



COENRAAD DE BUYS.

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A T H E S I S

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CONTENTS.

	<u>Page</u>
Chapter I The Young Man, Coenraad. 1761-1785	1
Chapter II The Frontiersman, Farmer and Hunter. 1785-1795	6
Chapter III Republican and Outlaw. 1795-1798	22
Chapter IV The Van Jaarsveld Rising and the Caffir War. 1799	31
Chapter V Beyond the Fish River. 1799-1803	45
Chapter VI A Return to the Colony. 1803-1813	68
Chapter VII Beyond the Orange River and Northwards. 1814-1828	83
Photostat copies of De Buys' signature. Following	10
Extracts from Opgaafrollen, Graaff Reinet "	30
Sketch Map of De Buys' Trek in 1801 "	62
Extracts from Opgaafrollen, Swellendam and George. "	82
Bibliography. "	98



CHAPTER I.

The Young Man, Coenraad. (1761 - 1786)

The blood of the French refugees and of the pioneer Dutch colonists met in Coenraad de Buys, and this blending produced in him a man in whom the characteristics of both races were intensified almost to a fault.

He was the forerunner of a new type of South African - the stoically brave, fanatically independent trekker, with his childlike faith in God's word - but like all new types, new patterns, he possessed the traits of his successors in a more marked, a more crude degree. In his bravery was reckless daring, independence was lawlessness, and his religion was a mass of inconsistencies.

His was a restless adventurous spirit which the conventionalities of civilized life could not confine, although his self-sufficiency was not complete enough to free him from the necessity of observing the outward forms of the religion of his fathers. According to his son, Michael, his father read to them regularly from a big Bible, prayed on his knees and spoke to them about God's word.¹

He anticipated Louis Trichardt in his attempt to lead a Trek to Delagoa Bay by almost forty years and he travelled further and more extensively than any white man of his time in the interior of South Africa. His ancestry is not at all remarkable.²

1. G. Hofmeyr. Twintig Jaren in de Transvaal p.9

2. For the du Buys family see G.C. de Villiers. Old Cape families Vol.I p.27. This reference will not be repeated again when used later. The will of Elsje Hofman (O.C.29 No.53 A.C.T.) also mentions all her children and grandchildren.



Coenraad's great-grandfather, Jean du Luis, an agriculturalist and vinedresser¹, came to the Cape from Calais in 1688², so poor that he had to receive assistance from the Batavian fund.³ He married here Sarah Jacob, the daughter of another refugee⁴. Their son Jean was christened in 1709 and in 1730 he married Elsje Hofman.

For nearly forty years Coenraad's grandparents held the loan farm Bergfontein on this side of the Gouritz river⁵ and progressed so, that at Jean du Luis' death in 1779 the sale of the estate realised nearly 6,000 rixdollars. The size of their establishment can be judged by the fact that they had nine slaves, who fetched 1,852 rixdollars at the sale.⁶ They were stockfarmers too, as there are records of their renting other loan farms for grazing purposes.⁷

Coenraad's father Jean, usually called Jan, was christened in 1730 and in 1752 he married Christina Scheepers, a widow with five children⁸, who was eight years his senior. She could write a fair hand⁹ and must have been a lady of some charms as she was married four times.¹⁰ The children of this marriage, however, were two daughters and three sons, Johannes, Coenraad and Frederick Petrus.

Coenraad's parents belonged to the congregation of "t Land van Saveren" but they brought him to be christened in Capetown on the 24th October, 1762. The sponsors, his godparents, were Jan Las, an uncle by marriage, and Geertruy Minnie, his halfsister.¹¹

1. C.G. Motha. The French refugees at the Cape . . . p 50
2. Colenbrander, Afkomst der Boeren p. 24.
3. Theal's History Vol. II p. 342.
4. Colenbrander, ibid p. 25.
5. S.G. 10 p. 331-334 A.C.T.
6. O. 413 Vendue kollen 27/28 Dec. 1779
7. A number of these in the Oude Wildschutte Boeken e.g. S.G. 12, S.G. 20, S.G. 22 etc.
8. C.C. de V. ibid Vo. II p. 385.
9. C.C. 13, 31 July 1769 A.C.T. Inventory signed "Christina Scheeper"
10. C.C. de V. ibid Vol III. p. 225
11. Doopboek N.D. 106, Church Archives, C.T.



Coenraad was named after Christina's father, Coenraad Scheepers.¹ At his christening he must have been at least a year old, as in July 1769 his age is given as eight years², so he was born in 1761, probably on the farm Wagenbooms Rivier, behind the Cogman's Kloof.³

Part of his childhood was spent on his father's loan farm, de Aselsjagt, as they had the opstal (buildings) there⁴ but his father died in 1769⁵, still a poor man. His estate realized only 743 rds and he had no slaves and only the barest necessities in the way of household utensils.⁶

The same year Coenraad's half sister, Geertruy Minnie, married David Senekal and the following year Coenraad's mother followed her example and married David's younger brother, Jacob Senekal.⁷

Where Coenraad spent the rest of his childhood is not known, but he certainly had a little schooling and learnt to write, either from the usual itinerant schoolmaster, or from his mother.

At the age of twenty-one, Coenraad was living with his godmother, Geertruy, and David Senekal in the Swellendam district. He worked as "knecht" or overseer for his brother-in-law, for a half share of the butter, which was to be taken to Capetown with Senekal's waggon and oxen. After six months he left and sued Senekal for his share, but lost the case. Hereupon he appealed to the Council of Justice at the Cape, but the case was brought before the Landdrost again, and this time Senekal was ordered to take the butter to the Cape at the first opportunity and to pay the costs.⁸

1. C.C. de V. Vol II p. 384.

2. C.C. 13 Inventory 31 July 1769 A.C.T.

3. S.G. 16 p 429. Farm registered 8 Dec. 1761.

4. S.G. 17 p 161. Farm taken 25 March 1762 A.C.T. & Ibid(2)

5. Doodregister 1758 - 1796 Nov. 1769 A.C.T.

6. Ibid 2.

7. C.C. de V. Vol III 259.

8. Swellendam 10. Minutes of Landdrost & Heemraden
19 June, 1782. A.C.T.



After this little family dispute, Coenraad must have decided to follow his elder brother's example and go farming. He took on loan, for one year, the farm just left by Johannes, "de Brakke rivier, aan de Lange Cloof en over de Attaguas Cloof".¹ He was of age, and had probably received from the orphan chamber his share of his father's and grandparents' estates.

The end of the Company's rule was a period of trouble and strife between the free burghers and the officials at the Cape. Memorials of complaint were drawn up and taken to Amsterdam by a deputation, who were to lay them before the seventeen. It is certain that Coenraad de Buys took a keen interest in this controversy, because one of the points in the memorial of 1779 referred to his uncle Jacobus de Buys. The memorial states (in article 3) that Jacobus van Staden and Jacobus de Buys complained at the Cape to the Fiscal of the conduct of the Landdrost of Swellendam. The Fiscal had them arrested promptly, and for one year they remained in prison, after which they were released without trial and without any compensation for their loss of honour, goods and cattle. The memorialists added, that to that day no one knew what their crime had been.

It appears that the landdrost had written to the Cape, complaining that these two burghers had entered his house and had behaved in a very violent manner, having cursed, pushed and beaten him. De Buys had even fired his gun at him. The Fiscal had been instructed to investigate and to punish the offenders, who were to be taken into custody, as soon as possible.²

1. S.G. 29 p.59 A.C.T.

2. C. Beyers, Die Kaapse Patriotte p. 18
Resolution of the Council of Policy 26 May, 1772. No.C.64.



Although Coenraad was only a child when his uncle was imprisoned (1772), we may be sure that the subject was again heatedly discussed in his family circle at the time of the Memorials (1779-1782). He had thus, no doubt, learnt his lesson of dissatisfaction with, and opposition to authority by the time he followed his brother to the far eastern frontier in 1785.



CHAPTER II.

The Frontiersman - Farmer and Hunter (1785-1795)

In 1701, the white population of the Cape numbered 1265 souls, living on the peninsula and in the districts of Stellenbosch, Brakenstein and Swellendam. By 1793, the new district of Graaff-Reinet had been formed, and the population had increased to 13,830. This increase in numbers had resulted in the free burghers penetrating gradually farther into the interior in search of fresh pasturage for their stock. The advance did not proceed by short stages, which would have resulted in a closely knit area of settlement. Instead, it proceeded by leaps and bounds, which left certain areas sparsely settled, or, with only a roving population during the rainy season.

The reason was, that the foremost trekkers, after leaving the more fertile coast regions, were checked by the inhospitable Karroo, with its periodic and uncertain rainfall; this split the stream of advance into two main lines, one going east along the southern coast to the Fish River, and the other line going in the same direction, skirting the Karroo to the north, went through the Ghoup and Camdeboo to the Eruintjes Hoogte.

In order to keep control of its subjects the Company was reluctantly compelled to extend its boundaries from time to time, so as to include the outermost trekkers, who, in spite of proclamations, would settle beyond the limits.

Eruintjes Hoogte, with the Riet and Gamtoos rivers formed the eastern boundary in 1700, and this was



extended to the upper Fish and Bushmen's rivers in 1775. In 1778 Plettenbergs Beacon marked the north eastern corner of the settlement and by his arrangement with some Xosa chiefs, the line was extended to the Great Fish river, this being confirmed by the Council of Policy in 1780. When the drostdy was established at Graaff-Reinet in 1786 the farms along the Tarka were included. The impact with the Xosas, who were moving in a westerly direction along the coast, stopped further eastward expansion for a few decades.

The farms lying within reasonable distance from the Cape, produced wine and grain, but transport difficulties made this unprofitable for the more distant districts, where stock-farming was the rule. Horses were bred for their own use and sheep and cattle were raised for sale to the licensed butchers, who sent their agents to collect these in the outlying district. When the burghers could get into town, they sold their butter and soap there.

The loan place system suited these people very well, as it enabled them to lead a semi-nomad existence in search of suitable grazing grounds for their stock. In Graaff-Reinet all farms were occupied on the loan place system, which meant that on the payment of 24 rds. rent, the farmer could occupy a farm, about 3000 morgen in extent, for one year. The lease could be renewed annually, and in practice he could remain on it indefinitely, although actually the government could claim resumption at any time, granting compensation for the "opstal",



8.

or buildings - if any. This, however, seldom happened.

On the frontiers, especially, the problem of dealing with the wild Bushmen had always been acute. They had no tribal system, so treaties were out of the question and ruthless extermination was the rule. To this was now added the problem of the dealing with the Xosa on the south eastern frontier. As early as 1760 Xosa stragglers had advanced as far west as the Fish river and by 1779 they had already made a serious incursion over this river, but by 1781 they were driven back and such chiefs as there were, promised to recognise the Fish river as their boundary.

As early as 1771 the old elephant hunter, Willem Prinsloo, had settled on the banks of the little Fish river (where Somerset East now stands) and had refused to return within the limits. He was followed by others, and in 1778 the farmers of the Sneeuwberg and Eastern frontier begged van Rietenberg for the establishment of a drostdy and a church nearer to them, as they were often obliged to travel a month to reach the nearest drostdies at Stellenbosch or Swellendam.

In 1786 the boundaries of the new district were fixed and a drostdy, named Graaff-Reinet, established on the banks of the Sunday's river. The first landdrost, Herman Otto Soeke, proved eventually to have been an unfortunate choice, as he became idle and dissolute.

The funds for the district were raised chiefly by a small tax on cattle and sheep, based on the numbers given at the annual "opgaaf". Military or police force there was none,



the government supplying powder and lead only, for defence against the natives. Heemraden were chosen from the district to form a board to assist the landdrost. Veldwagtmeesters were chosen from among the burghers, to keep order in their wards and to make periodic report to the landdrost. When necessary, a burgher commando was called out to deal with native inroads.

It can be readily imagined that only the most hardy and selfreliant men went to this district and that they soon developed a great independence of spirit and, often, a disregard for authority, so distant as to be almost useless to them in any crises. In addition, many servants, sailors and soldiers, discharged by the Company, were permitted to take up land there, and, as they were not always of the most orderly type of Europeans, they often exercised a not altogether beneficial influence on their more unsophisticated neighbours, the colonial born.¹

1. The facts for this short survey of the conditions in the district in which Coenrad was now to live have been taken from :-

- (a) Eric Walker. Historical Atlas.
- (b) Theals History. Vol. III.
- (c) C. Beyers. Die Knapse Patriotte.
- (d) Dr. A.J. van der Walt. Die Ausdehnung der Kolonie am Kap der Guten Hoffnung 1770-1779.



Johannes de Buys took up land over the Bushman river in 1784¹ and was soon followed by his younger brother Coenraad, and his uncle Petrus de Buys², who each registered a loan farm, Coenraad's being Brandwagt.³

Buildings were being put up at the new droestdy and in 1787 Coenraad supplied them with 1500 feet of yellow-wood planks for which he signed a receipt for 250 Rds.⁴ In 1788 he signed, as a witness, a declaration in a case in which he had no further concern, but this signature confirms the earlier one.⁵

His troubles with the kaffirs began almost as soon as he came to the Oorveld, for on 21 March 1788 he received this letter :-

"Respected Cousin Coenraad de Buys,

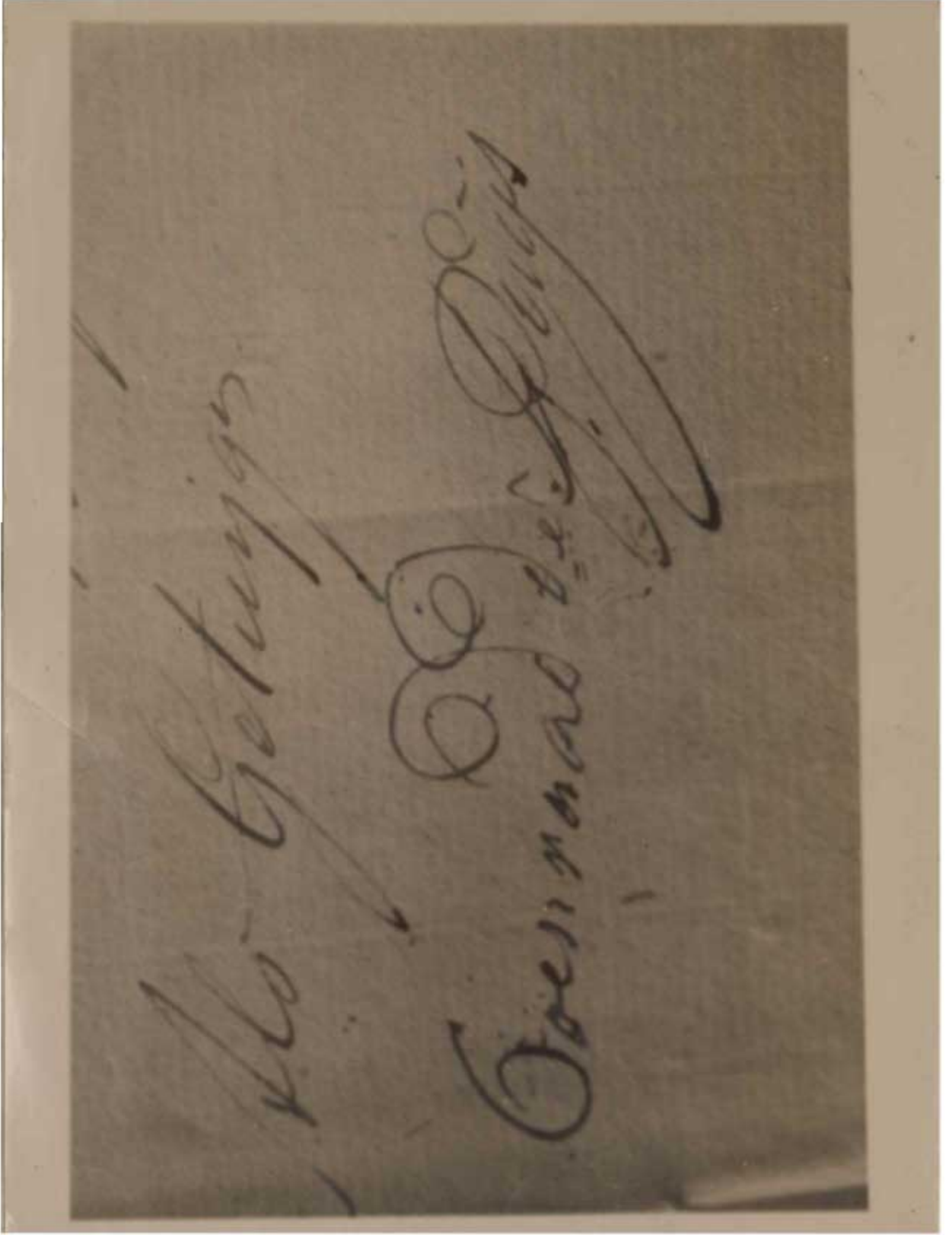
I have to inform you that Langa let you know that he desires payment from you for beating his caffre, otherwise he will immediately come again because that is a challenge and the Christians must not think he is afraid to make war. This he made known in presence of Gert Knoetze, with compliments from us all I am your uncle Petrus de Buys."⁶

1. S.G. 32 p. 231 A.C.T.
2. S.G. 33 p. 209 A.C.T.
3. S.G. 33 p. 205 A.C.T.
4. Gr. Rt. 329 25 May 1787 & Gr. Rt. 589 2 July 1787. A.C.T.
5. Gr. Rt. 434 No. 49. A.C.T.
6. 1937 A.C.T. This volume is one of about a dozen, containing copies, extracts, notes etc. collected by Mr. D. Moodie from documents referring to the treatment of the natives. Only a small portion has been published (The Record . . .) The copies etc. are not arranged chronologically nor on any other plan, often appearing more than once in different volumes, and sometimes without giving any clue as to where they were found. The originals of most copies can be found but there are a number which can not be found in the archives now, so he is useful at times. Moodie also gives reasons for some of the deficiencies in the Graaff Reinet papers, which are far from complete.



25 May 1787
was my beloved
Colonel de Ruijs

Gr. Rt. 324 . 25 May . 1787



Gr. Rf. 434. 21 Jan. 1786.



Langa was the chief of the Amambala tribe and was to become de Buys' inveterate enemy.

At the end of this year Coenraad was summoned to pay his arrears of taxes, "schapen en beestengeld", 3 schellings, but as he did not appear, he was debited with costs.¹

At this time too, de Buys made himself guilty of forgery. The original record of the military court cannot be found, but Hoodie gives the following "substance" of the proceedings :-

A deputation of farmers from the Luarveld brought a written complaint dated 11 August 1788, concerning the thefts of the kaffirs, which they could no longer endure, saying that they would be obliged to attack the kaffirs and recover their cattle. The deputies alleged that this letter was a forgery; they had not signed it. The real complaint "of nearly the same tenor" was then brought in. Coenraad de Buys admitted that he had falsified the complaint. De Buys had written the two petitions. That bearing the real signatures contained no announcement of an intention to attack the kaffirs, which the other did. De Buys said that having made some mistakes in the original he thought it no harm to transcribe it and sign the names, but his excuses were considered "frivolous"² by the board.

1. Gr. kt. 586. No. 7 A.C.T.
2. Hoodie gives one copy of the Dutch petition and two English translations showing the alteration made by de Buys. There were ten signatories, one of them Coenraad's uncle Petrus. Coenraad was one of those whose cattle had been stolen. No. 952 and No. 1937. A.C.T.



Years later Maynier gave evidence to the Commissioners of Eastern Inquiry that he had found a letter from the Secretary Magener, in the absence of the Landdrost, at Graaff Reinet " that the boers, particularly C. Buis C.S., under pretence that the Caffres had committed depredations, continually insisted to form a Commando against the Caffres, that he, (the secretary) had caused enquiries to be made whether their complaints were well grounded and found that they were not, but merely advanced for the purpose of enriching themselves with the plunder from the Caffres". This letter, Maynier says, he sent to the Cape with his report (1794 ?) but I have not been able to trace it. Woodie comments on this by saying that Maynier did not explain that Magener's letter was based on the interpolation added by de Ruys, which was only discovered later².

As Maynier is apparently quoting from memory and gives no date for the letter no conclusion can be reached as to the exact time the letter referred to when C Buis, "cum suis" wished for a commando.

In March 1789, the Xosas under Langa and Cungwe invaded the Zuurveld; the farmers fled and lost some of their cattle. The landdrost called out a Commando, but orders were received from the Cape that war was to be avoided and the burghers were forced to withdraw without punishing the invaders.³

1. Maynier's Report to Commissioners of Eastern Inquiry 1823-1837 Blue Book 1835 Vo. 1 p.28
2. No. 952. A.C.T.
3. C. 85 Resolution 20 March, 1789.



