1902.

These three sources of archives, archaeology and oral history also cross collaborate each other. Finally it is also highly unlikely that the camp itself could have been located without these archival resources.

The Attorney General files detail the various angles of Raubenheimer's act of High Treason for which he was charged as he was a British subject (born in the Cape Colony) who assisted the Boer forces when they occupied the area in 1899.

The Vryburg Deeds Office files for the two farms contain a plan of the farms with an indication of buildings, lands and a furrow, details of which are seldom found on farm title deeds from that area, and proved very useful when examining the terrain.

5.2. Why Dry Harts?

The research identified that the Native Refugee Camps at Orange River Station, Kimberley and Taung were relocated and consolidated at Dry Harts, starting late September 1901 and throughout October 1901. Refugees would have also continued being sent there throughout the remainder of the war. A research question is why that place?

The records reflect that on 1 August 1901, the Native Refugee Department Orange River Colony was formed and on 3 August 1901, Goold Adams, the Deputy Administrator of the Orange River Colony wired the General Manager of De Beers Consolidated Mines that, “We have over twelve hundred native refugees in Kimberley, and are anxious that they should be able to cultivate this season in order to provide themselves with food for next year”.³¹⁵

He then asked the General Manager if his Directors would allow these people to cultivate for one year a small portion of the De Beers Consolidated Mines estate, thus assisting his department, “...in this laudable object”. Hinting that if this met with the approval of De Beers Consolidated Mines and requesting a reply to his telegram he would send someone round to make necessary arrangements and would supply seed and farm implements.³¹⁶

On 7 August 1901, De Beers replied that they would assist the Department in providing land for cultivation. However they indicated that the chief difficulty for this project would be the availability of water, which would be very limited. They were willing to set out part of the farms of Oliphantsfontein and Susanna, located in the Orange River Colony, where there were water supplies but expressed the concern that as these farms were located some distance from the town that there was a risk of the Boers interfering with the camp thus jeopardising the project.³¹⁷ Goold Adams forwarded their reply to Major Henderson, Director of Military Intelligence.³¹⁸

One issue not mentioned in this correspondence is that the farms Oliphantsfontein and Susanna are located beyond the seven mile outpost lines and that there was Boer activity in the area. On 21

³¹⁵ VAB, CO, Vol. 29, Reference 2770/01, No 489.

³¹⁶ VAB, CO, Vol. 29, Reference 2770/01, No 489.

³¹⁷ VAB, CO, Vol. 29, Reference 2770/01 (General Manager De Beers Consolidated Mines to Goold Adams).

³¹⁸ VAB, CO, Vol. 29, Reference 2770/01, No 2770.

August 1901, De Beers Consolidated Mines employees exchanged shots with four or five Boers at 11 pm on Rooifontein farm, which was located within the outpost cordon.³¹⁹

On 13 August 1901, the De Beers General Manager received a reply thanking him for the offer that the refugees collected in the Kimberley Native Refugee Camp could plough lands on the two De Beers owned farms. However Goold Adams was concerned that the military authorities would not consent to them being located at such a distance from a military centre, but an officer would be sent to discuss the matter with the General Manager.³²⁰

Goold Adams, wrote to Major General Pretymann informing him that, “It is the wish of Lord Kitchener that the natives collected in the several Refugee Camps in this (ORC) colony should if possible be given the opportunity of planting during the forthcoming season to enable them to raise crops for the next year”.³²¹

Goold Adams further advised Major General Pretymann that Captain De Lobtiniere had been appointed to implement this plan and that he had sent Mr Gerrard to Kimberley report to Major General Pretymann and to see what could be achieved with the native refugee camps in Kimberley and at Orange River Station in furtherance of this objective. The telegram ended with a suggestion that, “I hope the De Beers Consolidated Mines Co may be able to help with land”.³²²

On 4 September 1901, Goold Adams wired the De Beers Consolidated Mines Directors:

“With reference to placing ORC camp Natives now in Refugee Camps on land near Kimberley, in giving them an opportunity of planting during the forthcoming rainy season to enable them to raise crops to sustain themselves next year”.³²³

³¹⁹ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, GM Collection, F & E 1/1/1.

³²⁰ VAB, CO, Vol. 29. Reference 2770/01 (Goold Adams to General Manager De Beers Consolidated Mines).

³²¹ VAB, CO, Vol 32. Reference 309/01.

³²² VAB, CO, Vol. 32, Reference 309/01; see also: De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives; GM Collection, F & E 1/1/1.

³²³ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, GM Collection, F & E 1/1/1.

This reference to refugees on land which is fertile for farming purposes and being near Kimberley would refer to those refugees in Klippiespan Camp. That farm has arable lands and is located near Kimberley, the distinction of near being that it cannot refer to Blankenbergvlei, as the ground is neither arable and is located within Kimberley.

On 5 September 1901, the Company replied that they were prepared to do anything possible to assist in this matter.³²⁴ On 13 September 1901, the De Beers General Manager advised Goold Adams that a few days before he met Mr Gerrard met who said that he would inspect Susanna & Olifantsfontein. Gerrard later indicated that Major General Pretzman considered that these farms were too far removed from the military outposts, which in the eastern perimeter ended at the Olifantsrug ridge overlooking Klippiespan.³²⁵

Military activity was taking place at Klippiespan at this time. On 17 September 1901, Mr Groenewald, a tenant farmer, was removed from Klippiespan and interned in the Kimberley Burgher Refugee Camp.³²⁶ His house, as was standard British military practice would have been commandeered for use by the camp administrators. For the month of September 1901, the internees for Kimberley as reflected on the map were performing agricultural labour on the ground that they occupied. This could not have referred to Blankenbergvlei as no reports of agricultural work exist in the De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives. This would have occurred at the Klippiespan Camp.³²⁷

On 19 September 1901, the De Beers Secretary reported to the Directors that he had asked Major Armstrong to allow additional trucks for compound supplies. Major Armstrong replied that that the Company must utilise some of its existing truck allowance for this purpose.³²⁸ The reason was that

³²⁴ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, GM Collection, F & E 1/1/1.

³²⁵ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, GM 2/2/13.

³²⁶ http://media1.nweb.co.za/bccdb/obccd/pub_view.asp?pg=item&ItemID=74684, as assessed on 26 June 2009.

³²⁷ VAB, CO, Vol. 36, Reference 3481/01.

³²⁸ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, *Board of Directors Meeting Minute Book 2/2/8*.

all available railway stock was about to be used for another purpose; the relocation of thousands of black refugees from the Phase One internment camps throughout the Transvaal, Orange River and Cape Colonies into newly formed Phase Two forced labour camps being established by the Native Refugee Department and to transport large numbers of troops and munitions for counter guerrilla operations. Despite the high number of troops being railed across the fighting zones where counter guerrilla warfare operations were under way and the demands that this placed on the railways, rolling stock was provided by the Military Authorities to the Native Refugee Department to enable this massive relocation.

One possibility that has never been presented in any of the literature consulted for this thesis is that the military request for assistance with land to De Beers Consolidated Mines for use as an agricultural forced labour camp, became a point of leverage attempted by De Beers Consolidated Mines. Throughout 1901, the Company experienced their demands for truck allowances being scaled back by the military. The initial discussions between Goold Adams and De Beers Consolidated Mines around this issue of land for refugees started at the earliest on 3 August 1901, and it would appear to have taken a long time without conclusion. On 19 September 1901, De Beers Consolidated Mines asked Major Armstrong to allow additional trucks for compound supplies, which Major Armstrong refused.³²⁹

Within a week of Major Armstrong's refusal the closure of the Native Refugee camp at Blankenbergvlei and removal of its internees commenced to Dry Harts. It is possible that De Beers Consolidated Mines attempted to manipulate the military authorities by offering land in exchange for a greater truck allocation, resulting in the military then abandoning their aim of a forced labour camp on the Company's property. They then decided instead to relocate and concentrate the internees near Dry Harts siding where the Native Refugee Department would have total control

³²⁹ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, *Board of Directors Meeting Minute Book 2/2/8*.

over its own operation, thus exiting themselves from the machinations of being linked to global capital, as represented by De Beers Consolidated Mines.

Major General Pretymann's Public Notices in May 1901, offer another clue embedded in his choice of language. "On and after the 22nd June 1901, any native found in Kimberley, and unable to show that he is earning his living in suitable employment, will be deported from the Kimberley District".³³⁰ The word deported in the Oxford Dictionary means, "Expel (a foreigner) from a country, typically on the grounds of illegal status or for having committed a crime".³³¹ The majority of black refugees in the Kimberley camps originated from the Orange River Colony, and some from the Transvaal Colony. They were not citizens of the Cape Colony and were viewed as enemy aliens, as were those refugees at Orange River Station and Taung. Consequently in consolidating these four camps into one centre, given that Taung was furthest north from Kimberley, then a northward move was the stronger option.

Thirdly, a camp would have to be secured by a garrison stationed at a railway siding. Garrisons south of Vryburg were at Border Siding (near Hartswater), Taung, Pudimoe, Dry Harts, Brussels Siding, Tigerkloof and Vryburg. Blockhouses plugged the gaps and were also reinforced by armoured trains that patrolled the line.

Vryburg was out of the question as it already had a refugee camp which strained the town's water resources. Tigerkloof and Brussels Siding were too close to Vryburg, and Border Siding too isolated and which had come under attack by Boer forces during this period. Taung posed a problem already in that the refugee camp was located in the middle of the Taung Native Reserve, so adding more refugees was not the solution. Pudimoe was also in the Reserve. Directly adjacent

³³⁰ Africana Library, *Diamond Fields Advertiser*, (27 May 1901).

³³¹ <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/search/?multi=1&dictCode=english&q=deported> Accessed (8 December 2015).

to the reserves' northern boundary was Vygeboomsvlakte farm on which the Dry Harts garrison was positioned at the railway station.

Dry Harts Station contained buildings which could be used as stores and wells for water. The fieldwork around the station identified the remains of blockhouses which strengthened the garrison. Dry Harts station also had a telegraph office for communications. Prior to the formation of the camp, black refugees were being dropped at Dry Harts, where they were starving to death, so they could be consolidated into a camp.³³²

There is another key piece to the puzzle as to why that exact spot, besides from the garrison presence. Vygeboomsvlakte farm was owned by Johan Adam Raubenheimer which he received as a Crown Grant in 1893. In 1895, Raubenheimer sold a portion of Vygeboomsvlakte to his son in law Cornelius Schoombie (married to his daughter Theunsina Schoombie) and this farm was named Wolwedans.³³³ When the Boer forces occupied the area in 1899, Johan Raubenheimer, Cornelius Schoombie and some of their sons assisted the Boer forces during their occupation. In doing so they committed High Treason and were arrested by the Mafeking Relief Column on 8 May 1900.³³⁴ On 15 May 1901, the Attorney General Cape Town directed that the case against C.J.H. Schoombie be dealt with by the Commissioners referred to in Chapter III of Act No 6 of 1900. On 31 August 1901, the Attorney Generals Cape Town directed that the case against JA Raubenheimer be dealt with by the Commissioners referred to in Chapter III of Act No 6 of 1900.³³⁵

Both Raubenheimer senior and Schoombie were put on trial as Cape Rebels and convicted of High Treason. Raubenheimer and his wife were interned in the Kimberley Burgher Refugee Camp and

³³² P. Warwick, *Black People*, 156.

³³³ Vryburg Deeds Office, Vygeboomsvlakte and Wolwedans farm files.

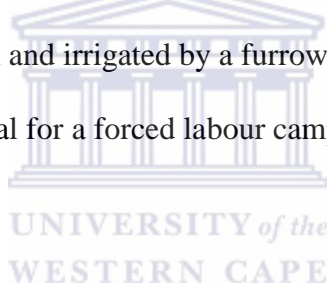
³³⁴ KAB, AG, Vol. 1816, Reference 14690.

³³⁵ KAB, AG, Vol. 1696, Reference 4197, VBG 22/4.

Schoombie and his family in the Vryburg Burgher Refugee Camp. Some of Raubenheimer's sons remained on commando as rebels until the end of the war.³³⁶

On 12 September 1901, the Vryburg Resident Magistrate in a report to the Law Department Cape Town decreed that, "that women whose husbands and or sons who were still fighting were removed from the surrounding farms where they had enjoyed ample opportunity at communicating with their connections still under arms".³³⁷ This date falls right within the timeline that plans were being considered to relocate the refugees at Kimberley, Orange River Station and Taung Native Refugee Camps to Dry Harts.

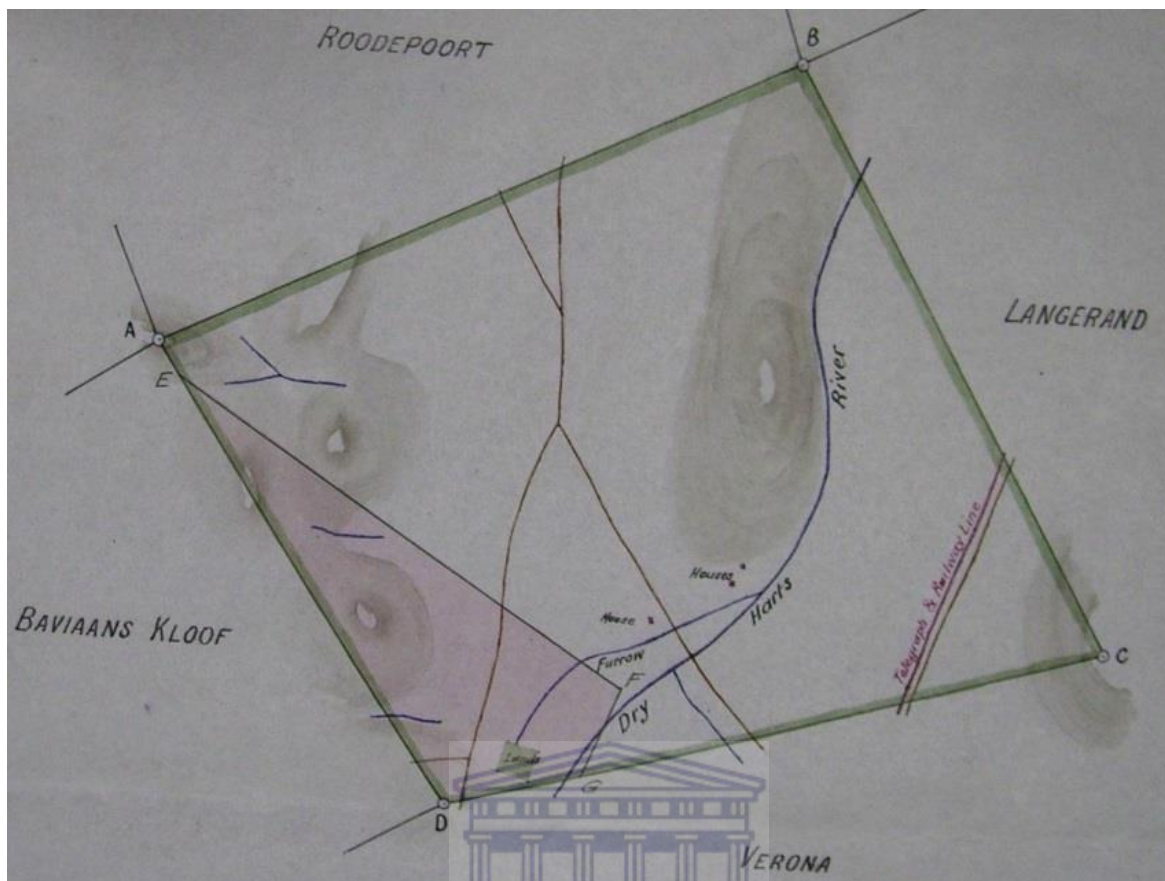
Vygeboomsvlakte and Wolwedans stood vacant. The Vryburg Deeds office plans for these farms show that in 1895, three houses stood on Vygeboomsvlakte and that a portion of lands on Wolwedans was under cultivation and irrigated by a furrow which drew water from the Dry Harts River. This infrastructure was ideal for a forced labour camp whose internees had to produce vegetables for the army.



Consequently Dry Harts was selected because of the need to vacate De Beers properties due to political wrangling, the need to deport the refugees into an isolated area and as far removed from an urban centre as possible, the unsuitability of any other garrisoned site south of Vryburg and which was not in the Taung Native Reserve, and that the farm was cleared of treasonous civilians and had all the required infrastructure available – houses, wells, and fertile irrigated ground which was already being farmed prior to the farmers' arrest.

³³⁶ KAB, AG, Vol. 1696, Reference 4197, VBG 22 / 15.

³³⁷ KAB, AG, Vol. 2085, Reference 53.



1895 Deeds Office Sketch of Vygeboomsvlakte farm with Wolwedans subdivision depicting the three houses, furrow and irrigated lands.³³⁸

5.3. Forming Dry Harts Forced Labour Camp. September to October 1901.

At the end of September 1901, planning was underway to relocate the refugees from Kimberley, Taung and Orange River Station camps and to concentrate them at a proposed new site at Dry Harts, located 160 kilometres north of Kimberley and 40 kilometres south of Vryburg. This proposed site is depicted on a map which indicates all Native Refugee Camps operating that month across South Africa together with a table of the approximate numbers of refugees and how many families this represented.³³⁹

- Kimberley: 1,575 internees made up of 260 families

³³⁸ Vryburg Deeds Office, Vygeboomsvlakte and Wolwedans farm files

³³⁹ VAB, CO, Vol. 56, Reference 3481/01.

- Orange River Station: 1,237 internees made up of 210 families
- Taungs: 600 internees made up 100 families

This number of 1,537 correlates with the De Beers Consolidated Mines records for Blankenbergvlei population on 18 September 1901 and therefore refers to Blankenbergvlei Native Refugee Camp. Klippiesspan camp was not officially on strength and neither were the large number of black civilians already at Dry Harts. Captain De Lotbiniere wrote to Lord Milner that it would take 100 trucks alone to move the Kimberley and Orange River Station camps to Taungs and Dry Harts, with five families to a truck, versus 20 families to a truck, as originally envisaged.³⁴⁰ This means that the total number of families being moved was about 500.

Two points about De Lotbiniere's communication with Milner are pertinent. Firstly the forced removal from these two Native Refugee Camps included 1,575 people (260 families) at Blankenbergvlei and 1,237 people (210 families) at Orange River Station, totalling 470 families. This leaves a shortfall of 30 families, approximating 150 people. The hypothesis is that these 30 families were Kimberley refugees at Klippiesspan who were also railed to Dry Harts at a later stage.

The second point is that why were only five families allocated to a truck versus the 20 envisaged? The hypothesis is that the refugees salvaged all possible materials that they could use from their dwellings at Blankenbergvlei and Klippiesspan and Orange River Station to construct new shelters at Dry Harts. The military allowed these materials to be railed with the refugees as it would save them having to purchase and rail through on a separate occasion building materials for the camp being assembled at Dry Harts. The refugees would arrive on site with materials on hand.

On Monday 23 September 1901, the move from Kimberley to Dry Harts commenced.

The first batch leaving now by rail for Dry Harts where a new camp is being formed. The last batch is expected to leave by Sunday next (29 September). Some 70 natives in work till now have left or are leaving their employment to go away with their families to the new

³⁴⁰ NASA, SNA, Vol. 59, De Lotbiniere to Milner, (30 September 1901).

camp. Some natives tried yesterday to get away from here to Mankoerane's but mounted pickets prevented them from going into this location. In a few days a raid will be made on Makoranes again. I am informed that some natives living here are going to build their huts near the De Beers Consolidated Mines Reservoir, those natives are employed.³⁴¹

A sense of apprehension must have prevailed about this imminent forced removal. The fact that some of the refugees attempted to escape in order to avoid their displacement to Dry Harts indicates a sentiment about where they were going. The report does not disclose their gender; perhaps they were women and children trying to remain behind as their men were working on the mines and this was their attempt to retain their family cohesion.

On 24 September 1901, 347 refugees left Orange River Station for the Dry Harts forced labour camp.³⁴² It is unknown what date they passed through Kimberley, yet they were joined by the next group of Kimberley refugees on 29 September 1901, for routing north.



³⁴¹ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, Record No: 9054 Native Camps and Natives Generally [Box 2/1/36 Ref E].

³⁴² NASA, FK, Vol. 1822.



The original caption for this photograph is: [Refugees and Transport from Transport Train, Kimberley \(1901\)](#).³⁴³ This photograph was taken at Kimberley railway station and depicts refugees with their possessions loaded into a railway truck. Note the empty sacks which would be used to construct shelters. Dated 1901, these people are about to be railed to Dry Harts and is the only photograph ever identified to date depicting a specific group of refugees in a specific place and linked to the specific events that this thesis describes.

On 1 October 1901, the refugees at Blankenbergvlei were gone. This meant that refugees from the Boshof, Jacobsdal, Petrusburg, Hebron, Hoopstad and Christiana districts ended up in the Dry

³⁴³ <http://www.boer-war.com/Gallery/Stereoview1-64.html>. As assessed 19 August 2016.

Harts forced labour camp. An inspection by a De Beers Consolidated Mines representative found an old woman and man too ill to be moved and who were left with a quantity of foodstuffs by the departing Superintendent.

Thirty wagons and carts were abandoned, some very good ones, others more or less broken down. Nobody looks after these wagons. On the site a great amount of tins, old sheet iron used for building the huts is strewn all over the place, portions of huts still standing. I found 10 huts close to the road running along the Dorsfontein – Kenilworth boundary fence, east of the De Beers Consolidated Mines reservoir. The huts are occupied by natives working for Nicols sanitary contractor.³⁴⁴

Prior to the move on 18 September 1901, there were 307 refugee huts at Blankenbergvlei. Six days later the De Beers Consolidated Mines inspector found only scrap left behind and portions of huts still standing, suggesting that the shelters were recycled for all usable pieces and taken with them to Dry Harts.³⁴⁵

Given that the purpose of the Native Refugee Department was to provide male labour to the army and the women, children and elderly agricultural labour, no records were located that indicate if an agricultural scheme was started before the internees were relocated to Dry Harts forced labour camp.³⁴⁶ No planting was attempted at Blankenbergvlei as no record of this exists in the meticulously recorded reports about this camp in the De Beers Consolidated Mines archives. At Klippiesspan camp this was possible, as directly adjacent to the living areas there is evidence of very old ploughed lands. This is not visible on the ground though it is visible from the air. These lands may very well have existed from before the war and which is why the internees were positioned there in order to use them.

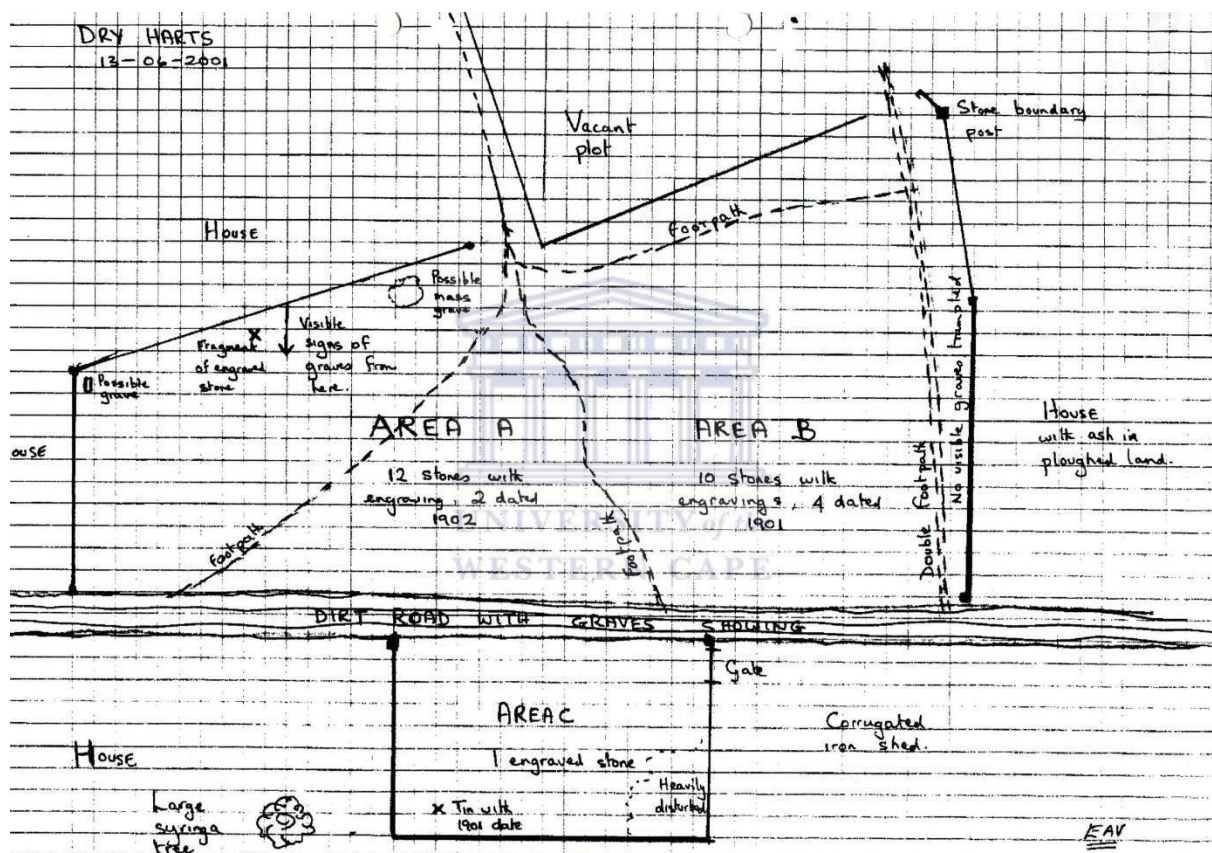
Prior to formation of the camp black refugees were already being assembled at Dry Harts by military columns clearing the western Transvaal. How many in total was not identified in the

³⁴⁴ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, Record No: 9054 Native Camps and Natives Generally [Box 2/1/36 Ref E]; De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, GM Collection, F & E 1/1/1.

³⁴⁵ De Beers Consolidated Mines Archives, GM Collection, F & E 1/1/1.

³⁴⁶ SNA 1902, Vol.13, Captain De Lotbiniere to Sir Godfrey Lagden, Commissioner for Native Affairs, Johannesburg, (13 January 1902).

archive yet the archaeology offers a possibility. The burial site on Vygeboomsvlakte has three distinct burial areas which the research describes as Areas A, B and C. Area C contains approximately 600 graves based on the archaeological survey, with only one engraved headstone. Area B has stones dated 1901 and Area A stones engraved 1902. The hypothesis is that Area C is the burial site of those refugees already at Dry Harts before the formation of the camp and once formed, burials continued in Areas B and finally A.



Sketch plan of Dry Harts camp cemetery by E. Voigt, 13 June 2001.³⁴⁷

In analysing the fragmentary archive which consists of camp registers for Dry Harts, Taung and Orange River Station containing statistics of refugee numbers, births, deaths and rationing costs it is possible to form three deductions around the formation of this camp. However, when dealing

³⁴⁷ Author's collection.

with fatalities the research will show through the archaeological record that the authorities under recorded the deaths.

On 3 September 1901, Reverend Brown wrote of his visit to Dry Harts, which may have been in August the month before that the refugees were:

In great poverty and misery and our visit was a comfort to them. Many are dying from day to day – what is to become of the survivors I cannot think. Between the Dutch and the English they have lost everything, and there being no political party interested in their destiny, they ‘go to the wall’ as the weakest are bound to do.³⁴⁸

These people would not have been settled near the station given the garrison requirements of a clear field of fire of a minimum of one mile around their positions. As Vygeboomsvlakte and Wolwedans had been cleared of Boers and were located just over a mile from the station and had wells, this was where they were settled. Their dead were buried in Area C, and from Reverend Brown’s description, the death rate was high.

A question is that although being Transvaal refugees how did they get to Dry Harts? The fragmentary archive records that on 19 August 1901, there were 200 black refugee families approximating 1,200 people at Taung.³⁴⁹ On 30 September 1901 this number dropped to 600 people.³⁵⁰ What happened to the other 600? One possibility is that this missing 600 died at Taung. Another is that given that plans were afoot during September 1901 to consolidate at Dry Harts the hypothesis is that these 600 people were dispatched to Dry Harts during late August 1901 and it was these people that Reverend Brown encountered. They formed the initial core of the camp that was to be formed.

During September 1901 the relocation of the Kimberley camps and the Orange River Station camp to Dry Harts commenced. The research identified that these refugees did not go directly to Dry

³⁴⁸ P. Warwick, *Black People*, 156.

³⁴⁹ NASA, FK, Vol. 1813.

³⁵⁰ CO, Vol. 36. Ref 3481/01.

Harts. They arrived at Taung and were held in the Native Refugee Camp there during October 1901. The only register ever made by the Native Refugee Department for the Taung Native Refugee Camp was for the month of October 1901. A review of the camp register as on 31 October 1901 reveals that the refugee total soared to 3,449 people in camp with 84 deaths for that month, making a total of 3,533 in camp, comprising 632 men, 1,184 women and 1,633 children.³⁵¹ If we subtract the 600 people from August 1901 this leaves a figure of 2,933 people who arrived in October 1901. The refugees that left Kimberley and Orange River Station in September 1901 totalled 2,810.

This evidence shows that they were not railed directly to Dry Harts station. They disembarked at Taung and were held throughout October 1901 in transit at the Taung Native Refugee Camp. In November 1901 they arrived at Dry Harts, in all likelihood having walked there from Taung when the camp opened. November 1901 is the opening date of Dry Harts camp as this is when the refugees from the south were consolidated there and it was that month that the first camp register was opened. The camp was located on Wolwedans farm and the burial site on Vygeboomsvlakte farm. If they walked from Taung to the farm then they would not have carried with them all their building materials taken from Blankenbergvlei, nor transported them as their carts and wagons were left behind. Consequently exposure to the elements would have been a serious cause of illness and death.

Research into the philately of Dry Harts also dates November 1901, as the opening of the camp. The first postage stamp issued for Dry Harts existed from 1888-1889. Thereafter stamps were issued from 1891 until 15 October 1899, when the Boer forces occupied the area. No further

³⁵¹ CO, Vol. 36. Ref 3481/01.

stamps were issued until November 1901.³⁵² This is relevant in that once the camp opened, post would need to be sent and postage stamps would be required.

The camp register for November 1901 month end has 3,388 refugees in camp. This comprised 651 men, 1,182 women and 1,555 children with 208 deaths making a total of 3,596 people in camp.

The deaths are broken down as 11 men, 30 women and 167 children. These figures support the fact that there was an original core in this camp before the 3,449 refugees arrived from Taung. For example approximately 1,633 children arrived from Taung in November 1901, 167 died in camp which at the month end had 1,555 children in camp. Child refugee numbers according the register declined by 78 yet total deaths were 167, the difference representing 89 child deaths are from the original core population before the arrival of refugees from Taung.

5.4. The archive of Dry Harts camp.

The majority of archival resources for this camp covers the period after the war ended on 31 May 1902 until the camp closed in December that year and covers claims for compensation by the Boer farmers and also the camps' medical assistant.

On 31 July 1902, Schoombie instructed her attorneys to enquire from the Secretary for Administration in Bloemfontein as to when the refugees on her property would be removed, would rent be paid from 1 June 1902 and if so at what rate per month. Additionally her attorneys informed the administration that, "this camp was formed a considerable time ago and that great damage to the farm has resulted".³⁵³

On 18 August 1902, the camp was described as:

The camp at Dryharts is all on Mrs Schoombie's farm, together with some of the cultivated land, although not much. The only damage done to the property since our occupation is the

³⁵² VAB, CO, Vol. 87, Ref 2887/02.

<http://www.postmarks.co.za/PH%20CGH%20Douglas%20to%20Dry%20Harts.htm> Accessed 10 December 2015.

³⁵³ VAB, CO, Vol. 87, Ref 2887/02.

clearance of all grass from the actual site of the camp, and perhaps the destruction of a few bushes and a little firewood, though as a rule the natives go much further afield for their fuel. Against this we have thoroughly repaired the house, with doors windows, floors etc and this is now occupied by our staff. Every effort is being made to repatriate these Refugees and break up this camp but it is too soon to say when this can be accomplished.³⁵⁴

On 13 October 1902, Captain Locke-Waters was informed by headquarters in Bloemfontein that Raubenheimer had joined Schoombie in a claim for rent for their farms Vygeboomsvlakte and Wolwedans for the months of August and September 1902. Locke-Waters was advised to calculate the rent at 1/ (shilling) per family in the camp at month end and that he arrange with their legal representatives to obtain a joint receipt from them and allow them to divide up the amount as they saw fit.³⁵⁵

Locke-Waters reply is of interest in that he wrote, “Mrs Schoombie has specially requested through Mr Hartley to pay no money whatever to her father, Mr Raubenheimer, on her behalf”.³⁵⁶

He listed the amount of families and rental due as follows:

Number of families in camp on Mrs Schoombie’s farm on:

| | |
|--------------|--------------------|
| 31 August | 330 @ 1/ = £16 |
| 31 September | 278 @ 1/ = £13.8.0 |
| 31 October | 128 @ £1/ = 6.8.0 |
| 31 November | Nil anticipated |
| Total | £36.16.0 |

Mr Raubenheimers farm

| | |
|--------------|--------|
| 31 August | 1 @ 1/ |
| 31 September | 1 @ 1/ |
| 31 October | 1 @ 1/ |
| 31 November | 1 @ 1/ |
| Total | 4/ |

³⁵⁴ VAB, CO, Vol. 87, Ref 2887/02.

³⁵⁵ VAB, CO, Vol. 87, Ref 2887/02.

³⁵⁶ VAB, CO, Vol. 87, Ref 2887/02.

On 10 November 1902, Raubenheimer's claim was assessed as follows:

| | |
|---|----------|
| For the use of about one acre of land as Cemetery. | £2: 0: 0 |
| For one family residing on his farm from 1 st August @ 1/- per month | 3: 0 |
| Rental of his house from 1 st August @ 20/- per month. | 3: 0 |
| | £5:3: 0 |

Assistant Superintendent Turner added the following remark:

I beg to draw your attention to the fact that I estimate a low rental for the house on the grounds that had it not been occupied by the Department, it would certainly have been razed to the ground, and in addition, it has been maintained in a good state of repair.³⁵⁷

On 13 November 1902, Captain Locke-Waters wrote the following report regarding J.A.

Raubenheimer's claim:³⁵⁸

Dear Turner,

Your D/3680/ has just reached me, re Raubenheimer's claim for rent and as you do not know this man I shall like to let you know what manner of man he is before replying to your letter officially. In the first place he is a convicted Rebel and has been disenfranchised as such and is most generally regarded as a scheming, thieving old rascal by all who know him in this district and is said to have practically ruined his late son in law, Schoombie. Of course family differences of these people are nothing to us, but I certainly fail to see that he has any claim against us at all and certainly none upon the amount due to Mrs Schoombie for rent since there is but one family residing on his Land and that one we could easily shift. Certainly the cemetery is situated on his farm, but that should be more a question of compensation for the land used, the value of which would be about a sovereign, than a share of the rental, don't you think! True also we occupy his house and store, for which he rather owes us some thanks, as. But for our being here there would be little of either left (?) this. We have actually preserved the place for him.

Long ago I reported upon a claim sent in by this man against the Military that was so (palpably) excessive and misrepresented that I believe he overreached himself, the claim being eventually thrown out as a false and preposterous one.

Both his sons are also rebels. Schoombie (?) died in the Refugee Camp as a suspect.

Raubenheimer does not wish to come back here at all but told me that he wished to sell and (?) to the Colony again, so he is not being kept out of his home and I felt it my duty to let you know all the foregoing facts before you decide upon paying him either rental or compensation of which he deserves neither. I feel sure that it is just a try on of his because of his daughter's success in getting rental. If anything at all is due to him it is 1/s per month

³⁵⁷ VAB, CO, Vol. 125, Ref 5986 / 02.

³⁵⁸ VAB, CO, Vol. 87, Ref 2887/02.

for the one family and about £1 for the cemetery ground (one acre). Of course I can see that his legal advisors in Vryburg and follow whatever course you suggest after perusal of this letter.³⁵⁹

On 13 December 1901, Mr Winton, the Assistant Travelling Paymaster to the Department and Captain Locke-Waters arrived at Dry Harts to wind up the camp. They visited Raubenheimer who, “Became highly indignant at the settlement we offered, viz £5.3.0, the secret of his wrath being that he is ignored with regard to Mrs Schoombie’s portion of the settlement”.³⁶⁰ Raubenheimer then attempted to claim for water drawn off his farm which was refuted as Locke-Waters and Gleeson’s view was that this had kept his wells in good order and, had this not occurred, then his wells would have all needed cleaning. He then claimed that Gleeson had ordered that one his wells be filled in but this refuted as untrue as the well had been covered over to prevent dirt and rubbish from falling in.

He further claimed that wood was taken by the refugees from his farm. Of interest is that this was refuted because, “No wood to speak of was ever on his farm, and certainly not since the occupation by the NRD”.³⁶¹ Raubenheimer it appears did not attempt to disprove this point and evidently could not as there would have been no tree stumps in evidence.

This reference to there being no wood on the farm is a critical piece of information to understanding the catastrophe that occurred inside this camp and it corroborates the archaeological survey. In the all the fieldwork around Dry Harts during 2001 to 2008, no evidence of coal having been used (other than on a dump connected to Raubenheimer’s farmhouse) was located, meaning the refugees were not supplied with coal. There is no archival evidence to indicate that other black camps were ever supplied with coal. The research identified in cases where wood was used by the black refugee camps, then compensation was paid to the farm owner, for example as at

³⁵⁹ VAB, CO, Vol. 87, Ref 2887/02.

³⁶⁰ VAB, CO, Vol. 125, Ref 5986/02.

³⁶¹ VAB, CO, Vol. 125, Ref 5986/02.

Brandfort.³⁶² Therefore if there was no wood available, then not only would cooking have been problematic, boiling water would be difficult. Consequently, water infected with typhoid and enteric would most likely be ingested, with devastating consequences.

On 27 August 1902, Mr L.M. Gleeson arrived at Dry Harts from Bloemfontein to take up duties as the Medical Assistant. He was paid 15 shillings per day and received free lodgings and rations. On arrival he informed Locke-Waters and the Camp Superintendent Mr Purcell that when Captain Wilson Fox appointed him, he was assured that he would receive a month's salary as a gratuity when the camp closed. On 3 December 1902, he was free to go as he reported to Dr O'Farrell the Senior Medical Officer of the Department, based in Bloemfontein that there were no internees in the camp with the exception of the camp staff. Yet he still remained on purely as a matter of his own convenience until 16 December 1902.³⁶³

Gleeson received a full months pay for December 1902. Locke-Waters refused to pay his gratuity as he had no authorisation to do so. Gleeson was presented with his share of a mess bill for £2, which he paid under protest and he later claimed that he incurred this cost as the staff had not received their rations for December 1902. He then visited Wilson Fox in Bloemfontein and demanded his gratuity. Wilson Fox denied that this was ever agreed to.³⁶⁴

Gleeson did not let the matter rest going so far as to write to Joseph Chamberlain the Colonial Secretary and Lord Milner. The ensuing correspondence around this issue offers a glimpse into the conditions inside the Dry Harts Forced Labour Camp.

What is revealing is correspondence related to Gleeson's attempted claim, is that on 4 March 1903, Captain Wilson Fox had this to say:

³⁶² VAB, CO, Vol. 107. Reference 4442/02, Lucas Maree compensation claim.

³⁶³ VAB, CO, Vol. 146, Ref 1410/03.

³⁶⁴ VAB, CO, Vol. 146, Ref 1410/03.

Had I known as much about Mr Gleeson as I do now, he would have been summarily dismissed for gross neglect of duty, as he was directly responsible for the sending away from the Camp a number of natives who were in an unfit condition and suffering from a severe epidemic of scurvy, a fact which he altogether omitted to report to the S.M.O.

Owing to what can only be described as culpable negligence, some of these unfortunate people actually died on the road, and some on arrival at their destination, and I have just paid the sum of £33.8.0 to the District Surgeon at Jacobsdal for extra attendance on these people.³⁶⁵

Dr O'Farrell substantiated this by reporting that, "towards the close of his services, I was not at all satisfied, and he even if there has been a question of a honorarium I should certainly not have granted it in his case".³⁶⁶ In none of the archival records uncovered is there any indication that a medical officer was stationed at Dry Harts, other than Dr O' Farrell visiting the camp in the second week of February 1902.³⁶⁷ Nor is there any surviving records that the camp had a medical assistant until Gleeson's arrival in August 1902. The fact that scurvy is referred to as a "severe epidemic" is revealing in that scurvy is not an epidemic, it is a developed condition and its causes were well known in 1902. This is evidenced by the Kimberley mines who recognised the link between nutrition and scurvy before the war, as commented on in Chapter Two.