According to the instructions, the retiring secretary and Honoratius Maynier, newly appointed secretary, interviewed the chiefs and the Government was satisfied with the truce, although the farmers were not. Cungwe claimed the land as far as the Kowie river, saying that they had bought it from "the Gonas hottentot, Capn. Ruiter"¹ who based his right on a short occupation.

Ruiter, also called Captain Ruiter Plaatje or Kohla, was a freebooter of mixed hottentot and Bushman blood, who collected a gang of thieves of these two races round him. He robbed the Xosas on the Fish river until his followers deserted him, when he made common cause with the Xosas² especially Chakka.

In September, 1789, we find Coenraad registering a new loan farm, De Brieffontein, on the Bushman river.³ This may have been due to the Xosa invasion, but only six months later he registers another piece of land, Boschfontein, between the bushman and Sunday's rivers, near the sea.⁴ He did not cancel the grants of the first farms and so remained liable for the rents of all three places.

The reason for this move was probably due to the fact that in February 1790, "Capitein Ruyter Plaatje" had moved his stock on to Coenraad's land; Ruiter said he had Coenraad's permission to do this.⁵ This lends colour to later accusations against de Buys.

1. Gr.ht. 589. Minute 3 Aug. 1789 A.C.T.

2. Theals History vol. III p. 181. and Gr.ht 585, a number of letters July/Aug. 1790. Lucas Meyer to Landdrost A.C.T.

3. S.G. 36 p. 285 A.C.T.

4. S.G. 36 p. 391 A.C.T.

5. Gr.ht. 434, 25 Nov 1791. A.C.T. "sekere streek lands aan de Bojesmansrevier" in margin.



A few months later Captain Sakka (Chakka) visited the Veldwagtmeester of Bushmans River with Auitter, Rlatje and thirty kaffirs. Meyer did not wish to cause a disturbance so did not take Auitter's gun from him, as the Hottentot promised to hand it over to the landdrost. The Gonna Hottentots were giving trouble and he continues "maer van petrus lommar heeft de kaffers 40 beesten weggenomen doe hy naar de kaap gereeden was en twee slave jongens van van reenen en een hottentot van hannis buys en heef de capityn sakka uytgestuur na coenraad buys en doen heeft de andere schelme alomme uyt haer lieden uyt gevlugt maer waerheen dat weeten se niet regt maer haer prissomaatsie is dat zy na die bossiesmans revier in die dikke bossen soud weesen en de naam van die capiteyn die bossiesmans revier overgetrokken is heet tietie met de Gonnas".¹

It is not clear what he means, but it looks as though Chakka expected to find the culprits on Coenraad's land or he wanted help from Rlatjes gang there.²

A list of defaulters for loan farm rents, dated August 1792, was drawn up. By this time Coenraad owed rent for 6 years and 5 months for Brandwagt, a year and 11 months for Le Brieffonteinen and a year and 5 months for Boschfontein - a total of 224 Rds.³ He was not the worst defaulter though. Moodie gives a list of the detailed information, collected by the Commissioner O.G. de Wet from the officiating Landdrost and Heemraden, regarding arrears of rent due on loan farms,

1. Gr. Rt. 173. Lucas Meijer to "Landrots" 28 July 1790. A.C.T.
2. Auitter's gun is referred to in several letters from Lucas Meyer at this time, as he had shot another chief's son.
3. Gr. Rt. 46 nos. 277, 464, 481. A.C.T.



15.

with his decisions in each case, as to whether they could pay or not. His information on Coenraad's case is "Ruined by the kafirs the buildings on his farms and all his goods burned, all his cattle stolen, he, Buys, now wandering in poverty".¹

A great many of these defaulters were to be excused from payment owing to their losses from the kaffer depredations.

In September 1792 Cornelis van Rooyen writes that unless the landdrost can settle a quarrel between Coenraad de Buys and the kaffirs there will be trouble, as he cannot arrange it. Coenraad had made frequent complaints against the kaffirs, saying that they had stolen fifty of his cattle. They replied that they had not stolen, but had taken the fifty cattle out of de Buys' kraal, which were their own, and not his. Further, they said de Buys had taken two oxen from Captain Saka (Chakka) for which he must still pay them. They had heard that de Buys wished to fetch more cattle and wanted to know how they should act if he insisted on taking cattle to complete the number lost.² Van Rooyen gives no opinion as to who was in the right in the matter, and no decision on the case can be found. Coenraad had told Sarend Lindeque and Dreyer that he had caught a thief redhanded slaughtering one of Christoffel Botha's cattle, but on taking him to his chief he got no satisfaction but had to go quietly away!³

In September 1793, Landdrost Doeke was dismissed and the secretary, Maynier, was appointed provisional landdrost. He was so unpopular that

1. Moodies extracts 1789 - 1800 (no serial number)
2. Gr.Rt. 585. August 1792 damaged. A translation in Moodies Ms. 1937 dated 3 Sep. 1792.
3. Gr.Rt. 585. T.F. Dreyer to Landt. and Military officers. 9 June 1792. A.C.T.

when his appointment became definite several members of his board left the room.¹

The kaffir depredations had never ceased, and when the farmers heard of his appointment, a commando under Barend Lindeque took the law into their own hands and recovered about 800 cattle, half of which went to Adlambi, who had given them assistance, and the rest they kept for themselves. The tribes who had been attacked retaliated and invaded the colony, laying farms waste as far as Swartkops river, murdering men and taking their cattle. Maynier went to interview the chiefs who promised to retire, but would not restore any cattle. As soon as he left they continued plundering.

Meanwhile, on orders from the Cape a commando from Swellendam was advancing and Maynier too, took the field with his burghers, none of whom would consent to act as commandant under him. The two commandos united in September² and about 200 men appeared before Maynier's tent under the "insubordinate" leadership of de Buys, demanding that Laurens de Jager of Swellendam should take command. They hoped, said Maynier, to have a freer rein against the kaffirs. But on this point he would not give way.³

A little fighting was done, some cattle recovered and Ndlambi was visited at his kraal. He promised to collect and restore the rest of the cattle. Further attempts were made to clear the Oorveld, but in November the Commando was disbanded, although the burghers were very dissatisfied with the terms of peace and plundering recommenced before the Swellendam burghers had reached

1. Gr.kt. 589. Minute 6 May 1794 A.C.T.

2. Theals History Vol 111 p. 217-227.

3. C.106 Resolution 9 May 1794. for Mayniers report on the Causes of the war, dated 31 March 1794.



their homes.¹

Waynier was asked to prepare a report on the causes of the war, which he did.² One cannot help being struck by the fact that he mentions, in detail, all the misdeeds committed by the burghers that he could think of, past and present, but did not specify any of the thefts and murders committed by the kaffirs, which might have led to the war. He had sufficient of these complaints to chose from out of the veldwagtmeesters reports and many of them have as good grounds for belief, or better, than the complaints he quotes against de Buys. He lays all the blame for the war on the colonists, who crossed the Fish River in disregard of Proclamations, who traded cattle with the kaffirs, or, took them into their service and then illtreated them.

A substantial part of these charges is directed against Coenraad de Buys :-

"Behoren de voorsgde. ongelukkige ruptures der Caffers naar insien van den Ondergetde. ook wel voornamentlik te worden gestributeerd aan het gedrag van den burgher Coenraad de Buys en aan de herhaalde mishandelingen door denselve aan den anderzints so beraisonneerde en vreedlievende Natie, by aanhoudenheid gepleegd."

This is a big charge to make against one man, making him chiefly responsible for the war. The reasons he gives are these :-

The Captains Mogora and Karkotie complained, at the drostdy, that de Buys had taken their wives (wijven) and cattle from them.

1. Theal ibid.

2. C. 106, resolution. 9 May 1794.



The Captain Langa, when a prisoner at Adlambie's kraal in November 1793, told Maynier, in the presence of three burgher witnesses, that the deeds committed by him against the Christians were solely out of revenge for de Buys' behaviour, as he had not scrupled to take Langa's wife with violence and use her as his own. Langa's sons, Tholi and Kama, had confirmed this in the presence of Mr. Faure, the Landdrost of Swellendam.

The christened bastard Hottentot, Gerrit Coetzee, stated that, on the pretext of hunting elephants, de Buys was wont to go among the kaffirs and take from them such cattle as he fancied. These were driven to his farm and if the kaffirs protested he made them lie on the ground and punished them severely (tussehen leven en dood had gestraft). Further, de Buys gave the Hottentots Platje and Riqueur orders to fire on the kaffirs, and the former had thus killed five and the latter four. He encloses a declaration of the Hottentot Platje who told of de Buys' gross illtreatment¹.

We now come to what the "Christians" say of him. The veldwagtmeesters, Gerrit Hendrik Bouterbag, Hendrik Janse van Rensburg and Johannes Arnoldus Botma reported, that when the last commando attacked the kaffirs they called out that if Coenraad de Buys, Coenraad Bezuidenhout and Christoffel Botha, who were the chief causes of the war, were removed from the Colony the hostilities would cease, these men having stolen their women and possessed them (hebbende hulle meiden ontroofd en tot hun bezit gebruikt)

1. Unfortunately the original report together with the enclosures cannot be found. Was this the same Platje referred to above?



Gerrit Hendrik Kautenbag and some of his neighbours had thought of lodging a written complaint asking for de Buys' banishment, and Kautenbag had been told by the Oosthuizen, who lived near de Buys, that Captain Chakka had complained bitterly to them the previous year of de Buys' illtreatment (mishandelingen). The veldwagmeester of Zwartkop's river, in whose ward Coenraad lived, stated that he had received complaints from the kaffirs that de Buys continually illtreated them.

On the last commando he had been the leader of those who demanded that Maynier should give the command to Laurens de Jager.

Several years before, de Buys had presented a document signed by a number of people complaining of troubles caused them by the kaffirs. On examination it proved that de Buys himself had forged the names of these people, for which he was reprimanded. This Maynier found in the resolutions of the "Krygsraaden van Graffe Keynet".¹

When Maynier returned to the drostdy early in 1793, Nogera, Karkotie and the Hottentots Adam Vogel and Willem Haasbeck came to complain of de Buys. Upon this, a letter was sent to him, pointing out his serious and punishable offence and he was ordered to answer for his conduct at the drostdy. The heemraad entrusted with the delivery of this note had neglected his duty and de Buys thus continued to harry the kaffirs to the uttermost.

Maynier added that Stephanus Ferreira, the old heemraad of Swellendam, told Laure that he had no doubt

1. This resolution cannot be found now, but Moodie gives the "substance" of the resolution in his Ms. collection in the archives under the date 9 Feb. 1789. No. 952 and No. 1937. A.C.F.



hostilities would cease if de Buys were banished.

In how far was de Buys guilty of all these charges against him? He was never tried, so no decision was given by any competent Court. We cannot help thinking here, of the result of the investigation of the charges, brought in by Read and van der Kemp in 1812.

It is impossible now, to discover the reliability of Maynier's witnesses. Had they special reasons for disliking de Buys? Were competent interpreters used in the cases concerning natives? We do know that Maynier had a grudge against de Buys, for he writes that, as a result of his insubordinate behaviour in the matter of Laurens de Jager, another burgher taunted him (Maynier) in the hearing of several others at a public sale, that the burghers had refused to obey him on Commando.

The forgery of the complaint is undoubtedly true and this shows de Buys to be untrustworthy; but this does not prove that all his accusers were more trustworthy than he. He was undoubtedly violent but he may have had much provocation. The charge of taking kaffir women was made by different chiefs, and, judging from his later career seems very likely to have been the truth.

Maynier was privately instructed to collect necessary evidence against de Buys for the Fiscal, so that a good case could be made against him when he was tried.¹ He was to tell no one of this, and the extract resolutions sent to Graaff Reinet therefore refer only to Barend Lindeque and the others, de Buys' name not being mentioned.²

Maynier, however, had his hands full in the district, where dissatisfaction against him became so strong

1. C. 106 Resolution 9 May, 1794. A.C.T.

2. Gr.Rt. Extract resolution 9 May, 1794. A.C.T.



that he was expelled from the drostdy in February, 1795. A Commission under Mr. U.G. de Wet, after collecting some evidence, suffered a like fate and Graaff Reinet proceeded to govern itself.

In June Swellendam followed their example and in this month too, an English fleet arrived and took possession of the Cape in the name of the stadtholder, then a refugee in England.¹

If de Buys had changed his ways at this time, his history among the kaffirs would have been forgotten. The principles of the revolution in France, however, had reached the Cape, witness the "National Conventions" in the revolted districts and the wearing of the National Cockade, so that Craig wrote, "the great body of the people are at this moment infected with the rankest poison of Jacobinism". Letters were received signed by the "Voice of the Patriotick People" and disaffection was rife among the military.²

De Buys himself lived in a district where this feeling was most active. The surgeon Woyer³ and the schoolmaster Campagne⁴, both men of some education, were the chief agitators there, and de Buys, from his very nature, would be inclined to support such doctrines and so add political agitation to robbery and violence among the natives.

1. Theals History Vol. III
2. Rec. C.C. Vol. I p. 154. Letter Craig to Mt. Hon. H. Dundas 22 Sep. 1795.
3. BO 49 Letter Craig to Landt. Laure 24 June, 1796.
4. Rec. C.C. Vol. I p. 426. Letter Craig to Mr. Huskisson 3 Aug. 1796.



CHAPTER III.

Republican and Outlaw. (1795 - 1798.)

Swellendam gave up its republican government and submitted to the English within a month¹, but the Graaff Reinet burghers, although they had written to General Craig explaining their actions,² were not so amenable. Mr. F. F. Bresler, who was sent as their new landdrost, was expelled from the drostdy and the British flag he had hoisted was pulled down.³ Troops were therefore posted in readiness to subdue them and all supplies were cut off from the district.⁴

Not content with their own refusal to submit, the more unruly element decided to march to Swellendam and expel all office holders there who had taken the oath of allegiance.⁵ Landdrost Faure informed Craig that he was prepared to resist the rebels and that the wife of Heenraad Ferreira had reported that the majority of the rebels came from the Zuurveld, beyond the Gantoois river, and that they had been called up by Coenraad de Buys and Gerrit Hendrik Houtenbach⁶. Most of the Zuurveld farmers had been forced to abandon their homes after the kaffir depredations and were living in the Long Kloof with friend or relations.⁷ One of the Ferreira's was associated with the rebels⁸ so the woman's information was probably correct.

Their attempt to win back Swellendam, however, came to naught as Craig was able to report that it had

1. Rec. C.C. Vol. 1 p. 269 Letter Craig to Rt. Hon. Sir. H. Dundas 27. Dec. 1795.
2. B.O. 26. Letter Gr. Rt. burghers to Craig 27. Oct. 1795.
3. B.O. 26. Letters Bresler to Craig 2 March 1796 and 26 May 1796. A.C.T.
Rec. C.C. Vol. 1 p. 368. Letter Craig to Dundas 21. April, 1796.
4. *ibid* p. 354 Letter Craig to Dundas 11 April, 1796.
5. Rec. C.C. Vol. 1. p. 335 Letter Craig to Dundas 8, March, 1796.
6. B.O. 24. Letter Faure to Craig 11, March, 1796.
7. Rec. C.C. Vol. 1 p. 498. Bresler to Craig 27, Dec. 1795.
8. *ibid*. p. 478 Some burghers of Gr. Rt. to Craig 12, Nov, 1795.



been decided at a meeting of the most violent of the popular leaders, that they would submit to the government.¹

Graaff Reinet, however, continued to govern itself until the middle of the following year.

We now find the first evidence of Coenraad de Buys acting as emissary to the kaffirs. On the 14th June he made his report to a combined meeting of burgher military officers, Heemraden, and the Landdrost, appointed by the district, Carl Gerotz. He stated that he had pacified the kaffirs as much as possible. He then asked whom he was to obey, the Landdrost and Heemraden or the burgher Janse van Rensburg, as it seemed that all must submit to this man, who did as he pleased. He complained that van Rensburg harboured rogues who were murderers deserving death, such as *am.* Hasfelbek (Haasbek?) whom the court had demanded from him several times without effect

He was assured that the matter would be investigated and was thanked for his good intentions as regards the kaffirs and asked to spare no zeal in further endeavours in this matter.²

It is not clear whether Coenraad had been asked to deal with the kaffirs or not, but apparently the meeting was satisfied with his intervention and willing for it to continue. It appears thus, that, although some burghers gave evidence to Maynier against him, there were others who approved of his methods with the natives, nor can he have been as unpopular with all the natives as he was with Langa's tribe.

It must not be forgotten though, that, cut off

1. Rec. C.C. vol.1 p. 353. Craig to Dundas 11 April, 1796.

2. Gr.kt. 590. Minutes 14 June, 1796. ...C.T.

from their usual supply of ammunition as they were, the men in charge at Graaff Reinet would be only too willing to use any means of preserving peace with the Xosas, and that it was not every one who would venture among the tribes in their unsettled state as de Buys and his friends were wont to do. We hear no more of him this year.

The van Rensburg Coenraad complained of was probably Hendrik Janse van Rensburg. His uncle had married Coenraad's aunt and so by the easy relationships of the South African they regarded each other as cousins. Hendrik himself married Coenraad's niece, the daughter of Johannes de Buys.¹

Meanwhile, Graaff Reinet was feeling the effects of the blockade. Moyer disappeared from the district², Campagne was captured and deported³, and they were disappointed in their efforts at getting outside assistance.⁴ The Government made preparations to subdue the district and a small force under Major King set out.⁵

A public meeting had been held at Graaff Reinet on the 22nd August, but Adriaan van Jaarsveld was the only man of importance present from Zwartkop's River, Bruintjes Hoogte and the Zuurveld.⁶ A letter was entrusted to two deputies, who arrived at the Cape in time for Craig to stop Major King's advance. The provisional landdrost, Gerotz, was told to carry on until a new landdrost could be sent to them and a general amnesty was declared for all except Moyer⁷.

1. C.C. de V. Vol. III p. 121.

2. BO 49 Letter Craig to Faure 24 June 1796. A.C.T.

3. Rec. C.C. Vol. 1. p. 426 Letter Craig to Am. Huskisson 3 Aug. 1796.

4. The Dutch fleet under Admiral Lucas was captured at Saldanha Bay.

Rec. C.C. Vol. 1 p. 433. Letter Craig to Dundas 19, Aug, 1796.

5. Ibid. p. 453. Letter Craig to Maj. King 4 Sept. 1796.

6. BO 26. Letter Gr. Mt. burghers to Gen. Craig 22 Aug, 1796.

7. BO. 49 Letter Craig to Landdt. and people of Gr. Mt. 12, Sept. 1796.



Those on the frontier did not consider this binding on them. In July they had held a meeting at Boschberg on the summons of Marthinus Prinsloo, and talked of attacking Swellendam and restoring the "National Assembly" there¹, but by the 12th November a letter signed by thirty-one burghers, expressed their views.² Craig replied that they would have to submit³ which they did, realizing that it was not use resisting any longer.

Bresler was again to be sent as landdrost, but his departure was delayed until the new governor, the Earl of Macartney, arrived⁴. Bresler was then accompanied by Macartney's secretary, Mr. John Barrow, "to discover how far the same objects may appear alike to British and Dutch eyes"⁵.

Bresler was given full instructions as to the methods he was to employ to restore peace and order in the district, among the colonists and the kaffirs. He was also given the right to turn anyone out of the district who was likely to cause trouble, and to open all doubtful correspondence between the district and the capital.⁶

Having arranged matters at the drostdy Bresler, Barrow, Jan du Plessis and Hendrik van Rensburg went on a tour of inspection to the Fish River. Their interpreter was the Hottentot, Willem Haasbek⁷. From the Fish River Bresler writes of his attempts to persuade the natives to cross the river and of his intention of visiting Gaika.

1. BO 26 Circular of Marth. Prinsloo 21 June, 1796.
Rec. C.C. Vol. I p. 453 Letter Craig to Major King.
4 Sept. 1796.
2. Rec. C.C. Vol. I p. 478 Burghers at Fish River to
Craig 12, Nov. 1796.
3. *ibid.* p. 502 reply to the above. 31. Dec. 1796.
4. *ibid.* Vol. II p. 38. Letter Craig to Dundas 14 Jan. 1797
5. *ibid.* p. 113 Earl Macartney to Dundas 10, July, 1797.
6. BO 50 instruction to Mr. Bresler, general and secret
and open letter to Gr. Rt. 20 June 1797 A.C.T.
(See also Rec. C.C. II 95.)
7. Gr. Rt. 590. Minute 10 Oct. 1797. A.C.T. and Barrows
Travels vol. I p. 193.