Scurvy is caused by the lack of vitamin C, and is one of the accompanying diseases of malnutrition. If untreated scurvy is invariably fatal. Typical symptoms are initial fatigue, followed by formation of spots on the skin, spongy gums, and bleeding from the mucous membranes. Spots are most abundant on the thighs and legs, a person may look pale, feel depressed, and be partially immobilized. As scurvy advances, there can be open, suppurating wounds, loss of teeth, yellow skin, fever, neuropathy and finally death from bleeding. Treatment is through a vitamin C-rich diet, and complete recovery takes less than two weeks.

³⁶⁵ VAB, CO, Vol. 146, Ref 1410/03.

³⁶⁶ VAB, CO, Vol. 146, Ref 1410/03.

³⁶⁷ VAB, CO, Vol. 54, Ref 326/02.

The fact that Gleeson did not diagnose or treat these people and sent them back to Jacobsdal where they died on route and after arrival, reflects either his complete medical ignorance or, as Wilson Fox describes, culpable negligence. He simply did not care. What did the Camp Superintendent and Captain Locke-Waters do about this? Absolutely nothing. The fact that scurvy existed to such a fatally severe degree, and this being after the end of the war when supply interruptions to the logistics would have decreased is telling. This would have been worse prior to the end of the war when supply interruptions were more frequent.

This incidence of scurvy was not an isolated incident. Scurvy had occurred elsewhere at around the time that Gleeson assumed his duties. De Lotbiniere reported that the death rate in the camps increased during August 1902 from 3.5 to 3.6 per thousand. Either he was extremely ignorant or more likely his monthly reports require greater scrutiny, for he recorded the cause as due to:

An outbreak of scurvy among the boys working in the towns, and taken by them back to the camps. The Medical Officers in each district are taking every care to check this outbreak, and I hope to be able to report next month that the disease had been checked.³⁶⁸

One other clue as to medical conditions and health at Dry Harts is found in the monthly returns in the CO archive. Many of the authors whose work was consulted in the literature review relate that in the camps the internees could purchase medical comforts. Fransjohan Pretorius describes in his chapter 'Everyone's War' how salt and milk was distributed free of charge. Those who worked and could afford it, could buy luxury articles such as sorghum, sugar, coffee, syrup, tea and tobacco as part of their medical comforts.³⁶⁹ However this is a generic statement, as it provides no specific example, as is the case with much of the literature. The monthly returns suggest otherwise. In the existence of Dry Harts forced labour camp medical comforts were only available for purchase for

³⁶⁸ VAB, CO, Vol. 105, Ref 4316/01.

³⁶⁹ F. Pretorius, *A History of South Africa*, 257.

three of the twelve months that the camp existed. April 1902 recorded the highest cash takings, during the same month that the monthly return column for recording deaths stopped being filled in.

Given scurvy, the quantity of foodstuffs being issued is of relevance, in that with the exception of June 1902, the black refugees did not have to pay for their rations. This means that everyone was working, having lost all their material wealth which to resist forced labour by purchasing food. In November 1901, 3 388 refugees received 129,000 lbs. of food issues, averaging 38 lbs. per person. In January 1902, 3,405 people received 104,000 lbs. averaging 30 lbs. per person. In February 1902, 3 190 people received 66,926 lbs. averaging 21 lbs. per person. March food issues averaged 24 lbs. per person, April 18 lbs. June and August there is no entry against food issued. The lowest amount per person was April 1902, a month which the returns contains no deaths listed against the death column.

This reflects that nutrition fluctuated, in all likelihood due to supply interruptions along the railway system. The primary food stuff issued was mealie meal. Based on the memory existing today in Dry Harts of poisoned pap being the cause of death, this became contaminated. The internees at Dry Harts Forced Labour Camp were dying of starvation, scurvy and malnutrition right up to the very end of this camps' existence in December 1902 under conditions of appalling neglect. Yet Purcell and Locke-Waters remained silent and did nothing. They covered it up. From April 1902 onwards they stopped forwarding death statistics to headquarters to be entered in the monthly returns.³⁷⁰

³⁷⁰ VAB, CO, Vol. 88, Reference 2991/02 and VAB, CO, Vol. 105, Reference 4316/02.



*Captain George Henry Archer Locke-Waters.*³⁷¹

5.5. Oral traditions and memory of Dry Harts camp.

While surveying Dry Harts between June 2001 and July 2008, I had numerous informal conversations with local residents who approached the survey team as they were interested in the work being done. All these conversations were written down in my field notebook immediately after they happened. When enquiring of them what happened at this place, while standing in the vicinity of the burial site, their answers were all similar. The people buried here have no

³⁷¹ Photograph given to the author by Locke-Waters descendants.

connection to the current residents, as the villages of Moretele and Ntswanahatse only started developing in the late 1940s. The graves were already there.

The first person I spoke with at Dry Harts was John Bartman, born 27 June 1926, on Vygeboomsvlakte Farm.³⁷² He showed me where the burial site was on 13 June 2001. Mr. Baartman went by the title of Oompie. His father's name was Andries Bartman who fought in the war initially with the Boer forces and was at Magersfontein with Kommandant Tollie De Beer's Schweizer Reineke Commando. He later worked on the Kimberley mines.

Oompie told me when we stood in the graveyard that the people buried there died of poisoned pap and that his father who had been here during the war had told him this. This is significant in that this is the original source to this oral history. Locke-Waters recorded that on 1 November 1902 there was one family left on the farm.³⁷³ This would have been Andries Baartman and his wife Maria Kraalshoek, Oompie's parents. Oompie related that his parents remained on the farm immediately after the war and were the only family to do so. When a child growing up he recalled no other black peoples on the farm.

This account of poisoned pap is a consistent memory amongst the elderly residents of Moretele and Ntswanahatse. On 28 October 2001, during an interview with the BBC, Klein Jan Maruping, who was aged in his 80s, related that his father had also served with the Boer forces and that he understood that the people died of poisoned pap.³⁷⁴

On the 30 May 2007, I met three men walking back to the village and after exchanging pleasantries I asked the eldest one for information. He said that he had lived on the farm since 1938 and that the whites left in 1939. He recalled that there were at that time only three black

³⁷² J. Bartman, Ntswanahatse, (16 June 2011).

³⁷³ VAB, CO, Vol. 87, Ref 2887/02. (References in full and date)

³⁷⁴ B. Phillips, *Forgotten victims of the Boer War*, British Broadcasting Corporation, London, (2001), <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/1682972.stm>. Accessed on 1 August 2015.

families living on the farm. Black settlers came in with lots of cattle because there was always a lot of water here, especially at the Raubenheimer well.

He had no recollection of an agricultural furrow, but he did say that they used to plough next to the school and that the Raubenheimer's ploughed extensively on the other side of the river towards Dry Harts station. (These fields show up clearly on aerial photographs). He said that there used to be an orchard at "the old house" (Raubenheimer's house). He stated that no-one now living in the villages knew anything about the graves, but there was a story connected to their eating "geel pap".

On 23 June 2008, Mr. David Sebogo related that he had grown up in the village and was born in the 1950s.³⁷⁵ He did not know who the people were buried there yet confirmed the oral tradition that they were poisoned through their mealie meal and that they died in large numbers, many at a time. He said that the poisoning was deliberate by the farmer. He indicated with his hand that there was a mill in the vicinity of Dry Harts Station. According to what he had heard, the people connected to the burial site worked in the mill and took their mealies there for grinding and when they got the grain back the farmer had poisoned it.

He recalled that the grave mounds were nearly a metre high with demarcated paths between the graves. A wild fruit, which grew prolifically in the graveyard, was eaten by the locals who also grazed their goats in the graveyard. The gravestones were engraved and the locals could clearly read the names engraved on the stones.

He remembered the old man Baartman, whom he said was a "coloured". He implied that he knew him well and distinctly remembered him and it seemed from Mr Sebogo's description that Baartman may have had some form of status in the community.

³⁷⁵ D. Sebogo, Ntswanahatse, (23 June 2008).

I asked him if he recalled any rubbish dumps on the farm when he was a child. He did and confirmed that they were in the Wolwedans area and between Wolwedans and the graveyard. These were not all rusted and were not found in one demarcated area but were remembered as being located in haphazard vicinities.

On 25 June 2008, while surveying the cemetery an elderly man approached us and related that the cause of death for those buried in the graveyard was from drinking poisoned water. On 4 July 2008, two elderly men approached us to observe and enquire how our work was progressing. I recognized them from our many prior visits to the village and my impression was over time, that they were local persons of influence. They related that they had lived in the village from around the 1940s and that at that time there were not many people residing there. The village grew to its current appearance during the 1980s. The local people have no known connection to the people buried in the graveyard. They were adamant that any local claiming to know anything about the burials or the history connected to this graveyard would be “talking nonsense” as no one knew the story.

According to them the only person who knew what happened here was “Ou Baartman” otherwise known as Oompie Baartman. One of the men said he remembered Oompie Baartman clearly, when he trekked to the village as a child and they found Baartman there, living in the house. Baartman had worked with the “whites” who were here and was the only one who knew what happened. Baartman had died and his son, who was born on the farm also became known as Oompie. Baartman. Ou Baartman senior had told these men’s fathers when they arrived on the farm that the people had died from poisoned pap.

This distinction between the Baartman’s is of importance in that the son born on the farm, would have been John Baartman, known as Oompie and who we met in 2001. Ou Baartman, whose first name was Andries, was his father.

What does this oral history tell us when combined with the fragmentary archive and the reality of at least 2,000 graves in the cemetery?

The people buried in the cemetery worked to produce mealies which were given to the authorities to be milled. The mealie meal that they were issued became contaminated by the water used to prepare food and for drinking purposes. Ingesting the food and water killed them. Is there any archival material that supports this hypothesis?

A published account of Kotie Steenkamp's war memories in 2015 supports this. Steenkamp came from the farm Groenpunt in the Boshof district and she evaded capture throughout the war by constantly moving around the veld. Koos and Leentjie, two of her black employees joined her. However they fell into British hands after becoming exhausted and dispirited and were sent to Dry Harts camp. In 1904 two years after Dry Harts camp closed Koos returned to Groenpunt and explained what had happened. He told Steenkamp that once inside the forced labour camp their situation worsened and they virtually starved to death.³⁷⁶

When the war ended and the camp closed only one family remained on the farm, those of Andries Bartman who had served with the British forces and that he had been in the camp, working with the camp authorities. He witnessed what happened and related later to his son Oompie Bartman and the new settlers in the 1940s that the primary cause of death was poisoned pap. This pap was geel pap which is an animal feed, so it is likely that the milling that is remembered may have involved producing Sowens Stew, based on the Mafeking siege model.

³⁷⁶ RJ Constantine (ed), *Gedenkuitgawe: Wedervaringe van vrouens en kinders in die konsentrasiekampe en te velde gedurende die Anglo-Boereoorlog 1899-1902*, Bloemfontein, War Museum of the Boer Republics, (2014), 19.

5.6. The archaeological survey.

I first visited the Dry Harts area in February 2001, and tried to locate the camp. In April 2001, I invited Elizabeth Voigt who had recently retired as the Director of the McGregor Museum, to join me on this quest. After numerous walks across the veld and in the hills overlooking the villages of Moretele and Ntswanahatse we made contact with Oompie John Bartman. He lived in what appeared to be the oldest building on the edge of the village and, based on a tall tree and the fact the building was built from stone, we surmised that it may have been there during the time of camp and formed part of the camp's infrastructure. Oompie Bartman guided us to the camp cemetery on 13 June 2001.

We visited Dry Harts again throughout 2001 and walked the area around the villages to gain an understanding of the landscape and identified features that may have survived from the camp. During 25 to 31 May 2007, we returned to undertake fieldwork and GPS plot all surviving features. The original farm deed depicted three buildings, a furrow and irrigated lands. The camp authorities referred to using the buildings and wells on the farm. Our search sought to locate these and any old trees that may originate from the historic era, all of which could act as historic landmarks to help interpret the terrain beyond the cemetery of the forced labour camp. During June to July 2008, we returned and surveyed the cemetery.



Figure 6, Google Earth. The terrain of Dry Harts Forced Labour Camp depicting the key landmarks.



'Oompie' John Baartman and G Benneyworth, 13 June 2001, Dry Harts cemetery.³⁷⁷

³⁷⁷ Photograph, E. Voigt.

5.6.1. Buildings, wells and rubbish dumps.

The fieldwork involved locating and plotting the following ruins and structures linked to the Raubenheimer and Schoombie period of occupation. All structures on their properties were used by the British army during its occupation and management of the camp and therefore these form key points on the terrain. Local people assisted the fieldwork in particular Naomi Bartman (Oompie's daughter) who told us what the various structures were used for, which narrowed down the older structures linked to the camp.



Raubenheimer's store (The Bartman family residence), was one of the buildings used by the Native Refugee Department. Note the adding of a pitched roof by building upwards is post war. This happened during Oompie's lifetime. There used to be another house alongside this

*building. Only the foundations remain and based on its lay-out, this ruin was a residence dating to the 1920s.*³⁷⁸

To the east, a short distance from the building on a rise jutting out into the river is a dump which yielded British ration tins and glass. Some of the tins and a button were marked VR, which refers to Victoria Regina, their manufacture predating January 1901. The dump included two crimped British Army .303 bullets. As already stated it is usual to find crimped cartridges at British Army camp sites, as the cordite inside was used as a firelighter. In the veld nearby was a surface scatter linked to the military where we located a blue enamel British Army issue water bottle, boot polish and Bourneville Cocoa tins and other artefacts all associated with British troops. This evidence along with soot is linked to the camp authorities billeted in this area.

In all the years that we surveyed the area we never located a rubbish dump from the camp. A theory we tested was that the camp dumped its refuse in the river bed. We undertook a search extending for three kilometres downstream of the camp area, yet this produced not a shred of evidence. The only evidence found of any dump was the British dump. The conclusion is that no camp rubbish was dumped in the river.

According to David Sebogo when he was a child in the 1950s he recalled that rubbish dumps were in the Wolwedans area and between Wolwedans and the graveyard. At the time these were not all rusted and were not found in one demarcated area but were remembered as being located in 'haphazard' vicinities. This area is where the camp living area was so we searched the vicinity yet found nothing. No trace of the camp dump was located.

³⁷⁸ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.

On the original Wolwedans farm are two very typical rural Boer houses, the only ones of their type in the village. The main one is a typical Northern Cape house, complete with stoep kamers and an add-on kitchen. The one nearby is similar. Both houses overlook the river, which they would have done in the early 1900s.



The top building is assumed to be Schoombie's house. The garden includes old Peppercorn trees and a very old Seringa tree. The bottom house which is near the first also has very old Seringa trees which date from the historic period. The archival material referred to wells on

Vygeboomsvlakte farm being used by the camp. Four wells from the period were located, two on Wolwedans and two on Vygeboomsvlakte.³⁷⁹



In the immediate vicinity of Schoombie's house is a disused well. A windmill and an old water tank built of calcrete blocks, stands where according to local informants was Raubenheimer's well and where his house once stood.³⁸⁰

These wells are located right in the river bed, which is logical as they would hold water long after the river had dried up. These are deep wells; at least six to eight metres remain open and visible beneath ground level, so they could have been even deeper, when in use. They are the ones referred to by Captain Locke-Waters when disputing Raubenheimer's claim.³⁸¹

³⁷⁹ Photographs, G. Benneyworth.

³⁸⁰ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.

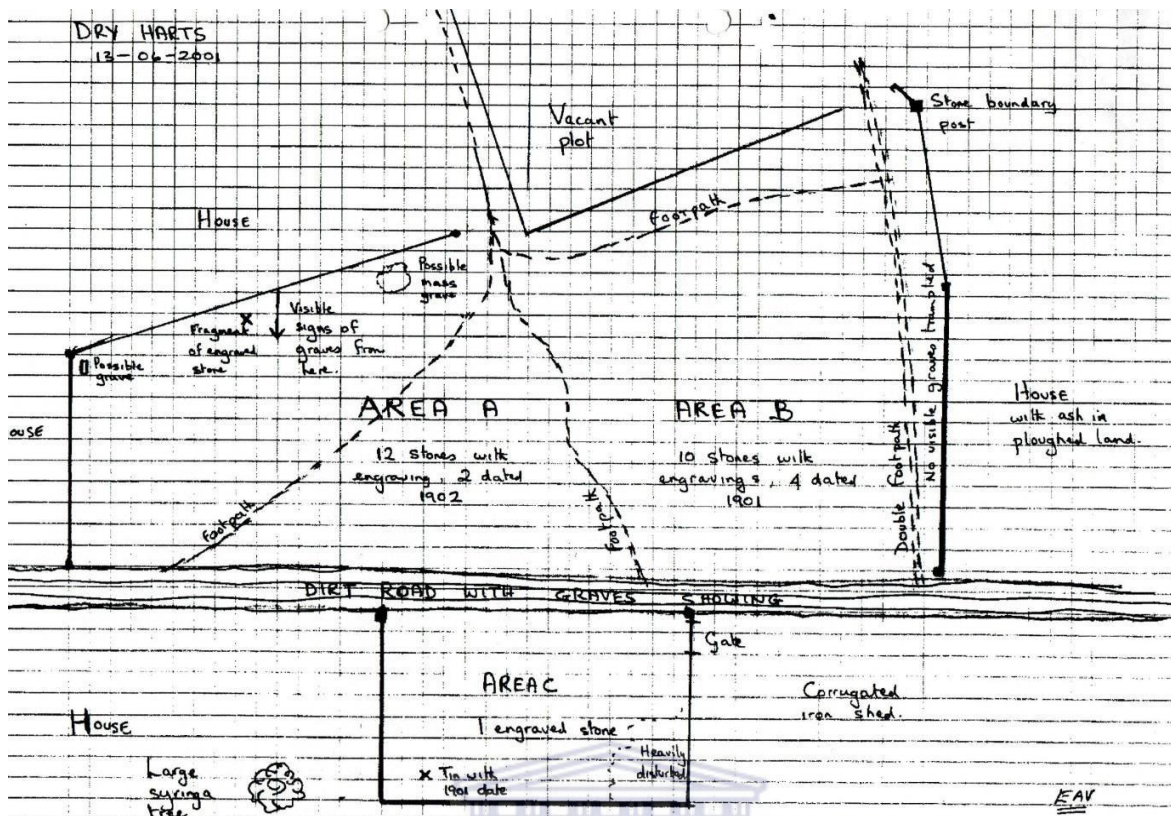
³⁸¹ VAB, CO Vol. 87, Ref 2887/02.

The fieldwork located the three buildings and four wells. The irrigated lands today are open veld. The interpretation from this evidence is that we had mapped the main points of the camp. The conclusion as to where the original camp living areas existed are beneath Ntswanahatse and Moretele villages, the landscape being cleared and compacted by the camp inhabitants and hence an ideal place to settle when black settlers started arriving in the 1940s.

5.6.2. Dry Harts Forced Labour Camp cemetery.

When the cemetery was located in 2001, the initial estimate of graves was approximately 2,000. The archival records reflect that Raubenheimer was compensated for an acre of land (4,000 square metres) which the cemetery occupied.³⁸² Local informants advised that the ground was never built on because of the numerous oval calcrete heaps which form the grave mounds and the upright head and foot stones still mark graves. However the current area of the burial site which is visible is slightly less than an acre and on the eastern side there is a fenced off area with a large corrugated iron shed; which could be built on top of some graves which are linked to Area C.

382 VAB, CO, Vol. 87, Ref 2887/02.



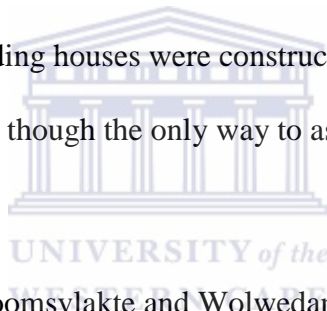
Sketch plan by E. Voigt of Dry Harts cemetery, 13 June 2001.



Figure 7, Google Earth. The same view as the sketch.

Three areas in the burial site appeared to be distinctly separate from each other and are referred to as Areas A, B and C. This is based on the position of dated stones and the two footpaths, the central one dividing Area A and B which is a prominent path. The track through Area A was less distinct. The dirt road through the cemetery divides Areas A and B from Area C, hence we divided the cemetery into these three areas. This formed the foundation for all future surveys linked to these three respective areas.

Although we believed that graves existed under the dirt road based on protruding cobbles we found no evidence during the later surveys in 2007 and 2008. This means that Area C was at the time that Areas A and B were established, separated by this road which has survived from 1901. Discussions with local residents indicated that no graves were found when their corrugated iron shed and surrounding houses were constructed. An examination of their yards found no indication of burial sites though the only way to ascertain this would be through ground penetrating radar.



Other burial sites exist on Vygeboomsvlakte and Wolwedans farms. One of these is the Raubenheimer family cemetery and is located in Ntswanahatse village, which the residents maintain. The rest of the burial sites are associated with post war black settlement.

According to the local informants, in the 1950s the vegetation was different. Dense thorn trees grew above the graveyard towards the ridge. Currently a few large thorn bushes exist in the area, indicative of livestock grazing, with resultant damage to the burial site. The entire area has been affected by dumping and by the fact that two cattle tracks cross it and cattle and pigs feed around the graves.

In May 2007, I observed that several gravestones had been damaged since a prior visit in 2003. Further damage has been done by the fact that the road on the eastern side has been

graded and widened. Two gravestones have gone missing, one of them probably as a result of the grading.

Apart from the size of the cemetery the most important aspect of it is the presence of a number of engraved headstones, many unfortunately broken. In 2003, 22 complete or partial headstones were found with engravings on them. They date from November 1901 to April 1902.

During the May 2007 survey, GPS readings were taken all around the cemetery. In June and July 2008, the cemetery survey was undertaken, after receiving permission from Kgosi Joseph Gaorekwe to proceed.

The approach to identifying a grave was that it had to consist of some cobbles, preferably with some still embedded in the ground, in other words not just loose cobbles on the surface. Headstones of rock other than calcrete would be recorded. Headstones which were embedded in position and which had broken tops protruding above ground level would be excavated to reveal missing pieces or engravings which were below ground level. This decision informed the entire survey approach. At no stage would we initiate any work that might risk compromising any human remains.

After establishing a base line, a system of 10 metre squares was set up within the grid in Area C and each ten metre square then divided into four. We then recorded the top and bottom of each grave in relation to the main base line and the relevant corner peg. Where engraved stones were found these were plotted onto a GPS. Area A was surveyed and a portion of Area B. The total number of graves surveyed was 1,639 which was approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of the cemetery. It is likely that at least 2,000 graves or more comprise the cemetery, which confirmed the 2001 hypothesis.

The possibility exists that what appear to be individual graves could contain multiple burials and therefore the final death toll is much higher. This was a practice which had already been implemented on compound burials in Kimberley. Conditions in the Dry Harts Forced Labour Camp would have been worse than that of a pre-war compound, due to starvation, infectious diseases, heat and a weakened physical condition of the grave diggers performing the burials.³⁸³ Consequently it is likely that there were multiple burials which can be confirmed by using ground penetrating radar at some future point.

5.6.3. Dry Harts – summing up the evidence.

A review of the death statistics in the monthly camp returns in the SNA and CO collections for the Native Refugee Department's forced labour camps across South Africa identified that Dry Harts camp had the highest death rate on paper, remembering that only seven monthly registers were found for the 12 month period that the camp existed.

These record 427 deaths, an average of 106 deaths per month over seven months. If this average is applied for the 12 months then this totals 1,272 fatalities. Yet of the seven registers located only four of the monthly returns listed death statistics. From April 1902 the camp administrators stopped forwarding death statistics to headquarters who printed the monthly returns. There is no record that this lack of information was ever queried by headquarters.

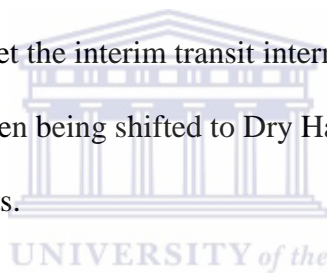
The cemetery contains at least 2,000 individual graves, in which there is every likelihood of multiple burials. Consequently a reliance only on the written record, as most of the scholars have done, when commenting on the camps and fatalities is wholly inadequate.

None of the literature produced since the 1980s and which was consulted offers any value into establishing what exactly happened inside Dry Harts camp. The only exception being is

³⁸³ A.E Van der Merwe, D. Morris, M. Steyn, and G.J.R Maat, 'The history and health of a nineteenth-century migrant mine-worker population, 85-195.

Warwick's work in 1983 who cited Reverend Brown commentary on the horrific conditions inside the camp during his 1901 visit to the area. What the research for this thesis identifies was that the forced labourers were fed on a diet which proved inadequate to sustain life. Scurvy, malnutrition and starvation were dietary related causes of death. A poor diet resulting in malnutrition increases susceptibility to measles. Malnutrition produces lethargy and apathy which lead to starvation. As epidemics became rampant, the poor level of health lowered resistance to disease, making internees susceptible to infections.³⁸⁴ The lack of any ration tins or dumps on the terrain supports this as no additional nutrition other than mealie meal was supplied and this too was essentially animal feed.

No tents were issued, in line with British military policy. Material to build shelters left with the refugees from Blankenbergvlei, yet the interim transit internment at Taung may have resulted in much of this being left behind when being shifted to Dry Harts in November 1901. Consequently there was exposure to the elements.



Death by waterborne diseases as cause of death was established. No trees existed on the farm and no record was uncovered of firewood wood being supplied from elsewhere. Typhoid, enteric and dysentery contaminated drinking and cooking water which could not be boiled due to an absence of fuel.

Medical support was limited to one recorded instance of a doctor's visit from Bloemfontein. There is no record of a doctor being attached to the camp staff, only a medical assistant appointed in August 1902, three months after the end of the war. Through culpable negligence he killed a number of refugees from scurvy. Medical comforts were only issued during three of seven months and this was in all likelihood the same for the remaining five months.

³⁸⁴ J.L. Scott, *British Concentration Camps of the Second South African War The Transvaal, 1900-1902*, Florida, Florida State University, (2007), 136. <http://diginole.lib.fsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=4302&context=etd>. (25 August 2015).

The graves and those with headstones, foot stones and grave goods can be interpreted in various ways. The majority of graves have no engraved tombstones and are calcrete mounds, some with calcrete headstones and footstones. Forty two graves with engravings were located. Twenty one stones were located engraved with a name. One marker of corrugated iron was found. Fourteen are dated by year of death, six list the month of death and one records the date of birth. A religious profile identified five stones depicting Christian crosses (+) and one with an engraved open Bible.

Three children's graves had stone tools as grave goods. These are significant in that a search of the surrounding countryside never located a single stone tool of the type, suggesting that these stone tools were brought with the children to Dry Harts camp. Upon their death they were placed on their graves. One hypothesis is that the stone tools were talismans, items of significance to the children and went with them to the grave. All other grave goods were made from metal, two of which were enamelled.

The language profile of the engraved stones has only one stone being clearly that of a Dutch/Afrikaans speaker, namely John Louw. The remainder are African language speakers, yet of interest is that three of these stones list the personal details in English. The hypothesis is that these stones were commissioned by the relatives of the deceased and paid for with cash. Two scenarios exist. Men returning from employment with the army or people entering the camp with cash, such as refugees from the Boshof and possibly Jacobsdal locations.

An English speaking stonemason working with the military garrison at the station or in the forced labour camp engraved in English after being supplied the particulars. These may have been provided verbally – hence the phonetic spelling of the names. It is also possible that this mason did the elaborate geometric engravings and polishing of some of the stones and gave them to the relatives who then using nails engraved with cursive writing the deceased's particulars.

The practice of erecting the engraved stones at the head of the grave was observed in two cases. The rest all appear to have been anchored against the foot of the cobbled mound and not the head of the grave. This practice is identical to many Boer graves in the camps during the war, suggesting that these people were originally farmworkers.

The written archive, archaeological landscape and surviving memory establish that Dry Harts was the site of one of the South African War's worst forced labour camps. These refugees were not just the casual victims of the British army. They were subjected to an unprecedented level of systemised incarceration, conscription, forced labour, violence and mass dying on a let die basis.³⁸⁵ Starting with the scorched earth policy and looting of their assets they eventually ended up in Dry Harts after journeys through Orange River Station, Kimberley and Taung. Here under conditions of appalling neglect their forced labour was not enough to save their lives. Thousands perished.

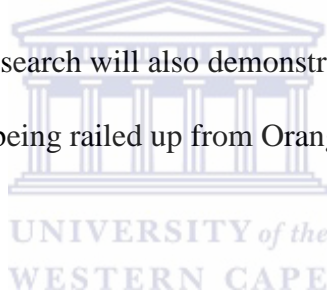


³⁸⁵ R. Chickering, 'Total War: The Use and Abuse of a Concept', in M.F Boemke and R. Chickering and S. Forster, *Anticipating Total War: The American and German Experiences 1871-1914*, Washington/ Cambridge: German Historical Institute, Cambridge University Press, (1994), 13-28.

Chapter Six. What do the other camps tell us?

This chapter presents a history of the Native Refugee Camps at Orange River Station, Taung, Vryburg and Brussels Siding. This history was recovered using the three resources available, written archive, archaeology and in the case of Vryburg oral history and memory. The chapter demonstrates that it is possible to recover a history, however not through a sole reliance on the written archive. Field work and archaeological surface surveys provide the evidence, in particular in the case of the Taung camp for which there is virtually no written archive, given that it existed for a brief point in time.

As with Dry Harts camp, reliance only on the archive for the death statistics for the Taung camp is fraught with error, as an examination of the burial site which was located shows the possibility of an unrecorded catastrophe. The research will also demonstrate that Taung camp was predominantly a transit camp for those refugees being railed up from Orange River Station and Kimberley for final routing north to Dry Harts.



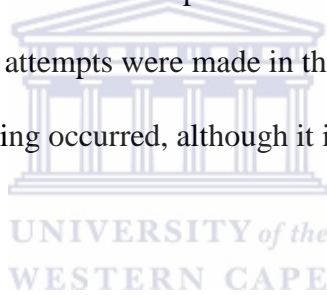
In the case of the Vryburg camp the research will demonstrate that oral history resources are invaluable in understanding living conditions inside that camp and other camps such as Dry Harts. The memory of gars, which was in essence animal food, prevailed into the 1980s from Vryburg and shows that this formed part of a general policy of rationing by the camp administrators. This chapter provides an insight into specific experiences inside these camps and shows that the experience of refugees and forced labourers was not one of participation in 'everyone's war'.

This chapter will show that as with Kimberley and Dry Harts camps that the Orange River Station, Taung and Vryburg camps started out as Phase One Native Refugee Camps. Orange River Station and Taung then became forced labour camps with the creation of the Native Refugee Department. Vryburg remained a self-supporting camp, as it never fell under the Department, however in May 1902 a portion of the refugees were sent to Brussels Siding to form a forced labour camp.

6.1. Notes on the archives consulted.

In the case of Orange River Station camp, the primary source of archival information that provides a limited insight into this camp is located in the FK collection in the National Archives of South Africa. An indication of camp refugee numbers and the camps' possible position on the terrain was located in the Free State Archives Colonial Office collection. In 1999, I attempted to locate this camp which would exist on private land and was unsuccessful. To date it has not been found.

For the Taung camp, the research identified that very little information exists about the camp. This camp at Taung was both a Phase One and Phase Two camp, namely initially a Native Refugee Camp that had military garrison oversight before being taken over by the Native Refugee Department to then become a forced labour camp. The aim by the Department was agricultural labour and the records reflect that attempts were made in this direction. Although there is no direct evidence that ploughing and planting occurred, although it is likely, as a no work no food policy was employed.



The primary source material for constructing a history of the black refugees in Vryburg is archival material, an extensive terrain survey during 2001 to 2008; and an oral history collection housed at the University of Witwatersrand. South African archival collections consulted include: the Military Governor Pretoria collection and the FK collection at the National Archives of South Africa, the Vryburg Resident Magistrate archives in the Western Cape Archives and Records Service, the South African Library Cape Town, the Africana Library Kimberley, and the National Archives of the United Kingdom. A municipal librarian in Vryburg advised that they had some old books in a suitcase in a cupboard. In there was uncovered the original Vryburg Municipal Council Minute Book dating from 1900. The books have subsequently disappeared.

Information about the Brussels Forced Labour Camp was located in the Colonial Office files in the Free State Archives, Bloemfontein.

6.2. Orange River Station Native Refugee Camp.

This camp had 1,237 internees when it was relocated to Dry Harts on or around 30 September 1901. This was nearly as large as the camp at Blankenbergvlei, yet despite this, the research uncovered an archive for this camp that is best described as fragmentary or virtually non-existent. Much material exists about the Burgher Refugee Camp near the station, located on the farm Doornbult, however this thesis is not about the Burgher camp.

In 1999, I visited Doornbult farm and the owner Rina Widd showed me around the site of the Burgher camp, the debris of which was well preserved. During our discussions I asked her if she was aware of any graves on the property that would have been linked to the Native Refugee Camp. She told me of a site between the station and the blockhouse near the former railway bridge over the Orange River. An examination of the graves identified that it dates from the 20th century.

Given the high number of refugees in the Native Refugee Camp, graves and surface evidence should exist. Even a bare minimum death rate of 10 % of the total number of internees when the camp closed, namely 1,584, would produce 154 fatalities. Ten percent is a very conservative estimate, as this thesis when reporting on Dry Harts Forced Labour camp has demonstrated. The other option is that graves and archaeological surface evidence have been destroyed by the centre pivot mass irrigation systems that exist in the area. Or they are on Doornbult or another farm in the vicinity, which fieldwork might locate, or they are known about yet the landowner remains silent on this.

As was the pattern throughout the fighting terrain, military columns dumped refugees approximately one mile from military garrisons stationed at railway terminuses. Consequently there would have been refugees already at Orange River Station throughout the first half of 1901. On 1 August 1901, the Orange River Colony's Native Refugee Department was formed and the

camp came under the control of the Native Refugee Department.³⁸⁶ Major General Pretzman reported to Goold Adams that the handover occurred and that the population was increasing at Orange River Station camp.³⁸⁷

Rationing as always with the camps was a life or death issue. On 12 September 1901, Mr Lilinfeld of Messrs Champion & Co, the contractors who supplied the camps, wired Bloemfontein from Orange River Station that the Controller of Supplies at Kimberley would not permit grain supplies to be sent south, instead wanting King Williamstown to expedite a supply north. Champion indicated that the corn meal supplies at Orange River Station would last another three days but that grain would not be there by then.³⁸⁸ It appears that Captain Lobiniere made arrangements with Messrs Lawrence & Co in Kimberley to solve the problem, instructing them to immediately provide the Native Refugee Camp at Orange River with half a truck of grain as an interim measure until stocks from the coast arrived.³⁸⁹

During August and September 1901, Colonel Henry's column was active in land clearances and scorched earth in the Koffyfontein district, so it can be assumed that black refugees from this district were sent to Orange River Station.³⁹⁰ On 4 August 1901, 46 refugees were brought in by Colonel Byng's column and 14 more refugees on 14 August 1901.³⁹¹ On 12 August 1901, 101 refugees arrived at Orange River Station from Modder River Station. The document does not specify a racial designation, although the research identified that they originated from the Jacobsdal magisterial district. On 14 August 1901, 150 Boer refugees and 11 black refugees were

³⁸⁶ NASA, SNA 1902, Vol. 13. Captain De Lotbiniere to Sir Godfrey Lagden, Commissioner for Native Affairs, Johannesburg, 13 January 1902.

³⁸⁷ VAB, SRC, Vol. 10, Reference 3933.

³⁸⁸ VAB, CO, Vol. 34, Telegram/3259/01.

³⁸⁹ VAB, CO, Vol. 34, Telegram/3259/01.

³⁹⁰ NASA, FK, Vol. 1822.

³⁹¹ NASA, FK, Vol. 1817.

brought in by General Plummer's column.³⁹² They would have originated from the Jacobsdal magisterial district, as that was where General Plummer was then engaged with land clearances.

The collection refers to the arrival of 275 Boer refugees on 15 August 1901, from Windsorton Road and on 16 August 1901, 31 Boer refugees brought in by Colonel Dawkins column from Fauresmith district. On 17 August 1901, 38 white refugees arrived from Luckhoff, on 18 August 1901, five Boers and one 'native' refugee arrived from Wolwekraal. The report does not specify if any black refugees were brought with, however the reference to Fauresmith and Luckhoff identifies that black refugees at the Orange River Station Native Refugee Camp would have originated from those districts. Wolwekraal would refer to a farm.

On 18 August 1901 a new camp superintendent arrived from Bloemfontein and took charge of the camp, his name unknown. No records were located that indicate if an agricultural scheme was started before the refugees were relocated to Dry Harts forced labour camp.³⁹³ On 24 September 1901, 347 refugees were railed to Dry Harts.³⁹⁴ On 30 September 1901, 1,237 refugees comprising 210 families were still in the camp.³⁹⁵

They were all relocated to the Dry Harts forced labour camp, presumably during late October 1901, as the camp return shows no refugee numbers listed. They disembarked at Taung where they were held until November 1901 and then routed to Dry Harts when that camp opened that month. However, the October 1901 report records that mealie meal was purchased for the camp at 25 shillings per bag of 200 lbs, presumably earlier in the month or to take with them to Taung.³⁹⁶

³⁹² NASA, FK, Vol. 1817.

³⁹³ SNA 1902 Vol.13, Captain De Lotbiniere to Sir Godfrey Lagden, Commissioner for Native Affairs, Johannesburg, (13 January 1902).

³⁹⁴ NASA, FK, Vol. 1822.

³⁹⁵ VAB, CO, Vol. 36, Ref 3481/01.

³⁹⁶ VAB, CO, Vol. 36, Ref 3481/01.

6.3. Taung Native Refugee Camp.

The earliest archival reference to black refugees being interned at Taung was dated 19 August 1901. Two hundred black refugee families were at Taung and the garrison Commandant wired Vryburg for rations to feed them. Taking the average of families to total numbers, this means that the refugee population was between 1,000 to 1,200 people who had been brought in by one of the columns then sweeping the western Transvaal.³⁹⁷

On 26 August 1901, the Taung Commandant issued rations to the native refugees brought from the Transvaal by Lord Methuen's column.³⁹⁸ These refugees are presumed to be the 200 families referred to a week earlier, as the Commandant's diary makes no mention of new arrivals in the interim. The fact that it took a week to obtain authority to feed them is indicative of the condition they would have been in. Displaced, forcibly removed and traumatised by the violence they had experienced and, without food for a week once in camp, speaks for itself.

The impact of the scorched earth campaign across the border with the Transvaal was clearly devastating. Kommandant Tollie De Beer of the Schweizer Reineke Commando attempted to smuggle 30 bags of grain into the Taung Native Reserve where it could be concealed from the columns clearing his district. However, the Taung Commandant intercepted this on 29 August 1901.³⁹⁹

In September 1901, the Commandant's diary provides some information about the refugee living conditions, where they were located, the formalisation of them under the control of the Native

³⁹⁷ NASA, FK, Vol. 1813. Of interest to Dry Harts forced labour camp is that the Taung Commandant recorded two days later that Major Morgan's column was at Dry Harts and, it is presumed, that Morgan's column was dropping off refugees there. This being before the time that the Dry Harts Forced Labour Camp was formed.

³⁹⁸ NASA, FK, Vol. 1813.

³⁹⁹ NASA, FK, Vol. 1813.

Refugee Department and the use of black male labour by the military. In September 1901 there are references to 30 black men being sent to the Army Transport Department as military labourers.⁴⁰⁰

The Commandant's records also show the confusion of logistics, for example, on 4 September 1901, 10,000 lbs of flour were loaded into a train truck and railed to the Officer Commanding Supplies at Vryburg. On 20 September 1901, this exact amount of flour was railed back to Taung, offloaded and handed over to the bread contractor.⁴⁰¹ This is a substantial amount of flour for a small garrison guarding the station, which is indicative that additional people needed feeding and could have been the substantial number of black refugees in Taung.

On 7 September 1901, the Commandant, "Interviewed Mr Dent, inspector re native refugees. Mr McKenzie Assistant Native Administrator arrived to choose suitable spots for cultivation, etc".⁴⁰²

This reference is the first and only one which indicates that as of that date the aim of the Native Refugee Department was to form a forced labour camp at Taung based on agricultural labour. The Department's printed camp return reports until April 1902 all have Taung printed as a camp yet nothing filled in except for month end October 1901. The majority of refugees at Taung originated from Orange River Station and Kimberley and that all refugees in the camp were routed to Dry Harts in November 1901.

⁴⁰⁰ NASA, FK, Vol. 1822.

⁴⁰¹ NASA, FK, Vol. 1825.

⁴⁰² NASA, FK, Vol. 1825.



Figure 8, Google Earth. Taung Native Refugee Camp.