Further, according to the powers granted to him, Bresler ordered Coenraad de Buys to leave the colony within two months owing to the complaints made against him by several of the inhabitants, the charge being that because of the remote and unfavourable situation of his dwelling place he was able to detain and conceal hottentots, slaves etc.¹ We may be sure that Hendrik van Rensburg, whom de Buys had accused of like practises the previous year, was one of those who asked for his banishment. Van Rensburg and du Plessis were to continue negotiating with the affairs after Bresler's departure.²

For the next six years Coenraad remained an outlaw from the district of Graaff Reinet. What did this sentence mean to him? "The landroost had only the shadow of authority . . . the orders of the Court of Justice met with as little respect, at the distance of five or six hundred miles, as the orders of the Landroost and his council. If a man, after being summoned did not chose to appear, there was no force in the country to compel him; . . . the only punishment was a sentence of outlawry for contempt of Court. A sentence that was attended with little inconvenience to the criminal, who still continued to maintain his ground in society, as if no such sentence were hanging over him. It debarred him, it is true, from making his usual visits to the capital but he found no difficulty in getting his business done by proxy."³ The truth of this was amply demonstrated by de Buys' case during his outlawry.

1. E.O. 27. Letter Bresler to Macartney 7 Sep. 1797 A.C.T.
2. Gr.Rt. 590 Minute 10 Oct. 1797. A.C.T.
3. Barrow's Travels vol. II p. 24.



by the end of the year Hendrik van Rensburg made his report. He had heard rumours that de Buys had joined the kaffirs on this side of the Fish River, instigating them to rise against the Christians and to seize the land along the Bushman river. After this they were to take Bressler, Barrow and those who had accompanied them on their tour as prisoners, to do with as they pleased.

van Rensburg sent Hottentot spies out, who reported that the Captains maintained that de Buys had instigated them against the Christians, but that, although some of their subjects were willing, they were disinclined to such a step.

Further, Captain Conga (Cungwe or Congo), on this side of the Fish river, had been deserted by a number of natives of the lesser chiefs, who wished to join Gaika across the river. Seeing his power weakened by this desertion Conga had taken Coenraad prisoner so that, according to his promise, he would help to defend him in case of an attack from Gaika, whose power they were beginning to fear. Coenraad longed for his freedom (die rykhalsende na zijn verlossings uur blijft uitzien).¹

This report is based on the information got by the Hottentot spies from the kaffirs. This was told to van Rensburg and by him to Bressler, who again reported it to Macartney. It can therefore not be taken as very reliable. It is difficult to believe that de Buys would have instigated the kaffirs to rise against his kinsmen and friends, but not so difficult to believe that he wished to be avenged on those who were responsible for having him outlawed. He repeated these threats against Bressler later.

1. B.O. 27. report Bressler to Macartney containing statement made by H.J. van Rensburg 3 Dec. 1797 A.C.T.



it is possible too, that Conga held de Buys prisoner, although the reason given by van Rensburg may not be the correct one.

Macartney ordered Bresler to summon de Buys, "who always behaved as a bad subject", to appear at the drostdy within a given time. If he did not appear the landdrost was to make every effort to take him, alive or dead, a reward of one hundred rixdollars being offered for him.¹

De Buys did not appear and the notice of the reward offered for him was put up for all to see.² What would de Buys' fate have been if he had been sent to the Cape? Petrus Delpont, for refusing to take the oath of allegiance, was deported.³

On 20th April 1798, a deserter (who claimed to be a prince by birth, but later confessed that he was merely an Irishman, deserted from the ship Exeter) declared that he was going to join de Buys, who was reported to have been elected king of the kaffirs. In the same letter, however, Bresler said that de Buys was rumoured to be in the Long Kloof, Swellendam.⁴

Macartney thereupon sent orders to Swellendam that Petrus Delpont, Coenraad de Buys and a false coinier should be apprehended and a reward offered for their capture, and notified Bresler of this.⁵

1. BO 65 Further instructions for the Landt. of Gr.kt. 14 Feb. 1798.
2. Gr.kt. 325. Bekendmaking - undated, appears between 20 Sept. and 10 Oct, 1798. A.C.T.
3. BO 51. Letter Macartney to Bresler 12 July, 1798. A.C.T.
4. BO 27 Letter Bresler to Macartney 21 April 1798 A.C.T.
5. BO 51 Letters Macartney to Faure and to Bresler 22, May, 1798 A.C.T.
S'dam 11 minutes 4 June 1798. A.C.T.



It is strange, in these circumstances, to find in the minutes of the Landdrost and Heemraden at Graaff Reinet, among the names of those who were permitted to leave with their attestations for Swellendam, the names of Coenraad de Buys and Jacobus Delport,¹ but among the permits granted by Swellendam in reply, there is not one for de Buys.² It is possible that the latter had gone to his uncle Jacobus in the Long Kloof. A note in the minutes states that Jacobus de Buys insulted P.H. van Rooyen, for which he was summoned to appear before the court. He wrote in reply that he could not appear, so he was ordered to apologise publicly to van Rooyen. A note adds that he is stated to have kffirs on his farm, who must be removed immediately to prevent trouble.³

The fate of Delport probably made Coenraad decide to remove himself further from the seat of authority and a few months later, Bresler wrote that the veldwagtmeester, whom he had commissioned to enquire after him, reported that he had retreated across the Great Fish river, where he lived with a certain Botha, his foster child, "intending not to return so long as the Colony shall continue under the present government." This Botha was probably Christoffel, but perhaps it was Jan, with the one hand.

Bresler adds however, that as he is known to the kaffirs as their enemy they will no doubt treat him according to his deserts, and that, as far as he is concerned, he will never rest until he has cleared the country of this rogue.⁴

1. Gr. Rt. 590 Minute 4 June 1798 A.C.T.

2. S'dam 130 and 131 4 June, 1798 A.C.T.

3. S'dam 11. Minute 14 June 1798 A.C.T.

4. BO 27 Letter Bresler to Macartney 1 sept. 1798 A.C.T.
B O 43. Another deserter confessed that he had stayed with de Buys for six months, until the latter departed for the kaffir country (undated) A.C.T.



in October, Bresler, was visited by "ambassadors" from Gaika and Bresler hoped by their means to get de Ruys, who had joined their chief. They seemed very friendly, and he even hoped that Gaika himself would visit the drostdy soon.¹

1. BU 27 Letter Bresler to Macartney 29 Oct. 1798.



Year	1707	1708	1792		1794	1796	1798	
Reference Number Act	(J.144 & J.03	J.04	J.04a	J.144	J.84b	J.85	J.144	J.86
Paarden	1	1	1		1	1		
Runderen	48	48	50	100	100	100		
Schape	300		500	500	500			
Snaphanen	1		1	1	1	1		
Pistolen	1		1	1	1	1		
Deegens	1		1	1	1	1		

The above table shows extracts from all the Graaff-Reinet "opgaafrollen" in existence from 1707 to 1798. In 1796 and 1798 Coenraad's name did not appear as he was not in the colony. The figures for all the years are most unreliable as they were most likely copied (1708 from 1707 and the remaining figures from 1790) by the Landdrosts or their Secretaries.



CHAPTER IV.

The Van Jaarsveld Rising and the Kaffir War. 1799.

Towards the end of 1798 plans were again made to overthrow the English rule. There were people in Capetown who kept the districts informed of events there, and in Europe.¹ As a result of Napoleon's designs on Egypt, and India, Macartney was ordered to send a large part of his force to the East.² Macartney himself left for England, and immediately after the stores and horses of the Dragoons were destroyed by fire at the Cape.³ All these rumours, distorted in form and magnitude, reached Graaff Reinet in due course.⁴ The English government had never used force in the districts, and now they were no longer considered capable of it.⁵

It was therefore decided "to renew the old Patriotism"⁶ This started as early as September 1798, according to one witness,⁷ but the first proof of it appears in a letter dated 12th December, 1798.⁸

Note. In this chapter I have made extensive use of the summing up of the fiscal and the sentence of the Graaff Reinet Prisoners in Rec. C.C. Vol. III p. 213 - 296, the numbers given by me refer to the clauses as marked there.
(Only the sentence itself is to be found in the Archives at Capetown. (C.J. 744)

1. (449)-(460).

2. Rec. C.C. Vol. II p. 261 Letter War Office to Macartney 18 June, 1798.

3. *ibid* p. 302 Letter Maj. Gen. Dundas to Rt. Hon. H. Dundas 2 Dec 1798.

4. (449)-(460) and (497)-(498)

Rec. C.C. Vol. II p. 400 Letter Gen. van de Leur to Gen. Dundas 22 March, 1798.

ibid p. 407 Letter Barrow to Gen. Dundas 3 April 1798.

ibid p. 439 Proclamation by Maj. Gen. Dundas 20 June 1799

5. (455) and (506)

6. (475)

7. (495)

8. (474)-(475)



The attempt was doomed to failure from the start. It was evidently not the desire of the majority of the inhabitants to rebel. The scheme originated among a mere half dozen men, at the most, and through their representations they managed to gather a small band, probably not more than thirty, who were ready for mischief. These ardent patriots then managed by force, persuasion and threats to get others to join them.

Their organisation left much to be desired. Their object was "to renew the former Graaff Reinet patriotism". This was given various interpretations by the rebels.¹ In the early stages there does not seem to have been any plan of campaign, nor any recognised leader.² As far as can be discovered the sequence of events was as follows :-

In December 1798, Martinus Prinsloo visited Jan Botha, nicknamed "one hand" who lived on the farm of P. Hautenbach. Prinsloo intimated that if sufficient willing followers could be found to press him to renew the former patriotism, he would take command.³ What his particular grievance was, is a mystery. One of his fellow conspirators later said, "that he considers Prinsloo as the principal Author of the disturbances in Graaff Reinet . . . and I am extremely surprized at it, for he is a man that lives like a fish in the water, and yet he is always the first in the disturbances".⁴

Upon this suggestion Jan Botha wrote a letter, dated 12th December, 1798, "that they had resolved to renew

1. (158)-(162)

2. Rec. C.C. Vol. 11 p. 484. Letter Depty Secr. Ross to Rt. Hon. H. Dundas 14 Sept. 1799.

3. (473)

4. (972)-(973) (i.e. like a fighting cock on the fat of the land.)



the former Patriotism which had been neglected and, to carry it on with greater energy than before." This letter Trinsloo read to several others¹ and so the fire spread. Coenraad de Buys, known as the enemy of the English, and one who would gladly avenge his wrongs, was communicated with in kaffirland by letter.²

Another ally was found in Adriaan van Jaarsveld. On a summons for forgery of a receipt to the Orphan Chamber, he had to appear in Capetown on the 29th November, 1798. This he failed to do³, knowing his guilt. He was therefore arrested by the Landdrost at Graaff Reinet on 17th January 1799, to be conveyed to the Cape. He submitted quietly but remarked that he feared this would cause a disturbance among the people.⁴ And it did.

Van Jaarsveld's arrest probably brought the rising to a head prematurely, but whether they had expected it or not, Trinsloo made good use of the opportunity to spur on the laggards with this proof of the government's perfidy. Four days later Trinsloo, with an armed band of farmers, demanded van Jaarsveld from the small escort which was taking him to the Capital. The escort informed the farmers that he was not wanted by the Government, but for another matter, to which Trinsloo replied, "that this was not the only affair but that there was another which was spreading all over to Swellendam, therefore he must have van Jaarsveld"⁵

The band next went to a farm near Graaff Reinet, from where letters were sent out bidding the farmers to assemble, armed, at Piet Kautenbach's on the 25th January,

1. (475)-(478)

2. (480) and (153)-(155).

3. (36)-(38)

4. (43)-(47)

5. (72)-(97) and Rec. C.C. Vol. 11 p. 355 Deposition of H. Certel 16, Feb. 1799.



and asking Barend Burgers to join them; adding that Malta, Bengal and Ceylon had been taken by the National Convention.¹(in France)

from here over a hundred armed men went to the Second Drift, near the drostdy, and from there sent four delegates "to ask for what reason van Jaarsveld had been apprehended and sent away and to make some reasonable requests"², chief of which was their old request, "that the inhabitants dwelling nearest the Groot vis River might be allowed to drive their cattle into Caffraria"³. This was a frivolous pretext for taking up arms, but Bresler was forced to ask this of the Government, out of fear for their numbers.⁴

The party then broke up and reassembled on Marthinus Prinsloo's farm on 28th January. Here they were joined by Coenraad de Buys, whom Prinsloo had sent for, when van Jaarsveld was arrested.⁵ Definite proposals as to how the patriotism was to be renewed seemed to have been made here, and their form is clearly due to de Buys' influence. In 1797 it was rumoured that de Buys wanted the kaffirs to seize land along the Bushman river and to hand Bresler and Barrow over to the kaffirs.⁶ Here, at Prinsloo's, they decided again to take the Colony, as they put it, and to carry off the landdrost and his family from the drostdy.⁷

1. (107)-(114).

2. (128).

3. (137) and Rec. C.C. Vol. II p. 349 Letter Landdrost and Heemraden to Maj. Gen. Dundas 25 Jan, 1799.

4. *ibid* p. 351. Letter Bresler to Maj. Gen. Dundas 24 Jan, 1799.

5. (144)-(155).

6. BU 27 Report Bresler to Macartney 3 Dec, 1797. A.C.T.

7. (161)-(162).



For this purpose circular letters were sent out by de Buys and Prinsloo, calling the burghers to come armed to the drostdy on 12th February.¹ The leaders assembled at Jan Bosch's place two days earlier to estimate their strength. At a meeting held there, it was decided "to deliver the Landdrost into the hands of Coenraad de Buys"². Prinsloo was asked at the trial "whether they had not agreed at Bosch's to proceed with the Caffers to take the Cape if possible" and replied "their plan had been to join the Caffers to the burghers and retake Graaff Reinet, and all those that would not participate in their proceedings would be put to death and their cattle would have been served out to the Caffers for provision", but he added, "that this was Buys and Jan Botha's plan, but which no other person would agree to"³

By this time the moderate men had had time to reflect and some, like Hendrik van Rensburg and Thomas Breyer, tried to moderate their zeal, while others reported their proceedings to the landdrost.⁴ The more sensible farmers must have realized that they were being used as a catspaw to obtain revenge for a turbulent outlaw like de Buys, and to further the schemes of those on the kaffir frontier, who wished to have a free hand against their natural enemies, the kaffirs. The Sneeuwberg farmers had their own problem, the wild bushmen, and they were not anxious to join those with grievances against the kaffirs.⁵

1. (168)-(169).

2. (170)-(172).

3. (670)-(672).

4. (173)-(176).

5. (139) and BU 24 Letter Faure to Maj. Gen. Dundas 5, March, 1799 and Rec. C.C. Vol. 11 p. 280.



The leaders were therefore forced to postpone further action until 17th February, when they hoped to have the Zwagershoek farmers to join them. A letter was sent signed "the voice of the people", commanding them to come or be considered "Traitors to their Country".¹

In another desperate attempt to get support de Buys even produced a letter from the landdrost to Hendrik van Rensburg which, he said, proved that the landdrost supplied the kaffirs with powder and lead. This letter was, of course, deliberately misinterpreted. Meanwhile, the drostdy and the roads to the Cape were guarded by armed men, to prevent Bredaer from getting help.³

The meeting, fixed for the 17th February, took place at Barend Burger's farm near the drostdy. Here de Buys tried to get the "multitude" to sign a paper, which some said was an oath of allegiance to de Buys and others a plan of what they were to do, but it was torn to pieces in the dispute which followed.⁴ Here, too, they were visited by the Reverend Mr. Ballot, their minister, who tried to reason with them, with very small success.⁶

We have Ballot's account of this visit from a letter which he wrote to the Fiscal, which was intercepted by the government.⁶ Ballot writes that Coenraad de Buys was said to be at the head of the armed men, but that it was really van Jaarsveld, whose true purpose it was to convey the landdrost to the kaffir country. Ballot did

1. (178)-(179).

2. (183)-(191).

3. (195)-(196) and (228).

4. (200)-(208).

5. (209)-(218).

6. BO 26. Rec. W.H. Ballot to Fiscal 24 Feb. 1799. (also in Rec. C.C. Vol. 11, p. 370).

BO 56 Diary March 17, 1799. Note of Ballot's letter being intercepted.



not guess the originator of this scheme and de Buys seems to have made a good impression on him. He writes, "I here only add my request, that if there is any possibility to grant Buys his pardon. This is a man who really does not design any ill, and who in my opinion may still become a proper burgher, also all that the Landdrost and Heemraden have written of him has been done spontaneously, for he has conducted himself in every respect composedly. I beg you to speak with the General on this subject".¹

But on Ballot's departure the rebels were reviewed by de Buys and van Jaarsveld, "and thereupon conducted themselves so as perfectly to evince that they had in no manner desisted from their plan, and that it was not so much the exhortation of the Reverend Mr. Ballot as again the want of a sufficient number of men that made them resolve to postpone until another time the final execution of their intention".² The men then heard, or suspected, that troops were coming to the Landdrost's assistance, so they forced him to send a letter to the government saying that, as order had been restored, there was no need to send troops and asking that van Jaarsveld might be excused the "prise de corps" against him. A note was added saying how the kaffirs were to be treated and concluding, "It is also our desire that any message which may be dispatched to the Caffres shall not be performed but by our fellow burgher Coenraad de Buys."

1. Dundas wrote (Rec. C.C. Vol. 11 p. 381) that Ballot's letter was written under "evident constraint" but Ballot's remarks about van Jaarsveld disprove this, as well as the fact that Ballot continued to make efforts to get a pardon for de Buys and even wrote to him in kaffirland. Unfortunately only a translation of this letter to the Fiscal is available. What the Landt. and H'raden wrote "Spontaneously" appears to refer to their letter written under pressure on 19th February, 1799.

2. (219)-(222).



The letter says "The burgher Coenraad de Buys has also appeared in the Village and requested that it may please Your Excellency to repeal the order given by the Earl of Macartney to the Landdrost by an instruction bearing date 14th february, 1798, by which he has been declared an Outlaw, we therefore beg leave to join our request to his that it may please Your Excellency to reinstate him in his former burgher Freedom, he promising to Conduct himself as becomes a good burgher and to answer this favour, and we being able to assure Your Excellency that the behaviour of the said de Buys has in every respect appeared to us to be more than worthy of this exoneration".¹

Was this written "spontaneously" as Ballot said? Presler says this letter was written to save his life² but he may not have been referring to this particular part of it. His diary says more definitely "Among other things Coenraad de Buys did send to require of me a certificate of his being allowed unmolested to continue in this district, which permission I found myself obliged from want of force to counteract such violence, to grant, but under approbation from the Governor. In the evening information was received that an armed complot was already assembled . . . to drag me from the Drostdy, which however was obviated by Coenraad de Buys pretending night time to be very improper for the

1. Letter Landt. and H'raden Gr. Et. to Dundas 19 Feb. 1799 also rec. C.C. Vol. 11 p. 364.
2. BO 26 Letter Sgt. Maj. M. Irwin to Acting Adj. Dickson 24 Feb. 1799. A.C.T.
BO 24 Letter Landt. Faure to Maj.Gen. Dundas 5 March 1799. A.C.T.
Both letters are also in Rec. C.C. vol. 11 p. 368 and p. 379.
rec. C.C. Vol. 11 p. 381. Letter Dundas to Vandeleur 7 March, 1799.



purpose."¹

That de Buys should have let such a chance go by after all his threats against Bresler is most remarkable. We can only surmise that he really intended to give up his career of violence and earn his pardon. This is the kindest thing Bresler ever reported of him, although it seems hardly intentional.

This happened on the night of February 19th, and the next day the conspirators met again on the farm of Jan Bosch, among them de Buys and "one hand" Botha,² who administered a solemn oath which some prisoners said was an oath not to betray Botha and de Buys, and others that Botha swore to repulse the British troops.

Coenraad then returned to Caffraria and Jan Botha went to form a camp at Coega, to oppose the troops, whom they expected would land at Swartkops Bay.³

Why did Coenraad withdraw at this stage? Did he intend to make a real effort to raise the Kaffirs to join them, or did he wish to dissociate himself from further troubles and try to gain a pardon? Of course, he knew the danger of being captured in the district as an outlaw.