On 12 September 1901, the Commandant, “Had meeting of Chiefs and Headman and instructed them to place all Transvaal refugees in middle of Reserve and have them closely watched also to report immediately the arrival or departure of stock from Reserve. Also made arrangements with them re immediately reporting of Intelligence”.⁴⁰³ This reference is the only clue as to the position of the Taung Native Refugee Camp, and it informed the terrain audit as to where to look for evidence on the ground.

In 2001, the terrain audit identified a burial site in the approximate area where the archival reference described the camp to have been located, at one point, during its brief history. The graves are laid out in rows and were heavily overgrown with thornbushes, making an accurate count impossible. Numbers were estimated to be about 600 at least. Discussions with various elders in

⁴⁰³ NASA, FK, Vol. 1825.

the adjacent settlement, which included Itireleng village, identified that they had no knowledge of who is buried there.



Graves at the Taung Native Refugee Camp burial site.



Figure 9, Google Earth. Taung Native Refugee Camp burial site.

The approximate area of this burial site is one acre, which if correct makes it the same size as the Dry Harts burial site and could therefore contain as many as 2,000 graves. The minimum possible burial area is 2 800 square metres. The ratio based on Dry Harts is 500 burials to every 1,000 square meters or a quarter acre. This means that between 1,400 to 2,000 people perished at Taung, which has escaped the written archive.

There are no deaths recorded in any of the archival sources consulted for the period prior to October 1901. The camp return for the month of October 1901 lists refugee numbers as, 632 men, 1,184 women, and 1,633 children, giving a total of 3,449 people. Deaths are recorded as 10 men, 11 women and 63 children.⁴⁰⁴ Given the number of graves on the terrain (as with Dry Harts) this total number of recorded deaths needs to be treated with circumspection. When the camps' total population is viewed against its population for September 1901, this means that that approximately

⁴⁰⁴ VAB, CO, Vol. 36, Ref 3481/01.

2,849 refugees were brought into the Taung Refugee Camp during October 1901. There is no camp return for November 1901 meaning that the internees were relocated to Dry Harts during that month.

6.4. Vryburg refugee camp and Brussels Siding Forced Labour Camp.

Vryburg is one of the earliest, if not one of the first towns, where refugees arrived willingly in order to avoid scorched earth and also due to being forcibly removed. During the origins of the Vryburg refugee camp black refugees initially willingly sought shelter with their livestock to escape the fighting in the western Transvaal and surrounds. Kessler stated that, “If this camp was in existence in early 1900 it would be one of the first black camps of the war”.⁴⁰⁵ Kessler’s term “early 1900” is based on Charles Van Onselen using this term in relation to his interviews with Kas Maine, which Onselen refers to in his biography on Kas Maine, *The Seed is Mine*.⁴⁰⁶ However Kessler has no fixed date, he merely repeated van Onselen. However, Vryburg was never an official Native Refugee Camp or forced labour camp run by the Native Refugee Department, making its profile unique.

Peter Warwick cited an article in the *Bechuanaland News*, dated 15 December 1900, which referred to black refugees in Vryburg.⁴⁰⁷ However my research for this thesis identified the earliest recorded date when refugees arrived at Vryburg, as recorded in the Vryburg Council Minute Book is October 1900. On the 30 October 1900, the Vryburg Municipal Council approved the issuing of permits by the town clerk, permitting refugees to graze their stock at no charge on the council commonage surrounding the town. The council agreed to review this situation during their next meeting, in a month’s time.⁴⁰⁸

⁴⁰⁵ S. Kessler, *The Black Concentration Camps*, 81.

⁴⁰⁶ C van Onselen, *The Life of Kas Maine, a South African Sharecropper 1894-1985*, New York, Hill & Wang, (1996).

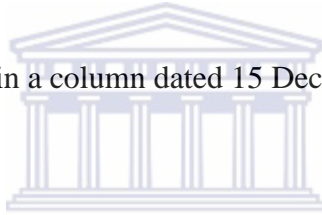
⁴⁰⁷ P. Warwick, *Black People*, 154.

⁴⁰⁸ Vryburg Municipal Council Minute Book.

Refugee numbers increased and by December 1900, the town's surrounds were filling up with more and more black refugees and their stock. A local newspaper reported that, "A stranger...passing through the streets for the first time might be excused...for supposing that he had stumbled into a large native location".⁴⁰⁹ On 8 December 1900, the *Bechuanaland News* reported that the refugees had considerable numbers of stock with them.⁴¹⁰

In December 1900, the council revoked their October 1900 decision and decreed that all black refugees should pay grazing fees, in an attempt to encourage them to leave town, but this measure failed. They paid the grazing fees as having fled the perils of the rural battleground and the ongoing scorched earth campaign they were hardly about to return into that cauldron⁴¹¹ Again this points to the resources that these refugees brought with them, they were able to pay their way.

This self-sufficiency is borne out in a column dated 15 December 1900 when the *Bechuanaland News* opined on the refugees that,



The sole business of the women and girls seems to promenade, and the men and boys are apparently deeply engaged in trying to discover what is the most comfortable position to lie down in. They are refugees – poor things! But they will not work. As a matter of fact there is no reason why the native refugees should work. They are well off. They have cattle, they have flocks of sheep and goats, they have cash in their pockets.⁴¹²

Fleeting references in the archives provide some information about where some of the refugees originated from. On 6 February 1901, three black women arrived from Uitvalskop Transvaal and sought domestic work in the town.⁴¹³ On 7 February 1901, 89 refugees comprising 42 adults and 47 children some with cows, goats & sheep arrive arrived from Morokani Randt.⁴¹⁴

⁴⁰⁹ South African Library, *Bechuanaland News*, (15 December 1900).

⁴¹⁰ South African Library, *Bechuanaland News*, (8 December 1900).

⁴¹¹ South African Library, *Bechuanaland News*, (15 December 1900).

⁴¹² South African Library, *Bechuanaland News*, (15 December 1900).

⁴¹³ KAB, 1/VBG, Vol. 22/12.

⁴¹⁴ KAB, 1/VBG, Vol. 22/12.

Water has always been a problem for Vryburg. Over the course of 1901, new arrivals of both black and Boer refugees strained the town's water supplies. During October 1900, parties of soldiers dug for water on the east side of the railway line close to where the black refugees were assembling.⁴¹⁵ In November 1901, the superintendent of the Boer camp offered to clean the water furrows running from Zwartfontein farm where the town received its water supply for a distance of 1,000 yards, provided the council did the rest, in order to improve the flow of water to the camp. The Council refused, and instructed the Superintendent not to use the water, it was for the town's use only.⁴¹⁶

The research for this thesis uncovered an oral history collection created by the Institute for Advanced Social Science, which is currently housed in the Historical Papers Collection in the Cullen Library at the University of the Witwatersrand. Kessler referred to Trapido and Van Onselen's work around this collection, yet he never personally reviewed the collection.

Consequently the value that this oral history and memory resource has to go where the paper archive cannot go was missed by Kessler, who attempted to comment on Vryburg. As for the specific camps that form the focus for this thesis, this material is key to gaining an insight into the lived experience of black refugees in these camps.

The Maine family's experience speaks of the horrific experiences of black civilians at the hands of the British army's scorched earth and land clearance tactics in the region. In interviews conducted by the Institute for Advanced Social Science, University of Witwatersrand, during 1979 to 1981 for Charles van Onselen with Kas Maine who was five years old 1900, he vividly recalled the destruction unleashed on his family by the war.⁴¹⁷

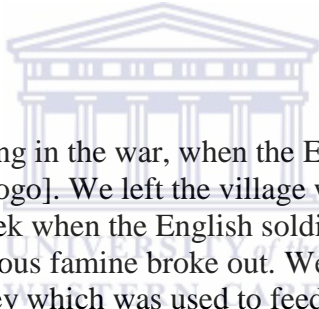
⁴¹⁵ Vryburg Municipal Council Minute Book, 1900.

⁴¹⁶ Vryburg Municipal Council Minute Book, 1900.

⁴¹⁷ Kas Maine, interview, Institute for Advanced Social Science, University of Witwatersrand, Ledig Rustenburg, AG 2738 / A5R. File 37. (21 November 1979)

Kas Maine's father Sekwale was conscripted as an agterryer, when the Bloemhof Commando mobilized in October 1899, and drew in the men from the Schweizer Reinecke district, under Kommandant Tollie de Beer. Agterryers were black men who were conscripted as Auxiliaries into the Boer Commandos. Some joined voluntarily and many originated from the farms. Sekwale saw action at Modder River and again at Magersfontein. Sekwale, together, with thousands of other black labourers dug the trenches and built the defences that played a key role in the Boer victory that followed at Magersfontein. During the action Sekwale witnessed a British reconnaissance balloon which alighted to direct artillery fire and the seeing this left a lasting impression. After the war he named his newly born son Balloon.

While Sekwale senior was on commando, the British troops arrived at Holpan near Schweizer Reineke. Maine recalled.



My father was away fighting in the war, when the English burnt the crops, the village and took everything to [Madibogo]. We left the village when my father was involved in the war. Yes he was at Skolsnek when the English soldiers burnt the village and took us away. When we were there a serious famine broke out. We were at Vryburg then. The famine was so serious that we ate barley which was used to feed horses. That was our food. Yes barley, we cooked and ate it...My brother was thrown to Taung by the war...The people at Taung were told to come and identify their relatives who came from the Transvaal. She identified him, took him away and he stayed with them. There was a shortage of food.⁴¹⁸

My father had few livestock, but they multiplied before the Anglo-Boer War. Now during the Anglo Boer War at Mimosa [Schweizer Reineke], many of my father's cattle were killed by the Boers and the English soldiers. Hee! Monna (Man) war is cruel. People were taken by contract. My father and others were driven by ox-wagons to the war at Skols Nek.⁴¹⁹

Do you know what we ate during the war? Do you know 'Gars' the things fed to horses? 'Gars' the things fed to horses, were our food. We ground them up and ate them. Niks without anything. Many cattle died, the English killed them. They even burnt the crops stored in 'disho'. House too were burnt. It was those houses roofed with grass not zinc.

⁴¹⁸ K. Maine, interview, Institute for Advanced Social Science, University of Witwatersrand, Ledig Rustenburg, AG 2738 / A5R. File 37 (21 November 1979).

⁴¹⁹ K. Maine, interview, Institute for Advanced Social Science, University of Witwatersrand, Ledig Rustenburg, AG 2738 / A5R. File 37 (21 November 1979).

They burnt everything so that the Boers should find any food...they burnt houses, crops and shot cattle so that there would not be any food.⁴²⁰

They took us away in wagons drawn by mules. We travelled the whole night. My father's cattle were also driven too. Only one survived. Blom was its name, and it ran away when we arrived at Schweizer Reineke. They also took fowls, they dropped us at Vryburg, some were dropped at Taung, some at Mareetsane. They were separating the black people from the Boers.⁴²¹

The British were not fighting the blacks, they were fighting the Boers; and so that they might not have the blacks, they destroyed everything.⁴²²

When he was taken away in the wagons, Maine recalled that the British gave them food.

We ate livestock which had died on the way. They left us in Vryburg. We were crowded there at Vryburg, all the blacks there were living on 'Gars.' We were helped by the old dwellers of that location [with accommodation and food].⁴²³

Maine's reference to this location had direct relevance for locating the terrain where these black refugees were congregated at Vryburg. They certainly would not have been allowed to settle around the perimeter of the town, as this would have presented the council with additional management problems, with respect to water, grazing, sanitation and security. Apart from which, the military garrison would never allow unsupervised refugees and their stock straying around the cleared zone, beyond their outposts and fortified positions after dark. They would have been consolidated into one designated area.

Maine referred to the location residents assisting the new arrivals. Evidence does exist of this pattern of refugees being helped by black members of established settlements. It was true for Kimberley where refugees entered the Mankooerane Location in search of succour.⁴²⁴ It also reflects that the refugee camp and Vryburg Location were in close proximity to each other.

⁴²⁰ K. Maine, interview, Institute for Advanced Social Science, University of Witwatersrand, Ledig Rustenburg, AG 2738 / A5R. File 37 (21 November 1979).

⁴²¹ K. Maine, interview, Institute for Advanced Social Science, University of Witwatersrand, Ledig Rustenburg, AG 2738 / A5R. File 37 (21 November 1979).

⁴²² K. Maine, interview, Institute for Advanced Social Science, University of Witwatersrand, Ledig Rustenburg, AG 2738 / A5R. File 37 (21 November 1979).

⁴²³ K. Maine, interview, Institute for Advanced Social Science, University of Witwatersrand, Ledig Rustenburg, AG 2738 / A5R. File 37, (21 November 1979).

⁴²⁴ Afrikaner Library, Kimberley Medical Board of Health records, (1901).

Maine's recollection of the dwellers of the location already being there when he arrived is correct, as two separate archival references about the refugee camp are dated 28 September 1901. The second identifies exactly where the Native Refugee Camp was situated. The Vryburg Commandant recorded that he:

Visited Native refugee location with Town Clerk and decided to appoint an overseer at 5 shillings a day and to get the location into shape, with east boundary west fence of new cemetery and west boundary north and south in prolongation of street which passes west side of Vryburg hotel.⁴²⁵

One point to make about this reference is that through all the research undertaken since 1999 for this thesis, one seldom, if ever, finds a description so precise as to the exact position of a Native Refugee Camp or forced labour camp.



Figure 10, Google Earth. Vryburg Native Refugee Camp.

On 24 May 2007, I applied this reference to a map using the cemetery and the Vryburg Hotel references and pin pointed the exact spot. The road alongside the hotel has been truncated by the

⁴²⁵ NASA, FK, Vol. 1825.

golf course. The line of the road was traced southwards and the area which had been occupied by the camp was identified. An inspection of the terrain found it to be an open rectangular piece of impacted ground. My notebook refers:

We then proceeded to the area which was described in the archival reference as being where the black camp was situated. We walked the area behind the Police Station/Commando building and the nearby nursery. The area has been severely torn up as part of it was once used as a shooting range by the Vryburg Commando, post 1961. Bully beef tin and other tin fragments were observed on the terrain. Our searches suggest that nothing remains of this Refugee Camp site. There is also no clear indication of a cemetery, which is not entirely surprising as the camp was situated close to the new cemetery and is also not far from Huhudi, where in 2001 we had been shown the possible position of a very old cemetery. We did however find some stone groupings not far from the nursery which might be graves.⁴²⁶

On 24 September 1901, the military Commandant asserted that “that owners of stock who graze same outside protected area, claims for loss of stock will not be entertained”.⁴²⁷ In military parlance this would mean stray beyond the perimeter at your own risk. It also meant that these refugees had retained their stock and hence continued supporting themselves.

On 12 October 1901, measles was reported to have broken out in the Native Refugee Camp. The *Bechuanaland News* commented that refugees in the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies were growing crops and suggested that Vryburg’s refugees be encouraged to do the same.⁴²⁸ However no evidence was uncovered by the research that they were forced to grow crops. It is feasible that the refugees on their own accord grew vegetables which would have aided their self-sufficiency as they remained self-supporting and were never incorporated into a camp controlled by the Native Refugee Department. Vryburg is never listed in the official monthly Native Refugee Department reports.

⁴²⁶ Author’s collection.

⁴²⁷ NASA, FK, Vol. 1825.

⁴²⁸ South African Library, *Bechuanaland News*, (28 September 1900).

6.5. Forming Brussels Native Refugee camp.

By May 1902, the water shortages at Vryburg were critical and the needs of black refugees always came second to the needs of the white civilian population, the Boer camp and the military garrison. During early 1902, water was being piped from Zwartfontein farm to the Boer camp. These pipes were laid by order of Lord Methuen.⁴²⁹ On 12 February 1902, the Military Governor Pretoria instructed the Officer Commanding in Kimberley:

One hundred refugees ordered here [Vryburg] from Kimberley should be detained if possible not enough water here following notice posted. People are requested to do little washing as possible.

The following day the water issue emerges:

MGP 5244 reported that 100 refugees are ordered from Kimberley to Vryburg. Stop. Please state by whose orders there is great shortage of water at Vryburg, stop. If not sent detain them.⁴³⁰

That same day the Military Governor in Pretoria wired the Deputy Administrator in Bloemfontein:

Who is ordering Transvaal refugees now in ORC Camps back to Transvaal camps. Stop. 700 have now been taken into various camps 300 of which went to Vryburg which arrived at an inconvenient time. Stop. We have now in our camps some 900 ORC refugees which you should arrange to take over.⁴³¹

Despite this by 17 March 1902, a considerable number of black refugees were at Vryburg, and numbers were expected to increase due to operations then underway in the western Transvaal.⁴³²

The Council minutes reflect that during April 1902, the town and the Boer camp were experiencing water shortages. Although the military were laying more pipes from Zandfontein, the Boer camp superintendent informed the Mayor that this supply would not prove adequate for the camp and that no water could be spared for the town inhabitants.⁴³³

⁴²⁹ Vryburg Municipal Council Minute Book. (19 May 1902).

⁴³⁰ NASA, MGP, Vol. 151, Ref 2526 B/02, Correspondence from MGP to OC Kimberley.

⁴³¹ NASA, MGP, Vol. 151, Ref 2526 B/ 02.

⁴³² VAB, CO, Vol. 59, Ref 766/02.

⁴³³ KAB, 3 VBG, Vol. 1/1/1/2.

On 1 April 1902, the General Officer Commanding Kimberley, reported to the Commander of the Lines of Communication in Cape Town, that the Vryburg Native Refugee camp contained 832 women and girls and 229 men and boys, totalling 1,061 people.⁴³⁴ This is the first reference to numbers in this self-supporting camp which means a census was taken. Plans were afoot to remove the refugees to Brussels Siding.

On 23 May 1902, the black refugees in the Vryburg Location were described as being self-supporting. However by desire of the Military Authorities, they were about to be moved out to a camp then being formed at Brussels.⁴³⁵ A handwritten document attached to this report lists the refugee numbers in camps operated by the Native Refugee Department based in Bloemfontein. Vryburg camp had a population of 2,970 people. This total reflects that during the period 1 April 1901 until 23 May 1902, the number of refugees in Vryburg grew from 1,061 to 2,970, which would exclude deaths and men who left the camp to work with the military.

The Native Refugee Department report for the month of June 1902 lists the Brussels Native Refugee Camp population as: 210 men, 445 women and 706 children totalling 1,361 people. Deaths for the month are one male, one female and one child.⁴³⁶ This means that 1,609 people in the Vryburg Location were not forcibly relocated to Brussels Siding. There is no explanation in the archives as to why this was, given that Vryburg's water shortages were the reason for creating a camp at Brussels Siding. One possibility is that the intention was to form the camp in two stages which never occurred as this camp was formed in the last month of the war.

The Native Refugee Department report for the month of August 1902 lists the Brussels Siding camp population as: 131 men, 385 women and 554 children totalling 1,070 people. Deaths for the

⁴³⁴ VAB, CO, Vol. 54, Ref 326/02.

⁴³⁵ VAB, CO, Vol. 54, Ref 326/02.

⁴³⁶ VAB, CO, Vol. 88, Ref 2991/02.

month are five women and four children.⁴³⁷ This reduction in numbers is indicative that approximately 530 internees had been repatriated to their place of origin.

The Department's September 1902 report has no statistics for Brussels camp meaning that the camp was emptied and closed during that month.⁴³⁸ A comment on these statistics contained in these reports is that the Brussels Native Refugee Camp existed for no longer than four months and it must be borne in mind that, as was the case with Dry Harts Native Refugee Camp, fatalities would in all likelihood have been underreported.

To date, the exact site and burial area for the Brussels Siding camp has not been identified. On 12 April 2008, fieldwork narrowed down the search area by locating one of the blockhouses. This was identified by a dump of British army ration tins, milk tins, broken glass and one unfired .303 cartridge.⁴³⁹

6.6. Land, labour and camps: Orange River Station, Taung, Vryburg and Brussels Siding

What do these four camps tell us? On the basis of the written archive it is possible to salvage a history of these camps. However, it is a history that is extremely fragmented, for example in the case of the Orange River Station camp, the written archive offered no insight into locating the camp. In the case of Taung the archive on its own would suggest that the refugees there were brought there and that the records for the period after October 1901 have disappeared, hence there is no further information on a camp that is presumed to have existed until the end of the war. However, this was not the case. This thesis proves that the majority of refugees originated from the

⁴³⁷ VAB, CO, Vol. 105, Ref 4316/02.

⁴³⁸ VAB, CO, Vol. 114, Ref 5079/02.

⁴³⁹ McGregor Museum, Traces, EV6, to 24 January 2009, Daybook Number 2 (17 April 2008).

camps at Orange River Station and Blankenbergvlei and on arrival in Taung were held there until November 1901 before being sent to Dry Harts.