Troops were advancing by land and sea and so van Jaarsveld and Marthinus Prinsloo, in a last desperate effort to stop them, sent a threatening letter to the Landdrost and Heeraden at Graaff Reinet and added a postscript that if Hottentot soldiers were used against them, Buys would march against them with the Kaffirs - "P.S. Als de minste gerugte van pandoere blykt, rukt Buys met de gantsche

1. Rec. C.C. Vol. II p. 394 Journal kept by Landt. Bresler.
2. (246)-(248).
3. (254)-(261).



Cafferland daar op los"¹ Another idle threat, as de Buys never appeared. At the same time efforts were made to get as many armed men at Coega as possible² and Jan Botha left, as some said, to get the kaffirs on this side of the Fish river to join as well.³

On the 3rd March Major McNab wrote that Coenraad had been joined by fourteen British deserters and that he was hard at work collecting a kaffir force.⁴ Vandeleur, with his usual hastiness, wrote that Buys was at the head of the rebels, when he was actually in kaffirland. "He boasts his intention of attacking us in a narrow ravine about 40 miles from hence, on the way to Graaff Reinet - - - - . I flatter myself we shall give him reason to repent his rashness, should he be hardy enough to risk an attack. Yet I could almost wish he would do it, as I think a good drubbing at first might be the means of saving a great deal of bloodshed eventually."⁵ He heard of this intention, probably, from some farmers who had come to lay down their arms as soon as he arrived⁶ and they were probably repeating the threats of van Jaarsveld and Prinsloo, who were trying to rally the waverers with these tales.

From Swartkops Vandeleur marched to Graaff Reinet,

1. (301)-(305). and Gr.Rt. 590. Minute 9 March, 1799 A.C.T.

2. (307)-(308).

3. (337).

4. Rec. C.C. Vol. 11 p. 384 Letter Maj. McNab to Maj. Gen. Dundas 12, March, 1799.

5. *ibid* p. 387 (and BU 26 A.C.T) Brig. Gen. Vandeleur to Maj. Gen. Dundas from Swartkops (undated - probably first week in March.)

6 (350)-(351)

where Bresler was relieved and the rebels sent delegates to ask for pardon.¹ The rest surrendered soon after in the Zuurveld and Bruintjies Hoogte², where Hautenbach with a hundred men was said to be expecting de Buys and the Kaffirs.³ A small number fled to Kaffirland where Vandeleur intended to pursue them.⁴

The rebellion was over and not a shot had been fired nor a drop of blood shed on either side,⁵ which is rather amusing after all the threats and big talk on both sides. Twenty of the ringleaders who had been caught were sent to Capetown by sea to await their trial⁶, but two were later released. Their trial, however, did not take place until August of the following year owing to the war which now broke out, known as the Third Kaffir war.

During these disturbances the kaffirs had been coming over the Fish river in large numbers⁷ but the English were confident that they would not join the rebels, nor become hostile⁸, although Bresler warned them that he expected trouble with them.⁹

Vandeleur changed his mind about going into Kaffirland and sent Commandant Hendrik van Bensburg instead with instructions to obtain the persons of the refugee rebels by any means - "te doden, dan wel op eenige andere wijze te vernielen". For these eight, Coenraad de Buys, Jan Botha, Christoffel Botha, Coenraad Bezuidenhout,

1. (352)-(363).

2. (367)-(369), (376)-(382).

3. BO 26 Letter Vandeleur to Maj. Gen. Dundas 21 March, 1799, A.C.T.

4. BO 26 Letter Vandeleur to Maj. Gen. Dundas, 10 April, 1799, A.C.T.

5. Rec. C.C. Vol. 11 p 425 Letter Maj. Gen. Dundas to Lt. Hon. H. Dundas, 14 May, 1799.

6. (384)-(385)

7. Rec. C.C. Vol. 11 387. Vandeleur to Maj. Gen. Dundas (undated)

8. BO 26 Letter Schab to Gen. Dundas 12 March 1799 A.C.T. also Rec. C.C. Vol 11 p 384

9. *ibid.* p 397 Vandeleur to Maj. Gen. Dundas 21 March 1799 also in BO26



Jan Knoetze, Gert Oosthuizen, Piet Steenberg, and Frans Krieger a reward of 1000 Rds. was offered, alive or dead. Some of them were suspected of being on this side of the Fish river, but if they were found to be with Gaika, he was to be persuaded by promises or presents to give them up.¹

Before van Rensburg could carry out these instructions, however, the kaffir war broke out, and, as the Hottentots joined the Xosas, General Dundas himself hurried to the frontier to take charge. He was obliged to remain there for over five months to restore some sort of order by which time several families had been murdered and most of the farms in the frontier districts were laid waste², the invaders penetrating as far as the Long Kloof.³

De Buys was naturally suspected of being implicated in this war. From the drostdy Bresler wrote, that the Hottentots and Kaffirs threatened him with an attack to which they were encouraged by the inhabitants, who fled before them, offering no resistance, "so that I think the want of ammunition is not the only reason, but that there are other reasons why they fly".⁴ They had not been given their usual supply of ammunition owing to the rebellion earlier in the year, and this, together with the defection of their Hottentots, really seems a sufficient reason for their flight, although Bresler's words imply more.

According to a deserter's statement, de Buys was on his way to the Portuguese settlement in July, when the war was at its height. He failed and remained with

1. BO 26 Instructions to Comdt. van Rensburg 24 May, 1799 A.C.T.
2. Ned. C.C. Vol. 11 p. 230/231. Trial of the 18 prisoners.
3. BO 53. Letter Depty Secy. Ross to Landt. Faure 3, Aug, 1799. A.C.T.
4. BO 26. Letter Bresler to Gen. Dundas 29 Aug. 1799, A.C.T.



the Tambookies, far from the scene of war."¹ "van der Kemp who was no friend to the Colonists and a zealous adherent to the English, exculpates Buys from such accusations" says Lichtenstein.² Maynier, who now became resident Commissioner at Graaff Reinet, wrote many years later of the state of the frontier in 1799, "The other tribes of the caffres, comprising those who resided some little distance from the frontier, like Gaika and others, took no active part, but received in a friendly manner Buys, Prinsloo etc - - -"³

When we remember that Coenraad's own brother was rendered homeless by the kaffirs burning his house⁴, we cannot believe that he egged the kaffirs on to despoil his own neighbours, kinsmen and friends. That his friends trusted him is apparent from the deserter's statement that de Buys "frequently received letters from the boors, mentions their names as well as some that have sent him gunpowder"⁵

There can, however, be little doubt that de Buys did all in his power to make Gaika hostile and suspicious of the English government and all its agents.

If we may believe van der Kemp, de Buys illustrated the character of the English to Gaika by saying that they were "the Bosjesmans of the Sea", which made them despise

1. BO 26. Letter Th. Lyndon to Maj. McNab, 7 Oct. 1799 A.C.T. His absence in July is further confirmed by the fact that Gaika had no interpreter to read van der Kemp's letter to him. See entry, 30 July, 1799, van der Kemp's Journal, Transactions of the Missionary Society (1804).
2. Lichtensteins - Travels - Vol. 1. p 366.
3. Report of Commissioners of Eastern Enquiry, Blue Book 1835 p. 29.
4. BO 26. Journal kept for the Veltcornet F.H. van Nooyen 20 Oct, 1799, A.C.T.
5. ibid (note 1) Lyndon added that he would not mention the names of the "boors" in case the letter fell into their hands and they took alarm.



the English as traitors and robbers.¹ Dundas was thus not far from the truth when he wrote, "I have always been persuaded that the people from Graff Keynet who have taken refuge in Caffraria, have scattered the seeds of future mischief, by falsely representing us to the savages, and although the fruits are not yet developed, it is most certain that the source of any serious interruption of the present tranquillity will be found on the other side of the Great Fish river, so long as that gang of ruffians remain there".²

1. Lichtensteins Travels, Vol. 1 p 403.
2. Blue book, 1836, page 32.

Note. For the following chapter, almost the only source for the events in Kaffirland is the Journal of Dr. van der Kemp, published in the Transactions of the Missionary Society, London, 1804. The dates given will refer to the entries in this journal.

Unfortunately the good Doctor says a great deal more about the souls of his converts than he does of the various intrigues between himself, the fugitives and Gaika. The impression one gains from the journal is that, considering their reputation, the fugitives were very kind to him. It may be that he was merely being forgiving and charitable. There is no reason for him to be silent about their misdeeds when reporting to his Society except that the fugitives themselves acted as his messengers in taking his reports to the Colony to be sent overseas, and some of the deserters could read English.

Another source is the statement made to Lt. Thomas Lyndon by a deserter who was with de Buys three months before, i.e. in July. The statement appears in a letter, Lyndon to Major McNab, 7 Oct. 1799, BO 26. A.C.T.



CHAPTER V.

Beyond the Fish River. 1799-1803.

We must now follow de Buys into Kaffirland, which he had entered during February 1799¹ Of his efforts to get the kaffirs to help the rebels we have only the statement of the deserter, that de Buys wanted Gaika to come out of Caffrland himself to fight against the English, but that Gaika would not agree to that.² It is not likely that de Buys would have tried the tribes on this side of the Fish River as Conga had kept him prisoner in December 1797, after which de Buys and one of the Bothas was reported to be living with Gaika, who was supposed to be the enemy of the kaffirs on the colonial side of the river.³ It is therefore more likely that he returned to Gaika.

Before the troops had reached Graaff Reinet de Buys was joined by a number of British deserters and other fugitives.⁴ They doubtless kept themselves informed of the progress of the insurrection, and, on the departure of the prisoners to Capetown for trial, de Buys must have realized that he could never return to the colony in safety. After living among the kaffirs for some years he had no doubt enjoyed being among his own people again. In addition, ballot may really have made some impression on de Buys, as his religious prejudices were apparently too deeply rooted to be abandoned, in spite of their conflict with his actions. His request for a pardon was therefore probably sincere, but the fate of the other rebels showed

1. Trial of Prisoners. Rec. C.C. III p. 124.
2. There are too the threats made by Prinsloo and van Jaarsveld that de Buys would bring the kaffirs over to fight. Gr.At. 590. Minute 9 March, 1799.
3. BU 27 Letter Presler to Macartney 1 Sep 1798 A.C.T.
4. Rec. C.C. vol II p. 384 Letter Maj. Schab to Maj. Gen. Dundas, 11 March, 1799. A.C.T.



him that he could not hope to be accepted as an ordinary burgher again. Now comes the scheme of going to the Portuguese settlement on the East Coast.

De Buys must have heard a great deal of part of the route and the country to the east, as Hendrik Janse van Rensburg and Tjaart van der Walt had both accompanied van Rieenen on his journey in search of survivors of the Grosvenor in 1791.¹ De Buys' preparations would take some time, as letters would have to be written and supplies, especially of gun powder, would have to be obtained from the colony before starting on such a journey. That this was successfully obtained is evident from the deserter's statement.²

The party, he said, consisted of nine deserters and eight colonists, two of whom had their wives and children with them.³ Their first two attempts to leave were foiled by Gaika, who brought them back, fearing that they would bring other kaffirs against him. The third time they got further, but were turned back by the Tambookies, who took their waggon-oxen and killed one of the Christians. After this they appear to have remained in the Tambookies country as Gaika had no interpreter to read Dr. van der Kemp's letter which he sent in July 1799, asking for permission to enter Kaffirland.⁴

Negotiations with Gaika were still being carried on by the Landdrost and Heemraden, through Tregard, who

1. wreck of the Grosvenor : Carter and van Rieenen page 186.

2. see above page 43.

3. The names are very much mutilated by Lyndon but they are quite recognisable as Johannes Botha "one hand", Christoffel Botha, Frans Kruger, Johannes Knoetze, Coenraad Bezuidenhout, Steenberg and one other called Jhns Lucas as near as I can read it. He was killed by the Tambookies. Steenberg is never mentioned in van der Kemp's journal later.

4. Van der Kemp's Journal. 30 July, 1799.



again used Piet Prinsloo to carry his messages.¹
Prinsloo, carrying an extract of the resolutions agreeing to terms of peace with Gaika, subject to the approval of General Vandeleur², overtook the missionaries on their way to Kaffirland and showed himself hostile to them.³

van der Kemp entered Kaffirland again on September 18th and learned that de Buys had been sent for by Gaika and that he had arrived from the Tambookie country on the 16th. What his advice to Gaika was we can only speculate, for immediately after de Buys' return Piet Prinsloo wrote to the Landdrost that he was going to Gaika's kraal, where he would be compelled to stay until peace was concluded, as he did not wish to be guilty of the blood of women and children whom the Kaffirs would murder if he refused to stay, as the peace offered had not been carried out.⁴ His meaning is not very clear, perhaps intentionally so. The deserter stated that all that Piet Prinsloo did was to ride round to the "boors" to get them to fight against the English.

On the 20th September van der Kemp had his first interview with Gaika and de Buys acted as interpreter. He said to de Buys, "I suppose you are Mr. Buys and understand these things; the Lord has sent me to preach the Gospel to this people, after I shall have attained their language. This I know said Mr. Buys; the Gospel must be preached to all nations, but you are come at a very improper time." Gaika said he was not safe himself and therefore advised them to go, but van der Kemp said he

1. Gr.kt. 590 Minute 23 August, 1799 A.C.T.

2. *ibid* 7 October, 1799

3. 28 August. Journal.

4. B.O. 26 Letter P. Prinsloo to Bresler 18 Sep. 1799 A.C.T.



wanted no more protection than was afforded to de Buys.

Van der Kemp then gave de Buys a letter from the Reverend Ballot.¹ De Buys however, was still doubtful and said he would not meddle with their affairs nor give them any assistance.²

The Doctor now heard that Frinsloo had represented the two missionaries to Gaika as spies and assassins who were going to poison him and de Buys confirmed that this had been said.³ Perhaps he had been thinking over Ballot's letter meanwhile and was beginning to relent towards the missionaries, or perhaps he resented Frinsloo's interference in the matter. Ballot had written that he was surprised at receiving no reply to his letter of 30th April, in which he had informed de Buys that he had obtained a pardon for him. He deplored the fact that it appeared from what de Buys had written (evidently to someone else) that he distrusted the government, with the result that the General had withdrawn his pardon. He had succeeded however, in getting him a second pardon, but only on condition that he delivered up the other fugitives with him. Vandeleur must have known that he could not do this, but Ballot assured him that if they would only write submissively and confess their faults, begging forgiveness, the General would pardon them. Ballot further commended the bearers of the letter, van der Kemp and Edmonds, to him and begs that he will give them every assistance in his power, "dewyl nu, uit u gesprek op graffereynet (ik) heb kunnen bemerken dat gy achtting voor den Godsdienst hebt."

1. BO 26 Letter Ballot to C. de Buys. 10 July, 1799.A.C.T
2. 20 Sep. Journal.
3. 21,22 Sep. *ibid.*

Whether de Buys hankered for the respectability of having a parson and a schoolmaster for his establishment or whether he hoped to make some use of the missionaries either with the government or with Gaika is difficult to decide, but van der Kemp writes on September 24th, "In the morning Buys attended at our family worship, and told us he was convinced that God had sent us; he would be our friend, come down himself, with his children and family out of the country of the Tambouchis to build an house for me on the other side of the great river "Keiskamma."

De Buys was as good as his word. Although van der Kemp neither praises nor blames, but just states the daily events as they occurred, one cannot but be struck at all that de Buys did for the old man, who must often have tried his patience sorely, especially, with regard to his attitude to his coloured converts, which was so utterly different from the conception de Buys had of the proper way to treat them. Although van der Kemp, when he considered his projects to be in danger through de Buys' presence, intended taking up his abode with a kraal of Hottentots, de Buys never abandoned his charge until he returned him to the colony almost two years later.

De Buys had now decided to keep the missionaries, but Gaika took a much longer time to make up his mind. He was evidently very suspicious and it needed all de Buys' eloquence to persuade him. From day to day Gaika put them off, until at last de Buys determined to force the issue. He sent Gaika a message to say that he was returning to the Tambookies and the missionaries would accompany him or return to their own country. He made all ready for his journey and refused the escort Gaika had provided to fetch his family. This brought Gaika and his captains on the scene at once. The King demanded to know the reason for



the preparations. De Buys upbraided him for his contempt of him, explained why the missionaries had come and said it was a shame to keep them awaiting an explicit reply for over a fortnight. This firm attitude was successful as Gaika replied in a speech "which lasted about an hour" and van der Kemp was given a field over the T'Keiskamma where he was to remain unhindered.¹

In spite of this some of the missionaries' oxen were stolen and de Buys was asked to help recover them. When de Buys arrived he said that his messengers had returned from the Tambookies and reported that his house and waggon were burnt, his wife and nine children had been murdered, probably by the Makdinnas. Nothing is said of de Buys' feelings except, "He slept this night with us".²

The following day de Buys went to complain of these excesses to Gaika, and on the 18th October he brought back their oxen. Christoffel Botha too, returned from the Tambookies and reported that the Makdinnas had indeed been guilty of burning the house and waggon, but that Mrs. Buys and his children had been saved by T'Zatzcu, the Tambookie captain, father-in-law to Gaika. "Buys then desired me to pray and to thank the Lord for this deliverance"³

They next went to their "field over the T'Keiskamma" where the Doctor introduced family worship into the house of Mr. Buys. The "field" was divided between them and a site selected for van der Kemp's house.⁴

Meanwhile, Gaika's messenger came to request de Buys to assist him at a council as he had arrested Piet Prinsloo and two of his friends on suspicion of their being

1. Journal Oct 5, 1799.
2. *ibid* Oct 16, 1799
3. *ibid* Oct 18, 1799
4. *ibid* Oct 21 and 22.



spies. Had de Buys sowed this suspicion in Gaika's mind? Did he distrust Prinsloo's influence with Gaika or was he jealous of this intermediary from the government? Van der Kemp's only comment is, "I sowed lettuce and carrots and planted red currants and potatoes". That evening he must have heard the matter discussed, but again his only comment next day is, "Mr. Buys went to Gaika and I continued to plant black currants, gooseberries and raspberries".¹

Apparently Prinsloo was released, for soon after we hear that a neighbouring tribe had taken his cattle and that he was flying for the Bokkeveld.²

Meanwhile de Buys had departed to fetch his family. The question of de Buys relations with native women will never be entirely cleared up, as he was married by native customs, if at all, and no record of these existed. It was not necessary for European guests to go through a ceremony either, as for example in the case of van der Kemp and Edmonds, they were offered two maidens - which they declined.³ Raynier had accused him of taking Langa's wife⁴, a much more serious offence, which made Langa's whole tribe hostile to him. The deserter had reported "that D'Guika's mother sleeps with Conrad Buis", and "that Buis keeps with a Caffres maid, sister to Congona". Further "that Buis has told D'Guika that he will give him a daughter that is fifteen years old". This last statement is confirmed by Collins, who told of Gaika in 1809, "it was amusing to observe the earnestness with which he dwelt on a promise that he stated had been made to him by Coenraad de Buys, when an exile in his

1. Journal Oct. 23 and 24, 1799.

2. *ibid* page 407.

3. *ibid* Oct. 3, 1799.

4. C.106 resolution 9 May, 1794.



country, of bestowing his daughter on him in marriage when arrived at maturity". Collins said that she was already married to an inhabitant of the colony, which was unwelcome news to Gaika who insinuated that she ought to be compelled to fulfill her first engagement.¹

The Fiscals report describes de Buys as, "one who had absconded from the colony in the Dutch time, residing ever since like a vagabond among the caffers on the other side of the Groot Vis River, where he kept a caffer woman for his wife², agreeable to the custom of that nation, by whom he had several children for which reason the present government would not admit him to this settlement, but considered him as an Outlaw and Vagrant"³ We presume that the Fiscal knew of other reasons for his banishment.

Lichtenstein says of Gaika's mother and de Buys, "that a sort of marriage was concluded between them after the manner of the Caffers, and in a short time he shared with this woman the almost unbounded influence which from her rank as well as her prudence she had obtained over the whole nation".⁴ He does not tell us who his informant was, although he does say de Buys "carefully avoided speaking of himself and his connection with the Caffres."⁵ He may have heard it from van der Kemp who told him that Gaika took no measure of importance without consulting his mother and his fugitive friend.⁶

If de Buys was really married to Gaika's mother it must have been a very loose form of union as he seldom lived at Gaika's place, but had his own establishment, even when he was not in the Tambookie country or travelling about.

1. Rec. C.C. Vol VII page 81. Collins Tour 1809.
2. C.J. 744 A.C.T. The original reads "alwaar hy naar de wyze dier natie zig een kaffers vrouw had genomen".
3. *ibid* Trial of the 18 Prisoners (147)-(152).
4. Lichtensteins Travels Vol 1 p. 259 - 260.
5. *ibid* p. 261.
6. *ibid* p. 365.



The Doctor's journal never tells us directly who or what "Mrs Buys" was, but from internal evidence it is almost certain that it was Mary, whom he calls a Hottentot. Michael de Buys said that his father's wife in Kaffirland was a light coloured bastard woman.¹ On one occasion van der Kemp wished to baptise his converts:- the Hottentot women, "wives" of the fugitives, and their children, and also the children of Mary's eldest daughter who was eighteen years old², and the children of a kaffir woman with whom Mary's husband live in polygamy. Mary's husband demanded that this should be done according to the rules prescribed by his church, which he described minutely and which is clearly the Dutch Reformed formula³. After some wrangling on this subject Mary's husband refused to allow any of them to be baptised. This punctiliousness about the Christian baptismal rites is amusing on the part of a polygamist. That this was de Buys to whom van der Kemp was alluding is supported further by the fact that Campbell had heard of a colonist who had returned to the colony, having both a kaffir and a Hottentot wife.⁴

De Buys had thus gone native in some respects and yet he still clung to certain beliefs. It is impossible to understand his state of mind if we take it that he was content to accept the fact of his polygamy and the doctrines he had been taught side by side. Like all of us, when his beliefs conflicted with his desires, he must have tried to reconcile the two. Perhaps he drew on the patriarchs for precedent, and imagined himself an Abraham or a David. Beyond the Fish River his position in this respect was easy enough.

1. S. Hofmeyr. Twintig Jaren in de Zoutpansberg p. 6.
2. Journal, 8 Feb. 1801. Perhaps the daughter of fifteen promised to Gaika in 1799.
3. Journal. Feb. 8. 1801.
4. John Campbell. Travels 1815. p.533.
J.C. Voigt. Fifty years - - - Vol.1 p.66 says "Du Bois was a man of amorous disposition. Like Solomon he had many wives or rather mistresses and concubines. The mother of Gaika was one of these."



At the end of 1799 Maynier, who had been sent for, owing to his previous experience in the district, ventured into kaffirland to interview Gaika. He tried to persuade the missionaries to return to the colony. Gaika gave Edmonds permission to leave but was reluctant to part with the Doctor.

De Buys had returned from the Lambookies with his family but refused to see Maynier.² A few days later Tjaart van der Walt visited them with a free pardon for de Buys from General Dundas, who had come to direct operations in the kaffir war himself. De Buys "declined" this pardon,³ which was granted only because it was regarded as essential to dissociate him from Gaika. One of the fugitives later confessed that Gaika had been tempted to murder the Commissioners (Maynier and Somerville) when they visited him in December 1799 as they had been invited for this purpose.⁴ Maynier had no success with Gaika and wrote later "De Heer Somerville vergezelde my in deeze Commissie en zal best kunnen getuigen hoezeer Chyka door de instigatien van Buys C.S., welke zig in persoon by hem bevonden, jegens het Gouvernement was voor ingenomen."⁵

When van der Kemp attempted to leave, his waggon was turned back by the kaffirs. Gaika explained that this was for his own safety and to check Maynier's "haughty and arbitrary proceedings."⁶

What made de Buys refuse his pardon? He hated the English certainly, and probably feared that he would have to join the prisoners awaiting trial in the Castle if once he entered the Colony. Perhaps he considered it better to live as the leader of his band and a valued counsellor to Gaika than to live in the colony as a poor

1. Journal Dec. 15, 1799. There are two entries marked 15 Dec. as v.d.Kemp discovered from Maynier that he was a day out in his reckoning.

2. Journal Dec. 15, 1799.

3. *ibid* Dec. 21, 1799.

4. *rec. C.C.* Vol III p. 213 Report of Commissioners.

5. *rec. C.C.* Vol III p. 213 Report of Commissioners.



struggling farmer, whose domestic affairs would be the object of scorn. In Kaffirland he could live a free and easy life and by hunting he could no doubt obtain sufficient to trade with the colony for gunpowder and other small necessaries. There were people willing to transact such business for the fugitives as we have seen before.

The Year 1800.

This year was full of alarms and excursions for those who lived with Gaika. He seems to have been particularly fickle and suspicious during this period.

The party still consisted of Faber, Kruger, the two Bothas, Knoetze, Bezuidenhout, Coenraad de Buys, a few deserters¹ and Piet Frinsloo and his wife who had joined them again. "Brother Edmond" had been allowed to depart in peace. They spent a fortnight building the Doctor's house, about 300 paces from de Buys' own. The house was 24 feet by 9 feet and had two rooms.² All seemed peaceful enough.

Jan Botha was anxious to return to the colony and set off, taking with him his wife and child, Hans Knoetze, and the wife and child of Kruger, who was away hunting elephants. Gaika had given reluctant consent, according to van der Kemp. On the way they were overtaken by kaffirs who killed Botha and took his cattle to Gaika. The rest of the party escaped. Gaika disapproved. He had told Ndlambi of Botha's departure, but left it to him whether he was to be allowed to pass or brought back³.

1. The journal mentions only Thomas Bentley by name.
2. *ibid.* 20 June, 1800.
3. *ibid.* Feb. 12 and 13, 1800.

Gaika said that Botha had given him 40 oxen, 4 cows and a gun in return for a safe conduct to the colony and Ndlambi was informed of this, but murdered Botha and took his possessions. Gaika demanded their return for the widow but had recovered only 2 horses, 2 girls (meiden) and a gun. Ndlambi replied that he was acting on Gaika's orders and the latter had taken back Botha's things and given them to his own people.

bk 45 Letter Alberti to Janssens 19 Dec. 1803 enclosing reports of interviews with the Chiefs. A.C.T.



Whoever was to blame, it was a warning to the fugitives that any attempt to remove with their possessions to the colony was dangerous. They were ordered to keep together and stay with de Buys¹, which looks as though Gaika could not protect them from the neighbouring clans.

Shortly after, dissention broke out among the tribes and Gaika feared that he would lose many followers. De Buys feared that his aid would be called in, in the event of a tribal war and he had sufficient experience by then to wish to avoid that. He therefore proposed that they should get as near the north eastern boundaries of the Xosa country as possible, in order to escape if necessary.

Unfortunately the journal for March is missing. The next entry on April, 5th informs us that de Buys and his people were "in great terror" at the thought of being killed by kaffirs. The events of March become clearer from the records in the colony. Maynier was visited by Commandant van Hensburg, who had brought Frans Kruger from Gaika. Kruger and Prinsloo had brought Betha's widow from Kafferland. They begged to be pardoned for not coming before, but Gaika refused to let them go. They would no longer remain with him, as he had taken all they possessed. De Buys was no longer on such good terms (bien) with Gaika and they did not know why he had a grudge against them. Kruger begged that their faults might be pardoned, and their departure from Gaika facilitated, Maynier was unsympathetic. He replied that they had gone of their own accord, that Dundas had pardoned them, and that they must make their own arrangements to leave Gaika. Eventually he relented and gave Kruger six dozen buttons and a few pounds of beads to

1. Journal 16 Feb. 1800.

2. *ibid* 24 Feb.



satisfy Gaika. Maynier adds, with apparent satisfaction, that he will soon have this gang of redoubtable men in his power and that Prinsloo and Kruger have gone to fetch their wives, and two deserters are on their way to the drostdy as well.¹

Sir George Younge's optimistic rendering of this news is "The Caffre Chief Chyka has even put to death one of the most violent of the fugitive rebels, who wanted to prevent his concluding a peace with us, and the rest he retains as prisoners to be disposed of as the Government shall think proper". Meanwhile the trial of the prisoners in the Castle was being arranged for².

To return to kaffirland. The Veld Commandant Johannes Strydom and two veldwagtmeesters T.F. Breyer and P.H. Erasmus wrote to de Buys, asking him to assure Gaika of their desire for peace with him. Maynier, they said, treated them very well and made efforts to obtain peace. They referred de Buys to Frans Kruger for news of the prisoners, as he had spoken to the Commissioner personally.³ Probably this letter was entrusted to Kruger. Whether de Buys finally received it or not, the messages and reports brought back by Kruger and Prinsloo from the colony may have helped to pacify Gaika again. Gaika was joined by a number of Hottentots and by his orders the whole company moved about 30 miles further east to the Debe.⁴

Here Gaika was persuaded by his Hottentot allies that the whites had schemes against him. Gaika behaved

1. Rec. C.C. Vol. 111 p. 111. Letter Maynier to Maj. Gen. Dundas. 26 March, 1800.
2. Rec. C.C. Vol. 111 p. 106. Sir G. Younge to Rt. Hon. H. Dundas. 7 April, 1800.
3. BU 26. Letter from messrs. Strydom Breyer and Erasmus to C. de Buys. 7 April, 1800.
4. Journal. 15 to 28 April, 1800.



very insolently to the Europeans and confessed that he had intended to kill them all, but had relented. The Doctor began to think that de Buys' company was unsafe and considered joining the Hottentot kraal¹. This naive confession seems rather ungrateful to his protectors.

On May 17th, de Buys, Kruger (who had not left kaffirland after all) and Bentley, rode to the Colony. The Doctor says nothing of the object of this visit but on their return they all moved to the Heiskamma, nearer the Colony. Here they were followed by Gaika and one of his wives and thirty of his followers who said that they intended to stay with them owing to an "epidemic fever" of which the natives were dying. Gaika no doubt felt safer, where he had de Buys and the Doctor to pray for him in event of illness.

On June 15th the Doctor writes, "all our colonists went on a journey to the Colony". Bentley was left to look after the old man, the women and children. Again no mention is made of their purpose, but they may have kept the facts from van der Kemp. They must have concocted some mad scheme for bargaining for the release of their friends in the Castle, or perhaps they talked themselves into the belief that they could invade the colony successfully.³ The details are rather meagre. The party, among whom were probably some kaffirs⁴, advanced safely to the Baviaans river where they were beaten back by the chief Conga, who refused to have the peace disturbed again.⁵

A messenger was sent to Gaika to complain of these rebels, who threatened the colony with war and invasion in his name. Gaika replied that he would make

1. Journal, 8 and 9th May, 1800.

2. *ibid.* 6 June, 1800.

3 and 5. *rec. C.C.* 111 p. 213. Confession of C. Eotha 15 Aug, 1800.

4. *rec. C.C.* 111. p. 369 Letter Sir G. Younge to Lt. Hon. H. Dundas 5 Jan, 1801.



no treaty without de Buys and that the chief term on which he would consent to peace was that his allies, the prisoners in the Castle, must be released, before which he would accept no present.¹ The prompter behind this reply is obvious.

Christoffel Botha, who was brought to the drostdy a prisoner, confessed that de Buys' object was to drive the English out of the colony and that several Boers knew of the intention which was at Gaika's command. Frans Kruger was to be general and de Buys sovereign. The Commissioners were to be carried off to kaffirland, where they would be treated exactly as the English should treat the Boers in the Castle.²

The invaders, however, were disappointed as the militia (burgher commandos) were called out and the Suurveld, Sneeuwberg and Bruintjes Hoogte were ready to repulse an attack.³ This raid apparently took place in July, for early in August, from the 3rd to the 8th, we find the disappointed deliverers of their country wreaking their illtemper on poor old van der Kemp, who complains that all the children have been kept away from his lessons. He mentions no names, nor gives any reason for his disfavour, but simply ends mysteriously, "The plan for killing me was laid aside by the wonderful interference of God". He held to his principles too, for shortly after he refused to baptize Faber's child until its parents should produce fruits meet for repentance.⁴

Unfortunately this was an extremely dry season and the Doctor was constantly plagued by Gaika and his followers to pray for rain. That was religion for, if not to make rain

1. Rec. C.C. Vol. 111 p. 215. Extracts from Commissioner's Report.
2. Rec. C.C. Vol. 111 p. 213. Confession of C. Botha 16 Aug, 1800.
3. Rec. C.C. Vol. 111 p. 369. Letter Sir J. Younge to Rt. Hon. H. Dundas 5 Jan, 1801.
4. Journal 23 Aug, 1800.



Sometimes he was fortunate and his prayers were answered, but still the natives hinted that there were malevolent people who were stopping up the hole from which the rain came. When the party returned to their old place on the Keiskamma they found it very dry, van der Kemp's house and the surrounding grass being burnt.¹

Sir George Younge, who was convinced that missionary labour was merely a cloak for deep political schemes and Jacobin plots, refused permission to two missionaries who wished to join van der Kemp, "because" he says, "I have undoubted intelligence that Vanderkemp, who has been making excuses for not leaving Guyka, tho repeatedly required, has been propagating not Christianity but the very principles above stated (Jacobin !) and is at this moment the Confidential friend and Companion at Guykas of the fugitive rebel Conrad de Buys, of whom the extract of the Comrs. Dispatched speak. They are inseparable, live and lodge together at Guykas and there is every reason to think de Buys is very far from being converted or discouraged by his new friend and Companion."² This is certainly a very different idea of their relations to that given by the Journal, but then the good Doctor does not tell us everyting. A few months later Sir George writes another indignant letter explaining that van der Kemp had tried to approach the government through the Fiscal, without the Commissioner's knowledge. He wished to propose, privately, a treaty with Gaika, "the terms of which had a tendency to engage us in a war in support of Gaika with some of his enemies, as he called them, and this as, the missionary professes, from a love of peace, though politicks are not within his sphere"³.

1. Journal Aug. 23 1800.

2. rec. C.C. Vol. III p. 340 Private letter, Sir G. Younge to Mt. Hon. H. Dundas, 22 Oct, 1800.

3. rec. C.C. Vol. III p. 391. Letter Sir. G. Younge to Mt. Hon. H. Dundas, 8 Jan, 1801.

meanwhile the temper of the kaffirs was getting more ugly. Three shipwrecked english sailors were killed by the people of Gaika and Umlao. The family of Coenraad Bezuidenhout profited, as they took from them two bags of coffee beans for their own use.¹ Some english deserters were also illtreated by Gaika and his people.² The Bezuidenhouts and Fabers had moved to the Goubussi(Kabusie)³ and the natives were beginning to steal even de Buys' cattle.⁴

The party therefore decided to fight their way through the "Eastern bosjesmen" - probably those near the Stormbergen - in order to find a new country.⁵ On Dec. 28th the Doctor writes, "The Colonists who apprehended themselves to be in considerable danger among the Caffrees (though I believed their fear to be a mere panic) resolved to escape from this country but were undecided where to go." On the last day of the year they therefore set out on a trek which was to last for four months.

The Year 1801.

Their first stage was to the Kabusie river. van der Kemp was nearly drowned in crossing, but was saved by de Buys who hurried to his assistance. They had got so far on the pretext of hunting elephants, so some of the kaffirs had accompanied them. These had to be shaken off before they could proceed.⁶ They managed to get rid of them by the 6th January. The party then consisted of 59

1. Journal 7 Nov. 1800.
2. *ibid* 18 Nov. 1800.
3. *ibid* 31 Oct and 13 Nov. 1800.
4. *ibid*. 12 Nov. 1800.
5. *ibid* 13. Dec. 1800.
6. *ibid* 2 Jan, 1801.



souls. They had a cart, three waggons and 25 horses as well as sheep, goats and over 300 cattle.^{1.}

Their route, as near as can be made out from the Journal, must have been a rough half circle from the Kabusie up the west bank of the Kei river as far as the Stormbergen and then on to the Bamboesbergen and down to Schapevlei in the Tarka district.

From the start they were harassed by the Bushman, who wounded Bentley with two poisoned arrows. They dared not light fires by night and so were troubled by lions,² so that they made "abbatis" and built houses.³

By day the Bushmen were less formidable as Faber managed to seize 20 kaffir beasts from them, for which van der Kemp says he reprimanded him, "but without effect".⁴ Two Hottentots and the kaffir tried to desert with five of the horses but on being pursued they were found murdered in a

1. Journal 6 Jan, 1801. The party is enumerated as follows:-

1 missionary	2 Dutch women	2 Dutch children
4 colonists	1 kaffir woman	13 bastard children
1 kaffir man	2 kaffir girls	15 Hottentot children.
1 Bambookieboy	6 Hottentot women.	
4 Hottentots		
1 slave		
1 German deserter		
5 English deserters.		

18 men

11 women

30 children.

The colonists were Bezuidenhout, Kruger, Faber and de Buys.

The Dutch women were probably the wives of the first two men.

The Kaffir woman was probably one of de Buys' wives, and the Hottentot women were Sara, Kate, Betsy, Leentje (Faber's wife?) Mary (de Buys' wife?) and one other.

The slave was Damin "a Mohometan Hindu", and one Englishman was Bentley.

1. *ibid.* 6 Jan, 1801.

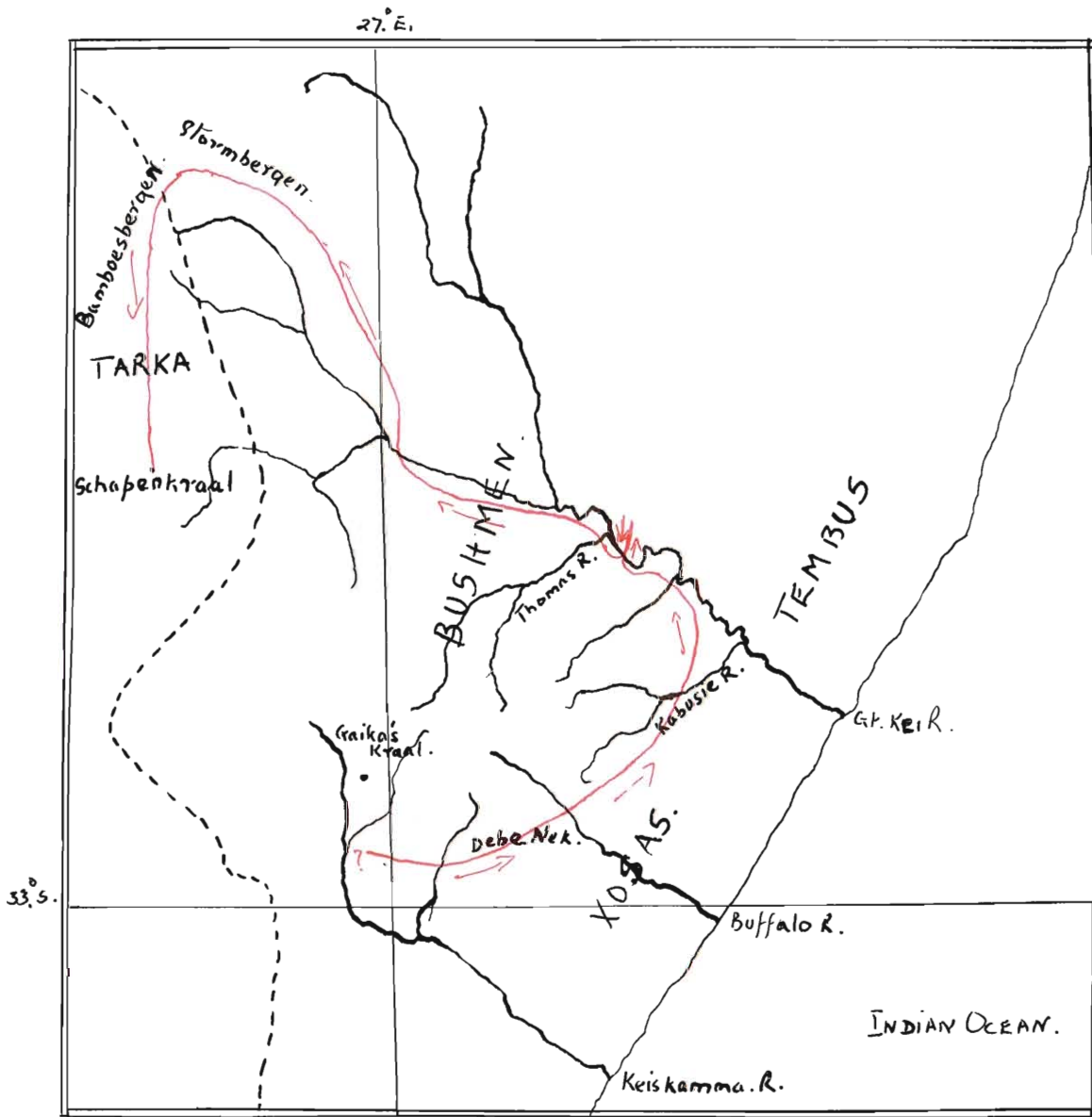
3. *ibid.* 13 Jan, 1801

4. *ibid.* 14 Jan, 1801.



A SKETCH MAP OF THE APPROXIMATE ROUTE TAKEN BY THE PARTY.

Journal. Dir van der Kemp
31 Dec. 1800 - 27 April 1801.



Rec. C.C. Vol VIII Collin's Tour 1809 page 58

"Thomas River, from an English deserter named Thomas Bentley, one of the party above mentioned who had been wounded there by a Boogeman"

c.f. Journal. 6 Jan 1801. Bentley wounded by two arrows by the Bushmen



most shocking manner by the Bushmen, who collected together in a vast number, whistling and shouting at the pursuers, who had to retreat.¹ They decided therefore to move further north where they were less molested.²

Here they even had time for a little relaxation, as appears from an entry on 26th March. "The colonists having got some wine from the colony diverted themselves by intoxicating the soldiers which ended in riot and blasphemy". Plans had been made to steal Tambookie cattle or Gaika's horses but this was "frustrated by God's intervention",³ as horse-sickness had appeared and two Hottentots and 14 horses were killed by poisoned arrows, so that they decided to move nearer the colony for safety.⁴

They reached the Haazenfontein on March 31st, the colonists declaring that it was the highest point in the country. From here Kruger rode to the colony with letters from van der Kemp, asking for transport to the colony, and a letter to Mr. Somerville on behalf of de Buys⁵. This letter has not been found. It may have been another request for pardon, as he had now succeeded in escaping from Gaika.