The archive for Vryburg enabled the research for this thesis to establish when black refugees arrived, to locate the site and establish that water was the issue that resulted in many of them being relocated to Brussels Siding. Most importantly the archive reflects that these refugees brought with them considerable resources which enabled them to sustain themselves for the duration of the war. This was a similar situation to the refugees at Klippiesspan as referred to in the earlier chapters.

Fieldwork proved critical to gaining an insight into the experience at Taung. The sheer number of graves and possible size of the cemetery shows that, as with Dry Harts camp, a calamity occurred there; one that is not recorded anywhere in the written archive. Consequently, establishing fatality numbers in the black camps and commenting on their experience using only the written archive, as has Kessler and those who cite him, remains a flawed exercise. Fieldwork at Vryburg established the terrain yet there is little visible on the surface.

Oral history and memory in the case of Vryburg offers the richness of narrative and provides an insight into the experience of Total War. Kas Maine recalled the horror of scorched earth, displacement, the destruction of family wealth, forced labour, starvation and internment. He also stressed how people's fate was predetermined by race and how the British military segregated them on that basis. His testimony confirmed the position of the camp and that they, as at Blankenbergvlei were assisted by local black residents who were not refugees. Maine recalled eating gars – horse feed and that his brother ended up in Taung, which meant that he would have been relocated to Dry Harts forced labour camp. This memory of gars in turn has survived in memory amongst the residents today who reside literally on top of the Dry Harts camp. It is linked to the invention of “sowans stew” during the Siege of Mafeking.

This experience and what we learn from these four camps is that the fight for land, the creation of forced labour, civilian displacement and the horror of Total War are a narrative entwined through a history of the camps. This was not, as Kessler and other scholars have advocated, a shared experience at the hands of a common enemy, along the notion of mutual suffering. The experience of civilians inside these four camps, which were forced labour camps and an independent self-sustaining camp was fundamentally different to that of the Boers interned in Vryburg, Kimberley, Orange River Station and elsewhere. Theirs was not so called black participation. Theirs was a standalone experience of land, labour, war and displacement.



Conclusion. Recovering a history of seven refugee and forced labour camps.

This central research question posed by this thesis is that would it be possible to recover a history of seven camps in the sample area of study? The research then sought to answer this question by using the identified resources of the written archive, those generated during the war and during its immediate aftermath, and also the archive of landscape, the archaeological record and that of surviving memory.

This approach was adopted after the experience of the Brandfort project in 1999, as detailed in chapter one. During this project two black camps were located along with their burial sites. Their existence was substantiated by archival documentation. However that was where the conventional research approach then got itself mired into a one dimensional approach, one which chose to ignore the possibility of survivor testimony and memory; a resource that adds a richness to the narrative of the human experience.

Having observed this firsthand, the approach then taken for any future investigations into the camps would be to use all the available resources, unlike what transpired at Brandfort. Yet the reality then in year 2000 was that the camps to be investigated were unidentified and about which nothing in the literature existed. Therefore was it feasible to locate not just one such site yet rather to set out and locate a sample of sites that were inextricably linked in the historical past? Even if a tangible trace was uncovered would it be sufficient to recover a history that might address the vacuum of knowledge that existed about specific camps and specific experiences? Again would it be feasible to link specific communities to specific camps, or would the human experience remain an unknown face locked in the past and lost to the present?

Before embarking on such an undertaking it was necessary to identify what that sample area would be. Would the research objective and subsequent process look to a sample area of camps in the former Transvaal or Orange Free State, or in the former Cape Colony? What could this work that

was going to be undertaken, over a significant period of time add to? At the point of departure I was then undertaking a MA Degree and my research report focussed on military operations linked to the Relief of Kimberley. In 1999 I had developed the exhibit at Magersfontein Battlefield Museum and had a strong interest in the history of the region. Consequently in building on to the knowledge platform the decision was taken to locate the Kimberley Native Refugee Camp.

In reviewing the literature available then it was clear from Warwick's work that six camps existed at Kimberley, Vryburg, Dry Harts, Taung, Brussels Siding and Orange River Station, familiar places from having travelled through them. A historic map which I obtained during the centenary commemorations further indicated that these camps and the Kimberley camp were to be relocated to Dry Harts during September 1901. As these camps were all linked to Dry Harts as a final internment centre, this meant that Dry Harts was a central thread to this history.

A search of the national archival information retrieval system identified that there were no indexes or references to files containing information about black refugees in Kimberley. This was not to say that archival information didn't exist, it was going to require a significant effort to find it. However some information existed about the Dry Harts camp making it the initial research focus.

As detailed in chapter five in 2001 the burial site was located with the assistance of local residents, one of whom who had a direct link through his father to the camp. The sheer size and scale of the burial site was astounding. Subsequent surveys of the burial site identified numerous engraved tombstones as detailed in Appendix B.

Later that same year through sheer serendipity a local famer near Kimberley pointed out an area of possible interest resulting in the identification of Klippiespan Camp. It was only later in 2008 that research in the De Beers Consolidated Mines archives identified that Kimberley had two camps prior to being relocated to Dry Harts. The terrain of the Vryburg and Taung camps were also

located and some archival records about the Brussels Siding and Orange River Station camps as detailed in chapter six.

The terrain investigations prove that it is possible to locate a surviving trace of the tangible evidence of the camps. The only exceptions being the camps at Blankenbergvlei and Orange River Station where post war mining and farming operations may have destroyed surface evidence. Nevertheless in the case of Blankenbergvlei detailed archival records enabled a reconstruction of events at that place.

Locating the terrain evidence is only one angle to recovering a history. In the case of Klippiespan camp, no archival evidence was uncovered that offers insight into this camp. Consequently the archaeology proved critical to understanding what transpired at this place. The material culture recovered through the archaeological excavations as detailed in chapter three goes where the written archive cannot go.

Personal effects provide a trace of who these people were. Their material culture indicates that they had material wealth, as evidenced by their jewellery and household effects and were in all likelihood not farm tenants having originated from the Boshof Location which existed from the outset of the town in the 1856. The hypothesis is that trade with the diamond mines and Kimberley and Beaconsfield up until the outbreak of war enabled them to establish themselves materially. However Total War destroyed their wealth.

Oral history and memory offer insights into the human experience inside the Dry Harts and Vryburg camps. Gars as a ration runs as a central thread through this narrative and in turn links to the issuing of Sowans Stew during the Siege of Mafeking. The experience of Gars and starvation inside Vryburg camp was remembered by a survivor when interviewed in 1979. In Ntswanahatse and Moretele villages this memory lives on as a consistent explanation for what transpired at Dry

Harts camp. The internees there according to local oral history died in large numbers from contaminated food and starvation. They are able to explain this historic past in no uncertain terms.

The rationale informing the research and its outcomes demonstrate that through a combination of resources that it is possible to recover a history of the camps. A key objective and rationale of this research is to demonstrate that the written archive is limited and that a reliance only on this archive results in a limited understanding of what transpired inside the camps. The literature to date describes the camp system and in certain cases such as work by Kessler details are provided about life and death inside the camps. How the camps functioned, what their purpose was and how they were part of an integrated Total War strategy is well understood. This is all based on the written archive. However what is lacking is specific information about specific camps and specific communities who ended up displaced into this system.

As the research unfolded it proved possible to link a specific community and their experience of Total War to specific camps. Chapter four detailed the experience of black civilians residing in the Boshof and Jacobsdal magisterial districts. The land clearances resulted in the liquidation of their assets – livestock which the military auctioned to the benefit of the white population of Kimberley and Beaconsfield. Profits realised financed the British war effort.

By provisioning Kimberley and Beaconsfield with protein this enabled the military to allocate less rolling stock for provisioning these towns and to reallocate transport to its counter insurgency operations then underway as part of the Total War strategy. This further underwrote the British war effort that by creating a situation of destitution, labour could be extracted in exchange for rations. The no work no food policy being central to this coercion. Work or starve was the choice, hence mining capital and the military were able to obtain male labour while women and children and elderly men were manipulated into working as agricultural labours for the Native Refugee Department inside its camp system. The sheer destitution in Dry Harts camp is evidenced by the

fact that all the internees were on rations throughout the camps' existence camp. Its burial site bears witness to the scale of the tragedy.

The policy of no work no food and forced labour underwrote the camps. This then poses a question given that the literature to date refers to black concentration camps and Boer concentration camps. Were these Native Refugee Camps on the same standing as the Boer camps and merely separated along racial lines, or was there in fact a fundamental difference between them?

The research shows that starvation as a tool of Total War along the let die principle informed British military policy. If black refugees were unwilling to work they were to starve and perish. The experience of internees in the Native Refugee Camps was much like the mining compound system, a forcible enclosure resulting in a fundamentally different experience to that of the Boers. Camps for black refugees were operated according to an entirely different vision to that of the Boer camps. Extractive labour operating within a wider paradigm of colonial expansion and exploitation of human and natural resources on a massive scale in line with Total War.

Boer internees on the other hand were rationed at a higher nutritional standard and not compelled to labour. Therein is the difference. Boer camps functioned as places of concentrated internment. The Native Refugee Camps on the other hand functioned as forced labour camps where labour was compelled and coerced. They were not concentration camps in the Boer sense of the word. Yet the literature has these two camp systems bundled together in mutual and shared suffering.

Much of the literature generated during the centenary and since 2002 highlights the notions of black 'participation' in 'everyone's war'. Participation runs like a central thread through the narrative of the war and also the camps. Including participants into the overarching wartime narrative has focussed on the theme of black and Boer civilians having a shared experience at the hands of a common enemy and even supporting the combatants of both sides. Attempts to reimagine and reconfigure the narrative have remained dominated by an Anglo Boer War in which

new participants appear on the periphery. The research for this thesis shows otherwise.

Participation and everyone's war is a misnomer.

At no stage during the land clearances, forced removals and internment of black civilians was any information uncovered that spoke to a shared experience. Granted the process of scorched earth, removal and internment was similar yet that's where the similarity ended. Once black civilians were interned into the Phase One camps their experience took on a completely different process, one which continued with the formation of the Native Refugee Department and its Phase Two camps.

Nutrition, rationing, shelter and medical support in the camps show that black civilians were erecting their own shelters, receiving minimal rations and forced to labour, quite unlike the Boer internees. Discussions and communications between the mining houses and the military and subsequent military arrangements show that very detailed planning went into coercing labour. Once the Native Refugee Department was established, the die was cast. Families were split up, all based on labour extraction. People were uprooted and consolidated at Dry Harts camp.

In the final conclusion this thesis demonstrates that the black civilian experience of land, labour, war and displacement, created through the violence of war was a standalone experience. One which speaks to a fractured yet recoverable past.

APPENDIX A.

Ethics statement.

No ethics statement is required as the thesis will use prior archaeological research for which permits were obtained and oral histories that are located in archival depositories. No further archaeological excavations nor oral history research was undertaken prior to the commencement and finalisation of this thesis.

Regarding the archaeological research informing this thesis, permits were applied for to the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) in terms of Section 35(4) of the National Heritage Resources Act, Act No. 25 of 1999, for excavations at the following sites:

- New Klippiespan, at approximately 28° 45 41.0S, 24° 54 43.7E, in the Kimberley District, Free State Province. This was to undertake a limited excavation needed to supplement the surface survey information of areas which include six living areas of camp inhabitants and three of British guard posts; excavation of up to six camp dumps and three probable British dumps and plotting of grave mounds (no excavation of the latter).
- Vygeboomsvlakte 814, at approximately 27° 32S, 24° 50E, on the farm Vygeboomsvlakte 814, in the Vryburg District, North-West Province (Dry Harts). This was to undertake the excavation at two dump sites to obtain a sample of cultural material to compare with samples obtained from Klippiespan and from Vryburg sites (Zwartfontein); to clear and re-erect head and foot stones that have broken off (for recording), involving a limited amount of excavation to re-erect in order to record the engravings.

The oral history resources utilised for this thesis are located in the Historical Papers Collection, Cullen Library, University of the Witwatersrand.

APPENDIX B.

Dry Harts Forced Labour Camp Register.

This register created for this thesis lists only prominent graves with engravings or other distinguishing features, identified during the 2008 survey. It includes the original GPS coding's and grave numberings that were created during the survey so that should future scholars wish to access the original field notes they can do so and which are accessioned in the McGregor Museum, Kimberley. All photographs taken were by the author and the sketches drawn by E. Voigt and the author.

Area A.

GS 1 - Grave C9/9.

A slate stone with a chiselled decoration from the sides of the stone with smoothed lines. The headstone was embedded 33 cm deep in soft red sand and backed by cobbles of the grave. Fourteen pieces which fit the headstone were excavated from the base of the buried headstone, along with 25 other fragments and pieces. A piece which was found on the surface near the fence in 2001 fitted into this headstone.

Calcrete cobbles are on either side of and behind the headstone with soft soil in front of the headstone. Cobbles from the adjacent grave were visible during the excavation of the headstone. The stone was largely reconstructed except for a missing middle piece.

Engraved cursive writing:

(D)aniels

Lumo 15 years

1902

The length of the main upright piece is 14cm, a lone piece 34cm and the original length of the stone 89cm with a pointed top.



Headstone uncovered with cobbled mound of grave behind it.⁴⁴⁰

⁴⁴⁰ Photographs, G. Benneyworth



First find during the excavation of a piece fitting into the headstone.⁴⁴¹



⁴⁴¹ Photograph E. Voigt



This piece, found near the fence in 2001, some distance away from the grave, which suggests it was thrown by herders at cattle; a practice observed at the site in 2001.⁴⁴²

⁴⁴² Photograph G. Benneyworth.



Cursive writing = (D?) aniel

*Lumo 15 years*⁴⁴³

⁴⁴³ Photograph G. Benneyworth.



Original pathway at the original ground level between the grave rows in which headstone fragments were found.⁴⁴⁴



⁴⁴⁴ Photograph G. Benneyworth.



Gravestone with excavated fragments prior to backfilling.⁴⁴⁵



⁴⁴⁵ Photograph G. Benneyworth.

Area A.

DGS 4.

No. 9 of 2001.

Engraved block capitals: Kosenioa Madisa.

Stone: grey slate.



Photo taken May 2007.⁴⁴⁶

⁴⁴⁶ Photograph G. Benneyworth.

Area A.

GS 3 - G11/3.

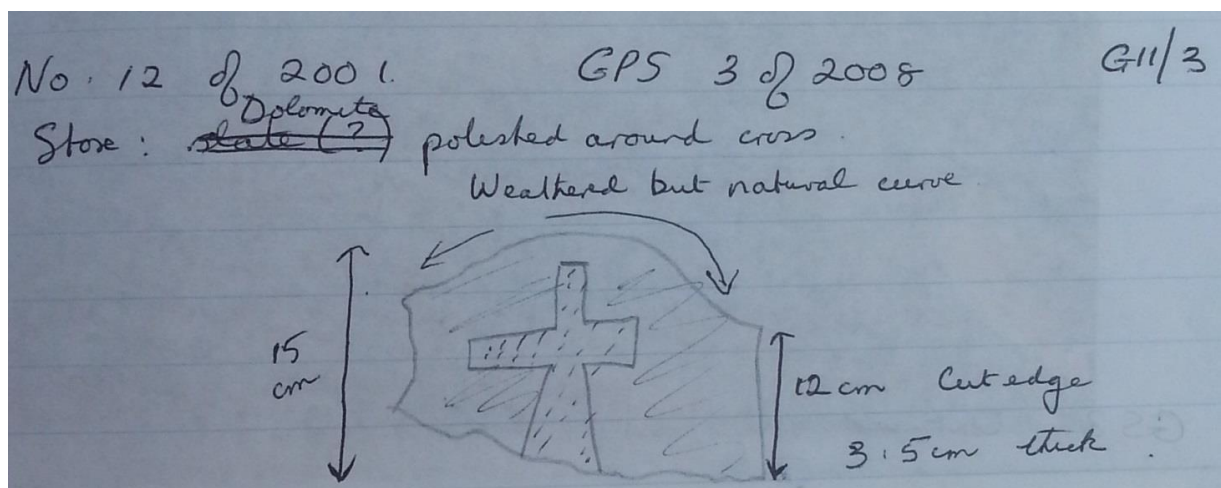
No. 12 of 2001.

Stone: Dolomite.



The stone is polished around a cross motif. The curve is a weathered and natural curve.⁴⁴⁷

⁴⁴⁷ Photograph G. Benneyworth.



Sketch of GS 3 with dimensions.⁴⁴⁸

⁴⁴⁸ Sketch, E Vogt. Photograph, G. Benneyworth.

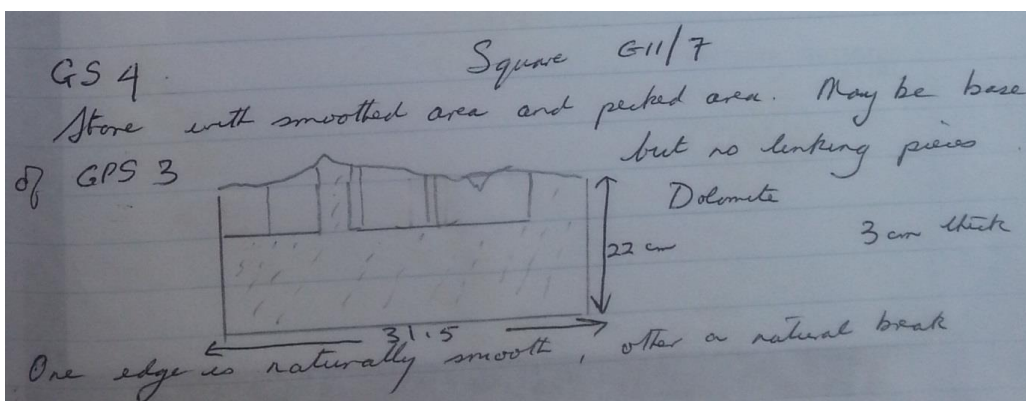
Area A.

GS 4. Square G11/7.

Stone: Dolomite with a smoothed area and pecked area.



One edge is naturally smooth, other a natural break.⁴⁴⁹



Sketch of GS 4 with dimensions.⁴⁵⁰

⁴⁴⁹ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.

⁴⁵⁰ Sketch, E Voigt.

Area A.

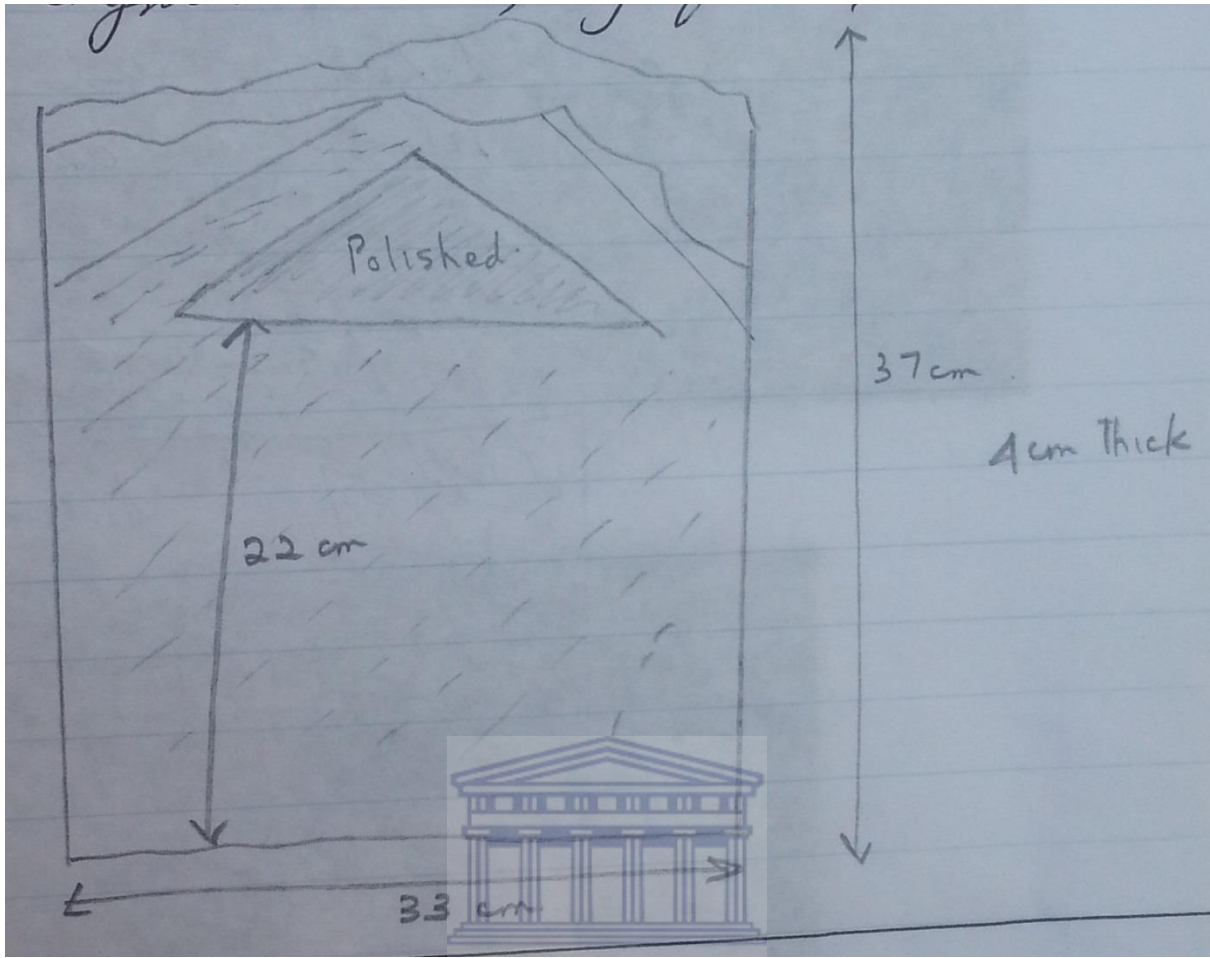
GS 5. Square E4/5 (Old D4 of old grid).