By the 27th April the party had got through the Bamboesbergen and was on colonial territory. They stopped at Schapenkraal, about four miles from the boundary in the Tarka district.⁶ Bezuidenhout offered his waggon to transport the Doctor to van der Walt's place⁷, where he obtained money to pay the people with whom he had been living, i.e. the fugitives.⁸ Before he left, van der Kemp was

1. Journal 29 Jan, 1801.

2. *ibid* 30 Jan.

3. *ibid* 28 March.

4. *ibid* 26 March.

5. *ibid* 6 April.

6. D. Moodie, The Record Part V. 1808-1809 page 6.

7. Journal 27 April, 1801.

8. *ibid* 30 April, 1801.



able to write, "By the mercy of the Lord I got an opportunity to converse freely with Buys on the concerns of his soul"¹. As they were going to part de Buys no doubt listened patiently to a little sermon.

By the middle of May, the missionary was in Graaff Reinet, where Maynier told him that only the fear of endangering his safety had prevented the government from sending a force to take the fugitives from Gaika.²

Shortly after, messengers arrived from Gaika, who said he was very grieved to have lost van der Kemp and that de Buys had always tried to stir up the King's mind against him, but that he had always resisted these attempts. Although de Buys would not have wished van der Kemp to usurp his place as the King's counsellor, he could easily have persuaded Gaika to send van der Kemp back to the colony if he had really wished him out of the way.

The Doctor was also shocked to hear that cattle had been extorted from Gaika in his name, in order that he should pray for rain. De Buys had probably "given" so much of his property to Gaika, who was extremely covetous, that one is inclined to sympathise with him if he took what the unpractical Doctor did not want.³

The presence of "Gaika's clique"⁴ added another disturbance to the frontier. The farmers were desperate as a result of kaffir and Hottentot depredations and could get no satisfaction from Maynier, who reported that the natives were behaving well.⁵ In July the farmers appeared in arms at the drostdy and demanded redress. Maynier ascribed the rising to various reasons given, he

1. Journal 30 April, 1801.

2. *ibid* 14 May.

3. *ibid* 19 May.

4. *rec. C.C.* Vol. IV p. 34 Letter ^aMaynier to Gn. Dundas
(?) July 1800.

5. *ibid* p. 26.



said, by the farmers.

The usual sort of rumours were spread. Four hundred armed men were approaching and they would be joined by a large number from Swellendam under Tjaart van der Walt, and C. de Buys with thousands of kaffirs would be there too.¹

Maynier said that the well-intentioned farmers had not the courage to support the government owing to the threats of a band of ill-intentioned men, who forced them to join their party and threatened that if the rising failed and they were forced to retreat, they would flee with their booty to the "Groot Rivier" and to Namaqualand. This party he said consisted of people who had nothing to lose and who were thus capable of committing any crime; such men as Piet Irins, Frans Kruger, the Bezuidenhouts, the English deserters - all Waikas clique, except de Buys.² De Buys at this time was probably trying to reinstate himself as a good burgher. It will be remembered that van der Kemp had written to Comerville on his behalf. In addition there is a letter from van Rensburg to de Buys, in which he excuses himself for not going to see de Buys as he had been requested, owing to his having no horses. Nevertheless, he assures him that he is trying to arrange matters for him "om een verbetering voor u te soeken" and advises him to write to the Commissioner, even if only to let him know where he can be found. Van Rensburg ends by saying "ook hebbe ik ondersoek gedaan na die Jabuleusje woorde die wy hier gehoort hebbe gehat maar ik kan gantz geen grond kryge van de saak als alles leugenagtig"³.

1. Rec. C.C. Vol. IV p. 29 Letter Maynier to Gen. Dundas
(?) July 1800.

2. Ibid p. 34

3. BU 34. Letter H.J. Van Rensburg to C. de Buys 16 May,
1801. A.C.T.



Could he be referring to the rumour that the government intended pressing them for soldiers and sailors, which was one of the reasons given by Maynier for the discontent on the frontier ?

De Buys' efforts to try and gain a pardon must have been known to Maynier, for which reason he excludes de Buys' name from the list of disturbers. According to Collins the fugitives who remained after van der Kemp left Schapenkraal, returned^{ed} to the T'sy (kei) and some of them went even beyond the country of the Tambookies. This he must have heard from Coenraad Bezuidenhout's son, who was his guide.¹ De Buys was said to have brought to the colony a "Mambookies" girl from the second nation beyond the kaffirs (Xosas is meant) but this may also be inaccurate.² If de Buys ever visited Natal, it must have been at this time (1802) and not before 1794 as has been suggested.³ Michael de Buys said that before returning to the colony they went to Natal and to the old place of the "Kaalkaffers" of which he did not know the name. There his father took the sister of Moselikatse and they were married in the colony. Her children were Doris, Gabriel, Jan, Baba and Michael himself.⁴

Meanwhile, Graaff Reinet remained disturbed and complaints against Maynier poured in, some from the most law abiding farmers, so that when the drostdy was again threatened in October, troops were sent to relieve Maynier and he was recalled. It was announced that the farmers' grievances would be investigated, after which the

1. Rec. C. C. Vol. VII p. 57.

2. John Campbell, Travels 1815. p. 533.

3. G. Preller. Sketse & Opstelle - Buys en sy bure.

4. S. Hofmeyr. Twintig Jaren - - - p. 6.

people were easily dispersed.¹

For the remainder of the period during which the English held the Cape, some efforts were made to deal with Xosa and Hottentot marauders, but nothing definite was achieved and the Boers lost their respected leader, Tjaart van der Walt. When the Batavian Government took over in 1803, the frontier districts had been practically abandoned by the farmers.

The failure of van der Kemp's mission to the Xosas has been ascribed to de Buys' opposition. There may be some truth in this, but there were more pertinent reasons for failure than that. Lichtenstein ascribes his failure to the fact that the Xosas regarded him as a magician and a rainmaker, and, as his prayers were not always answered, he had to take safety in flight.² This is substantiated too, by many passages in the Doctor's journal.

It is obvious that the Xosas had no desire for his doctrines nor could he help them economically, as the missionaries did for the remnants of tribes in Basutoland later. He seems to have realised this himself, and, while still among the Xosas, devoted himself chiefly to the stray Hottentots he found there. These he found so much more amenable, that he made Hottentot missions his future task.

1. Rec. C.C. Vol. IV p. 97 Proclamation 29 Nov, 1801.
2. Lichtenstein's Travels. Vol. 1 p. 312.



CHAPTER VI.

A return to the Colony. 1803 - 1813.

When the Cape passed into the hands of the Batavian Republic a proclamation was issued which pardoned all former offences of a political nature.¹ The prisoners in the Castle, whose sentences had been postponed from time to time, were set at liberty after their case had been examined.² General Janssens then set out on a tour of the country to see what could be done to restore peace and prosperity in the eastern districts.³

One of the first tasks he set himself was to induce the colonists living with the kaffirs to leave them, as he distrusted their influence there. A letter was sent to de Buys, asking him to come to Algoa Bay, as he might be of great help in arranging terms with the natives owing to his relations with Gaika. Janssens appealed to de Buys as to one who is a friend to his country, the Dutch colony in South Africa. He writes that he is sure de Buys will help "daar ik veronderstel dat het belang van het Land daar hebt
gij geboren zijt en de grootste tijd van u leeven doorgebracht u altoos dierbaar is".⁴ This was the right appeal to make to one who had been called "the honest protector of our Native Country".⁵ Hendrik van Rensburg was also requested to meet the Governor.⁶

Janssens wrote that the Eastern frontier was in a deplorable state. His messenger had returned and said that van Rensburg was on his way to join the Governor, and

1. BH 109 Proc. 1 March 1803. A.C.T.

2. BH 1 Resolution 30 March 1803. A.C.T.

3 & 4 BH 88 Letter Gen. Janssens to C. de Buys 8 April 1803, A.C.T.

5. Rec. C.C. Vol. III Sentence of the Court. p. 285

6. Theal Belang Hist. Doc. Vol III p. 223. Letter Janssens to De Mist 12 April, 1803.

that Gaika and de Buys would meet them at the Fish river drift at the appointed time. He adds, "Buys zal ik trachten minzaam voor altoos uit Kafferland te krygen"¹.

The kaffirs in the colony said that they would not return until they had fought against Gaika and they begged that de Buys might be removed from Kaffirland². In the middle of June de Buys came to camp with four deserters and asked the Governor to come nearer Gaika's kraal, as he feared his enemies. De Buys was asked to persuade Gaika to make peace and to return to the Colony and he agreed to both these proposals.³

Gaika was next interviewed and declared himself willing to pardon his enemies and to make all the Europeans leave Kaffirland, only de Buys he desired to keep, as he knew his country and the colony and could act as intermediary (tusschenspraak). To this Janssens would not agree, saying that de Buys was coming out to live with his family, but would still remain Gaika's friend.

When asked whether Maynier or Presler had ever instigated him to attack the inhabitants, Gaika replied that Maynier had sent him presents and said that if he would attack and destroy (anvallen en vernielen) de Buys and van Rensburg he should have half the horses and all the cattle, the sheep being for Maynier himself.⁴ Maynier certainly negotiated for de Buys' capture, but he would never have been so foolish as to make such suggestions. Either Gaika was given distorted messages, or he had been primed to make this reply. The whole statement is open to grave doubt

1. BR 93. Letter Janssens to de Mist 31 March 1803 A.C.T.
2. BR 97. p 175. Articles for making peace with the Kaffirs. A.C.T.
3. Theal. Belg. Hist. Doc. Vol. III p. 249. Janssens to de Mist 7 July, 1803. Lichtenstein's Travels. Vol. I. p.390 / 392.
4. BR 93. Account of interview with Gaika. June 1803. A.C.T.



as the interpreters were de Buys himself, and the Hottentot, Platje.¹

Janssens confided to de Mist that of all the strange people gathered together in the district, the most striking (marquanste) were Hendrik Janse van Rensburg and Coenraed de Buys. He considered them both very intelligent men, and thought that something could be made of van Rensburg, who had ambition and could be trusted. De Buys, however, he considered dangerous and untrustworthy. His stay in kaffirland was a series of intrigues. Although some thought he was useful to the Colony there, Janssens believed the contrary. He had great influence over Gaika, but was hated by all his Captains and the kaffirs in the colony.

Janssens considered that de Buys had put Gaika into a dangerous position by his advice, as the chief mixed his words with "vertellingen, vorderingen en verdraaying-en die niets anders dan het gevolg van inblasingen waren". De Buys could realise how they felt towards him and seemed rather abashed (bedeesd) when he appeared in Camp.. He expressed his longing to return to the Long Kloof, Swellendam, and as this agreed with Janssens' plans he urged him to leave as soon as possible, so that he could acquaint de Mist with the true state of the kaffirs. Janssens advised de Mist that it would be best not to make this letter, warning him against de Buys, public.²

A few months later he further qualified his opinion of de Buys by saying that he considered him the most dangerous man in the colony.³

1. C.J. 3232. Interrogation of Jacobus, Johannes Zeeman. A.C.T
2. Theal. Belang. Hist. Doc. vol.iii p. 233 Letter Janssens to de Mist, 6 July, 1803.
3. Letter Janssens to de Mist 16 Oct, 1803 (from a Photostat copy received from the State Archives, 'sGravenhage.)



Johannes Bezuidenhout was interviewed at Graaff Reinet on a complaint made by Gaika that a kaffir in his service had been beaten to death. Bezuidenhout replied that he had employed a native who had later gone to serve de Buys. He had beaten him for theft, but the kaffir was in good health and only died three months later. He demanded that de Buys should bring witnesses to prove what he said. De Buys, he added, was an intriguer (intrigant) who had not a single friend and who had been of no account since his earliest years (niets het gedeugd). He had always been a disturber (oproermaker) and persecutor (vervolger) of Christians as well as blacks and had caused Gaika to bring this charge against him to damage him and bring him into bad repute with the authorities.¹ This little tirade is quite mild, compared with some of the accusations these people brought against each other.

General Janssens left a small force at Fort Frederick to keep order and returned to the capital, while de Buys went back with Gaika to fetch his family and possessions. He seemed in no hurry to keep his word and the kaffirs in the colony, in spite of Gaika's promises, remained there, Conga saying that he must first gather his crops², and others complaining that de Buys was still with Gaika, instigating him against them.³

Cornelis Faber appeared at Graaff Reinet with two waggon loads of cabinet-wood (werk hout) for sale. The Landdrost informed him that if they appeared in the colony again, without having taken final leave of kaffirland, they would be arrested and sent to the capital.⁴

1. BR 93 p 381 (undated but July 1803) Het geval van Johannes Bezuidenhout. A.C.T.
2. BR 42 Letter Maj. v. Gilten to Janssens. 26 Oct 1803. A.C.T.
3. BR 45. Letter Eptn Alberti to Janssens 20 Nov. 1803. A.C.T.
4. BR 45 Letter Alberti to Janssens. 19 Dec 1803. A.C.T.



In September messages had arrived at Graaff-Reinet from Gaika, complaining that Ndlambi still robbed and murdered and asking for advice, as he did not wish to break his contract with the governor. He was keeping de Buys too, until he had instructions what to do, as he did not regard it safe to let him go.¹ Van Gilten was angry because these messages should have come to him direct and he thought it all a ruse on de Buys' part to make trouble, and would not believe anything against Gaika's enemies.²

Alberti took over Fort Fredrick and sent two letters to de Buys from the governor, ordering the Landdrost to get a receipt for them when they were handed over to de Buys.³ The chiefs in the colony were interviewed, but there was not much hope of getting them to move without force, as they feared Gaika and distrusted de Buys. Ndlambi declared that if he was distrusted for the death of Jan Botha an escort could be sent to fetch de Buys from Gaika.⁴ When this interview took place de Buys had already been on colonial territory for eight days, four colonists having volunteered to go to Kaffirland with a waggon to fetch him.⁵

At Bruintjes Hoogte de Buys, Faber and an English deserter Jan Naader (Lichtenstein calls him John Naader) met Alberti on their way to Graaff Reinet, from where they intended going to the Long Kloof. This removed the last of Gaika's clique.⁶

de Buys reported that Gaika was trying to induce all the chiefs except Ndlambi, to return to him. He had also heard from Thomas Bentley that he, the Bezuidenhouts, the Lochenbergs and some other deserters were

1. BR.42 Letter Gerotz to Maj. v Gilten 8 Oct.1803 A.C.T.
2. BR.42 Letter Maj.v Gilten to Janssens 26.Oct.1803. A.C.T
3. BR.43. Letter Alberti to Landt.Gerotz. 31 Oct.1803 A.C.T
These letters were dated 1.th & 16th Oct.1803 but I have not been able to trace them. They were probably orders to leave at once.

4. 5. 26. BR 45 Letter Alberti to Janssens 19 Dec: 1803. (see enclosure) A.C.T.

planning to go to Delagoa Bay and were waiting for powder and ammunition from the Cape. They hoped to get others from the Colony to join them. They were prevented from getting their ammunition and so forced to keep along the Orange River and so Coenraad Bezuidenhout was eventually caught and brought back.¹ De Buys seemed determined that all his associates should be forced to follow the lawful paths, since he had decided to do so.

He further reported that Bentley had warned him to be careful, as the Governor was sent by the Prince and not by the Dutch government. Apparently they had so many tales to tell that Alberti no longer knew what to believe. He says, "Ik beken met deezer zaak verlegen geraakt te zyn. Coenraad de Buys is te weinig te betrouwen als dat men op het geen hy zegd zoude kunnen te werk gaan, en wie weet wat hem beweegt het bovengemelde te vertellen"².

In Swellendam de Buys settled on his farm "d' Opkomst over de Lange en agter de Attaquas Cloof".³ This was probably the farm formerly held by his brother Johannes⁴. This farm appears to have been granted to Coenraad by the government, but there is no record of this, nor of the terms on which he held it.

The following year, while on tour, de Mist visited this neighbourhood and asked de Buys to come and meet him and we are fortunate to have here Lichtenstein's description of him -

"He was invited to meet us and came on the thirty first of December. The representations to which rumour, too much addicted to exaggeration, had given us

1. Gr.Rt. 55 Letter Alberti to Soeke 17 Jan. 1806. A.C.T.
2. Bh. 45 Letter Alberti to Janssens. 19 Dec. 1803. A.C.T.
3. J. 293. Opg. afrol. A.C.T.
4. S.G. 27 p. 239. Johannes de Buys takes "d'Opkomst aan de Kouga agter de Attaquas Aloop 1780 -1790 & S.G. 43, for 1794.



beforehand of this extraordinary man, were corrected from the moment of his entrance. His uncommon height, for he measured nearly seven feet; the strength yet admirable proportion of his limbs, his excellent carriage, his firm countenance, his high forehead, his whole mien, and a certain dignity in his movements, made altogether a most pleasing impression. Such one might conceive to have been the heroes of ancient times; he seemed the living figure of a Hercules, the terror of his enemies, the hope and support of his friends. We found in him, and it was what according to the descriptions given we had little reason to expect, a certain modesty, a certain retiredness in his manner and conversation, a mildness and kindness in his looks and mien, which left no room to suspect that he had lived several years among the savages, and which still more even contributed to remove than his conversation the prejudice we had conceived against him. He willingly gave information concerning the objects upon which he was questioned, but carefully avoided speaking of himself and his connection with the Caffres. This restraint, which was often accompanied with a sort of significant smile, that spoke of the inward consciousness of his own powers, and in which was plainly to be read that his forbearance was not the result of fear, but that he scorned to satisfy the curiosity of anyone at the expense of truth, or of his own personal reputation, made him more interesting to us, and excited our sympathy much more than it would perhaps have been excited by the relation of his story."¹ From this glowing description of de Buys, then about forty-three years of age, we see that

1. Lichtenstein's Travels. Vol. I p. 261.



he had not lost his power to charm and interest those with whom he came into contact.¹

There must have been others though, who were not so charmed at having this notorious figure living amongst them. His brother, in keeping with the family tradition for violence, was summonsed during this period for insolence to the veld commandant P.H. van Rooyen, for which he was severely reprimanded.²

A few months later Coenraad de Buys sent in a complaint, in the form of a memorial asking that his presence might be recognised as legal.³ Although the memorial was written by a notary, the style of the document is typical of Coenraad. He begins by saying that he will not go into the causes which led to his total destruction, the ruin of his numerous household, nor tell of the misfortunes he has wrestled through during the past eight or nine years; nor is he actuated by revenge against those whom he considers the causes and instruments of his ill-fortune. He is only thankful that Providence has given him the power to endure and the good fortune to return after many years among the heathen nations, to the land of his birth under the rule of those appointed to their high positions by the Batavian government.

If, however, he is to remain peacefully among his compatriots, he wishes to inform the Commissary General that during the time the English government was at the Cape, a notice was published declaring him an outlaw and offering a hundred rixdollars for his capture, alive or dead.

1. "Klad Journaal" of de Mist's Tour, Theals belang. Hist. Doc. Vol. III mentions an interview with de Buys on 31 Dec. 1803, but gives no details.
2. S'dam 15. J. de Buys. 23 Dec. 1803.
3. Original memorial from a photostat copy from the State Archives 's Gravenhage. Copy in BR.III Resolutions 15 May, 1804. The memorial is not dated.

He has long since forgiven this murderous attempt on his life but would like it to be made known, just as publicly, that he has returned to the Colony with the full consent and knowledge of the highest authority in the colony, to live as a quiet and peaceful burgher, under the protection of the laws. He begs that this notice against him may be declared null and void, so that not the slightest "infamie Juris" may rest, or be considered to have rested, on him. He encloses a copy of the "Bekendmaking" of 14th Feb. 1798.

We gather from this that some of his neighbours cast black looks on him and that he was attempting everything in his power to wipe out the past and begin afresh. His petition was discussed in Council on May 15th. De Buys was to be informed that his pardon was included in the general amnesty given on 1 March 1803. Further, his return had been made, not only with the knowledge of, but by the express commands of the Governor and General -in-Chief, and that he might live free and undisturbed among the other inhabitants as long as he behaved well. The decree of outlawry was now cancelled and non-effective. He was to be sent a copy of these resolutions which he could have registered at the drostdy at Graaff-Reinet, or wherever he considered it necessary.¹

We hear no more of de Buys during the Batavian rule and for the first few years he probably tried hard to settle down in his new surroundings with his "numerous household". The revolutionary wars in Europe continued and in 1806 General Janssens was forced to relinquish the Cape to a superior English force. Up to 1814 the Cape was held by right of conquest and there was still a chance that it would have to be restored to the Dutch when peace was finally

1. BR 111 Resolution 15 May, 1804. A.C.F.



declared. During all these years de Buys lived quietly and we hear comparatively little of him.