Stone: Dolomite, 4cm thick.

The headstone was buried upright and 12 cm into the ground. A large number of small pieces were found during excavations. The stone was taken to the McGregor Museum laboratory to try to fit together the pieces. There are some engraved letters which are very faint and unreadable.



Photograph, G. Benneyworth.



GS 5 with dimensions.⁴⁵¹

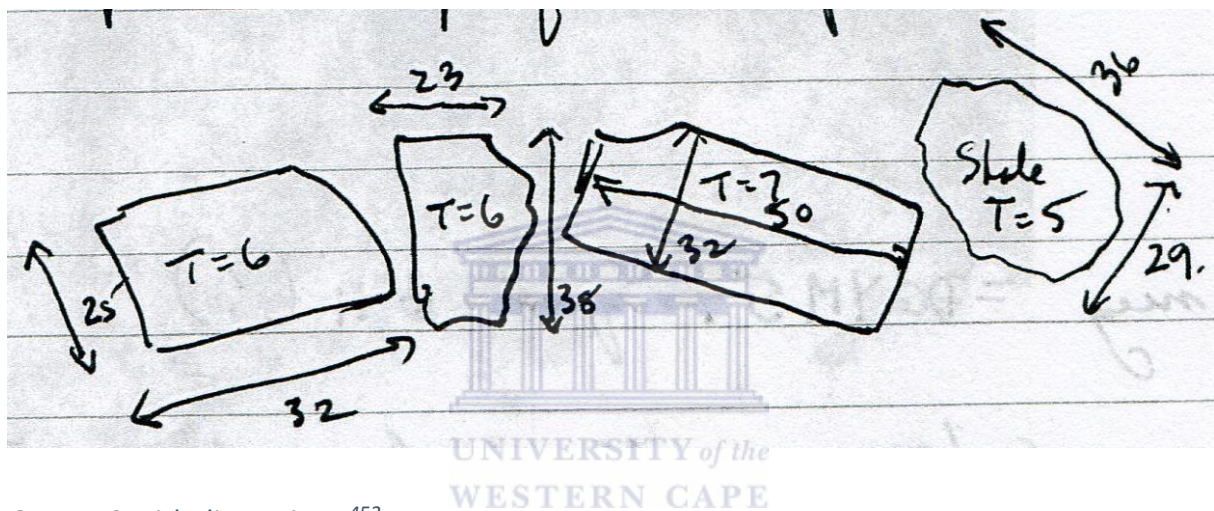
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⁴⁵¹ Sketch, E. Voigt.

Area A.

Grave I 9.

This grave was covered by three large dolomite slabs, with a piece of shale at one end. The smallest piece was placed on top of another piece. It is unusual in that it was the only grave in the cemetery which had this undisturbed arrangement of stones.



Grave I 9 with dimensions.⁴⁵²

⁴⁵² Sketch, E. Voigt.

Area A.

GS 9.

Stone: Slate.

Engraving: Block capitals:

BULLOR TOLO

The top and bottom of the stone found were broken off. The top might be the remains of a cross. The bottom is cut and recessed with a fine engraved line. Lots of pieces of black shale were found in the grave when excavating the headstone.

Headstone thickness is 3 cm. Height 19.5cm and the width 20cm.⁴⁵³



⁴⁵³ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.

Area A.

GS 10. No. 4 of 2001. Square D6.

Engraved: cursive writing.

Lesi Moremo

1902 Saller 3.

The headstone is a long thin slab of slate, buried upright and protruding above ground level. The top of the stone is broken off and was excavated on 27 June 2008. The excavated stone is 16cm long and 15cm and the complete headstone would have been 70 cm long. Engraved in the centre of the top is an upside down cross with possibly another cross in the middle. One other large fragment, plus a small one with “O” on it were uncovered. One other large piece with a raised ridge fits on the left side of the headstone.



*Upright GS 10 headstone prior to 2008 excavation.*⁴⁵⁴

⁴⁵⁴ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.



*Reassembling the excavated pieces.*⁴⁵⁵

⁴⁵⁵ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.

Area A.

GS 21

1902 Engraved: block letters.

Willem Motobi.

The headstone is upright in the ground with a broken top. It was excavated and fragments found piecing name and date together with polished sections.⁴⁵⁶



⁴⁵⁶ Photographs, G. Benneyworth.

Area A.

GS 22. Grid JZ.

Engraved: Block capitals:

CCB

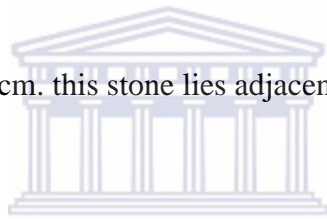
ALEA

OO

On JANOARY

IN 1902

The measurements are 15cm x 45cm. this stone lies adjacent to the road separating Areas A and B from Area C.⁴⁵⁷



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⁴⁵⁷ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.

Area B.

GS 6.

On 1 July 2008, these stone fragments were located in what was probably the D7 line from the 2001 grid. Seven matching pieces from the curved top of the headstone and five smaller pieces without inscriptions or matching patterns were located in 2008.

The pieces are made from Dolomite and the stone's dimensions are a width of 26cm and height 17cm.⁴⁵⁸



⁴⁵⁸ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.

Area B.

DS 9. Square D 9.

A dolomite slab with a cross + engraved.⁴⁵⁹



⁴⁵⁹ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.

Area B.

GS 7.

No photo. An engraved headstone with “1902” on it.

GS 8. D8/9 of 2008. No. 7 of 2001.

The base is anchored upright in the ground. The top is broken off and lying next to the stone.

There is very indistinct cursive writing which is illegible on the left and right of the central column of the cross.⁴⁶⁰

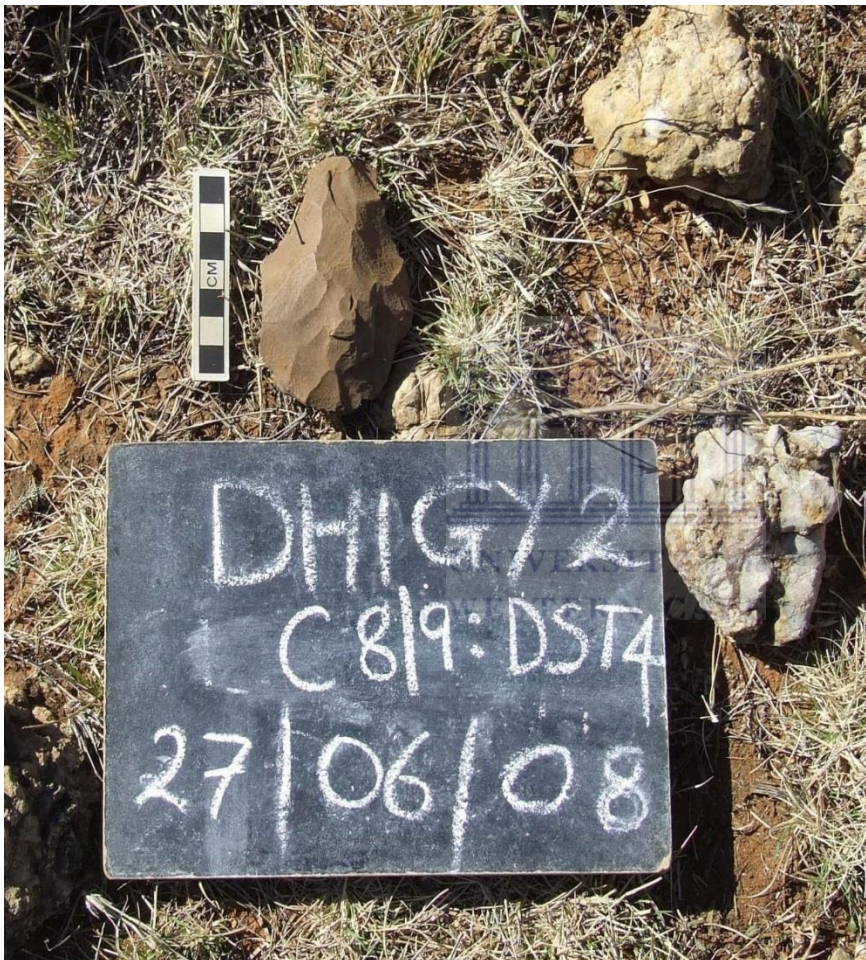


⁴⁶⁰ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.

Area B.

DST 4. Grave C8/9.

A small finely worked diorite hand axe with its point broken is the only grave goods item on the grave. Its length is 9cm with a breadth of 6cm and the thickness 2.9cm. ⁴⁶¹



⁴⁶¹ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.

Area B

GS 11. Square D11.

The stone is lightly pecked with two intensely polished lines and two cut edges at a slight angle.⁴⁶²



⁴⁶² Photograph, G. Benneyworth.

Area B.

GS 12. Grave C8/5.

Engraved: The engraving is very fine cursive writing, but not easy to read.

Lekea...tuno

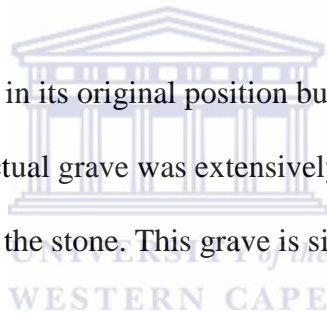
Mos..02

OR:

Sehoa...tuns

Mor 02

The upright section was anchored in its original position buried 34cm into the ground. The surrounding area except for the actual grave was extensively excavated and numerous pieces uncovered that fit into the base of the stone. This grave is similar to C9/9.⁴⁶³



⁴⁶³ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.



Fragments of GS 12.⁴⁶⁴



⁴⁶⁴ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.



Reconstructed pieces of headstone GS 12.⁴⁶⁵

⁴⁶⁵ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.



Reverse side of the broken base of headstone GS 12.⁴⁶⁶

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⁴⁶⁶ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.

Area B.

GS 13.

Engraved: John Louw April 1902 MO? NT?

Stone: Slate, 5cm thick with its base still in the ground.⁴⁶⁷



⁴⁶⁷ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.

Area B.

GS 15.

Engraved:

1902

BH

The base of the stone was buried 21cm in the ground.⁴⁶⁸



⁴⁶⁸ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.

Area B.

GS 17.

Engraved: block capitals.

LOUSLE (U?)

This is a shale fragment found on the surface close to GS 15.⁴⁶⁹



⁴⁶⁹ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.

Area B.

GS 18.

Engraved: Block Letters:

LOVI

MAV⁴⁷⁰



⁴⁷⁰ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.

Areas B.

GS 19. D15/2.

Three engraved lines with unclear writing:

Engraved:

ALM

The stone was found in the soil on top of a cobbled grave mound.⁴⁷¹

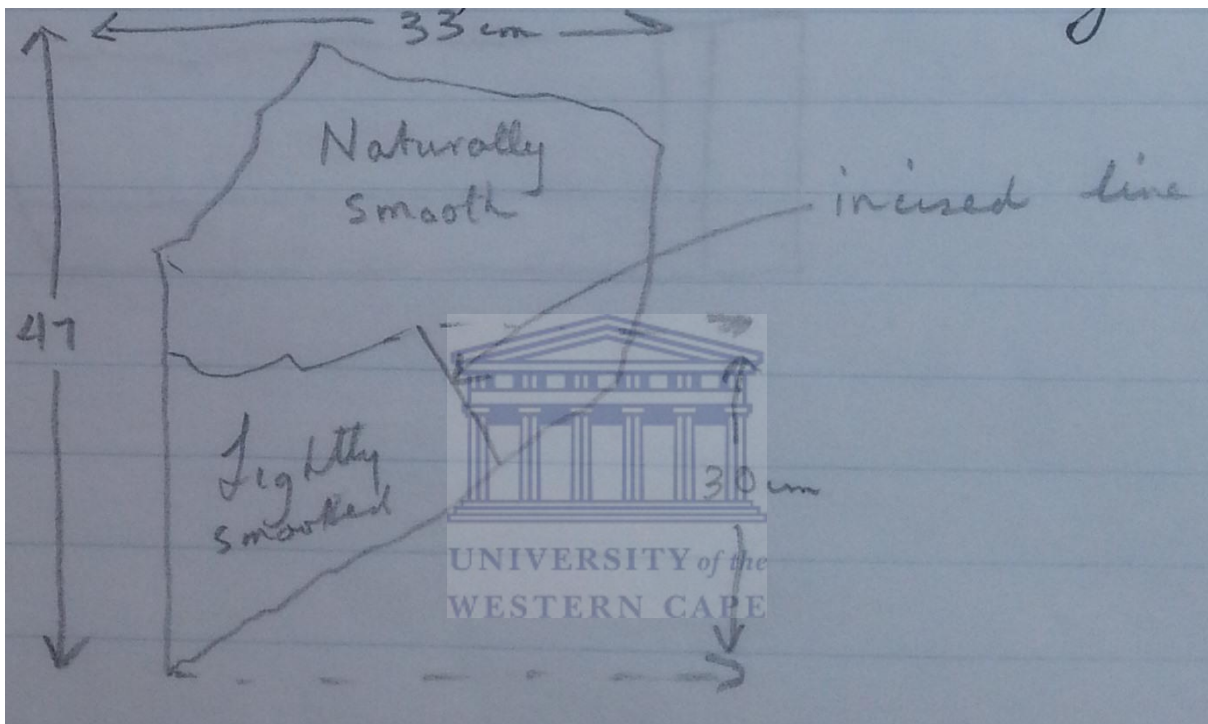


⁴⁷¹ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.

Areas B.

GS 23.

The stone is shale and buried 29 cm into the soil. The surface appears to be natural, but one line is engraved.⁴⁷²



⁴⁷² Photograph, G. Benneyworth.

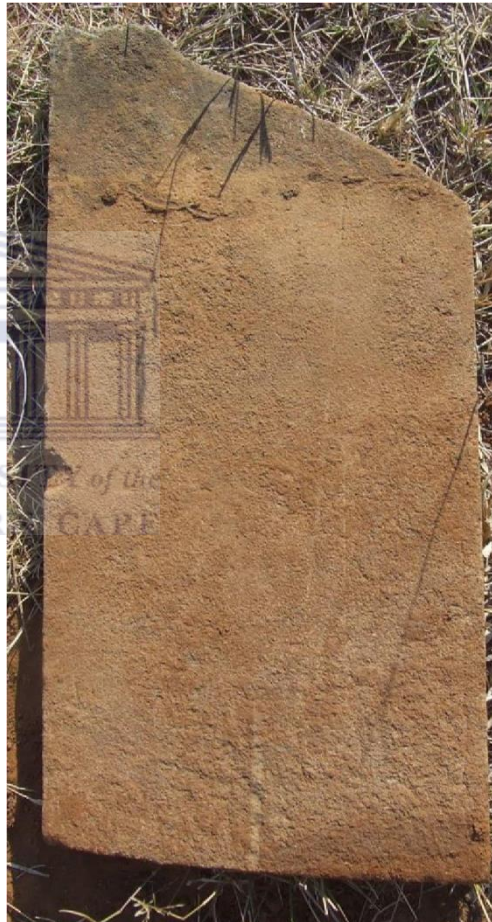
Area B.

GS 24.

This headstone was the only stone that was found with engravings on both its sides. The top of the stone is broken. The obverse has a grid line pattern engraved right across its face. The reverse has evidence of three lines scratched onto it which intersect, possibly made with a nail.⁴⁷³

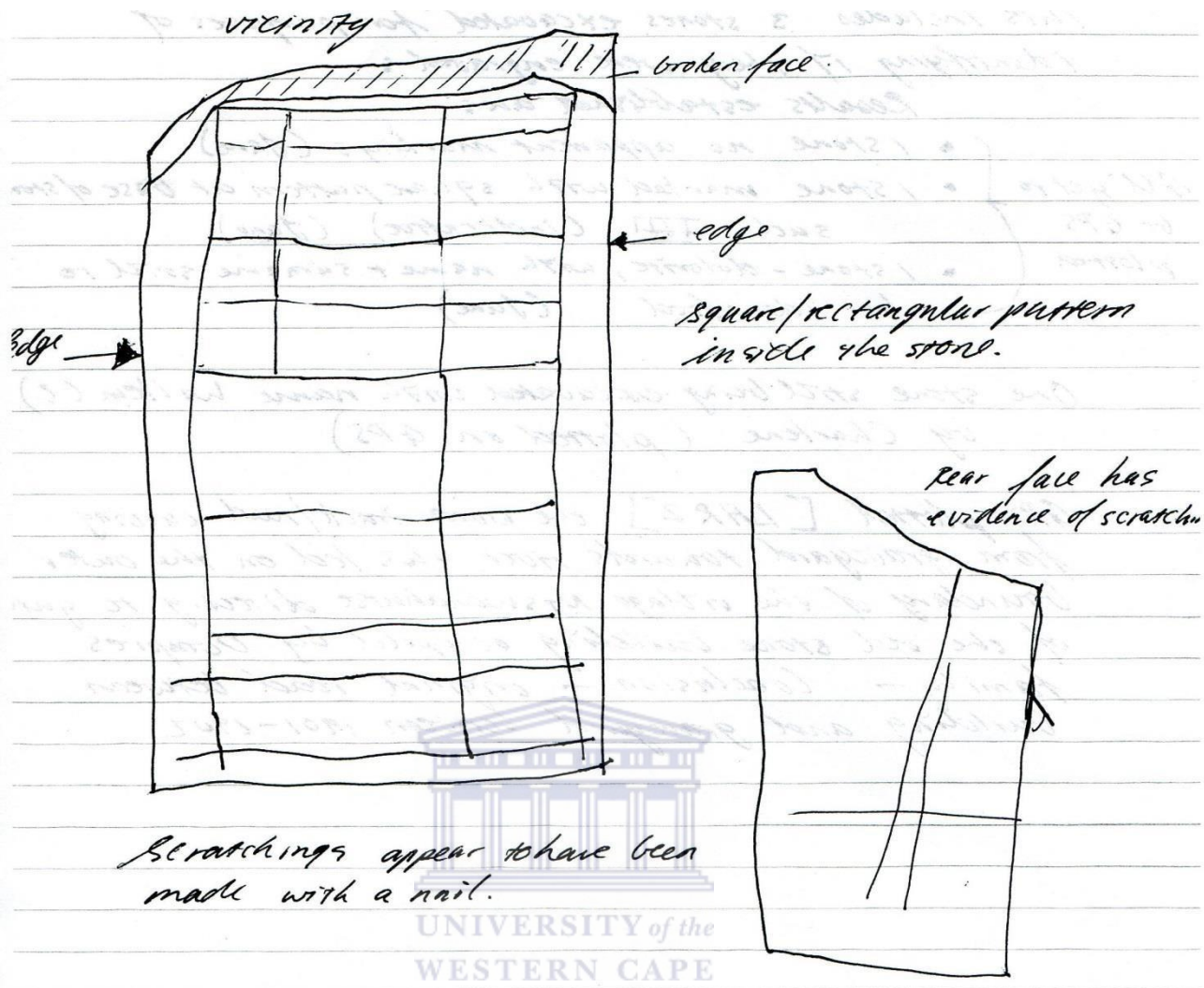


GS 24 obverse.