In March 1809 one, Martinus Menderon, was granted a loan-farm, De Doorn Rivier,¹ which he allowed Coenraad to occupy.² The farm lay between the Long Kloof and the Attaquas Kloof, near therefore, to his other farm, d'Opkomst.³ In October his nearest neighbours, J.M. Heyns, O. Heyns and A.J. Fourie complained that this farm should not have been granted, as it lay too near theirs and took all the water from the upper reaches of the Doorn river before it could reach them. In addition, M. Heyns' farm was also used as an Outspan, so that it was against the custom of the land to have granted Menderon this farm. De Buys was apparently not a popular neighbour as the Memorial states that the grant was detrimental to the water and grazing of the inhabitants who used the Outspan and benefitted one who was unworthy of the government's favour - "een ingezetene bevoordeeld die daden na diefte amaakende aan zig heeft laten versijten zonder zijne beschuldigers dies wegens te regt te doen stellen - en dus 's Gouvernements gunst onwaardig is" They offered to pay the same rent for it as Menderon paid in order that the farm might be used solely as an Outspan place.⁴ In January 1811 the farm was examined by the Heemraad Rousseau, who found that the complaints of the neighbours were justified. The Landdrost and Heemraden therefore reported to the Colonial Office that, in their

1. and 3. C.O. 43 Landt. & Heemraden to Col. Off. 15 March 1809. Report on memorials for Land (M.J.Menderon) A.C.T.
2 and 4. J'dam 52. Memorial of Heyns & Fourie 8 Oct. 1809 and on the back of second page appears the report of the Heemraad J. Rousseau 29, Jan, 1811. A.C.T.



opinion, the grant ought to be withdrawn, and the occupier compelled to evacuate the ground.¹ In April 1812 de Buys paid 60 Rds. rent for the farm, a note stating that the grant had expired in 1811.²

In other ways life was not too easy for him either. In a dispute with a Hottentot servant he had to confess that he had engaged the man before the registering of contracts became compulsory.³ At the end of the same year the Landdrost reprimanded a veldcornet for his unjust behaviour towards a de Buys. The veldcornet justified his behaviour by saying that the Commandant Linde had ordered all Hottentots to be called up for military duty if they had no contracts. On this de Buys' farm, no contracts were found, so all his servants were taken.⁴ Although no Christian name is given in this instance, it may very likely have been Coenraad, taking into consideration the first case and the fact that his "opgaaf" showed a great decrease in Hottentot servants from 1811 to 1813.⁵

In the kaffir war at this period the Landdrost Stockenstrom and nine others were massacred by the kaffirs, one of these being Philip Buys, a halfbreed interpreter.⁶ He was most probably one of Coenraad's sons.

During his stay in the colony de Buys had some of his children baptised. De Villiers gives the names of three, sons of Maria⁷ (called Mary by van der Kemp ?) and Hofmeyr says he found the baptismal certificate of Michael

1. CO 100. Report on Memorial of Heyns and Fourie 9 Sep, 1811. A.C.T.
2. CO 90. Lyst der gecollecteerde recognitie penningen. A.C.T.
3. S'dam 17. Minute 31 Jan, 1811. A.C.T.
4. S'dam 17. Letter Veldct. J.J. van Rensburg to Landt. 12 Dec. 1811. A.C.T.
5. J. 297 & J. 68. His name does not appear on the list for 1811. A.C.T.
6. Theal Vol. IV. p. 254. The original report cannot be found
7. C.C. de Villiers. Old Cape families. Vol. 1 p. 127.



too.¹ There were probably others but they may have been Christened by the missionaries, if at all.

On 8th January, 1811 a certain Coenraad Willem de Buys married Catherina Dorothea Meyering. The letter of consent was signed by his father "C.D. Buys" and entered in the register as "consent van zyn vader C de Buys"². Everything points to this being Coenraad's son. There was no other C. de Buys in the district at this time. In the "opgaaf rollen" their names appear in succession as Coenraad senior and Coenraad junior.³ A later will of the wife of a Coenraad Willem de Buys⁴ gives the name of one of the children as retrus - a common name in Coenraad's family, so that they were probably descendants. The difficulty is that this signature of 1811 differs very much from his other three signatures of 1787, 1788 and 1804, which all agree closely. But this may have been a deliberate disguise of signature, for obvious reasons.

In 1812 the burghers not living in the Graaff-Reinet or Uitenhage districts could make a money contribution towards the defence of the frontier against the Xosas. This exempted them from military service there.⁵ Coenraad contributed 40 Rds, Coenraad Willem 20 Rds. and Johannes de Buys 5 Rds., to this fund,⁶ each according to his means.

The last we hear of de Buys before his final departure from the colony is his participation in the trial of "awaade" Martha Ferreira at George in 1813. The complaints of Read and van der Kemp led to an enquiry at the Circuit

1. J. Hofmeyr. Twintig Jaren p 6.
2. C.O. 73. Marriage Returns for S'dam 1811 and S'dam 27, 8 Jan, 1811.
3. See e.g. J. 68. A.C.T.
4. Pretoria Estate No. 7975.
5. C.O. 1762. Proclamation 4 Dec, 1812.
6. C.O. 90. Landt. to Col. Off. 2 Dec. 1812.



Court of 1813, which became known as the black Circuit.

The Ferreriras had been moved from the vicinity of Fort Fredrick by the order of the Batavian government in 1803, owing to complaints made against them for their ill-treatment of the coloured people.¹ F.H. Ferreira and his wife Martha, were permitted to settle in the Long-loof with a brother, Ignatius Ferreira.²

The trial of Martha, at George, was one of the biggest cases ever tried by any court in the colony up to that date.³ She was accused of the murder or maiming of ten of her servants and was said to have been driven from her brother-in-law's home because of her cruelty. She was the mother of ten children and appeared better educated than was the rule for a farmer's daughter. A larger number than usual attended the proceedings "so that the silent attention which was paid by all did not a little contribute to increase the solemnity of this trial". The interest increased when she answered 240 interrogatories "with that modest, decent and at the same time feeling deliberation and coolness which can alone proceed from conscious innocence or from those hackneyed in all the ways of hypocrisy and deceit"

One of the charges against her was based on a tale told to the missionaries by Coenraad de Buys, who had got the story from a kaffir who had come from Ferreira's. The story was that about five years before (± 1808) a kaffir and two women came to his place and told him that Fiet Ferreira's wife had beaten a Hottentot girl, Griet, until the blood ran from her nose and mouth. When the veldcornet came to investigate he found the hut burned, with the girl in it.

In his deposition de Buys said that he heard

1. Theal Selang.hist.Doc.Vol.III p.225. Complaints of Head and van der Kemp to Maj. van Gilten 6 May. 1803.
2. BR 5. Resolution 4 Jan, 1804, A.C.T.
3. Rec. C.C. Vol. I, p. 328. An account of the trial given by G. Beerslaerts van Blootland to Henry Alexander 10 Feb. 1814



afterwards that the incident of the burnt hut referred to Rachel and not to Griet.

When called as a witness, in the presence of the accused woman, de Buys stuck to the truth of his deposition.¹ Most of the tales against Martha Ferreira were found to be exaggerated or untrue and she managed to clear herself of the most serious charges.

This incident cannot have made de Buys more popular with his neighbours and soon after this he must have left the colony for good. What his reasons were is difficult to discover. He may have been harassed by petty troubles for a number of years. Game was getting scarcer, and in September 1814 the game laws were to be enforced strictly in the George district.²

It has been suggested that there was still hope that the Cape might be restored to its former owners when peace came, but this hope was finally lost when the Cape was ceded to England on 14th August 1814. There is just the possibility that de Buys had heard this news before he left the colony, but more likely he had already left George before this date. Unfortunately there are no early George records to be found, so we do not know whether Coenraad had got into some trouble which he wished to avoid. It is more likely that he had just got to the stage where he had forgotten the more hazardous side of his early exile and only remembered his freedom from restrictions, so that he longed to go roaming again.

The best reason I found for his departure is given by Campbell. In the Long Kloof he visited the widow Sondag and, "A boor there enquired if I knew a boor who was beyond the limit of the name of Boich"³ who

1. For the trial of Martha Ferreira see
C.J. 3011. 31 Dec. 1812 & 5 Jan 1813.
C.O. 108 C. de Buys 13th witness 3 Oct. 1812.
C.O. 1945. 3 May, 1811. C.J. 3253 Bylagen Process
Verbaal van der Kemp & Mead. A.C.T.
2. Rec. C.C. Vol. IX p. 197. 30 Sep. 1814.
3. The way an Englishman would probably spell the name.



had married a Caffre woman whom his friends so much despised that he left the colony in disgust"¹

Previously Campbell had written "I heard of a boor at present in the colony who had lived a long time in Caffraria, where he married both a Caffre and a Hottentot. On the English capturing the Cape², he returned to the colony bringing along with him his two wives and a Mambookis³ girl, from the second nation beyond the Caffres. This girl he caused to be well educated, when he discarded his Hottentot and Caffre wives and married her"⁴ This can only refer to de Buys with whose affairs the missionaries would be familiar through Dr. van der Kemp.

That de Buys had married before his departure is further supported by the fact that he never once gave the names of any wife or number of children in his "opgaaf" until 1813 when his wife's name appears - Elizabeth.⁵ Was she the Mambookies girl, or the sister of Moselikatse, whom he was supposed to have married in the colony?

So at the age of about fifty two, and after trying to live as a "quiet and peaceful burgher" for eleven years Coenraad returned to his roaming and began the most lawless period of his career.

1. Two M.S. note books in the S.A. Library Capetown (Books I & III) Mr. Lloyd told me that Book II was destroyed with the Gubbins collection in the fire at the Witwatersrand University.
2. A natural error.
3. Van der Kemp's journal describes the Mambookies as living along the east coast beyond the Tambookies. 29 Dec. 1799.
Lichtenstein's Travels Vol. I p. 367 says that the colonists called the Gonaquas the Mambookies
4. Campbell's Travels (1815) p. 533.
5. J. 68. Opgaafrol N.C.T. No marriage record can be found.



Year	1805	1806	1807	1808	1809	1810	1811	1812	1813
Reference Number Act	J.291	J.292	J.293	J.294	J.295	J.296	J.297	J.299	J.68
Vrou									Elizabeth
Zonen									
Dogteren									
Hottentot Mannen	4	4	4	6	6	2	4		1
" Jongens	0	0	4	16	16	3	7		
" Vrouwen			8	9	9	4	6		1
" Meisjes			10	6	6	4	7		
Slaven				1	1				
Wagen of kar paarden			1	1	1	2	1		2
Aantal paarden						2			
Trek ossen	30	30	28	40	40	20	24		14
Aanteei beesten	69	69	40	81	81	121	100		12
Hamels			15						
Aanteei Schapen	120	120	181	392	392	95	46		
Bokken	59	59	16	177	177	27	108		
Widen gars gezaaid	1	1	2			2	4		
" gars gewonnen	14	14	28			18	35		
" tarwe gezaaid	4	4	6	6	6	7	5		
" tarwe gewonnen	40	40	40	105	105	60	40		
" rogge gezaaid									
" rogge gewonnen									
Wijnstokken						4000			
Leggers wijn						1 legger			
Leggers Brandewijn						1 legger			
Wagens of karren	2	2	2	1	1	1	2		2
Naam van plaats			d'Opkomst over de Ganga	d'Opkomst	d'Opkomst	De Doorn Rivier	d'Opkomst de Doorn R.		
Aard van plaats			Veeplaats	Veeplaats	Veeplaats	Landbouw	Veeplaats Landbouw		
Vorm van Besit			Leenings	Leenings	Leenings	Leenings	Albei Leenings		
Uren van Hoofdstad			48	40	40	32	40 & 32		
District	Z'dam	Z'dam	Z'dam	Z'dam	Z'dam	Z'dam	Z'dam		George /



Veldkornetschap	Agter Lange Cloof	Agter Lange Cloof	Agter Lange Cloof	Agter Attaquas Cloof	Lange & Attaquas Cloof		
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The above table shows extracts from the Swellendam and George "opgaafrollen". In 1812 Coenraad's name does not appear in the Swellendam roll and there is no roll for George. In the 1806 roll Coenraad's name has been scored through. The years 1805 and 1806 are the same and also the years 1808 and 1809 which shows how unreliable these figures are.



CHAPTER VII.

Beyond the Orange River and Northwards. 1814 - 1825.

The northern frontier of the colony attracted as many lawless characters at this time as the eastern frontier did. A prohibited trade was carried on with the Griquas, who unlike the more primitive tribes, used firearms and wore more or less European clothing. The Griquas were composed of Hottentots and people of mixed descent, who were established at Griquatown (the old Klaarwater) under Mr. Anderson, of the London Missionary Society.

To the northwest of Griquatown lay the haunts of the notorious bandit Afrikaner and to the south-east was the newly established station for Bushmen, Tooverberg (or Toorenberg) under Mr. Smit of Lethelsdorp.¹ Further in the interior lived the various tribes of the Bechuanas whom travellers reported as a peaceful people with many cattle.²

All these people were beyond the jurisdiction of the colonial government. Nevertheless, the government kept itself informed of what was happening there, in the interests of the safety of the northern districts. The missionaries, naturally, were expected to co-operate and help keep the peace.³

Towards the end of 1814 it was reported that there were kaffirs at the Groot Rivier (Orange) who mixed with the people there and robbed the Bushmen. The veldtcoronet of Zeekoe river begged that the kaffirs might be driven away "wyl het van het begin der waereld geen wooning van de kaffirs is geweest om die reeden zoo ben ik er niets Goeds van te wagte".

1. CO 1473. Letter C.O. to Smit. 26 July, 1814. Permission to begin at "Toorenberg" A.C.T.
2. See Travels of Lichtenstein and in Rec. C.C. Reports of Somerville and Truter 1801 & Colonel Collins 1802.
3. CO 1476. Letter C.O. to Anderson 17 Jan, 1817. A.C.T.



In addition, he complained that the burghers went without his permission to the missionary at the Orange river.¹

The colonial office replied that they could not allow an attack on the kaffirs coming from the Baviaans-river to the Orange, unless they molested the colonists or entered colonial territory.² The chief of these stragglers were under the leadership of Cola (or Kola) and Lantzer.

The exact date of de Buys' departure from George cannot be fixed. He gave in his last "oggaaf" in 1813, this usually being taken in the first quarter of the year. Early in 1815 Cuyler, landdrost at Uitenhage, had heard the de Buys was among the kaffirs again, having entered kaffirland from the Nieuweveld, where he had last lived.³ He had been accompanied by another colonist, who had returned, leaving his family with de Buys. Cuyler warns the landdrost of Graaff Reinet, Fischer, that de Buys is a dangerous character and suggests that the Bezuidenhouts at Baviaan's river might be discreetly sounded, as he suspects that they know of the matter and could say where he could be found.⁴

At the end of the month Fischer, who had visited the Table Mountain on the border, reported that the Rev. Mr. Kircherer had heard from Mr. Anderson, who was then in Capetown, that his people coming from the Orange river stated that Coenraad de Buys with Lantzer and other kaffirs was there.⁵

Whether de Buys had fallen in with the band and

1. Gr.Rt. 162. Report of Veldct. H.J. v.d. Walt to Landt. 24 Nov. 1814. A.C.T.
2. CO 1474. Letter C.O. to Landt. J.H. Fischer. 13 Jan. 1815. A.C.T.
3. Cf. S. Hofmeyr - Twintig Jaren ... page 6. Says de Buys was a farmer from Beaufort West, as the district was later called.
4. Slagters Lek. N.O.V. Leibbrandt p. 783. Letter J.G. Cuyler to Landt. Fischer. 16 Jan. 1815. The original cannot be found as the back of the Vol. in which it should have appeared has been damaged.
5. CO 155. Letter Fischer to C.O. 28 Jan. 1815. A.C.T.



persuaded them to move to the Orange, or whether he had simply accompanied them on their way, is difficult to say. Stockenstrom discovered later, that Lantzer had "conducted" de Buys to the Orange and that a colonist, David de Koker (de Kooker) had accompanied him half way and then turned back. This de Kooker, however, intended to rejoin him again and had given Lantzer ammunition to conduct him to de Buys.¹

In May 1815 the missionary Smit at Toverberg wrote that his settlement was a failure, as the Bushmen were suspicious, and said "that the missionaries were only come among them to betray them to the colonials". Smit wished to leave and found a similar institution in the colony.² Coenraad de Buys has been accused of wrecking this station³, but I can find no direct proof of this. Not a single missionary mentioned him in this connection although it is possible that he may have instigated the kaffirs who were disturbing the station in December 1815.⁴ Smit's mother-in-law gave evidence later that the institution was broken up in 1819 by "Boors" who took children away in their waggons and whose representations caused the landdrost to break up the institution.⁵ This was long after de Buys had left these parts.

At the end of 1815 the event, known as the Slaughter's Nek rebellion took place. On comparing this rising with the van Jaarsveld rising in 1799 it is surprising how much they have in common. Their methods of procedure, their aims, their oaths and their allies, the kaffirs, are all reminiscent of the former events. This may be due to the fact that the participants were in both cases the same people, or sons of the previous rebels. One of the ringleaders was Cornelis Faber, Coenraad's old ally in kaffirland. The government

1. CO 208 Letter A. Stockenstrom to C.O. 29 July, 1815. A.C.T
2. CO 155 Letter A. Stockenstrom to C.O. 30 May, 1815. A.C.T
3. E.A. Walker, South African History, page 158.
4. CO 155. Letter Landt. Fischer to C.O. 23 Dec. 1815. A.C.T
5. Blue book 1835. p. 174 Evidence of Mrs. Solomon Baretz.



became doubly anxious to trace de Buys when these plots became known. From Captain Andrew's post on the Fish river, Major Fraser wrote that the rebels expected to be joined by a large number of kaffirs and that Cornelis Faber and Coenraad de Buys were raising them, de Buys having been in kaffirland for over five months.¹

If this was true, de Buys must have left the Orange river again, but probably the rebels were merely trading on his name, as Stockenstrom said later that if de Buys had known of the rising he would have taken part in it. At the examination of the rebels Faber confessed that Johannes Bezuidenhout and Bothma had wished to go to the Orange river, but he did not think that they wished to join de Buys, as he and Bezuidenhout had never been able to tolerate each other.³ This was the same Bezuidenhout whom de Buys had accused of beating Gaika's kaffir to death. Bezuidenhout himself was shot dead in kaffirland when trying to resist capture.

A few months later Stockenstrom heard of de Buys' whereabouts from a Hottentot of the Bethelsdorp institution, who had accompanied the missionary Evans to Klarwater. He had met de Buys out hunting, a day's journey beyond the institution. De Buys made many enquiries about the colony and asked if any "Boors" were coming to join him as he was expecting some. The Klarwater people told him that de Buys lived about three hours ride⁴ from their kraal and he had a number of Korannas and Bushmen with him. De Buys, they said, had done everything in his power to persuade the people of the school to join him. He said that the missionaries would betray them to the government and they would be sent to the colony as soldiers. This

1. C.J. 3330. Letter Maj. Fraser to Landt, Grahamstown 16 Nov. 1816. A.C.T.

2. and 4. CO 174. Letter A. Stockenstrom to C.O. 12 March 1816. Leibbrandt in "Slagters Nek" gives a poor copy of this letter - his version is three hundred yards for three hours ride.

3. C.J. 3329. Examination of Cornelis Faber.



made them uneasy and they wanted to leave. De. Buys had tried to buy ammunition from Anderson. The missionary thought it dangerous for Mr. Evans to go to Latakao on account of the impression made on the savages by de Buys. Stockenström feared that those banished from Graaff-Reinet after the Blagtersnek events would be too near de Buys if they were allowed to go to the Tulbagh Group, as they intended.¹

Stockenström was commended for this discovery of de Buys' hiding place, but as this was outside the boundaries the landdrost at Tulbagh would simply have to keep a close watch on his movements. If he entered the colony and caused any disturbance, or broke the laws, he could be arrested and brought before the proper courts of law.³

If de Buys had remained there peacefully he might have been ignored, but he made further trouble. The bastards had always carried on barter with lawless colonists in an unobtrusive fashion. In de Buys they found a more daring leader. The Hendrik's and Goeyman's families and others, joined him⁴, and procured firearms on the borders of the colony and even threatened the institution itself⁵ in the hopes of getting ammunition.⁶

Stockenström feared trouble, as the Griquas, if they ran short of cattle, would trade with the tribes farther in the interior, which might give rise to disputes, especially as the peace had already been broken by Coenraad de Buys.⁷

His fears were justified, for soon after they formed a commando under de Buys and plundered a number of

1. C.O. 174. Letter Stockenström to C.O. 22 March, 1816. A.C.T.
2. C.O. 1475. Letter C.O. to Stockenström 19 April, 1816. A.C.T.
3. C.O. 1475. Letter C.O. to J.H. Fisher, 19 April, 1816. A.C.T.
4. Blue book 1835 p. 212. Melville's Report - Buys is misprinted "bergs" - see J. Orpen, Reminiscences p. 191.
5. C.O. 184. Letter Anderson to Stockenström, 5 June 1816. A.C.T.
6. C.O. 1440 Lord. Ch. Somerset to Colonial Secretary, 23 Jan, 1817. A.C.T.
7. C.O. 174. Letter Stockenström to C.O. 19 Sep, 1816. A.C.T.



cattle from a Briqueua¹(Bechuana) tribe lying east of Lithakao, shooting three of the tribe and wounding one². Anderson was severely reprimanded for this, it being pointed out to him that this event "had been anticipated from collecting so many indolent and ill-disposed people together where there was no sort of social compact to restrain them". He was requested to prevent people flocking to the institution to the detriment of the farmers labour supply and told that it should not be against his principles to return runaway slaves by force. As a result of the "atrocious murders" of the commando, the chiefs at Lithakao had refused to let Mr. Evans take up missionary work among them.³

Moffat ascribes Evans' failure even more directly to de Buys. He affirms that before the missionaries arrived de Buys had gone to the vicinity of the Yellow⁴(Vaal) and Hart rivers and had intercourse with the Bechuanas. "Into their minds he diffused his principles, which were hostile to the Colonial Government, and succeeded in making willing converts. Among them was Mothibi's (the chief's) brother. This man was at Lithako while the missionaries were there, and it was through his influence that they were rejected. This same person, in returning to the Hart river, probably to announce to Buys his success in opposing the settlement of teachers at Lithako, was shot dead by the poisoned arrows of the Bushmen"⁵.

An account of these doings was sent to the Colonial Secretary with complaints against the missionaries and Coenraad was described as "a Colonist long known for his

1. C.O. 198 Letter Read to C.O. 4 Dec. 1817. "Corannas call the bootchuanas Briqueuas". Burchell's Travels Vol. I. p. 364.
2. C.O. 184. Letter Anderson to Stockenström 25 Nov. 1816. A.C.T. (See also Rec. C.O. Vol. XI p. 229)
3. C.O. 1476 Letter C.O. to Anderson 17 Jan 1817. A.C.T.
4. Moffat himself calls the Yellow the Orange river (Missionary Labours p. 587) but he must have meant between the Hart and the Vaal (Yellow from its colour). Burchell Vol. I p. 391 calls the Vaal the Yellow river.
5. H. Moffat Missionary Labours p. 23a.



rebellious disposition and bad habits, who has for many years been a very distinguished character among the Disaffected on the frontiers".¹

Anderson returned a very meek reply to this letter of reprimand, promised to take up runaway slaves and said he had succeeded in getting those who had committed the "outrageous act" in company of de Buys to return and promise obedience in the future. They had returned the stolen cattle, which he intended to restore to the owners.

Of the author of all the mischief he writes, "Coenraad Buys has removed so far away that I have no knowledge of his present situation".² where he had "removed" to is difficult to say.

The kaffirs under Gola and Dantzer were still giving trouble, it being reported that Gola's kaffirs had guns which were said to have been sent by the missing Coenraad de Buys. Two kraals over the Orange river were going to join Gola and murder the Christians.³ The veldkornet who reported this was said to be very friendly with Dantzer and with him lived de Kooker who was to have joined de Buys⁴, so the report is not very trustworthy.

The following year Stockenstrom discovered that Gerrit Bezuidenhout and Frans Labuschagne were trading with deserters and kaffirs in kaffirland, so he travelled to the frontier and seized these two men as he felt sure that de Buys could not be far off, nor ignorant of Bezuidenhout's plans. He was determined to discover what intercourse might exist between them and to try and capture de Buys, "in order to prevent the calamities which might result from the machinations of such unprincipled characters in concert with the bastards"⁵. It was discovered however, that the two traders were connected

1.C.O. 1440. Letter Lord. Ch.Somerset to Earl of Bathurst
23 Jan, 1817. A.C.T.

2.C.O. 187. Letter Anderson to C.O. 20 March 1817. A.C.T.

3.1939 A.C.T. Moodies M.S. Notes Letter Veldtkornet J.v.d.
Westhuyzen to Landdrost. 13 June 1817. A.C.T.

4.C.O. 208 Letter Stockenstrom to C.O. 29 July, 1818. A.C.T.

5.C.O. 208 Letters Stockenstrom to C.O. 14th & 16th July, 1818



with the deserters for profit, and not for treasonable purposes, and no further mention of de Buys was made in this connection.¹

After the arrest of these two men Stockenstrom travelled on to the Orange river, where he was to meet Anderson. The latter arrived and told Stockenstrom how disaffected his people had become through the "machinations" of Coenraad, who assured them that the government allowed the missionaries to live among them so that they might be "seduced into the Colony and made soldiers of". He had further instilled into their minds "that they should consider themselves entirely independent of the Government, as a separate nation, strong enough to defend themselves". He told them that people on the borders of the colony would supply them with guns and ammunition and persuaded them that he could make gunpowder himself. In addition to spreading these doctrines, he had again been raiding the tribes, taking "an immense number" of cattle, which he shared with those who helped him.

Stockenstrom then went on to Griquatown to exhort the people there, and to get their assistance in capturing de Buys, who was living about 100 miles north-east of the station, as he did not wish "to risk the farmers in this attempt". At Griquatown his threats and exhortations had the effect of making the bastards promise to assist in the capture of de Buys. He discovered that Coenraad had been at the Orange river with eight horses the day before he crossed, saying that he was going to the frontier to fetch a friend. On hearing of Stockenstrom's approach he departed, taking with him several runaway slaves, who might otherwise have been caught.

One of the bastards then proposed that it would

1. C.O. 208 Letter Stockenstrom to C.O. 21 Sep 1818 and C.J. 3632 case of Bezuidenhout and Labuschagne at Graaff Reinet.



be best if they went after him themselves, as they could pretend to be fleeing before Stockenström, and so take him unawares. This trick was agreed to. "Though I did not approve of this plan I was obliged to submit to it as my strength was exhausted by the long journey which obliged me to make the best of my way back - leaving the bastards with the best promises that they should take care Buys should be sent prisoner to the Colony, together with all the slaves he has been harbouring".¹

Shortly after, Cupido Kok brought back an account of their efforts. De Buys knowing, or suspecting, that he was to be taken fled further north. After pursuing him four days journey beyond his "home" his company was overtaken. A surprise attack failed, as the dogs barked and some children who went to fetch water before daybreak gave the alarm. De Buys and Arend² then came armed to the water place and some of the commando demanded his surrender. De Buys begged they would not fire yet and fled to his encampment. Four of the commando fired after him and Arend fired back wounding a Bushman. It was found that he had many people with him, both Bechuanas and Bushmen so that the commando being too few in number, gave up the attempt - as Anderson feared chiefly from a lack of courage and unanimity. They promised, however, to go again in a larger body.³

Stockenström deplored this lost opportunity, as no better chance was likely to occur. He was of opinion "that the missionaries Anderson and Read (at Kuruman) should be called upon to persuade the Savages among which they live to deliver up to the Government so dangerous a character"⁴.

1. C.O. 208. Letter Stockenström to C.O. 27 Aug 1818. A.C.T.
2. Marginal note on copy - "A slave belonging to F.J. Burger"
3. C.O. 208. Letter Anderson to Stockenström 2 Sep 1818 A.C.T.
4. C.O. 208. Letter Stockenström to C.O. 2 Oct 1818. A.C.T.



In reply to this report a reward of 1000 rds was once more offered for Coenraad de Buys.¹

The account of their journeys further, as given by Coenraad's son Michael², begins from this point and he describes this incident of the commando with certain variations on Cupido's story. The event is made to take place at the Orange river and their pursuers were white police officials and some of the Cape Corps. The events took place when Michael was a child and were retold when he was an old man. Some events he had merely been told of, and others he actually witnessed. It is therefore impossible to place any reliance on his details, or on the order in which he gives the events. His story is useful however as he gives the names of chiefs, tribes and kraals they visited so that one has some idea of the ground they must have covered in their wanderings.

According to Michael they went to Moroko after this incident. Moroko was then living at Kunwana in the western Transvaal³, where they remained until the kaffirs harvested their corn. In March Anderson had heard that de Buys had attacked a tribe, the Macqueen, but had not plundered much cattle.⁴ These were probably the Bakwena at Kolobeng. Their next host was Molimotsani (Molitsane⁵) and from him they went westwards to Legouroetze (?).

In June 1819 Anderson heard from Kuruman that the Korannas from Malipietze(?) had reported that de Buys, his wife and children, people and slaves, had been murdered by the Borapoolaans" - (probably the Baramapulana in the

1. C.O. 1447. Letter C.O. to Stockenström. 12 Oct 1818. A.C.T.
2. S. Hofmeyr. Twintig Jaren . . . p. 6 to 14.
3. R. Moffat Missionary Labours . . . p. 342.
4. C.O. 226 Letter Anderson to Stockenström 14 March 1819.
5. Bataung chief - his ancestral lands lay north of Basutoland. E. Walker - History . . . p. 232.



Zoutpansbergen) as de Buys had been moving east to a people who were said to have clothes. The report was again denied, but firmly believed by the Red Kaffirs¹ and the chief at Kuruman. Anderson too was convinced of its truth."

Soon after, the missionaries from Kuruman met Arend and two other slaves, who said that they had left de Buys and, on account of his outrageous conduct, they might expect to hear of his murder soon. He was on his way to the east or north-east. Arend had some linen which he had got from a tribe he had visited, who said that there were white people in a town two days journey further.³ From the date, this must have been at Delagoa Bay, as white people did not live at Port Natal until 1823.

The report of de Buys' death spread far and was believed by the natives. Jaartjie, one of van der Kemp's old pupils in Kaffirland in 1799, told that "Buis wandered about among the tribes, murdering and plundering until he himself was murdered"⁴.

De Buys must have abandoned his efforts to go east for in 1820 he was with Makaba, the chief of the Bangwaketse,⁵ north of the Molopo river in what is now Bechuanaland.⁶ According to Campbell, Makaba had invited de Buys to visit him, promising him two or three outposts of cattle; on his arrival he only received thirty oxen, which he refused as being too few. Makaba therefore detained him there by presenting him with two oxen to kill, who said that he must not leave Selita. This device was resorted to each time de Buys attempted to leave, so he was virtually a prisoner.⁷

1. Smaller Basuto tribes - see Trigardt's Diary.
2. C.G. 226. Letter Anderson to Stockenström 7 June 1819. A.C.T.
3. *ibid* 5 July 1819.
4. Stephen Ray - Travels - - p 382.
- 5 & 7. J. Campbell. Travels Vol. II p. 141 & 142. July 1820
6. R. Moffat's Missionary - - - p. 386.



Soon after Stockenström was sent to report on the Griqua and the Bechuana. He was told to try and see de Buys and offer him a pardon if he should appear capable and willing to give useful information about the interior, and if he "had not by recent outrages rendered himself unworthy of mercy".¹

Stockenström did not get an interview but sent the following report :-²

"All I could collect about Coenraad Buis that can be considered authentic is, that after flying from the Griquas in 1818, he remained for some time with a Bootchuana chief called Sibbenel,³ who, understanding that he got his flock of 1400 cattle by plunder from the Goka,(? a misprint) took the half; and Buis flying, on the second report that the Griquas were pursuing him⁴, went so far up the country that he had easy and frequent communication with the eastern coast; and that when Mr. Campbell went up to Currachane⁵ about three or four months ago, he, Buis, was a prisoner with Makaba, chief of the Wanketzens, who released him on hearing of the approach of white men, whom Buis had address enough to make Makaba believe would revenge what he suffered. I was sorry I could not see this wanderer. He has travelled a great deal, and can give the most useful information. he is quite worn out by the restless life he has been obliged to lead, hunted from one tribe to another after his ammunition was exhausted, exposed to the inclemency of the weather and extreme fatigue, without a single horse. He has lost the use of one side, and is really wretched. I communicated

1. & 2. Blue Book 1836. part I p. 133. Stockenström's Report 13 Sept. 1820.
3. Sebonella, Barolong chief with whom Wesleyans Hodgson and Broadbent worked near Yellow River. R. Moffat, Missionary Labours p. 414.
4. A vague report of a second pursuit had reached him and made him fly - *ibid* Stockenström's report.
5. Kurrichane, Chuenyane or Kurrichean.



to him his Excellency's gracious pleasure by a letter which the Bootchuana chief Chakko undertook to deliver; and if he avails himself thereof his sons might be of incalculable service to any one undertaking discoveries in Africa".

There are two more accounts of de Buys actual situation with Makaba. Campbell wrote, "Buys, the Africaner, is reported to sleep little, being always afraid of an attack upon his life. He has three guns, which he keeps beside him, and has taught his wife how to load them, that, when attacked, he may have only to fire. He is a miserable man, and his family are captives with him. Had we accepted of Makkabas invitation to visit him at Melita, it is very probable the whole party would have been detained".¹

A brighter picture came from Arend, who was found again by George Thompson. He said that he had visited Makabas chief town, Melita," and that the notorious outlaw Conrad Buys was living in ease and safety in Makabbas dominions and had received from him, on his arrival, a present of fifty head of cattle"²

In August 1821 the last missionary report of de Buys comes from Stephen Kay, who had forwarded a letter from Stockenstrom to him.. "C.B. is now at Mangwato a large town inhabited by the Maquanas, six or eight days journey north east of K.Chean³ his waggon wheel having broke, according to the most recent intelligence he halted there in order to repair the old or make a new one. But he appears to be still bent upon proceeding yet further into the interior".⁴

This is the last official report we have of his movements, and from here on we have only the recollections

1. J. Campbell's Travels Vol II (1822) p.142.
2. George Thompson Travels . . . p 211. Arend finally purchased his freedom by sending ivory to Capetown p. 265.
3. Mangwato may be Bamangwato near Shoshong? Maquanas may be Makwena? K.Chean is Kurrichane or Chuenyane.
4. 1941 Moodies MS.. Notes. Letter Stephen Kay to Stockenstrom 9 Aug.1821. A.C.T.



of Michael which were written down forty to fifty years later. After leaving Makaba they returned to Legouroetze, where they wished to remain. They sowed crops there. Their cattle had been left with Moroko to whom de Buys had also given a waggon. Nearly all their horses had died. After a time Legouroetze's kaffirs tried to steal their cattle and Michael describes a skirmish in which about ten of the tribe were shot. They escaped and went on to Katjouseleh (Mokwasele) the father of Secheli (Sechele).¹

Here Coenraad left his brood and went on a pack-ox to look at the land of the Namangwato.² He returned and took them there to the chief whose name was A'ghadi. Here they were kept until their hut (hartbeesthuisje) was almost completed. (Perhaps Michael was thinking of the wait for a new waggon wheel).

Leaving A'ghadi they went along the Limpopo and, after travelling for five days along the river, their mother died of fever. "Hy (myn vader) was zeer bedroefd over het verlies van onze moeder, en spreke ons in zyne droefheid aan, dat hy ons daar zou laten, wij moesten niet verder het land ingaan, en ook niet terug. Hy zeide nog dat de blanken naderhand zouden komen. De Heer zou voor ons zorgen. De volgende morgen vonden wy hem niet, hy was dien nacht vertrokken".³

This disappearance, making his end as mysterious as most of his life had been, would have been a fitting conclusion for this lover of lawless freedom, but there is an anticlimax - his children did not believe him dead.

About this time the Mantatee invasions were

1. Bakwena chiefs at Kolobeng.
2. Round Shoshong.
3. J. Hofmeyr. Twintig Jaren p 9.



causing great unrest among the tribes¹ and the Matabele and Zulu wars caused repercussions among all the tribes, so that the young de Buyses had a desperate struggle for existence. They went completely native until many years later, when they asked for the services of a missionary².

They acted as interpreters for such travellers as Harris, Smith and Baines, none of whom make mention of their ancestry. Smith, when visiting Moselikatse near the Marikwa river, writes "at one place the road skirted the remains of a very large Bamaliti kraal, which had, many years ago, been destroyed at the instigation of and by the personal assistance of Conrad Buys, a man who by his abominable and unprincipled conduct entailed more suffering upon the native tribes of South Africa than can easily be described".³ This is rather strong when we compare de Buys' escapades with the havoc created by the chiefs Chaka or Moselikatse at that time. Strangely enough Smith makes no mention of de Buys' son Baba, who, according to Harris⁴, accompanied this expedition. Harris himself calls Baba a converted Bechuana, domestic of the American missionary near Kurrichane Mountains; Baba acted as interpreter for him at Moselikatse's kraal.⁵

Trigardt came across Doris and Gabriel in the Zoutpansbergen and Gabriel took a message to Lourenco Marques for him.⁶ They were also met by Bronkhorst's people⁷, members of Potgieter's party who were exploring. Again we have no reference made to their father - apparently no comment was needed.

1. South African Journal Part I p 76 & 77 and Part II p.173
 2. Inkomende Brieven Julie/Dec. 1862. Pretoria Archives.
 3. Dr. A. Smith. Report of Expedition - - - - 8 June, 1836.
 4. "C. Harris - Wildsports . . . p.88
 5. ibid p.123.
 6. Trigardts Dairy 23 Dec, 1836.
 7. J. Chase, Natal Papers p.73. Bronkhorst calls Gabriel, Karel.
2. Letter Michael Buys to Rev. McKidd 2 Dec. 1862.



Thomas Baines tells of a halfcaste waggon driver Toris (Doris?) who died of fever near Hartley Hill. Near here, too, they found the "ruins of a house that had been occupied by a white man 45 or 50 years ago" (written in 1870)¹. Could this have been one of de Buys' stopping places?

When the Trekkers settled in the Transvaal, the Buys Volk, as they were called, associated themselves with them and became their waggon drivers and assistants in managing the kaffirs.² They became dissatisfied because they were not given more rights and decided to go to Portuguese territory, but were forced to abandon the attempt.³

The reason for their choice of destination is that they believed that Coenraad had married again and that a daughter of this Union had married a Portuguese.⁴ A certain Jan Kamers (or John Chambers), who had married one of the Buys women, was said to have gone to the Portuguese territory to investigate, and reported that Coenraad had married in Sofala, a woman from Goa.⁵ Priding themselves on their European blood, some of the Buyses believed that he had married a white woman.⁶

The truth of these beliefs cannot be established, but the story, so in keeping with his previous record of mysterious marriages, is likely to persist until definite proofs are found to enable us to reconstruct the closing scene of this strange character's life.

1. Th. Baines - Gold Regions of S. Africa p. 38.
2. J. Hofmeyr. Twintig Jaren - - - - - p 12 & 13.
3. Dr. G. Preller. Sketse en Opstelle. p. 110.
4. J. Hofmeyr. Twintig Jaren - - - - - p. 9.
5. Dr. G. Preller has given me the name of Dr. J. Grobler of Louis Trichardt as his authority for this statement
6. Blue Book - 1835 p 64. The details of this report were collected by officials of the Native Affairs Dept. from descendants.



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- South African Journal (Edit. Fairbairn & Pringle)
Part I Jan./Feb. 1824 pages 76 & 77 and Part II
page 173 on the Mantatee invasions.

Unpublished Sources:

- (1) Archives, Cape Town
- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------|
| Testamenten | O.C.29 |
| Inventarissen | O.C.13 |
| Vendue Rollen | O.C.413 |
| Dood Register 1758-1796 | |
| Wild Schutte Boeken | Series S.G. |
| Opgaafrollen | " J. |
| British Occupation Documents | " B.O. |
| Batavian Republic Documents | " B.R. |
| Graaff Reinet Documents | " Gr.Rt |
| Swellendam Documents | " S'dam |
| Colonial Office Documents | " C.O. |
| Court of Justice Documents | " C.J. |
| Council of Policy Minutes | " C. |



(4)

A series of about a dozen volumes of notes and copies of documents, relating to natives, made by D.Moodie. Some of these have been used in his published works but not all of them. The originals of many of these copies have since been lost. (Number-of series defective)

(2) Archives, Pretoria.

Inkomende Stukken Julie - Dec. 1862

(3) Dutch Reformed Church Archives, Cape Town.

Doopboek R.D. 136

(4) South African Library, Cape Town.

Two MS. note books kept by John Campbell in 1819/1820. They form the first and third of a set of three, the second having been destroyed by the fire at the Witwatersrand University. (Gubbins Collection)