GS 24 reverse.

⁴⁷³ Photographs, G. Benneyworth.



GS 24 illustrating the engraved patterns.⁴⁷⁴

⁴⁷⁴ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.

Area B.

GS 25. Square E 18.

This dolerite gravestone has a first name and surname which is unreadable and appears to be three lines of engraving possibly made by a nail. The field notes reflect that it should be deciphered in the laboratory.



Faint engravings visible on headstone.⁴⁷⁵

⁴⁷⁵ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.

Area B.

G 27. This is a dolomite headstone set in position with a broken top section found next to the grave. It has a + (cross) engraved at the top.⁴⁷⁶



⁴⁷⁶ Photographs, G. Benneyworth.

Area B.

GS 28.

This a dolomite fragment that has two crosses + + engraved on it. This was the only engraved piece in the entire cemetery indicating more than one + suggesting it could have been a grave with two people buried in it in which supports the hypothesis of multiple burials in a single grave in the cemetery.⁴⁷⁷



⁴⁷⁷ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.

Area B.

GS 29.

No. 18 of 2001.

Engraved: block capitals.

JOH

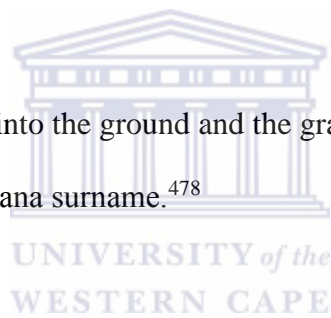
ANN

A: LEQ

.1901

Nov.

The headstone is partially buried into the ground and the grave footstone is a calcrete cobble. (Johanna Leo...) is a Tswana surname.⁴⁷⁸



⁴⁷⁸ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.

Area B.

GS 30.

No. 16 of 2001.

Engraved: block capitals.

DORK

AS PE

TSANI

ADI DIED

NOV 1

2 YEARS OLD 1901.



The name could translate to Dorcas Petsianadi.⁴⁷⁹

⁴⁷⁹ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.



Area B.

GS 31.

No. 17 of 2001.

Engraved: block capitals.

SANI

DAMI

BORN

FEB 9 1881

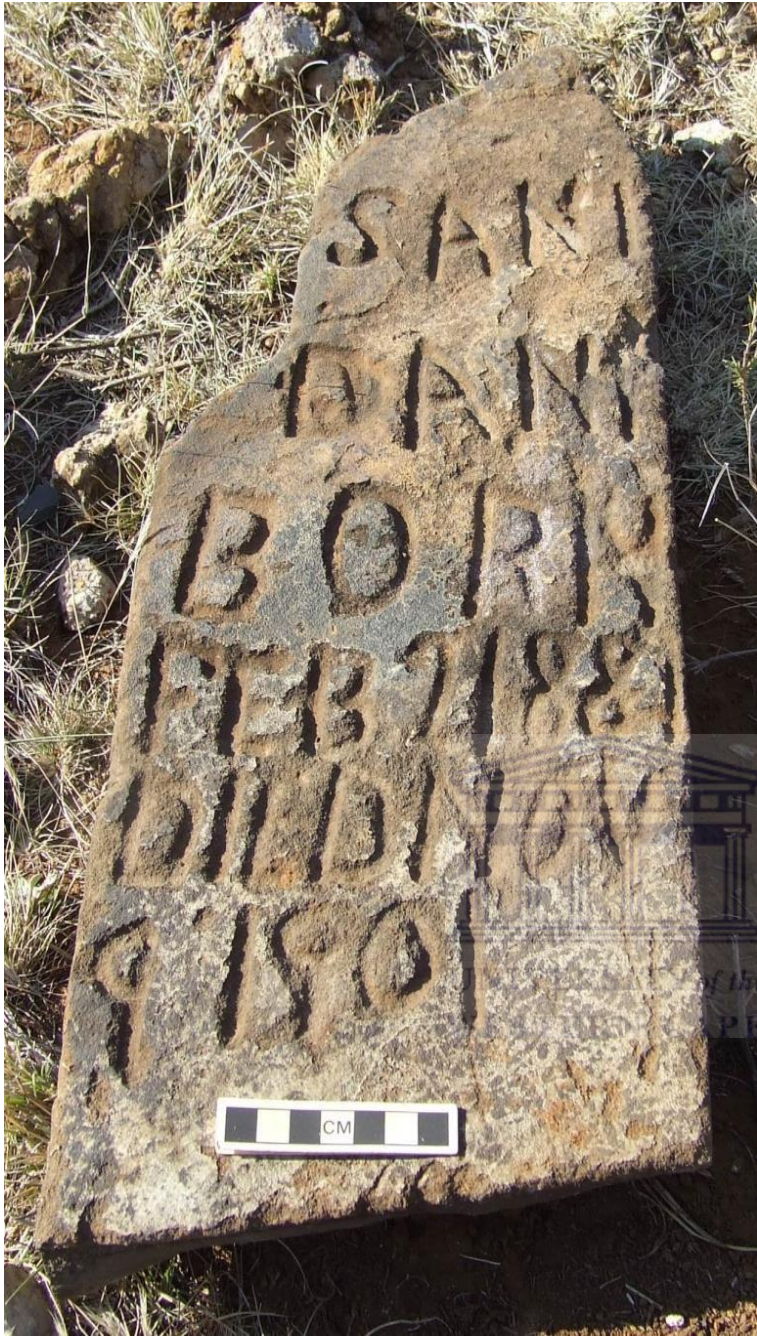
DIED NOV

9 1901

This rectangular slab is similar to No 16.⁴⁸⁰



⁴⁸⁰ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.



Area B.

GS 32.

D15/2.

No. 14 of 2001.

Engraved: block capitals.

JIMY MATL

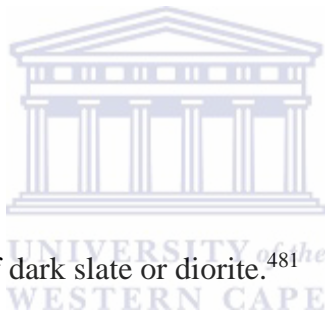
A KWA

NEVER

DIED 16

NOV 1901

The stone is a rectangular piece of dark slate or diorite.⁴⁸¹



⁴⁸¹ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.



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Area B.

GS 33.

DSG 9.

The stone is a shale piece with an incised palimpsest design engraved into it.⁴⁸²

⁴⁸² Photograph, G. Benneyworth.



Area B.

GS 34.

This headstone is on a child's grave which is a cobbled mound, found near the road separating Areas A and B from Area C.⁴⁸³



⁴⁸³ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.

Area B.

GS 35.

A child's grave with a corrugated iron footstone or headstone and a large cobble which resembles a skull.⁴⁸⁴



⁴⁸⁴ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.

Area B.

DSG 10. Square E 24.

No. 20 of 2001.

Engraved: block capitals.

Sara T (?)

Beletsa

90 01

This grave had as its grave goods a hand axe which was retrieved and accessioned into the McGregor Museum.⁴⁸⁵



⁴⁸⁵ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.

Area B.

DST 1. Grave S 10/3.

A clever stone tool on a child's grave.⁴⁸⁶



⁴⁸⁶ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.

Area C.

DST 2. On grave S 14/4.

Diorite cobble with 3 flakes removed off one edge.⁴⁸⁷



⁴⁸⁷ Photographs, G. Benneyworth.

Area B.

DST 3.

Grave Q 15 / 9.



A stone tool on a child's grave.⁴⁸⁸

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⁴⁸⁸ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.

Area B.

P18/12.

Excavated headstone buried 23cm below surface with no engraving. Its length is 27cm, breadth 33cm and its top 10.1 cm long. The top is unbroken.⁴⁸⁹



⁴⁸⁹ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.

Area B.

Grave Q 18 / 12.

This shale stone is deeply buried 48cm into the soil with only its top protruding. The decoration is a pocked engraved surface with smoothed lines on one surface only. The lines form a 'frame' with inverted 'V' within them. The dimensions are a length of 50cm, breadth 31cm and a thickness of 3cm. the stone was excavated and re-erected above the soil.⁴⁹⁰



⁴⁹⁰ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.



*Curve is natural but looks as if it were an outline.*⁴⁹¹

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⁴⁹¹ Photographs, G. Benneyworth.

Area C.

DGS 1.

Engraving: ONS or SNO.

A shale stone with a total length of 49cm, maximum breadth along the break of 35cm with a thickness of 5cm.⁴⁹²




⁴⁹² Photograph, G. Benneyworth.


In the area close to a fence where children had been playing by creating a sandpit, a piece of grey slate with two cut edges and a shallow depression in the middle was located. It is 8cm by 6cm with a thickness of 1.5cm.⁴⁹³



⁴⁹³ Photograph, G. Benneyworth.


| List of engraved headstones | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------|---|--------------|-----------------------|---|
| AREA A. | | | | | |
| Grave Number. | GPS. | Name. | Date. | Stone type. | Comments. |
| Grave C9/9. | GS 1. | D) aniels Lumo 15 years. Cursive writing. | 1902. | Slate. | Reconstructed from excavation. |
| No 9 of 2001. | DSG 4. | Kosenioa Madisa. Capitals. | | Grey slate. | Intact in grave. |
| G11/3 No. 12 of 2001. | GS 3. | A cross motif. | | Dolomite polished. | Engraved & polished around the cross, weathered but natural curve. |

| | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------|-----------------------------------|--|-----------|---|
| Square G11/7. | GS 4. | Engraved and polished area. | | Dolomite. | Stone with smoothed area and pecked area. It might be the base of GPS 3 but no linking pieces were found. |
| Square E4/5 (Old D4 of 2001 grid). | GS 5. | Faint letters engraved. |  | Dolomite. | Stone in ground with broken pieces found. Taken to laboratory. |
| Grave I 9. | | | UNIVERSITY of the WESTERN CAPE | | This grave is covered by 3 large dolomite slabs. |
| Have no grave number. | GS 9. | BULLOR TOLO Block capitals. | | Slate. | Top and bottom of the stone found broken off. Lots of pieces of black shale found in the grave. |

| | | | | | |
|------------------------------|--|--|-------|--------|---|
| No. 4 of 2001. Square D6. | GS 10. | Lesi Moremo 1902 Saller 3 Cursive writing. | 1902. | Slate. | Base in ground and pieces excavated. |
| Unknown | GS 14. | | | | |
| | GS 21 | Willem Motobi | 1902. | | Polished stone in ground and excavated with fragments. |
| See Area B. | GS 22 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30. |  | | | |
| See Area B. | GS 31, 32, 33, 34, 35. | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------|------------------------------|--|-----------|---|
| List of engraved headstones. | | | | | |
| AREA B. | | | | | |
| Probably line D7 of 2001 grid. | GS 6. | Heart shaped design. | | Dolomite. | Seven matching pieces from the curved top of the headstone and five smaller pieces without inscriptions or matching patterns. |
| | GS 6. | A polished 'fountain' motif. | | | |
| Square D 9. Located 100 cm from E9, | | Engraved cross + | | Dolomite. | |





| | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------|---|-------|--|---|
| and 97 cm from the E9C9 line. | | | | | |
| No photo. | GS 7. | | 1902. | | Not recorded in 2001. |
| D8/9 of 2008 No. 7 of 2001. | GS 8 | Cross on top of stone. Very indistinct cursive illegible writing. | | | In two pieces with base anchored in the ground. |
| Square D11. | GS 11. |  | | | A lightly pecked stone with two intensely polished straight lines. Two cut edges at a slight angle. |

| | | | | | |
|------------------------|--------|---|-------|--------|--|
| Grave C8/5. | GS 12. | Lekea...tuno Mos..02 Or Sehoa...tuns Mor 02 Very fine cursive writing, not easy to read. | 1902. | | Extensively excavated, numerous pieces uncovered, fitting into the base of the stone. This grave is similar to C9/9. |
| No 2 recorded 2001. | GS 13. | John Louw April 1902 MO? NT? h ? | 1902. | Slate. | Base still in ground. |
| No 3 of 2001. | | | | | Broken fragment |
| | GS 15. | 1902 BH | 1902. | | The base is fragmented. Three fragments labelled |

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|---------|---|--|-----------|---|
| | | | | | GS16 probably belong with it and were kept together and reburied. |
| | GS 17. | LOUSLE (U?) | | | Fragment of shale found on surface close to GS 15. |
| | GS 18. | LOVI MAV | | Diorite. | Letters close to the cut edge of headstone. |
| D15/2 No. 13 of 2001. | GPS 19. | ALM Engraved lines, writing not clear. | | | Stone in ground, cobbled mound. |
| | GS 21. | Fragment with two | | Dolomite. | |


| | | | | | |
|---------------|--------|---|------|--|--------------------------------------|
| | | engraved crosses. | | | |
| No 1 of 2001. | GS 22. | CCB ALEA OO On JANOARY IN 1902 | 1902 | | Found near road in two halves. |

| | | | | | |
|--|--------|--|--|--------|--|
| Probably Square A5 of 2001 grid, approx. 6m from A5- C5 2008 grid line. | GS 23. | 1 incised line.  | | Shale. | Buried 29 cm into soil. Surface looks natural, but one line is engraved. |
| | GS 24. | Headstone with scratched grid on one side, intersecting | | | The only stone with line engravings on obverse & reverse. |

| | | | | | |
|--------------------|--------|---|-------|-----------|---|
| | | lines on other. | | | |
| E 18. | GS 25. | Unreadable first name and surname scratched with a nail. | | | Appears to be three lines of engravings. |
| | GS 27. | Cross on top of stone.  | | | Pointed headstone - two halves with base in ground. |
| Square G 21. | GS 28. | Two engraved crosses at the top of fragment. | | Dolomite. | |
| No. 18 of 2001. | GS 29. | JOH ANN A: LEO IN .1901 NOV. | 1901. | | Partially buried in ground. |

| | | | | | |
|-----------------|--------|---|-------|--|---|
| | | | | | |
| No. 16 of 2001. | GS 30. | DORK AS.. PE TSANI ADI..DIED NOV 1 2 YEARS OLD 1901. | 1901. | | Made from the same material as No. 14 and is the same rectangular design. |

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------|--------|--|-------|-------------------|--|
| No. 17 of 2001. | GS 31. | SANI DAMI BORN FEB 9 1881 DIED NOV 9 1901 | 1901. | | Rectangular slab similar to 16. |
| No. 14 of 2001 D15/2. | GS 32. | Engraving: Jim(m)y Ma. Tlakwanver | 1901. | Slate or diorite. | Note: Nos 14, 16, 17 and 18 all engraved |

| | | | | | |
|--------------------|--------|---|--|---------------------------------|--|
| | | Died 16 Nov 1901 | | | and are the same type of stone. |
| | GS 33. | Incised palmate design. | | Slate. | |
| | GS 34. | A Letter A engraved in a block letter. | | | Headstone on a child's grave – a cobble mound. |
| | GS 35. |  UNIVERSITY of the WESTERN CAPE | | Corrugated iron & cobble. | A child's grave with a corrugated iron footstone or headstone and large cobble which resembles a skull. |
| No. 10 of 2001. | | One engraved, | | Slate. | |

| | | | | | |
|--------------------|--|--------------------------------|--|----------------------|-----------|
| | | pecked straight line. | | | |
| No 15. of 2001. | | Mo The rest is illegible | | | Fragment. |
| No. 19 of 2001. | | 189 19 | | Shale, very hard. | |

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------|---|------|--|---|
| | | Fine line engraving , not legible | | | |
| Square E 24 No. 20 of 2001. | DSG 10. | SARA T (?) BELE TSA 90 01 | 1901 | | Grave had a hand axe which E Voigt accessioned into the McGregor Museum collection. |
| | DSG 12. | Two polished lines. | | | Fragment. |

| | | | | | |
|---|--------|------------|--|--------|---|
| Grave S 10/3. | DST 1. | | | | Clever stone tool on child's grave. |
| Grave S 14/4. | DST 2. | | | | Diorite Cobble with 3 flakes removed off one edge. On child's grave. |
| List of engraved headstones. | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| AREA C. | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| DGS 1 S16/T16 line. | | ONS or SNO | | Shale. | This fragment has moved around since 2001. Should be matched with shale |

| | | | | | |
|-----------------|--------|--|--|---------------|---|
| | | | | | fragment No.21 found in corner of Area B. |
| Grave Q 15 / 9. | DST 3. | | | | Stone tool on child's grave. |
| Grave P18/12. | | | | | Excavated headstone buried 23cm below surface. No engraving Length = 27cm. |
| | | | | | Breadth = 33cm Top = 10.1 cm. Top not broken. |
| Grave Q 18/12. | | Pocked engraved surface with smoothed lines on one | | Shale. | Deeply buried, only top sticking out. |

| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | surface only. The lines form a 'frame' with inverted 'V' within them. | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|



| List of names. | Date of death. | Age. |
|--|------------------|----------------------|
| 1901. | | |
| | | |
| Johanna Leq | 1901 November | |
| Dorkas Petsaniadi | 1901 November 1 | 2 |
| Sani Dami | 1901 November 9 | 20 (Born 9 Feb 1881) |
| Jimmy Ma. Tlakwanver | 1901 November 16 | 6 |
| Mo (found in 1901 area) | | |
| (found in 1901 area) | 189.. 19... | child |
| Sara T Beletsa | 1901 | 11 |
| ONS or SNO (found in 1901 area) | 1901 | |
| | | |
| 1902. | | |
| Daniels; Lumo | 1902 | 15 |
| Kosenioa Madisa | | |
| Bullor Tolo | | |
| Lesi Moremo | 1902 | 3 |
| Lekea...tuno Mor... (Partial) Or Sehoa.. tuns Mor | 1902 | |
| John Louw | 1902 April | |
| BH | 1902 | |

| | | |
|-----------------------|--------------|-------|
| Lousle (U?) (Partial) | | |
| Lovi Mav (Partial) | | |
| ALM (Partial) | | |
| Ccb; Alea; OO | 1902 January | |
| Willem Motobi | 1902 | |
| A | | child |

| | | | | | |
|----------------------------|--|----------------------|--|--------|---------------------------|
| Scattered fragments | In area close to the fence where children had been playing, a piece of grey slate with two cut edges and a shallow depression in the middle was found. | | | | |
| AREA B. | No. 21 of 2001. | NO or SO or | | Shale. | Fragment on rubbish dump. |

| | | | | | |
|--|--|----|--|--|--|
| | | ON | | | |
|--|--|----|--|--|--|

| |
|--|
| May 2007 Dry Harts Cemetery GPS plots. |
| |
| DGS 1 Broken gravestone marked "...SNO.." lying in Area B. |
| DGS 2 Gravestone of ...hesi Moreem(a), 1902. |
| DGS 3 (DSG3) Engraved fragment with pattern of squares. |
| DGS 4 (DSG 4) Grey slate headstone of Kosenioa Modisa. Hand axe found on this grave. |
| DGS 5 (DSG 5) Gravestone of Jimmy Matlakwa. 1901. |
| DGS 6 (DSG 6) Gravestone of Sami Dami. Born 1881, died 9 November 1901. |
| DGS 7 (DSG 7) Engraved fragment. |
| DGS 8 (DSG 8) Engraved, same writing as DGS 6. |
| DGS 9 (DSG 9) New find: piece of slate with carefully incised design of a leaf pattern. |
| DGS 10 (DSG 10) Headstone of Sara Baletsa, born 1890 died 1901. Hand axe found on this grave. |
| DGS 11 (DSG11) Fragment with a cross carved on it. |
| DGS 12 (DSG 12) Piece with crossing lines. |
| |

| |
|--|
| June - July 2008. Grave goods metal items recorded. |
| |
| DGYM 5. Square B 11 Enamel mug. |
| DGYM 3 G11/3 Metal handle and collected. |

DGYM 4 in Square E 11 is a piece of strapping which was collected.

DGYM 5 Blue enamel lid from a billy can.

DST 5 A brick fragment from C18



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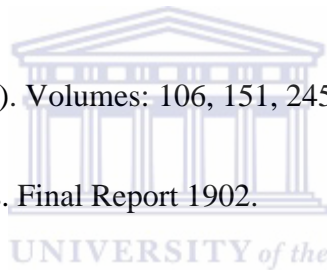
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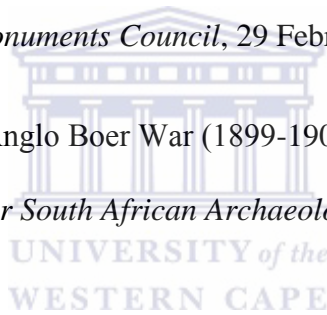
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